

**Significance of Intervention in Resolving Conflicts: A Comparison of Diplomacy and Military Use of Force**

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**Abstract**

Diplomatic efforts and military actions are distinct strategies employed in international relations as part of conflict intervention mechanisms to resolve conflicts. Diplomacy is the process of resolving disputes and promoting international cooperation through dialogue, negotiation, and other peaceful means. It focuses on finding mutually acceptable outcomes and encourages compromise. On the other hand, military action is the use of force or the threat of force to resolve disputes or conflicts. It is typically used as a last resort, when diplomacy fails. The effectiveness of diplomatic efforts versus military action in resolving conflicts has been debated for centuries. Both forms of action have their merits and drawbacks in various contexts. This article seeks to compare the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts versus military action in resolving conflicts through examining the role of diplomacy in preventing the use of force, with a focus on what approaches have been proven most successful. Diplomacy can help to build trust between parties which is essential for long-term peace while military action can be an appropriate especially in defending against aggression and to protect innocent lives. The article examines the historical and contemporary examples from around the world to understand the conditions under which diplomatic strategies have been used effectively to avoid or resolve conflicts and the case of military intervention as a diplomatic tool. This article provides an in-depth analysis of the significance of intervention in resolving conflicts by comparing diplomacy with the military use of force by presenting a comprehensive introduction, exploring key concepts and ideas in the main body and concluding with a summary of the findings and implications on the use of diplomacy and military use of force.

**Keywords:** Conflict, Diplomacy, Military Action

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**Introduction**

Diplomacy has long been used as an effective tool to prevent destructive wars and has often resulted in a peaceful resolution between states with hostile relations. Diplomatic efforts have been found to be effective in preventing or mitigating the threat of armed conflict, by providing an avenue for dialogue and negotiation between conflicting parties. For Example, archeological findings from ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egyptian and Indus valley civilizations reveal that conflicts were a common occurrence. For instance, the ancient city of Ur in Mesopotamia was destroyed and rebuilt multiple times due to conflicts. However, Diplomacy has long been seen as an essential tool for resolving these conflicts and preventing them from escalating into wars. Conflicts between countries have been around since the beginning of civilization, and in recent years they have become increasingly complex. This article compares the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts versus military action in resolving conflicts and negotiating peace.

The historical roots of diplomacy date back centuries, with its presence in international relations being documented as early as 1648 when diplomats were sent to mediate between warring nations during the Peace of Westphalia (Von Heuvel 2017). Since then, diplomatic efforts have proven successful at bringing about peaceful resolutions to both international and intra-state conflicts. From ending apartheid in South Africa, negotiating peace accords between Israel and Palestine, or preventing nuclear proliferation – these case studies suggest diplomatic efforts can be effective at preventing armed conflict from becoming a reality and resolving conflicts.

The impact of diplomatic efforts on conflict resolution can be seen throughout history. For example, the Treaty of Versailles, negotiated between Germany and Allied Powers after World War I, provided a framework for negotiations and set out specific objectives for Germany to follow in order to ensure that another war would never occur in Europe again (Kolb 2019). Other examples include the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty signed after World War II, which established a lasting peace between Japan and China; the Good Friday Agreement signed by Great Britain and Ireland in 1998; and more recently, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) agreed upon by Iran and six world powers in 2015. These examples demonstrate that while diplomacy alone cannot guarantee peace, it can be an important factor in helping to resolve conflicts peacefully (Guppy 2018).

The comparative study adopted examines how diplomatic efforts are different from or similar to military action when it comes to resolving conflicts especially at international scale. The articles explore how each conflict management approach is used, their relative effectiveness at creating peace between states with opposing interests as well as potential limitations posed by either approach. The article explores whether there are conditions or scenarios under which one approach is more successful than the other when seeking a peaceful resolution. Furthermore, this

article discusses factors that might influence the decision-making process when choosing between using diplomacy or military action for conflict resolution. An in-depth analysis of diplomacy and military action as conflict management mechanism provides insight on how best to use both approaches for preventing violence and promoting peace among nations with divergent interests.

