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Track II diplomacy in conflict
resolution: the role of religious
organisations as mediating
powers

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A mis padres por su apoyo incondicional.

A mis compañeros de grado por motivarme a conseguir mis objetivos.

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1. INTRODUCTION

I have the honour to convey to Your Excellency that the Government of the Republic of Mozambique and the Resistencia Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) signed on 4 October 1992 a General Peace Agreement establishing the principles and modalities for the achievement of peace in Mozambique.

- Joaquim Alberto Chissano (1992)

Rome, July 1992, the Sant' Egidio community hosts in its headquarters the beginning of the peace talks between the delegation of the Frelimo Government and a delegation of the Resistencia Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO). After three long months of difficult negotiations, both parties sign a General Peace Agreement finalising the Mozambican Civil War.

According to Samuel Huntington (1997), religious practice is “the central defining element of a civilisation”. In the Mozambican Civil War, religion played a significant role –not only was it part of the root causes associated with the conflict, but it also served as a tool for civilians to manage and survive the conflict. Most importantly though, religion was the base of the negotiations and was instrumental in achieving the peace process. The conflict in Mozambique comes to show how *Track II* diplomacy has become a non-traditional form of conflict resolution, that can sometimes be as effective as conventional mechanisms of diplomacy.

In recent years, the importance of non-state actors in international relations and negotiation processes has been widely acknowledged. With the recognition of the significance of non-state actors in conflict resolution, classical diplomacy evolved into *Multitrack Diplomacy*¹.

1.1 Objectives

The main objective of this thesis is to explore the role of religious organisations as mediating powers in conflict resolution in cases where state diplomacy has proved to be ineffective.

¹ This idea was developed and put into practice by Louise Diamond and John McDonald in 1989 and will be later defined and discussed in more detail.

Specific objectives:

- To explore the evolution of diplomacy and how the 'Track One, Track Two' paradigm emerged.
- To study the history and roots of violence in Mozambique after its independence from Portuguese colonial rule.
- To analyse the importance of the Community of Sant' Egidio in the peace process in Mozambique.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to examine the success of religious organisations in conflict resolution, some concepts around the subject need prior clarification.

2.1 Classical diplomacy and its evolution

All groups of states, bodies, and entities with individual concerns and interests, which live together in a community of customs and traditions, must establish a minimum degree of formal and structured liaison between themselves. This contact between two or more parties evolved to become what we now understand as *diplomacy*. This practice has been present in society for centuries but has undergone many changes throughout history. As some scholars recommend, diplomacy must be understood in an evolutionary sense because of its constant transformations.

Modern diplomacy began to take shape during the mid-15th century. The new techniques and institutions that were developed and established in Italy laid the foundations for contemporary diplomacy. At the time, the territory known today as Italy was composed of a series of small states, of which the most prominent and powerful ones were the Papal States, the Venetian Republic, the Duchy of Milan, and the Kingdom of Naples. These states were in constant competition with each other and so they had to establish lines of communication with each other to assure their survival. We could say that Italy was then what Europe was to become several years later. (Anderson, 1993).

The constant outbreaks of war made it necessary to intensify diplomatic efforts. As a result, during the 16th and 17th centuries, there were new developments in the field of diplomacy. The number of states which became independent grew and, following the European system, they established permanent embassies and resident ambassadors (Ghosh n.d.). The first Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established by Cardinal Richelieu² in 1626 to centralise to bring all foreign affairs activities under one centralised department (Islam, 2005). Cardinal Richelieu is credited for two major breakthroughs in the practice of diplomacy: *trading concessions* and *continuity of*

² Cardinal Richelieu was a French clergyman and statesman, appointed Foreign Secretary in 1616 and Prime Minister to Louis XIII of France in 1624.

diplomacy. Richelieu considered that concessions and counter-concessions were a vital part of a negotiation, and firmly believed diplomacy to be necessary even in times of peace, and not just in the advent of war (Richelieu & Hill, 1961).

In the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, the European powers agreed to seek peace through diplomacy rather than by engaging in war. This was the aim of the Congress of Vienna and the many congresses that followed. This congress system became known as the Concert of Europe and was successful until 1914 (Ghosh, n.d.). It was attended by representatives of several European states, making it one of the first examples of multilateral diplomacy.

During the 20th century, the logistics of international relations were everchanging. The rivalry of the European powers in the first half of the century led to the First World War, and later World War II. During the second half of the 20th century, we witnessed the fall of the European empires, changes in power dynamics and the rise of non-state actors in the international arena. With the transformations of the century, diplomacy also progressed so it adjusted to the demands of the time, and so, it became part of international law with the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (Leguey-Feulleux, 2009).

