

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The main aim of this chapter is to bring a general conclusions and suggestions concerning the Roles of the United Nations and the Sultanate of Oman in the Yemeni conflict from 2011 until 2024. The chapter begins by summarizing the main Roles played by the United Nations as a core institutional mediator in the Yemeni conflict, highlighting the main strategies that we found in our data analysis and other previous studies. Then, the chapter concludes the Roles and strategies played by the Sultanate of Oman, as a neutral mediator and a negotiation facilitator. Next, it is an essential to mention how these roles and strategies, if they fit with the international mediation roles and strategies, be implemented in various interactable conflicts. Finally, a after the main points have been summed up and recommended for implementation, the chapter, provides, based on the data analyses and the findings, critical suggestions that might be utilized by negotiators and/or mediators in dealing with conflict reconciliation.

5.1 Conclusions

The study has attempted to reveal, critically and academically, the contribution of two international actors in mediating the Yemeni conflict, namely the roles played by the Sultanate of Oman and the United Nations. The concluding remarks are drawn based on the two-study problem; the first is related with the how the United Nations mediate the Yemeni conflict since 2011 until 2024 with the aim to highlight the strategies utilized by its special envoys to Yemen and the reasons behind the persistence failure of some agreements and talks that took

place in different contexts and venues. The second is related with the Role and strategies played by the Sultanate of Oman.

Regarding the role played by the United Nations, our findings conclude that the mediation Role played by the United Nation is essential in resolving the Yemeni conflict. Utilizing its interest-based approached, the UN's contribution in resolving the conflict began from the first stages in 2012 by appointing the Special Envoy Jamal ben Omar to carry out the UN mandate to mediate the peaceful transition of Power from the former president Ali Abdullah Saleh to his Vice President Abdo Rabu Mansur Hadi. His effort, as a special envoy, was to supervise the transition initiated by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and supervise the implementation of the United Nations resolution concerning the transition.

When the United Nations being involved through its special envoy, it brought hope to resolve the conflict in its early stages. However, this role did not achieve due to the lack of mechanism in implementing the outcomes of the signed agreements, including the NDC's outcomes, which was the ultimate motivator for the persistence conflict. In other words, the UN envoy did not 'ripen' (Peck, 1988, p. 415) the situation at the beginning by bringing the Houthis as well as the civil society into the process.

Our findings also concluded that, dealing with pre-conditions is essential in the mediation process. The UN envoys, to some extent, did not consider this strategy from the first stages of the conflict. For example, instead of withdraw the

heavy weapons from the Houthis that they capture during their insurgent of the Yemeni capital Sana'a in 2015, the Peace Partnership agreement, supervised by the UN envoy, legalized the Houthis to be involved in more intensive military actions against the legitimate government until they capture most of the Yemeni governorates.

One of the study's interesting findings is the utilization of the international support. This strategy started to be implanted at the mediation of Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, where he was able to garner the international support to cope with the international intervention in the Yemeni conflict, like Iran and Saudi Arabia, as two proxy wars, by asking the involvement of the Sultanate of Oman, as it remained neutral country during the conflict and a friend with all conflicting parties, local (the warring parties in Yemen), regional (UAE and Saudi Arabia), and international (Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the USA). Utilizing this strategy, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed was able to convince the warring parties to move the talks to another avenue, namely Geneva, and later in Kuwait.

Bargaining (Peck, 1988), intransigence, and procrastination are strategies used by the warring parties during the negotiation process to achieve political goals. To illustrate that, when the Houthis were in their first stages of their military power, they were marginalized to be included in the negotiation talks took place in Saudi Arabia in 2012, known as the GCC initiative. However, when the Houthis controlled the Capital, Sana'a and other governorates, they brought weight to the negotiation table. In other words, during the negotiation, each of the

warring parties try to achieve wins in the ground to conduct pressure on the other party in the negotiation table.