The article analyzes how diplomatic efforts differ from military action when attempting to resolve international disputes. By comparing these two approaches against one another, a better understanding is gained of their respective efficacy at producing positive outcomes such as immediate de-escalation or long-term peacebuilding initiatives. Through examining historical precedents along with potential challenges associated with either approach, the article provides new knowledge on how best utilize diplomacy first whenever possible instead of resorting too quickly towards militarization as a means towards conflict resolution.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Conflicts and disputes cross countries are a common feature in international relations. The intervention strategies towards conflicts becomes a crucial decision for international community. This article investigates the significance and context of intervention in resolving conflicts, with the focus on examining two key approaches: diplomacy and military use of force. The changing global landscape defined by conflict scenarios and geopolitical tension trigger the need to understand the comparative significance of interventions including diplomacy versus military force. The comparative study is important for scholars, policymakers, and global stakeholders. The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the interventions to conflict resolution, examining their strengths, weaknesses, and underlying implications. The study contributes to the in-depth understanding of the decisions by the international community when faced with conflicts, facilitating effective and more informed decision making in pursuit of peace and security.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework provides a basis for understanding and analyzing existing research, as well as assessing emerging trends that may be relevant to this field. Diplomacy is a complex and multifaceted endeavor which requires both expertise and experience on behalf of stakeholders (Berridge G.R, 2015). It involves negotiations and agreements between different parties; it is a two-way process that requires active listening and engagement by all concerned parties. Furthermore, it is dependent on the establishment of trust between parties as well as an understanding and appreciation for each other's interests. Neorealism is a theory developed by Kenneth Waltz that proposes that states act in their own self-interest, which is to maximize their power and influence (Holsti, 2019). According to this theory, states strive for security and power, and they use both diplomatic and military means in order to achieve these goals. The neorealist perspective suggests that states often resort to military action when diplomacy fails, though this depends on the level of commitment of each state involved. Neorealism suggests that states are more likely to choose peaceful diplomatic solutions if there is an overall commitment from all sides involved toward achieving a peaceful solution since any one state can veto any agreement reached through negotiation (Touval & Zartman, 2002).

Neorealism theory suggests that states within the international system act in their own self-interest and view each other as potential threats (Sørensen, Møller & Jackson, 2022). In the context of conflict resolution, neorealism theory suggest that states are more likely to use military force to resolve conflicts, rather than diplomatic efforts. This is because states are more likely to use military force if they believe that it is in their own self-interest or if they believe it will be effective in resolving the conflict. Diplomatic efforts, on the other hand, rely on constructive dialogue, compromise, and cooperation, which may not be seen as advantageous to a state's self-interest. Neorealism theory posits that a state's foreign policy decisions are guided by its own self-interest (Sørensen, Møller & Jackson, 2022). Therefore, when deciding how to best resolve a conflict, a state is likely to choose the option that it believes will be the most advantageous to itself. This means that in most cases, states are more likely to rely on military action to resolve conflicts, rather than diplomatic efforts. This is because military action can provide a swift resolution to a conflict, and because it can often be used as leverage to gain a more favorable outcome for a state's own interests. Diplomatic efforts, on the other hand, take more time and require compromise and cooperation, which may not be seen as advantageous to a state's own interests.

Constructivism theory was developed by Alexander Wendt which focuses on how identities, interests, norms, and social practices affect international relations between states (Jeong, 2009). Constructivism proposes that these elements shape how states interact with each other and thus can lead them away from violent solutions towards cooperation. Shared identity, interest, norms and practices become common across countries' borders which facilitate dialogue between them. Constructivism emphasizes on the importance of dialogue not just between governments but also civil society organizations so as to build understanding among different stakeholders about common issues or interests which could lead toward diplomatic solutions instead of militaristic ones (Kratowil 1989; Wendt 1994).

Constructivism theory can be applied to the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts versus military action in resolving conflicts by suggesting that individuals and states learn through social interaction and through their environment (Sørensen, Møller & Jackson, 2022). This theory suggests that the way in which individuals and states interact with each other has a direct impact on their behavior and on the resolution of conflicts. In this way, diplomatic efforts that involve dialogue, negotiation, and compromise are more likely to result in a resolution of a conflict than military action.

Constructivism theory suggests that diplomatic efforts can be used to create mutual understanding and cooperation between conflicting parties and to facilitate a peaceful resolution of the conflict (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). By emphasizing dialogue and compromise rather than force, diplomatic efforts can create an environment in which both sides can work together to find a mutually beneficial solution to the conflict. Constructivism theory also suggests that a successful resolution to a conflict will depend on the ability of the parties involved to understand each other's perspectives and to find common ground. Constructivism theory can be used to understand the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts versus military action in resolving conflicts by looking at how the different approaches can create an environment of dialogue and understanding that can lead to a lasting resolution of the conflict.

