

Beyond Rationality

The Addition of Emotions to Readiness Theory to Explain Duterte's Willingness to Engage in Peace Negotiations with the Communist Rebels in the Philippines



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Abstract

In this thesis, it is argued that Pruitt's readiness theory – an adaptation of ripeness theory – is valuable, but not sufficient to understand President Duterte's changes in willingness to negotiate with the communist rebels in the Philippines. The deductive phase of this research, using process-tracing, shows that the application of this analytical frame offers valuable insights into this case. However, when using a grounded theory approach in the inductive phase, new concepts emerge that challenge the framework's rational choice premises. A case is made to abandon the dichotomous interpretation of decision making as either rational or emotional, and to include non-rational components on the same "level" of the framework.

As a result, this research presents "mixed readiness theory," which includes the central non-rational component "attitudes." In the analysis of three distinct time periods in the GRP-CPP/NPA/NDF peace negotiations, the relevance and potential explanatory value of this concept is explored. In Time Period 1, it is argued that Duterte's initial willingness to negotiate was the result of positive attitudes towards the communist rebels. In Time Period 2, it is argued that Duterte's cancellation of the peace talks was due to the development of negative attitudes about communists and positive attitudes about the military. In Time Period 3, it is argued that Duterte's frequent changes in negotiating position were a symptom of attitude incompatibility and attitude ambivalence. This rendered Duterte susceptible to persuasion by the so-called doves and hawks in his cabinet, who prevailed upon attitude strength and attitude salience to influence his willingness to engage in peace negotiations.

Key words: ripeness theory, readiness theory, rational choice, emotions, attitudes, persuasion, peace negotiations, Philippines, Duterte, NDFP, GRP

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They say it takes a village

This saying never rang more true for me than when I was sitting in a hotel room in the Philippines, watching my once-empty schedule miraculously fill up with interviews and appointments; when transcribing interviews with people who hoped that the next time we spoke, I wouldn't be visiting *them* in prison; and as I interrupted my classmates to ask one of a million questions during the writing process. I'm grateful to everyone who contributed to this project.

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*“We express our willingness and readiness to go to the negotiating table,
and yet we load our guns, fix our sights, pull the trigger.”*

– Rodrigo Roa Duterte, State of the Nation Address, 25 July 2016

Map of the Republic of the Philippines



Source: CIA World Factbook.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
CARHRIHL	Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law
CASER	Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms
CNN	<u>C</u> PP/ <u>N</u> PA/ <u>N</u> DF
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CSO	Civil society organization
EH/DF	End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces
GPH	Government of the Philippines
GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
IC	International community
JASIG	Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees
MRT	Mixed readiness theory
NDFP / NDF	National Democratic Front of the Philippines
NPA	New People's Army
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
PCOO	Presidential Communications and Operations Office
PCR	Political and Constitutional Reforms
PNP	Philippine National Police
RNG	Royal Norwegian Government
RRT	Rational readiness theory
RWC / RWG	Reciprocal Working Committee / Reciprocal Working Group

List of Figures

Figure 2.1	Model of Pruitt's rational readiness theory, including definitions	18
Figure 2.2	Model of mixed readiness theory, including definitions	22
Figure 3.1	Organizational affiliation of respondents	31
Figure 4.1	Structure of the negotiations	38
Figure 6.1	Number of deaths in the GRP-CNN conflict, 2010-2018	56
Figure 8.1	Model of mixed readiness theory	82

Glossary

Concept	Definition
attitude	“A relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols” (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005, p. 150).
attitude – affective component	A relatively enduring organization of feelings and emotions towards an attitude object (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005).
attitude – cognitive component	A relatively enduring organization of beliefs and knowledge about an attitude object (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005).
attitude ambivalence	The simultaneous existence of a positive attitude and a negative attitude about the same attitude object (Wood, 2000).
attitude incompatibility	The simultaneous existence of attitudes about two different attitude objects that have opposing effects on behavior (Young & Fazio, 2013).
attitude object	The socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols that an attitude pertains to (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005).
attitude salience	The ease with which an attitude comes to mind (Rocklage & Fazio, 2017).
attitude strength	How resistant an attitude is to challenges and how durable it is over time (Petty & Krosnick, 1995).
attitude valence	The degree of positivity or negativity of an attitude (Bohner & Dickel, 2011).
motivation	A “motivation (that is, a goal) to end the conflict” through a negotiated peace deal (Pruitt, 2005b, p. 6).
optimism	“Some faith that the final agreement will satisfy one’s goals and aspirations without too much cost” (Pruitt, 2007, p. 1529).