To have a definition of what modern diplomacy is, Barston (2006) claims that: *“Diplomacy is concerned with **the management of relations between states and between states and other actors**. From a state perspective, [it] is concerned with advising, shaping, and implementing foreign policy. [...] It is **the means by which states through their formal and other representatives, as well as other actors, articulate, coordinate and secure particular or wider interests.**”*

From this definition, it is worth highlighting a couple of aspects that are useful for the present study. Barston (2006) interprets diplomacy beyond its classical form of state-to-state relations and takes into consideration the role of non-state actors in the management of diplomatic relations. After World War II and the creation of the United Nations diplomacy matured to include non-governmental actors as such. Diplomacy was transformed from a one-track system to a two-track system.

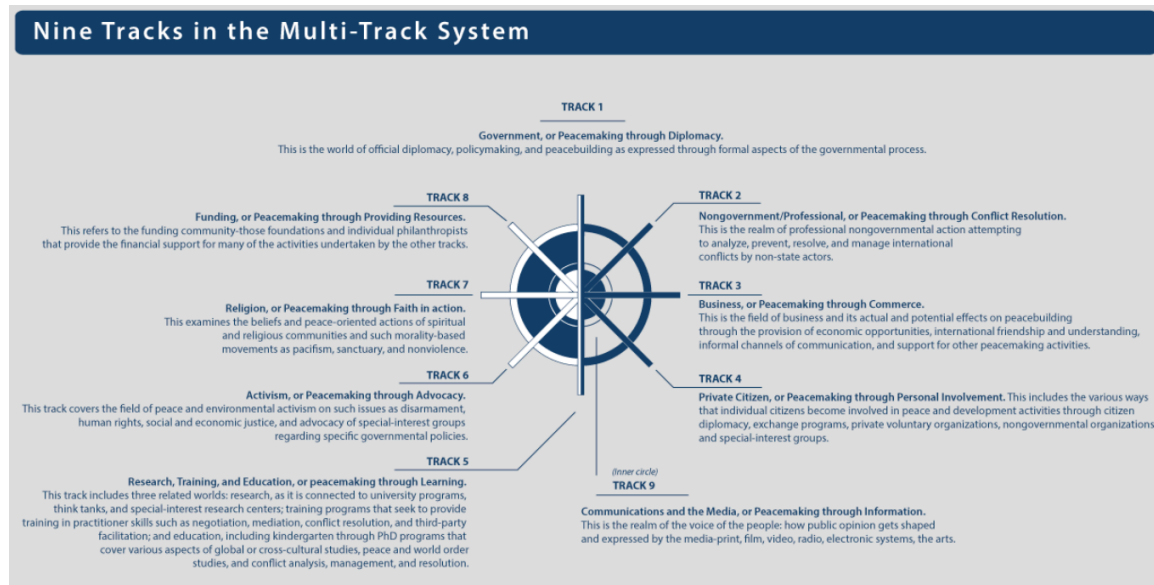
2.2 From the 'Track One, Track Two' paradigm to Multi-track Diplomacy

The term 'Track One, Track Two' diplomacy was created in 1981 by Joseph Montville in *Foreign Policy According to Freud*. In this article, Montville discusses the importance of psychology in relation to conflicts. The author argues that, while psychology can contribute to the escalation of tensions, it can also offer a new perspective on the root causes of conflicts and can substantially contribute to the process of conflict resolution. Montville uses the example of the Arab-Israeli conflict to portray his arguments. The psychological barrier that surrounds this conflict is the idea that, by acknowledging the other's side realities of national existence and accepting the rights to establish a state, they abandon their claims and destroy their *raison d'être* (Montville, 1981). As Montville comments, the *American Psychiatric Association* and the *Institute for Psychiatry and Foreign Affairs* established workshops with Egyptians and Israelis to discuss existing stereotypes and to try to overcome the cultural gaps between the two. These sessions were successful in humanising both parts in relation to the other's role in the conflict, and the initiative was welcomed by the Egyptian and Israeli governments (Montville, 1981).

What this example tries to point out is that oftentimes, *Track One* diplomacy (or official diplomacy *aka* between governments) is not effective in conflicts that have reached a stalemate. The initiative of the *American Psychiatric Association* and the *Institute for Psychiatry and Foreign Affairs* is exactly what the author describes as *Track Two* diplomacy, an unofficial, non-structured interaction (Montville, 1981). The objective of this type of diplomacy is the "reduction or resolution of a conflict, [...] by lowering the tension that exists, through improved communication and a better understanding of each other's point of view" (McDonald & Bedahmane, 1987). These attempts to resolve differences between the parties in a conflict are generally conducted by non-governmental organisations and other non-state actors (IMTD, n.d.).