### **The Convergence of Diplomatic and Military Efforts**

Diplomacy is defined as “the art or practice of conducting negotiations between nations” (Levesque & Brown, 2019). It incorporates techniques such as good faith bargaining and continuous communication to find mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts without resorting to violence or war. In order for diplomacy to be effective, trust must be established between all parties involved in order to create an environment where meaningful dialogue can take place without fear or aggression. Diplomats should also have an understanding and respect for different cultures and social norms in order to bridge any gaps that could hinder progress in conflict resolution process.

Diplomacy involves the use of dialogue to achieve a mutually acceptable outcome (Levesque & Brown, 2019). It is a form of peaceful persuasion that seeks to achieve a compromise between conflicting parties. Diplomacy can also involve the use of economic, political, or military pressure. There are several different types of diplomatic efforts that can be used to resolve conflicts including negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and dialogue. Negotiation is a form of diplomacy that involves two or more parties directly engaging in dialogue in order to reach an agreement. Mediation is a form of diplomacy where a third-party mediator is used to facilitate communication and create an environment of trust and understanding. Arbitration is a form of diplomacy where a third-party arbitrator is used to arbitrate the dispute and make a binding decision. Dialogue is a form of diplomacy that involves open communication between the parties in order to create an atmosphere of trust and understanding.

Military action is a form of conflict resolution that involves the use of force or threat of force to achieve a desired outcome (Bergmann & Cilliers, 2019). It is a more direct approach to conflict resolution that seeks to achieve a resolution through the use of force or coercion. There are several different types of military action that can be used to resolve conflicts. These include sanctions, military interventions, and wars. Sanctions are economic or political measures that are used to pressure a state or organization into compliance with certain conditions or requirements. Military interventions are the use of military forces to intervene in a conflict in order to achieve a desired outcome. Wars are the use of military forces to engage in hostile activities in order to achieve a desired outcome.

Diplomatic efforts depict a peaceful way of resolving conflicts. They are also more cost-effective than military action as they do not require the deployment of troops or the use of expensive military equipment. Diplomatic efforts allow for the exploration of different solutions to a conflict and the negotiation of a mutually acceptable outcome. The main weakness of diplomatic efforts is that they can be time-consuming and difficult to negotiate. They also require a degree of trust between the parties involved and can be hindered by the presence of power imbalances.

Military action is a more direct approach to conflict resolution. It is also a more expedient way of resolving conflicts as it does not require the negotiation of a mutually acceptable outcome. It is more practical as a state anticipates quick response and outcome. Military action can also be effective in situations where diplomatic efforts have failed. The main weakness of military action is that it can be very costly and can lead to further conflict and destruction. It is difficult to control and can have unintended consequences.

The frequency and intensity of international conflicts has increased over time due to a variety of factors including economic disparity, religious differences, competition for natural

resources, and ideological divides (Rowen & Smith, 1999). In order to address these issues without resorting to violence or war, diplomatic methods have been utilized to foster communication, resolve disagreements, and build trust between nations (Touval & Zartman, 2002). The value of diplomacy has long been recognized as a means for resolving conflicts in a nonviolent manner (Svoboda et al., 2007). As such, it is essential to explore its effectiveness relative to military action when responding to international crises.

The effectiveness of diplomatic efforts depends on a number of factors such as culture, history, politics and national interests (Gompert & Gompert 2009). For instance, if two countries have had strong political disagreements in the past or are dealing with deep-rooted cultural differences then it may be difficult for diplomats from either side to reach an agreement through negotiation alone. On the other hand, if both countries are willing to compromise then diplomacy can prove successful in resolving any issues or disputes that may arise between them (Gompert & Gompert 2009).

The use of force has long been an accepted method of resolving conflicts between nations. However, with the increasing prevalence of globalization and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, it is becoming more apparent that using military force to resolve conflicts is not only often ineffective but can also cause significant damage and destabilization in both the region and surrounding areas. As such, there has been a shift away from military action as a means of conflict resolution and towards diplomacy as a way to prevent the use of force. The effectiveness of military action as a conflict management model is highly contested, with some arguing that it is a necessary tool to protect national security and others believing it is an outdated and ineffective form of conflict resolution.

The most common argument in favor of military action is that it can be a powerful tool for achieving security and peace. This argument suggests that military action can be used to deter aggression and protect a nation from foreign threats. Application of military action points to the success of the Cold War strategy of “mutually assured destruction” (MAD) which is credited with averting a nuclear war between the US and the Soviet Union. On the other hand, opponents of military action argue that it is a costly and inefficient way of resolving conflicts. This points to the numerous conflicts in which military action has failed to bring about a lasting peace, including the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

In addition, opponents argue that military action often has unintended consequences such as creating civilian casualties and exacerbating regional tensions.