To tackle such challenges, the UN envoys for Yemen use Four strategies in their mediations and negotiations, namely facilitating, encouraging, persuading, and forgiving. These strategies, in addition to the three main strategies found in the literature, Communication-facilitation, Formulation, and Manipulation and their sub-strategies, the study found that utilizing these strategies without an international support might not promote a long-term reconciliation and peacebuilding.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel, the international dramatic moves started by the killing of the Saudi Journalist Jamal Khashoggi, in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, the inauguration of the new Democratic administration in the United States under the leadership of the president Joe Biden, and the Iran-Saudi conflict settlement mediated by China and Russia, has its direct and/or indirect effect on the Yemeni conflict. Hans Grandberg was lucky to seize the opportunity and initiate a renewable Truce in Yemen, deescalate the conflict, and relief the worst humanitarian crises in the world.

5.2 Contribution and Limitation

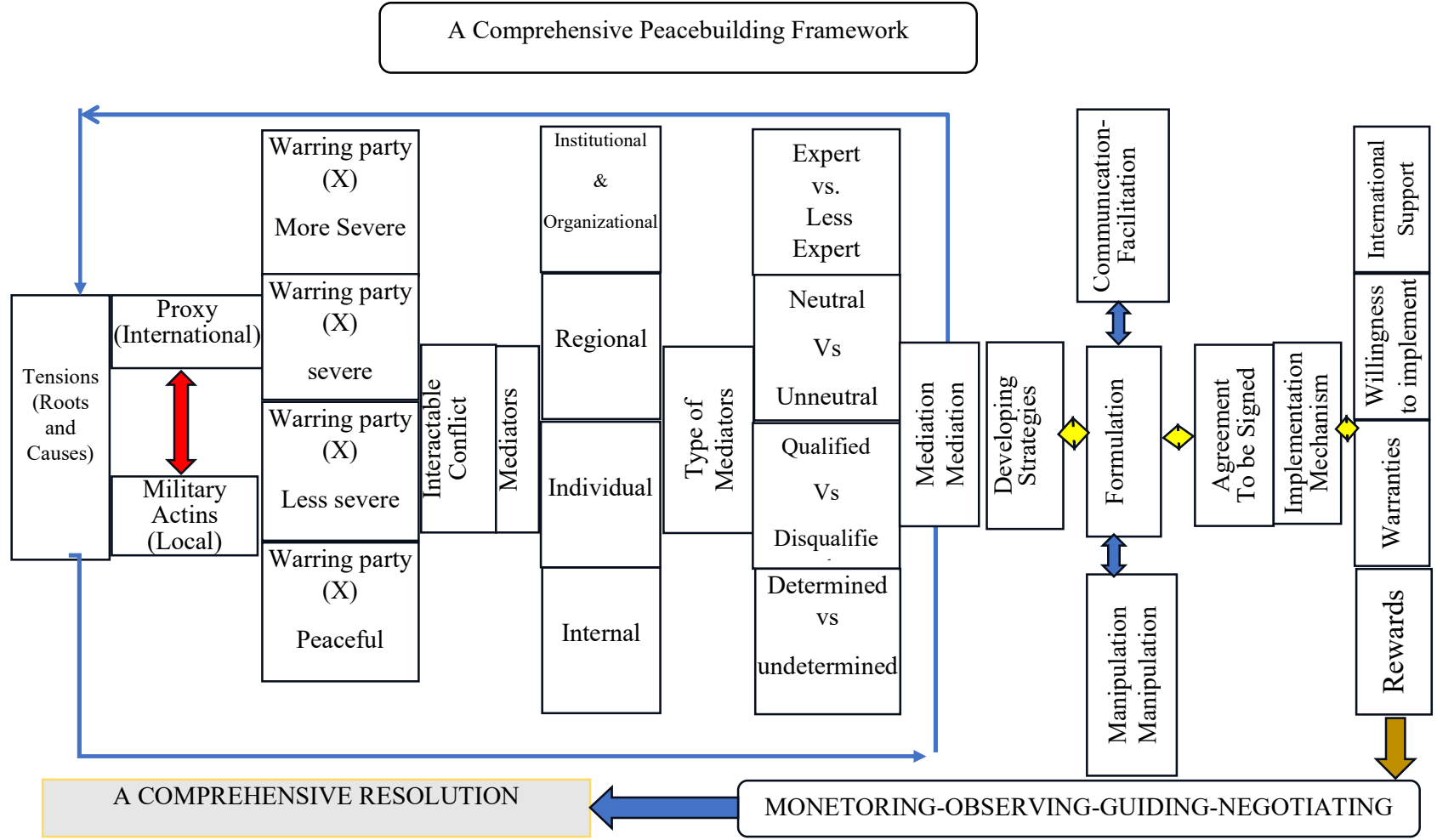
The findings as well as the recommendations of this study might be implemented in the field of International Relations (IR); peacebuilding (negotiations and mediations), and might be lessons for further talks and agreements.