Dr Louise Diamond and Ambassador John McDonald (2003) advanced Montville's notion of 'Track One, Track Two' diplomacy to conceptualise 'multi-track diplomacy'. First, Diamond realised that grouping all *Track Two* efforts under a single category did not accurately reflect the complexity of this type of diplomacy. She came

up with the idea of ‘multi-track diplomacy’ so that the term would encompass “all aspects of mediation from the ground-level work of private citizens to the top-level meeting of state heads (IMTD, n.d.). Second, McDonald separated *Track Two* diplomacy into four different tracks: conflict resolution professionals, business, private citizens, and the media. Later, both expanded the track system to include a total of nine “tracks” by adding religion, activism, research, training, and education.



Source: *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*, by Dr Louise Diamond and Ambassador John McDonald, Kumarian Press 1996. Retrieved from IMTD (Institute for Multitrack Diplomacy)

Diamond and McDonald did not want to order the tracks by order of hierarchy as they believed that each has its own resources and approaches, and that, rather than being separate and isolated forms of carrying out diplomacy, they work best when they are implemented in coordination with one another (IMTD, n.d).

2.3 Defining conflict

It is common to understand conflict as a mere clash between two parties. In reality, “the origins, processes, outcomes, and consequences of the conflict are deeper and longer-lasting than a simple collision” (Reimer et al., 2015, p.1). An additional assumption is that the outcome of a conflict must be one party winning and the other losing, which creates cycles of violence that stagnate conflicts. Conflict is understood as a disagreement whereby two or more parties in a given situation perceive that their needs and interests are threatened (Reimer et al., 2015, p. 3). Sources of conflict are usually not straightforward but can be made complex by history, culture, and identities.

These disputes can take place on multiple levels of society and on a local, regional, national, or global scale.

International humanitarian law differentiates armed conflicts into two groups: international armed conflicts – which oppose two or more States –, and non-international armed conflicts which are waged between governmental forces and/or non-governmental armed groups (International Committee of the Red Cross, n.d). State-based conflicts are divided into four sub-categories. The first category, *inter-state conflicts*, aligns with the differentiation made by international humanitarian law as it involves the confrontation between states. The second category deals with *intra-state conflicts*, which occur between the government of a state and internal opposing groups. Examples of these include civil wars and secessionist conflicts. The third differentiation, named *internationalised intra-state*, occurs once again between the government of a state and internal opposition groups, but with the intervention of international troops. The last category can be attributed to *extra-state* conflicts that involve a state recognised by the international system and a political entity which is not (e.g.: colonial conflicts). (Gil, 2020).

For the purpose of this dissertation, it is important to point out that the conflict in Mozambique began as an *extra-state* conflict, as it involved the Portuguese as colonial powers. However, once Mozambique became independent, the conflict evolved to become *intra-state*, as it involved various internal opposition groups. The reasons and specificities behind this conflict will be discussed in more depth in the subsequent sections.

2.4 Conflict resolution

Managing international conflicts through peaceful means has become a central concern of the international agenda. Conflict resolution (or dispute resolution) is one of the mechanisms available for peacebuilding. Nnaemeka (2019, p.18) conceptualises this term as the “process of bringing disputes to an end and removing the identified causes or triggers of conflicts and their forms of expression”. This process aims to achieve peace by reaching an understanding between the parties of the dispute. According to Nnaemeka (2019), peace is understood as a state of harmony and conciliation at all

levels, and where political conditions allow for social stability through functioning institutions.

The study of conflict resolution began in the 1950s-1960s, at the height of the Cold War when the conflict between the superpowers and the menace of nuclear weapons had reached a threatening point for society (Ramsbotham et al. 2016). A group of scholars from Europe and North America began studying conflict resolution as a phenomenon and institutions specialised in this field were created. By the 1980s, the ideas that stemmed from these studies were starting to be applied in conflicts such as the Apartheid in South Africa, the Middle East, and Northern Ireland.

In the practice of dispute resolution, the process heavily relies on the identification of the grassroots causes and the style of the dispute. As a differentiating element between conflict management and conflict resolution, the latter seeks the reduction, elimination, or termination of conflict (Reimer et al., 2015, p. 3). According to Reimer et al. (2015, p.10), a conflict is considered to be over “when the immediate issue, or conflict, is resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved”.

Methods of conflict resolution include proactive and reactive approaches. Proactive initiatives seek to prevent the emergence of conflict through the practice of good governance, inter-party collaboration, and trust and confidence-building (Nnaemeka, 2019). Reactive approaches, on the other hand, are concerned with addressing conflict situations through different techniques such as mediation, negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, and litigation. For the purpose of this dissertation, only negotiation and mediation will be discussed.