According to Bergmann and Cilliers (2019), military action is often an inadequate and dangerous approach to conflict resolution. For instance, a 2020 study by the United Nations found that military interventions tend to produce short-term gains, but are often followed by long-term instability and violence. Military action is a risky and often ineffective way of resolving conflicts. While it may be necessary in certain circumstances, it should not be relied upon as a primary method for achieving peace and security. Therefore, it is important for nations to consider other non-military approaches such as diplomacy and international cooperation when attempting to resolve disputes.

A study conducted by Rittberger et al. (2020) found that diplomatic efforts were more successful than military action when it came to resolving conflicts. Countries with well-established diplomatic ties are less likely to resort to violence when faced with a disagreement compared to countries without any diplomatic relations. In cases where armed conflict occurs

among countries with diplomatic ties, there are far fewer casualties than those experienced during full-scale wars involving countries without any formal diplomatic relations. The study asserted that military intervention further worsens the conflict especially in cases where no party wants to down their weaponry.

Kola (2017) conducted a study which examined the role of diplomatic efforts in preventing civil wars in Africa between 1990 and 2001. The study affirmed that while negotiations alone were not always successful in averting all civil wars they did play a major role in reducing their intensity when armed conflict did occur. For instance, peace agreements mediated by international organizations allowed some conflicts which had already started to eventually come under control whereas military interventions often resulted in continued destruction until one side conquered the other (Kola 2017).

According to Rowen & Smith (1999), diplomacy is consistently used before resorting to armed conflict as a means for settling disputes between states. This research highlighted the importance of strong relationships between leaders as well as other forms of informal powers like personal ties and public opinion when engaging with foreign states. In addition, Touval & Zartman (2002) asserts that sustained negotiation and other forms of dialogue are key elements for successful mediation between conflicting countries. In addition to these findings, Svoboda et al. (2007) discovered that multilateral negotiations were more likely than bilateral talks to successfully prevent armed confrontation between nations. Diplomacy is a valuable tool for reducing tension and avoiding violent conflict through peaceful means. By strengthening connections between states through meaningful dialogue and collaboration, it is possible to reach mutually beneficial agreements while avoiding unnecessary bloodshed or destruction (Rowen & Smith, 1999; Touval & Zartman 2002; Svoboda et al., 2007).

Diplomatic relations have a major influence on international relations, global peace and security. Diplomacy is seen as a tool to mediate disputes between nations, build trust between them, and promote peace (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Diplomacy takes many forms such as exchange of information, cultural exchanges, and conferences. The aim is to create a positive environment for peaceful resolution of disputes without resorting to force or war (Rudnyckyj et al., 2020). India and Pakistan were at war with each other for most of the 20th century. The two countries have been locked in a long-standing, bitter dispute over the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which has been a source of tension, instability, and violence in the region. In the past few decades, both countries have tried to solve the Kashmir dispute through diplomatic means, such as negotiations and dialogue. In 2018, the two countries began discussing a "framework for peace," which included a number of confidence-building measures, such as increased trade, increased people-to-people contact, and increased dialogue between the two governments (India-Pakistan Relations, 2018). This framework was seen as an important step forward in the process of normalizing relations between the two countries.

The theory "Pacification Through Negotiation" states that peace can be achieved through negotiations rather than violence (Luttwak, 1996). The theory is based on the idea that if two parties come together and discuss their differences, they can reach mutually beneficial agreements while avoiding bloodshed. Another commonly cited theory is known as "Conflict Management Theory" which argues that effective management strategies should be employed when dealing with violent conflicts (Deutsch et al., 1957). This approach stresses the importance

of communication between conflicted parties in order to avoid escalation and facilitate more constructive solutions to disputes.

Empirically there have also been attempts made to examine the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts versus military action in resolving conflicts. A study by Bremer & Wilkenfeld (2002) investigated the role and impact of third-party mediation on international crises from 1956-2000. The study found that third-party mediation was successful at reducing tensions between countries by helping them reach peaceful settlements but often failed due to issues related to power imbalance or lack of commitment from involved parties. Similar study conducted by Rudnycky et al., (2020) explored how different types of diplomatic engagement could impact civil wars and found that these interventions had positive effects in most cases but were limited by factors like geographic proximity or timing delays when implemented too late into an ongoing conflict.