Concept	Definition
perceived cost and risk	The perception of how costly the conflict is and the risks of remaining in the conflict (Pruitt, 2005b).
perceived progress and divergence of interest	The perception that an acceptable agreement is shaping up and the perceived distance between the two parties' positions (Pruitt, 2007, p. 1529).
perceived stalemate	A perception that "neither party can or will escalate the conflict further" (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986, p. 127) or "a perception that the conflict is not being won or that it is being lost" (Pruitt, 2005b, p. 7).
readiness	"Readiness is a characteristic of a single disputant that encourages movement toward or participation in negotiation" (Pruitt, 2014, p. 126).
ripeness	A particular moment in the course of a dispute, when "the (two) parties to a conflict (a) perceive themselves to be in a hurting stalemate and (b) perceive the possibility of a negotiated solution (a way out), the conflict is ripe for resolution (i.e., for negotiations toward resolution to begin)" (Zartman, 2000, pp. 228-229).
third-party pressure	Pressure exerted by powerful third parties to end the conflict, which can come from mediators, allies, or others (Pruitt, 2007).
valid leadership	"The perception that the negotiator on the other side can actually commit the other side to an agreement that will be endorsed back home" (Pruitt, 2005b, p. 8).
working trust	"A belief that the other party also wants to escape the conflict and has reasonable or flexible aspirations" (Pruitt, 2007, p. 1529).

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	12
1.1 Research Question.....	13
1.2 Contributions.....	13
1.3 Relevance.....	14
1.4 Outline.....	15
2. Readiness Theory	16
2.1 Rational Readiness Theory.....	16
2.1.1 Zartman’s Ripeness Theory.....	16
2.1.2 Pruitt’s Readiness Theory.....	17
2.1.3 Rational Choice Approach.....	19
2.2 Mixed Readiness Theory.....	19
2.2.1 Components of Attitudes.....	20
2.2.2 Dimensions of Attitudes.....	22
2.2.3 Dynamics of Attitudes.....	23
2.3 Conclusion.....	24
3. Methodology	25
3.1 Deductive Phase: Rational Readiness Theory.....	25
3.1.1 Analysis Selection: Theory-Testing Process-Tracing.....	25
3.1.2 Case Selection: GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations Under Duterte.....	26
3.1.3 Relevant Empirical Evidence.....	27
3.2 Inductive Phase: Mixed Readiness Theory.....	27
3.2.1 Analysis Selection: Grounded Theory.....	27
3.2.2 Relevant Empirical Evidence.....	28
3.3 Data Collection Methods.....	29
3.3.1 Chronology and Selection of Key Events.....	29
3.3.2 Interviews.....	29
3.3.3 Documents.....	31
3.4 Limitations.....	31
3.5 Conclusion.....	32
4. Chronology	34
4.1 Context.....	34
4.1.1 History of the Peace Negotiations.....	34
4.1.2 Actors, Objectives, and Structures.....	35
4.2 Time Period 1 – Start of Negotiations.....	37
4.3 Time Period 2 – Collapse of Negotiations.....	39

4.4 Time Period 3 – Repeated Initiation and Collapse	40
4.5 Conclusion.....	41
5. Time Period 1 – Start of Negotiations.....	42
5.1 Rational Readiness Theory.....	42
5.1.1 Motivation.....	43
5.1.2 Optimism.....	45
5.2 Mixed Readiness Theory	48
5.2.1 Positive Attitudes About CNN: Affective Component	48
5.2.2 Positive Attitudes about CNN: Cognitive Component.....	49
5.3 Conclusion.....	52
6. Time Period 2 – Collapse of Negotiations.....	53
6.1 Rational Readiness Theory.....	53
6.1.1 Motivation.....	54
6.1.2 Optimism.....	57
6.2 Mixed Readiness Theory	60
6.2.1 Negative Attitudes About CNN	61
6.2.2 Positive Attitudes About AFP/PNP.....	62
6.3 Conclusion.....	65
7. Time Period 3 – Repeated Initiation and Collapse.....	66
7.1 Rational Readiness Theory.....	67
7.2 Mixed Readiness Theory	68
7.2.1 Attitudes About CNN and AFP/PNP	68
7.2.2 Attitude Ambivalence.....	70
7.2.3 Attitude Incompatibility.....	71
7.2.4 Attitude Dynamics.....	72
7.2.5 Doves and Hawks.....	74
7.3 Conclusion.....	79
8. Conclusion: Emotions in Readiness Theory	80
8.1 Mixed Readiness Theory	80
8.2 Limitations and Future Research	81
8.3 Relevance.....	83
Bibliography.....	84
Annex 1 – List of Interviews.....	97
Annex 2 – Event Catalogue	99
Annex 3 – Topic Guide.....	102

1. Introduction

Rodrigo Duterte is not your typical politician. In his career, the President of the Philippines proudly compared himself to Adolf Hitler, saying he would “slaughter” three million drug users, called President Obama and Pope Francis “sons of bitches,” boasted he would ride a jet ski holding the Philippine flag to claim contested islands in the South China Sea, and said an Australian missionary’s rape and murder angered him “because she was so beautiful and the mayor [Duterte] should have been first” (BBC, 2019; Goldman, 2016). His controversial statements and policies have earned him such nicknames as “the Punisher” and “Duterte Harry.”¹ One of his lesser known labels, however, is “peace advocate.”