According to Carnevale & Pruitt (1992), the negotiation process entails the discussion between the parties of a conflict with the aim of coming to an agreement. Both parties acknowledge that a problem exists and that, by opening channels of communication, it is possible to reach an understanding that will resolve the dispute (Best, 2006). The benefits of reaching a solution are also understood to be better than remaining deadlocked. Mediation on the other hand is a variation of negotiation that involves the intervention of a third party. This mediator is considered to be neutral and is in charge of managing the interaction, helping the parties to reconcile their differences

and reach an agreement (Nnaemeka, 2019). The third party in mediation may be an individual, organisation, or country that is not a direct party to the conflict.

Another characteristic of mediation is that it is a voluntary process, which means that the disputants decide whether they accept or reject the offer of mediation and if they consent to the outcome of the process (Bercovitch & Lee, 2003). This relates to the level of success of the process, as depending on the willingness of the disputants to accept the mediation and its outcome will impact the result. In addition to this, it is important to mention that the final decisions of the mediator are non-binding (Bercovitch & Lee, 2003). This characteristic distinguishes mediation from other forms of dispute settlements such as arbitration. As previously implied, the desire of the parties to resolve the dispute is crucial to the success of the process.

With the development of the field of mediation, it was acknowledged that its success also depended on the ability to involve official actors. This was demonstrated by the object of this thesis, the Community of Sant 'Egidio. They managed to involve countries of interest and the United Nations in the settlement of the negotiations for peace in Mozambique.

2.5 Peacebuilding

Conflicts are natural in society, and while they may erupt into violence at times, they can also lead to positive changes. A significant percentage of the countries that have received assistance fall back into conflict within five years (Pintor, 2022). In order to avoid this from happening and end the cycle of violence, it is necessary to transform society and strengthen its capacities to manage disputes in a non-violent way. The Secretary-General's Policy Commission of the United Nations (2010, p.5) has defined peacebuilding as "a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development".

One of the dimensions of peacebuilding is to create stability in societies to discourage people from engaging in violence. This can be achieved through peacekeeping programmes to avoid conflicts, reintegration programmes and disarmament. After stability has been established, it is necessary to restore key

functions of state institutions so that they can offer basic public goods and services, e.g.: infrastructures. The objective is to establish democratic, transparent, and accountable institutions. In order to maintain this stable working environment, it is essential to help the post-conflict society to deal with conflict peacefully. Actions designed to achieve this include reconciliation programmes, transitional justice actions, and counselling among many others. (Pintor, 2022)

Building trust is an integral part of peacebuilding. Violence arises when there is a widespread mistrust that emanates from a sense of insecurity. For this reason, rebuilding trust in society, the government and its institutions is a core element of peacebuilding (Pintor, 2022). In addition to this, it is important to note that the process of building peace must be inclusive and ensure that all social groups are involved. This is crucial so that there is a shared sense of ownership and responsibility for the reconciliation of society (Interpeace, 2018). Peacebuilding aims at bringing different actors of society together to rebuild a country and create a better alignment of national policymaking, external assistance, and local priorities.

For peacebuilding to be truly effective, it must be understood that it is a long-term process. Transforming society requires considerable time and dedication, therefore, personal, and financial investments must be constant and consistent. Moreover, the process by which this lasting peace is built will influence the overall outcome of the peacebuilding process (Interpeace, 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

A core part of this research has been based on the examination and analysis of primary resources. Academic sources in the form of journals, papers, and reviews on the issues of interest were gathered to set the groundwork for the dissertation. For this phase of the investigation, consulting digital libraries such as JSTOR, Dialnet and Research Gate, as well as the digital repository of Universidad Pontificia de Comillas was found to be extremely useful.

One of the objectives of this dissertation is to assess the role of religious organisations in conflict resolution. To carry out this assessment, *Case Study Methodology* proved to be the most appropriate method. This is a qualitative approach that “facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544). *Case Study Methodology* was chosen because it allowed for the question of research to be well explored. As mentioned in the previous section, one of the theories to be applied throughout the dissertation is constructivism. For this reason, the constructivist approach of this type of methodology developed by Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) was used. This allows for an in-depth assessment of the data within a specific context.

In most cases, this method is used to study a particular geographical area. In the context of this research, Mozambique has been selected as the case study because of the author’s interest in its historical background and the nature of the conflict. With this geographical framework in place, a detailed contextual analysis of events and conditions that fuelled the conflict has been carried out. The results of this analysis have been contrasted with the objectives of the dissertation of evaluating the effectiveness of religious organisations, namely the Community of Sant ‘Egidio, as mediating powers in conflict resolution.

Tying back to the constructivist perspective of this dissertation, it is important to mention that the evaluation of the success of the actions taken by religious organisations to advance the conflict in Mozambique is subject to interpretation. It can be established, in general terms, whether the implications of the Community of Sant ‘Egidio had positive impacts on the status of the conflict. However, the extent of this

success depends on what the examiner believes to be positive progress.