Diplomatic efforts can play an important role in preventing armed conflict when utilized in a timely manner. The efficacy of diplomatic efforts is defined by power dynamics between conflicting parties or the strategic timing for intervention initiatives. Diplomacy facilitates mitigating violent confrontations at the international level when applied appropriately within specific contexts, making it an invaluable tool for keeping disagreements from escalating into full-fledged warfare where possible.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 was a major diplomatic success in resolving the conflict in Northern Ireland (Gill, 2016). The negotiations incorporated the British and Irish governments and representatives from the political parties in Northern Ireland. Through the Agreement, the British and Irish governments agreed to establish a framework for cooperation and to recognize the legitimacy of the aspirations of both communities in Northern Ireland. This Agreement marked a major milestone in the peace process in Northern Ireland, and its success is an example of the power of diplomacy to resolve conflict. The Good Friday Agreement was signed in 1998, which led to the establishment of a power-sharing government in Northern Ireland and the withdrawal of British troops from the region (Neuheiser & Wolff, 2014). The agreement also included a number of measures to ensure greater security and stability in the region.

The Dayton Accords were a major diplomatic achievement that ended the Bosnian War in 1995 (Smith, 2018). Through the Accords, the U.S. was able to bring together the leaders of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia to negotiate a peace agreement that stopped the violence and provided a path to a lasting peace. The success of the Dayton Accords is an example of how diplomacy can be used to resolve complex conflicts.

Military action has been widely employed as a tool of resolving conflicts since ancient times. It is still considered one of the most effective methods for conflict resolution, with some claiming that it is even more effective than diplomacy in certain cases. However, this statement is highly contested due to the numerous consequences and risks associated with military action. When considering the effectiveness of military action in resolving conflicts, several aspects must be taken into account. Firstly, there are two main types of conflicts: interstate and intrastate. Whereas interstate conflicts typically involve two states or governments with defined borders, intrastate conflicts take place within a single state or realm and may involve multiple parties. As such, different approaches are required for resolving each type of conflict. In most cases, international diplomacy is employed for interstate disputes while internal negotiation or



mediation is used for intrastate issues. Military force may also be utilized in either situation; however, its role will depend on a variety of factors and must be carefully weighed before being adopted as an approach to conflict resolution.

Another factor which affects the effectiveness of military action in resolving conflicts is the form the action takes: offensive or defensive operations. Offensive operations involve directing forces towards an adversary's territory while defensive operations are designed to protect one's own country from attack by another party or group. Each approach can achieve different goals; however, they both carry considerable risk - particularly when it comes to civilian casualties - and should not be undertaken lightly or without forethought. Furthermore, offensive operations have historically been seen as more likely to end up escalating a situation rather than de-escalating it (Fukuyama & Rotberg 1989).

The use of specific weapons can also influence the outcome of using military action as a means to resolve a conflict (Ossewaarde et al., 2020). This includes not only conventional weapons such as tanks and artillery but also nuclear arms and other forms of non-conventional weaponry like chemical weapons or drones (Gates 2010). The decision whether to deploy these weapons - particularly nuclear ones - will often have far-reaching implications on both sides involved in a conflict due to their destructive power (Hersman 2014). Therefore, their use should always be debated thoroughly before any military operation is launched so that potential damage can be minimized where possible (Kubo 2016).

Several cultural factors which need to be considered when analyzing whether military force will be effective at resolving a particular conflict (Shimko 2002). Different societies operate according to distinct codes of ethics which outline acceptable behavior during times of war; breaching these codes can lead to further complications regarding how the dispute should ultimately be settled (Darby 2006). Additionally, certain cultures might view warfare differently than others; for example, some may believe that victory cannot truly come without vengeance whilst others may prioritize compromise over complete subjugation (Dempsey 2005). As such, understanding these differing cultural perspectives can help determine which approach will prove most successful at achieving peace between two sides engaged in armed combat (Weidmann 2009).

Military force can certainly provide an effective means for resolving certain types of conflicts under specific circumstances – such as those involving direct threats against national security. Its utilization must always come with a great deal of thought and consideration given its high potential for destruction and unintended consequences regardless if offensive or defensive operations are employed. A full assessment is effected prior to any deployment so that all viable options from both political and cultural perspectives can be weighed adequately before attempting any sort of resolution through military means.

Military action has been used for centuries as a way to resolve conflicts between different nations, and has seen varying levels of success in achieving its goal. The literature provides evidence from multiple sources that military action can be effective in certain situations but can also have unintended consequences that end up making matters worse. One source of evidence for the effectiveness of military action comes from the historical cases of successful armed interventions. Examples include the United Nations' operations in Kosovo and East Timor, which helped restore peace and stability in those regions after years of civil strife. In both cases, armed forces were deployed in order to protect citizens from human-rights abuses and restore

order by providing a buffer between warring factions or ethnic groups. This illustrates how military intervention may be necessary when other diplomatic avenues fail to produce desired results.