To begin with, the study sees peacebuilding as a process, and in order to build this process a mediator (an individual or an organization/institution) must be equipped with strategies, based on theories or empirical cases, that fit the condition, situation, severity, and level of the conflict.

The findings of this study propose a framework (a model) that might be contribute in the literature of the International Relations in dealing with interactable disputes/conflicts. This framework acts as a base by which the mediator might be utilize to decode the roots and causes of a conflict in the Middles East and more specifically in Yemen. The components of the current framework were inspired from different sources, namely the findings of our data analysis in this study, the empirical studies that we used to support this study, as well as critical thoughts by observers and experts in the Yemeni politics; modified and improved to be within this framework.

Figure 5.1 presents the simplified peacebuilding framework which consists of several phases called the ‘processes of peacebuilding’. In this framework, for the mediators, *the first phase* is to consider and understand in-depth the roots and the causes of the conflict. Spending much time in this phase yields a compromise end.

Figure V.1 A Comprehensive Peacebuilding Framework



The second phase is the process of categorizing the warring parties based on the given categories of severity and their political, social, and economic demands. Since the categorization have been conducted, comes *the third phase*, by which the mediator discusses and decides who among the political actors is going to be involved in the process of mediation; the decision makers within the warring parties who can provide warranties for the mediator in case the mediation and the negotiation stalled or failed. *The fourth phase*, if the mediator is an organization/institution, taking the case of the United Nations, it is now that the Secretary-General who must choose his Special Envoy who has background about the political, social, and economic situation of the country or the parties of the conflict zone. The framework also categorizes eight-type mediators; experts vs. less experts, neutral vs. unneutral, qualified vs. disqualified, and determined vs. undetermined. *The fifth phase*, if the mediator has been chosen, it is his task to begin utilizing his abilities in fetching the conflict. The current framework suggests that the first act he has to do is to understand fully and comprehensively the roots and causes, severe or less severe, of the conflict. *The sixth phase*, if the roots and courses are clear for the mediator, is to set his mediation strategies (he may adapt available strategies or develop strategies that might fit the context and situation of the conflict). The framework recommends three main strategies, adopted from (Bercovitch et al., 2009, p. 351), namely Communication-facilitation, Formulation, and Manipulation. *The seventh phase*, if the agreement is signed by all the warring parties, the mediator might utilize different techniques to ensure the implementation of the outcomes. The framework provides some

alternatives, among these are the garner of international support, the willingness of the warring parties to implement the outcomes, seizing warranties from the warring parties, and finally providing rewards. *The eighth phase* is the mediator along with other observers follow closely the implementation through observation, monitoring, guiding, and negotiating if some issues might arise.

5.3 Recommendations

The study proposes two types of recommendations, namely theoretical and empirical. Theoretically, the study suggests that theories of international relation concerning intractable conflict, such as the Yemeni conflict, which is being described as complex by almost all the UN envoys, due to the complexities of the social structure and the tribes that shape most of the Yemeni politics. In addition, even though there is a huge amount of literature concerning the mediation and negotiation manuals, strategies of mediation and negotiation to reconcile intractable conflict, such as the Yemeni and Palestinian conflict are still inadequate.

Three of the UN envoys to Yemen are less experts in the Yemeni affairs and they have no sufficient knowledge about the structure of the Yemeni society and does it shape its politics. The United Nations should take into account that the special envoys to be sent to a conflict zone not only has a great deal of knowledge in the politics and conflict resolutions but also the special envoy has to have a full understanding of the roots and causes of the problem he/she is going to deal with.