The time frame for the analysis of the dissertation was set from the beginning of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique - to ascertain the causes of the conflict – up to the end of the involvement of the Community of Sant 'Egidio in Mozambique.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONFLICT

5.1 Portuguese colonisation and struggle for independence

Mozambique is a country located in southeast Africa that was colonised by Portugal in the 16th century with the arrival of Pedro de Covilha³ and Vasco de Gama⁴. From the time of their arrival, the Portuguese came into conflict with the Arabs, that had established themselves in the territory, and the Swahili. Colonisation began in the coastal areas of Mozambique, and as they drew Arabs out of the region and exerted limited control on the Swahilis, the Portuguese progressively penetrated the territory (Rocha, 1993). As they intensified the rule over the territory they brought about the disintegration of the Zimbabwean Empire of Monomotapa, which occupied part of modern-day Mozambique – this led to the creation of new political units dominated by a class of Portuguese traders that established themselves as landowners by buying or conquering land (Rocha, 1993). These properties became known as *crown lands*, considered by many historians as the first form of Portuguese colonisation in Mozambique (Rocha, 1993). The economic sustenance of Portuguese colonialism during these years was mainly based on the trade of gold and ivory. Towards the mid-18th century, the trade of these resources began to be surpassed by slave trade. This practice persisted clandestinely until the early 20th century (Rocha, 1993).

Emerson (2014) considered the Portuguese colonisation of Mozambique to be both a blessing and a curse for Lisbon. On the one hand, they were able to exploit natural resources for the benefit of Portugal's economy and create new markets for national businesses. On the other hand, Portugal was faced with various colonial wars that would result in the debilitation of the country and its isolation from the international community (Emerson, 2014). Despite reaching a state of relative peace in terms of colonial resistance at the beginning of the 20th century, Portugal later realised that the reality of the situation with its colony was not as 'ideal' as expected. African nationalism was still very present in Mozambican society, which led to sporadic outbreaks of violence (Rocha, 1993). This sentiment of nationalism grew with the process of

³ Portuguese diplomat and explorer.

⁴ Portuguese explorer known for being the first European to reach India by sea.

decolonisation that began in Africa in the mid-1950s.

Calls for independence intensified during the beginning of the 1960s and anti-colonial political groups such as the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) or FRELIMO emerged. FRELIMO began an armed struggle in 1964, liberating several areas from Portuguese rule. In these areas, they developed a model of political organisation which was based on democratic centralism (Bouene, 2005). This marked the beginning of the liberation war in Mozambique. Despite Portugal's attempts to hold on to Mozambique, the colonial power was already severely weakened by its various colonial confrontations around Africa. The peace talks that began between FRELIMO and Portugal in June 1974 culminated with the signature of the Lusaka Accord in September of that same year (Emerson, 2014). Mozambique officially declared its independence in June 1975.

5.2 The newly independent Mozambique

With the independence of Mozambique, the victorious FRELIMO was faced with a difficult national and international environment. The presence of the superpowers in African territory and the newly Marxist-led government of Mozambique fuelled competition between the Soviet Union and the U.S in the territory. On the national level, the leaders of FRELIMO were forced to face the challenge of uniting a “highly diverse country, reforming a post-colonial economy and building the new society that they envisioned” (Emerson, 2014, p. 23).

The government attempted to put into practice the model of organisation they adopted during the liberation struggle but encountered a lack of support from society (Bouene, 2005). The transformation that FRELIMO hoped for was based on the transformation of society into nationalisation of colonial power structures, an agriculture-based economy, and the replacement of traditional values (Bouene, 2005). The actions undertaken by the government resulted to be detrimental to the general environment of the country. According to Rocha (1993) the economic model imposed made the creation of wealth impossible and hampered development – this is a result of the lack of knowledge about the country's reality and the failure to take into account the inherited colonial structures. These structures were developed by the Portuguese in

efforts to counter regionalism and tribalism and build a unified national identity.

Another major obstacle for the FRELIMO government was the lack of support throughout the country, and within the party itself, of the elements of the Marxist project. As a revolutionary Marxist party, many local leaders were expelled and removed from positions of power and dissidents were imprisoned in re-education camps (Bouene, 2005). Internal pressures in Mozambique grew as a result of people's discontent towards the government. As Bouene (2005) explains, these growing tensions led to the emergence of anti-communist insurgent forces which were grouped under the umbrella of the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO). Once the right conditions prevailed, civil war broke out in 1977 between the FRELIMO government and the RENAMO, which lasted sixteen years.