The 2003 military invasion of Iraq by the United States and its coalition partners has had far-reaching and long-lasting consequences both within and outside the country. Internally, the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq led to a period of instability, violence and chaos that continues to this day. The US-led invasion and occupation destroyed much of the country's infrastructure and caused a massive displacement of people. The displacement of millions of Iraqis led to a large population of internally displaced persons (IDPs), who are still living in precarious and desperate conditions in Iraq (United Nations. 2017).

The war caused an estimated 500,000 deaths with the majority being civilians (McCoy, 2007). The conflict also had a devastating effect on Iraq's economy and infrastructure, with an estimated \$200 billion in costs to rebuild the country (United Nations, 2017). In addition, the invasion has had a long-term impact on Iraq's international reputation, with the U.S. and other Western nations viewed with distrust and suspicion (Glanz, 2011). The invasion and occupation destabilized the government and exacerbated tensions between Iraq's different ethnic and sectarian groups, leading to an increase in violence and the emergence of various militant and extremist groups, including the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Smith, 2016). Externally, the invasion and occupation of Iraq has had a significant impact on the region. The US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq led to a number of changes in the regional dynamics, including the rise of Iran's influence, the deepening of sectarian divisions, and the emergence of new militant and extremist groups (Smith, 2016).

Military intervention is viewed as one tool among many for resolving conflicts. Careful consideration of all potential consequences is important before considering the strategy. The intervention takes into account its long-term effects on regional politics and economies, as well as its impact on local populations who may become caught in the crossfire or displaced altogether due to conflict-related disruptions. Carefully planned interventions can yield positive results if they are implemented cautiously with full awareness of their implications (Bellamy & Williams, 2007).

When diplomatic solutions are exhausted or deemed inadequate for resolving conflicts, then militaries may play a role in promoting peace (Wright et al., 2015). At this point, however, it is important for decision-makers to exercise caution since these types of interventions involve complex dynamics; there are often unintended consequences which need to be taken into consideration before taking any drastic measures (Hamilton & Neumann, 2014). For instance, while forces may be deployed initially to restore order they could easily become embroiled in a longer conflict if their presence inadvertently inflames local tensions rather than calming them down (Brunetti et al., 2018).

Military intervention can sometimes be effective at resolving conflicts when appropriate conditions exist. The United States' decision to intervene in Somalia in 1992 is an example of the use of military force to resolve conflicts. The intervention was part of UN-led mission to bring stability to the region after a civil war had broken out in the country (Linn, 2006). The UN mission was designed to provide humanitarian assistance to the Somali people and to restore order to the region. The United States provided military forces to the mission to help create a secure environment for the delivery of aid.

The U.S. intervention was led by the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) which was responsible for leading the mission's military activities. The JSOC deployed a task force of about 1,800 personnel to Somalia in December of 1992 (Bjorge, 2009). The task force was composed of U.S. Army Rangers, Special Forces, and Marines. The mission was focused on providing security and support for aid delivery and to protect UN personnel. The task force worked with local forces and conducted a number of operations against warlords and other forces that threatened the security of the region. The U.S. intervention was successful in restoring relative stability to the region and enabling humanitarian assistance to be delivered to the Somali people (Cooper, 2005).

The intervention was also a success in that it established a precedent for the use of military force in the region in order to resolve conflicts. The intervention demonstrated that military force could be used to restore order and provide humanitarian assistance when needed. In 1999, NATO launched an intervention into Kosovo in order to end the ongoing conflict between Kosovo Albanian separatists and the government of Serbia and its ally, the Yugoslavian government (NATO. n.d.). The conflict had been raging for over two years before NATO intervened, with both sides committing numerous atrocities against the other. In order to end the conflict and bring about a peaceful resolution, NATO deployed forces to Kosovo in order to ensure that the Serbian and Yugoslavian forces withdrew from the region.

NATO forces were deployed with the intent of providing a buffer between the two sides and preventing any further violence. The deployment of NATO forces allowed for the establishment of a safe environment for the people of Kosovo, and for negotiations to take place between the two sides (Brown, 2000). After a series of negotiations, the Serbian and Yugoslavian forces eventually withdrew from the region, and the NATO forces remained in place in order to maintain peace. The NATO intervention in Kosovo was generally seen as a success by the international community.