One of Duterte’s campaign promises was to forge a peace deal to end the communist rebellion that has plagued the Philippines for 50 years (Sabillo, 2016a). This was surprising, as it was not a major electoral issue before Duterte brought it up, and because previous administrations engaged in largely unsuccessful negotiations with the communists (ICG, 2011; OPAPP, 2016). Once elected, the rebels – also known as CNN² – were excited by Duterte’s initial approach of goodwill and early concessions. In unprecedented fashion, the newly minted president released top communist commanders from prison, made encouraging and conciliatory statements, and appointed left-leaning individuals to key positions in his cabinet (Mogato, 2016). He even encouraged the Philippine military – sworn enemies of the communists – to be “friendly” with the rebels (Fonbuena, 2017c). These moves were a source of great optimism to those who hoped for an end to the conflict which has claimed tens of thousands of lives (ICG, 2011).

Unfortunately, three years in, it seems less and less likely that the two parties will find a way to settle their dispute. After his martial law declaration on Mindanao was met with intensified attacks by the CNN, Duterte terminated the peace talks in May 2017 (Davao Today, 2017; OPAPP, 2017). Repeated attempts were made to restart the negotiations, none of them successful. All in all, Duterte changed his negotiating position no fewer than eight times, repeatedly (re)scheduling and canceling the fourth and fifth rounds of formal talks (Davao Today, 2017; Fonbuena, 2017c). Meanwhile, discourse by the adversaries has grown increasingly hostile – Duterte’s threats ranging from “I will slap you” to using rockets to “flatten the hills” regardless of collateral damage (CNN Philippines, 2018; PCOO, 2017a) – and progress on substantive

¹ Duterte Harry is a reference to the iconic film character “Dirty Harry,” a ruthless but effective police inspector portrayed by Clint Eastwood in 1981 (Holmes, 2016).

² The communist movement in the Philippines consists of three inter-dependent organizations: a military wing named the New People’s Army (NPA); a strategic wing named the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP); and a political wing named the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP or NDF). Collectively, they are known as the CPP/NPA/NDF or simply CNN. Please note that whenever the phrase “CNN Philippines” is used, this refers to the news station.

agreements has come to a virtual standstill. These developments have left onlookers with one central question: How can we explain Duterte's changes in negotiating position?

1.1 Research Question

This question is best answered using readiness theory, which attempts to explain why leaders are willing to engage in peace negotiations. Readiness stems from two core components: motivation to end the conflict and optimism about the outcome of the negotiations (Pruitt, 2005b). As it is exactly Duterte's motivation and optimism – and the frequent changes therein – that are puzzling in this case, this study will approach the case using readiness components as its analytical framework. As such, the research question guiding this thesis is:

How have motivation and optimism facilitated or impeded the willingness to negotiate of the GRP³ with the CPP/NPA/NDF since Rodrigo Duterte was elected President of the Philippines in mid-2016?

This research seeks to fulfil two objectives. The first objective is to provide evidence for or against a newly synthesized model of readiness theory. To this end, a chronology of the many events of this case was created, the most important changes in negotiating position were selected, and two process-tracing analyses were conducted. The second objective is to uncover new components that influence readiness using a grounded theory method. Data collection consisted of formal statements made by Duterte, news articles, and in-depth topical interviews.

1.2 Contributions

In so doing, this research makes four distinct contributions to empirical and theoretical knowledge. Empirical reporting of the GRP-CNN peace negotiations has been largely neglected by previous research (Walch, 2016), as they were either overshadowed by other conflicts in the country – such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Abubakar & Askandar, 2011; Buendia, 2004; Franco, 2013) and ISIS (Abuza, 2015) – or by more mediagenic cases, such as the peace processes of Israel-Palestine (Lieberfeld, 1999; Pruitt, 1997; Rynhold, 2007), Northern Ireland (Haass, 1990; Pruitt, 2007), and South Africa (Haass, 1990; Lieberfeld, 1999). A detailed analysis of this eclipsed case study is thus a valuable first contribution.

Secondly, Pruitt's readiness theory is arguably rather unstructured. Researchers have contributed a wealth of excellent components, factors, antecedents, mechanisms, and

³ GRP stands for Government of the Republic of the Philippines. Another abbreviation commonly used in the Philippines is GPH, which simply stands for Government of the Philippines.

impediments of readiness, but few serious attempts are made to combine and structure these elements (Pruitt, 2005b; 2014). In my estimation, the resulting theory suffers from a lack of focus and therefore practical utility. In response, this research develops a synthesized model of the most important antecedents of motivation and optimism.