5.3 Civil War: a confrontation between FRELIMO and RENAMO

During the war both sides used brutal tactics. RENAMO however, targeted economic assets, schools, hospital, roads, and everything that represented the Mozambican state. Communities were severely punished, people were abused, kidnapped, raped, and killed. The objective of these actions was to make it appear that the FRELIMO government was incapable of providing Mozambicans with security (Momodu, 2018). The war dragged on into the 1980s and FRELIMO lost control of most of the territory but maintained control in urban areas. Both FRELIMO and RENAMO received support from the international community. As previously mentioned, the rivalries of the Cold War were still very much alive in Africa, and the Mozambican civil war was no exception. FRELIMO received support and assistance from the Soviet Union, France, and the United Kingdom; RENAMO received support from South Africa, Kenya and, covertly, the United States (Momodu, 2018).

By the beginning of 1990, neither FRELIMO nor RENAMO appeared to be winning the war. The changing international environment progressively led to a transformation in the situation in Mozambique. With the fall of the Soviet Union, both parties had lost major supporters, and so FRELIMO and RENAMO held their first direct talks (Momodu, 2018). With the adoption of the new constitution in 1990, FRELIMO left aside its political references too Marxism-Leninism and embraced a new political model of democratic

socialism. in addition, this new constitution made of Mozambique a multi-party state with regular elections and democratic rights (Momdou, 2018). The organisation of the State also underwent profound changes and market economy took over the initial scheme of nationalisation (Bouene, 2005). There is also an attempt of reconciliation with many groups of society such as religious groups, businessmen, and peasants, who suffered the most difficulties since the independence of Mozambique (Bouene, 2005).

In 1992, with the assistance of the Community of Sant 'Egidio during the negotiation process and the support of United Nations, the Rome General Peace Accords were signed between Joaquim Chissano, President of Mozambique⁵, and RENAMO (Momdou, 2018).

⁵ He is considered one of the founding fathers of FRELIMO and played a major role in the Lusaka Accords, which led to the Independence of Mozambique from Portuguese colonial rule.

5. RELIGION IN MOZAMBIQUE

In the words of Samuel Huntington (1997), religion is the “central defining element of a civilisation”. Religion in Mozambique has been a double-edged sword, exacerbating tensions during the Civil War, but also serving to bring about a peace agreement.

Religion has been present in Mozambique before the arrival of Portuguese Christian missionaries. According to Chingono (2014, p.32), “African traditional religions often constituted a very important force in society”. Matters related to education, culture, economy, politics, and war were strongly influenced by religious beliefs and authorities (Chingono, 2014). For example, spirit mediums organised the attacks against the Portuguese during the Shona uprisings of 1886. These spiritual mediums continued to exercise their influence in the various revolts that took place during the 20th century (Ranger, 1986).

Besides using religion for anti-colonialist purposes, traditional religion was also used as a tool of cooperation with the colonial state. As explained by Chingono (2014), the Portuguese, attempting to enhance the reputation and legitimacy of the colonial government, sought to support and participate in traditional rituals of succession. This became known as the ‘Africanisation of European institutions’ (Isaacman, 1972). During this colonial period however, the official religion was Catholicism, which was also used to enhance legitimacy of the colonial rule. Christianity had arrived in the country with the first missionaries of the sixteenth century with the pretext of instilling Western values to drive Africans away from tribalism and barbarity.

Mozambique is characterised by its ethnic and religious diversity. When Vasco de Gama arrived on the shores of the country, he was not only confronted with the power of traditional religions, but also with Islam. Mozambique had already been well permeated by Islam by the time of the Portuguese arrival. The region which was the most influenced by Islam was the northern part of the territory, and thus, the colonial government found the most opposition and where they failed to penetrate as deep into the territory as in other places.

6.1 The consequences of FRELIMO's religious repression

After the independence of Mozambique and during the transition period, FRELIMO considered religion to be “an obscurantist manifestation that served to deceive, trick and divide the people” (Machele, 2019, p. 331). Religion was incompatible with the political plan of the party and their idea of how the future was to look like for Mozambique. Their socialist programme was not looking to accommodate religion and therefore suppressed all kinds of religious and spiritual manifestations. Christian worshippers were persecuted and sent to detention camps, the Muslim community was also suppressed and their interventions in the social and economic sector were limited (Machele, 2019).

Repression of religion was part of the development strategies of FRELIMO, however they translated into the opposite of what they had expected. Suppressing religion in a historically religious society led to the resurgence of religious revivalism and fuelled the war (Chingono, 2014). Furthermore, FRELIMO unintentionally helped RENAMO recruit supporters. RENAMO used religion to their advantage to mobilise society as they bonded with tradition and religious leaders. They claimed they were fighting for religious freedom, which drove many religious followers to identify sacred places with RENAMO (Machele, 2019). In addition, they used religious symbols of Christianity in their combats and encouraged people to attend sermons and masses (Machele, 2019). Because of the policies followed by FRELIMO, RENAMO became known as the liberator of religious communities in Mozambique.