The deployment of NATO forces not only achieved the goal of ending the conflict, it also allowed for a peaceful resolution to be implemented. Additionally, the presence of NATO forces in the region provided a sense of stability and security for the people of Kosovo (NATO. n.d.). The presence of NATO forces in the region provided a sense of stability, room for dialogue and security for the people of Kosovo, which allowed for negotiations to take place between the two sides. The NATO intervention in Kosovo ultimately resulted in a peaceful resolution to the conflict and marked a successful example of the use of military force to resolve an international conflict.

In 2005, the long-running civil war in Sudan which had lasted for almost two decades and killed upwards of 2 million people, came to an end with the signing of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) (Shorrocks, 2019).

The CPA was the result of a long and arduous process of diplomacy between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). In order to reach the CPA, the two sides had to overcome a number of obstacles, including deep-rooted mistrust and animosity, and the inability of the two sides to agree on the framework for a lasting peace. Through the use of mediation, negotiation, and the facilitation of foreign powers, the two sides were eventually able to reach an agreement, which included a variety of measures such as a power-sharing arrangement, a referendum on the status of the region of South Sudan, and the demilitarization of certain areas (Shorrocks, 2019). This process of diplomacy eventually resulted

in a lasting peace and the end of the civil war in Sudan though the parties failed to meet their end of the agreement later.

Since World War II, many countries have used military power as a means to end ongoing conflicts or prevent them from escalating further. The approach has been successful in some cases, such as the Korean War and the First Gulf War. However, these conflicts were only temporarily resolved due to a lack of long-term solutions. Military action in some cases only serves to increase hostility between conflicting parties leading to further instability in the region. While immediate results may seem successful, they often fail to take into account how weak governments become after combating powerful forces. If used selectively and judiciously, force can bring about long-term peace and stability.

In 2011, the Syrian Civil War began when President Bashar al-Assad's government violently suppressed protests calling for greater political freedom and an end to the country's authoritarian rule (Corstange & York, 2018). The conflict has since become a proxy war between regional and international powers, with Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah supporting the Assad regime and the United States, Turkey, and Gulf countries supporting the Syrian opposition. In response to the violence in Syria, the United States deployed military forces to the region in an effort to resolve the conflict. In 2014, the United States and its allies conducted airstrikes against ISIS and other extremist groups in Syria. The United States has also provided training and assistance to rebel forces, and has provided limited financial support and diplomatic backing to the Syrian opposition (Carpenter, 2016).

In addition, the United States has implemented an extensive military campaign against ISIS in Syria, and has launched numerous missile strikes against the Assad regime in response to its use of chemical weapons. The use of military force has had a limited impact on the conflict in Syria. Despite the US-led military campaign against ISIS, the group still maintains a presence in the country. Similarly, despite numerous airstrikes against the Assad regime, the violence has continued unabated. The United States' military intervention in Syria has also resulted in numerous civilian casualties, and has had a devastating impact on the country's economy, health and infrastructure.

In recent years, there has been a debate raging between proponents of diplomacy and militarily-based strategies when it comes to resolving conflict. While not always successful, diplomatic approaches are often more effective than military action in resolving conflicts (Carment & James 2016). For instance, UN Resolution 242 was widely credited with helping resolve tensions between Israel and Palestine after 1967's Six Day War while United Nations Security Council resolutions have helped foster negotiations between warring parties across Africa since 2000 (Binnendijk et al., 2015). Similarly, economic sanctions have been used successfully by many countries especially the U.S, EU, and UN as an alternative form of coercive statecraft which ultimately helped bring about peaceful outcomes (Banerjee 2013; Kertzer & Schakel 2011).

Research also suggests that when diplomatic efforts fail to achieve their desired outcome – such as when trying to end Syria's civil war – military intervention often fails to bring about any tangible change (Goertz et al., 2013). This can be attributed in part due to lack of sufficient resources or political will but also because military interventions tend not to emphasize long-term solutions such as nation building or institution building which are core components for realization of peace and stability (Blacker & Smith 2018). Despite these diplomatic efforts, the

conflict has yet to be resolved. In contrast, diplomacy often provides enough incentives for rival parties or nations to make concessions and willing engage in meaningful dialogue without resorting violence or force (Flynn 2017).

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is one of the most prolonged and complex conflicts in the world. Diplomacy has been applied in various ways to try and resolve the conflict. For example, the Oslo Accords of 1993 were negotiated as a result of secret talks between Israel and Palestine, which were supported by the United States (Kassim, 2011). In 2000, the Camp David Summit was an attempt to negotiate a peace settlement between Israel and Palestine, but failed to reach an agreement (Lefebvre, 2017). In 2005, the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit was held between Israel, Palestine, and the United States, and resulted in the implementation of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access (Schmidt & O'Leary, 2017).

Diplomatic efforts provide better long-term prospects towards achieving peace and stability. Although not always successful due their reliance on compromise rather than coercion – something which is difficult come by when dealing with deeply entrenched conflicts - diplomatically based approaches remain one of best options available for those seeking viable alternatives towards achieving lasting peace.

In 2015, President Obama and his administration successfully negotiated a nuclear agreement with Iran to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions (Grossman, 2015). The agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was the result of several years of diplomatic efforts with the United States and its partners in the P5+1 (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Germany) engaging in direct diplomacy with Iran. The agreement was lauded as significant breakthrough in resolving a major international conflict. Obama's diplomatic efforts were praised by many as a major diplomatic success, as the agreement was seen as a way to reduce the risk of a nuclear-armed Iran and to avoid a costly war. The deal was widely praised for its successful application of diplomacy but was later abandoned by the US in 2018.

Diplomacy allows states to identify common interests that can be used as leverage during negotiations while also providing a forum where grievances can be aired peacefully. Furthermore, diplomacy involves public rather than confidential discussions which tend to foster greater transparency and trust between parties as well as encourage constructive dialogue which is essential for finding mutually beneficial solutions. Dialogue in conflict resolution is inherently flexible and allows parties involved in a dispute to voice their concerns openly without fear of retaliation. Diplomacy provides an invaluable resource for nations looking toward peace rather than war as a means for settling grievances.

Diplomacy offers an opportunity to address political issues without resorting to physical violence while also preserving relationships between countries. Diplomatic efforts require long periods of engagement and can often be difficult to implement due to differing interests between countries involved. For instance, the Vietnam War demonstrated how US policy makers leveraged both diplomatic initiatives and financial sanctions rather than relying solely on aggressive tactics such as bombing raids and ground invasions. This ultimately resulted in reduced civilian casualties and improved prospects for reconciliation among warring parties.

## **Conclusion**

Diplomatic efforts and military action are two common strategies used to resolve conflicts. Diplomatic efforts involve the use of negotiation, mediation, and other forms of communication to reach a peaceful agreement between conflicting parties. This could involve negotiations between governments, the use of international organizations such as the UN, or other forms of diplomatic engagement. Military action, on the other hand, involves the use of force or the threat of force in order to resolve a conflict. This could involve the use of air strikes, ground troops, or special forces operations. Diplomatic efforts and military action can be used in combination to resolve a conflict. For example, diplomatic efforts may be used to negotiate a ceasefire and establish a framework for long-term peace, while military action may be used to enforce the terms of the agreement. In some cases, military action may also be used to prevent further violence or provide humanitarian aid.

Both diplomatic efforts and military action have the potential to successfully resolve a conflict, but each has its own advantages and disadvantages. Diplomatic efforts are generally less costly, less destructive, and can help foster goodwill between conflicting parties. However, they are often lengthy and require a great deal of patience and compromise. Military action, on the other hand, can be more decisive and can quickly restore order, but it also carries a high risk of civilian casualties and could lead to an escalation of conflict. Ultimately, the right approach depends on the situation and the goals of the parties involved.

## **Recommendations**

**Enhance Multilateral Cooperation and Diplomatic Capacity** – Encouraging countries to actively enhance diplomacy as the main intervention for resolving disputes is important. States should also strengthen diplomatic efforts as the main channel of conflict resolution. Diplomacy efforts and multilateral cooperation demands states to enhance their capacity in resources and training for diplomats, establish mechanisms for early alerts on conflict prevention and resolution, through diplomatic avenues, and foster international dialogue.

**Develop Detailed Conflict Resolution Mechanisms** – Develop and implement strategic conflict resolution mechanisms that incorporate both diplomacy and military force when necessary. Develop standards through which military force can be implemented as a last resort and diplomacy as the preferred avenue of conflict resolution. Ensure diplomatic efforts are explored consistently and exhaustively before resorting to military intervention.

**Advance Negotiation and Conflict Mediation Skills** – Enhance capacity building at national and international levels to ensure stakeholders are better equipped with conflict mediation and negotiation skills. Develop avenues for training in conflict analysis, negotiation techniques, and conflict resolution. This ensures diplomats and international negotiators are empowered effectively to handle emerging conflicts.

**Foster Transparency, Accountability and Compliance** – Develop mechanisms and norms that advance transparency, accountability, and compliance with international laws and regulations that govern conflict resolution mechanisms. Encourage countries to align with the principles of international law, ensure that interventions adhere to universally acceptable legal and ethical standards, and respect sovereignty of nations.

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