As Chingono (2014) explains, religion in Mozambique served as a form of justification and legitimacy once again. Religion and war mutually reinforced each other: war was a means of ending repression of religious communities, and religious leaders were empowered through war (Chingono, 2014). For these reasons, religious activism re-emerged during the Mozambican civil war – many people understood religion as a means to survive as they found in it an escape mechanism (Chingono, 2014).

6. THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

“The promotion of interreligious dialogue is an area of coincidence with diplomacy, which diplomacy can and should encourage for the achievement of an objective shared with religions, which is peace and world stability. Diplomacy and religion can and should work together, safeguarding their different realities, without impositions or manipulations”

Álvaro Albacete Perea,

Centro Superior de Estudios de la Defensa (2017)

As mentioned throughout the dissertation, traditional channels of diplomacy have been superseded and complimented by other actors. Faith-based diplomacy is a form of *Track II diplomacy* in the ‘Track One, Track Two’ paradigm or Track 7 in *Multitrack Diplomacy*. Jacques Faget (2011) attributes the change in methods of diplomacy to the incapacity of United Nations and state diplomacy to ensure enduring peace among states. The role of religious organisations in actively promoting the official participation of religious leaders in international conferences, peace processes or post-conflict reconciliation programmes has been neglected for many years. However, nowadays the demand for collaboration between religion and diplomacy is a constant in international relations. This is based on the ability of religious organisation to influence their communities to achieve political and social objectives which are in line with religious values, such as the non-use of violence and toleration, and thus, contribute to the achievement of peace and security.

The dynamics of religion have proven to integrate smoothly in international relations because of their ability to “restore healthy and respectful relationships between the parties [in a conflict” (Johnston, 2003, p.15). Johnston (2003) continues to explain that the input of religious entities has proven to be very useful because, while they believe in a morally grounded international system, they are also aware of the need to be pragmatic in the process of reconciliation.

Oftentimes, state diplomacy is ill-equipped to deal with conflicts that emanate from social and religious issues. Faith-based approaches, according to Johnston (2003)

represent a more viable alternative to traditional approaches in protracted conflicts⁶. The intervention of religious authorities or organisations is sometimes crucial due to the moral authority they possess. Religious leaders can sometimes narrow the distance between faiths, promote dialogue between the parts in a conflict, and build relations based on trust, which as discussed, is essential for peacebuilding.

According to Johnston (2003) the actions of faith-based actors in conflict resolution are characterised by different attributes. The first characteristic is the dependency on spiritual principles. The idea of human dignity and common humanity for all is fundamental for true peace. This was derived from the notion that all human being were created by the Divine (Saperstein, 2013). Furthermore, the concepts of redemption and forgiveness, essential for post-conflict reconciliation, are central religious concepts. Religion and its values helps to rebuild society and trust among communities. The second characteristic is related to the moral and spiritual authority of faith-based organisations (Johnston, 2003). To be able to mediate in a conflict, the mediator must be recognised and hold legitimacy from both parties. This recognition comes either from their religious beliefs, or the trust and reputation that the mediator has built. The third characteristic is the understanding and respect of faith-diplomats towards other religions or traditions. Religious actors do not seek to resolve conflicts by belittling beliefs, but by finding common grounds and appealing to values that can help to advance peace. The fourth quality relates to the motivations they have to become mediators in conflicts. They tend to be very neutral because they understand that the help they provide is a religious calling (Johnston, 2003).

Religion can also contribute to conflict prevention, resolution, and peace-making because of their implications in local communities. Religious organisations are important actors in local communities and institutions and represent values that transcend conflicts. In times of crisis, religious organisations are among the most stable entities capable of assuming the role as mediators (Saperstein, 2013). Religious entities are very implicated in peace education initiatives, which help to create stable conditions that avoid conflicts from flourishing (Saperstein, 2013). In some countries, they are

⁶ A protracted conflict is a complex, severe, and enduring dispute.

implicated from grassroots levels to up to institutions.

As we have seen, religious actors have the power to give a fresh perspective on conflict resolution. The neutrality they provide, altruistic goals based on faith and solidarity, and their understanding of local communities make these actors an ideal mediator in conflicts that seem to be unresolvable. The next section will provide an example of the impact that religious organisations can have on peace talks by examining the role of the Community of Sant 'Egidio in Mozambique.

7. THE ROLE OF SANT 'EGIDIO IN MOZAMBIQUE

As has been mentioned throughout this dissertation, tensions, and violence during the civil war in Mozambique had reached a point in the 1990s that neither side seemed likely to emerge victorious. Peace talks began in this decade with the assistance of the Community of Sant 'Egidio, culminating in the Rome General Peace Accords, which ended hostilities between FRELIMO and RENAMO.

8.1 The Community of Sant 'Egidio

The Community of Sant' Egidio is a lay Catholic association dedicated to social service. It was born in Rome in 1968, in the light of the Second Vatican Council. Andrea Riccardi, the founder of Sant 'Egidio, gathered a group of students and founded a Christian community dedicated to teaching poor children in the outskirts of Rome (Gastrow, 1995). In 1973 acquired its headquarters in the church of Sant 'Egidio in Trastevere, Rome. From that point on, the association spread to other cities in Italy and across Europe, Africa, America, and Asia. In 2019, Pope Francis appointed Matteo Zuppi, a member of Sant 'Egidio and Archbishop of Bologna, to cardinalate.

The Community of Sant 'Egidio has been involved in various peace negotiations that turned out to be very successful. Their most significant achievement has been used in this dissertation as a case study: the Peace Agreement for Mozambique. *The Washington Post* (2004, p.9) described the Community of Sant 'Egidio as “one of the most influential conflict resolution groups in the world”.

The Community of Sant 'Egidio began taking interest in countries denominated the *periphery* of the world, where violence and poverty delayed development and government failed to provide a state of security and peace. In the early 1980s, Sant 'Egidio begins to work on some geopolitical issues, wars, and conflicts in areas affected by natural disasters. They first begin by sending humanitarian aid and then evolve to assist government and factions as mediators.

Sant 'Egidio has always believed religion to be a force for peace and thus, has been organising annual inter-religious meetings between the main representatives of world religions

8.2 Peace Talks in Rome

Peace talks in Rome began after FRELIMO and RENAMO came to the realisation that neither would achieve the military objectives they had set, and their objectives would be better reached through political negotiations. After unsuccessful efforts from the international community in advancing the conflict in Mozambique, Jaime Gonçalves, Archbishop of Beira (Mozambique), brought the problem to the Community of Sant 'Egidio with the hope that they might bring the government of FRELIMO together with RENAMO to talk about resolving the conflict. The idea of bringing the two sides together at the Sant 'Egidio headquarters in Rome began to take shape.

The Community of Sant 'Egidio played a major role in creating the ideal physical conditions for holding the talks (Branco, 2011). In addition to inviting both parties and hosting the meeting in its headquarters, it also ensured that they had the necessary logistical and financial support from the Italian government (Branco, 2011). Sant 'Egidio was successful in its efforts because both RENAMO and the FRELIMO government perceived the Community to be neutral and have compassion towards the cause. They both understood that Sant 'Egidio did not have any political or economic agenda as a mediator.

The peace agreement is signed the 4th of October 1992 establishing peace and democracy in Mozambique. The first elections were held that same month after which FRELIMO resulted victorious. These elections marked the beginning of the democratic functioning in the country. Following the successful conclusion of the peace negotiations, United Nations assumed responsibility of the implementation of the peace agreement. This is an important factor because, as mentioned before, *Track II* efforts need of official actors to back the advancements made in the negotiations. The mediation offered by Sant 'Egidio illustrates the power and utility of religious organisations in conflict resolution. Organisations with relevant expertise can be extremely useful in conflicts similar to Mozambique. Both parts assumed that there was the need to reach a peaceful setting and they both trusted Sant 'Egidio to guide those negotiations (Haynes, 2011). To be able to bring to parties such as the government of FRELIMO and RENAMO, which were entangled in years of violent conflict, it a great achievement for *Track III* diplomacy.

8. CONCLUSION

As seen throughout the dissertation, *Track II diplomacy* has become a very useful alternative for conflict resolution. Track 7 organisations, meaning faith-based groups, have proved to be an asset in processes of negotiations. Because of their understandings and empathy towards different social groups, they make a useful mediator in conflicts that seem intractable. For a mediation to be successful, it must begin with the trust of both parties towards the mediator and the understanding that this is the best solution to achieve peace.

Religious organisations in the case of Mozambique resulted ideal as religion played a very important role in the history and legacy of the country. The war in Mozambique had religious connotations, therefore it could be considered a very positive step that both the FRELIMO government and RENAMO trusted the Community of Sant 'Egidio as a mediator for their talks. As mentioned, these talks culminated in the signing of the Peace Accords in Rome in 1992, and the country managed to conduct democratic general elections. Despite these advancements, the situation in Mozambique as of today has not improved. In October 2013, RENAMO forces declared the annulment of the Peace Accords and were returning back to the situation at which they were during the civil war. This was justified after the government forces attacked RENAMO's base. (News24, 2013).

Despite the violent situation in which Mozambique is now involved, this must not hinder the efforts made by the Community of Sant 'Egidio. They did achieve peace in Mozambique for over 20 years. They also managed for United Nations to back their negotiations – a crucial step in *Track II diplomacy*. This case comes to show that, however little or big the advancements of religious organisations are in resolving a conflict, this type of diplomacy must be fostered in order to achieve advancements in many conflicts worldwide which seem to not have an end.

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