Thirdly, this research contributes much-needed evidence for Pruitt's causal claims. Readiness theory is intended as an explanatory framework, yet the research methods employed often do not lend themselves to validating such claims. In the past twenty years, one of the standard caveats in readiness research has been the need for more case studies and testing of the hypothesized relationships. This research addresses this gap by employing theory-testing process-tracing (Beach & Pedersen, 2013): a thorough, qualitative method of step-by-step testing of a model, with the ability to lend credence to causal claims.

The fourth and final contribution made by this research is a proposed fundamental shift in thinking about the premises of readiness theory. The original theory, which is also referred to as "rational readiness theory," posits that readiness is the result of rational cost-benefit analyses. However, the grounded theory portion of this research revealed that non-rational elements were central to Duterte's decision making. The addition of a new component – attitudes – was indispensable to the analysis, and helps to understand many of the most puzzling observations in this case. This component is not rational in nature, but rooted in emotions and beliefs, thereby encouraging a debate about the premises of readiness theory in the expectation that a "mixed readiness theory" would better reflect the empirical reality.

1.3 Relevance

Seen within the larger academic context, the addition of emotional components to the readiness model ties in with the "emotional turn" in International Relations. Recent years have seen an increased academic interest in the role of emotions in politics, which is to be expected "within the current geopolitical landscape, increasingly characterised by brinkmanship and populist rhetoric," making the analysis of "celebrity politics" and "politicians as 'personas'" a crucial endeavor (Prior & Van Hoef, 2018, p. 48). Indeed, populist narratives are said to have inspired the outcome of the 2016 Brexit referendum – also referred to as "the Fear Project" (Skonieczny, 2018; Wilkinson, 2016) – and the emotions of both voters and leaders are perceived to be increasingly important. US President Donald Trump's decision making is often characterized as "emotional" and "instinctive," whether referring to his choice of tweets or his decision to carry out missile strikes on Syrian airbases in 2017 (Hyvärinen & Beck, 2018; Landler, 2017; Skonieczny, 2018). It is thus important that readiness theory is not stuck in an outdated way of thinking and makes the emotional turn.

Not least, an enhanced understanding of the conditions under which leaders are willing to negotiate can help third-party facilitators in their peace-making efforts. In the Philippines, the Norwegian government has attempted to facilitate a peace deal between the GRP and NDFP since 2004, cooperating with local peace activists and religious organizations (CHD, 2019). The insight this paper offers into the dynamics of Duterte's negotiating behavior and the influence of those around him could be used by such peace advocates to inform their efforts, which could potentially contribute to the resumption of peace talks and an end to the 50-year-old conflict.

1.4 Outline

This thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 2 introduces readiness theory and presents a synthesized model of its key components. It then makes a case to abandon the framework's rational choice premises and introduces mixed readiness theory, adding the non-rational component attitudes. Chapter 3 describes the analytical approaches taken towards the theory-testing and theory-building portions of this research, the data collection methods employed, and the limitations encountered. Chapter 4 briefly describes the historical context of and actors in the GRP-NDFP negotiations, before moving on to a detailed chronology of the events during the investigated timeframe. To structure the analysis in Chapters 5-7, it also identifies three distinct time periods.

Chapter 5 analyzes Time Period 1 – featuring Duterte's initial willingness to negotiate – and presents the findings of the process-tracing analysis using rational readiness theory. Second, using mixed readiness theory, it argues that this initial willingness was caused by positive attitudes towards the CNN. Chapter 6 analyzes Time Period 2, which features the termination of peace talks in May 2017. Another process-tracing analysis is conducted, after which the grounded theory portion of analysis posits that the decreased willingness to negotiate was due to the development of negative attitudes towards the CNN and positive attitudes towards the military and police. Chapter 7 analyzes Time Period 3, which is characterized by the repeated initiation and collapse of negotiations. At this stage, the rational readiness theory analysis becomes secondary, and is thus discussed briefly. The focus is on the application of mixed readiness theory, which argues that Duterte's frequent changes in negotiating position were the result of attitude incompatibility and attitude ambivalence, which rendered him susceptible to persuasion by the members of his cabinet. Chapter 8 concludes by answering the research question, discussing the implications of the findings, and offering some promising directions for future research.

2. Readiness Theory

As introduced briefly in the previous chapter, this research approaches the case of the peace negotiations under Duterte through the lens of readiness theory. This chapter first describes how readiness theory was developed and discusses two major gaps: a lack of synthesis of its components and the inability of the framework to predict a ripe moment. For the sake of clarity in this thesis and due to its rational choice premises, Pruitt's readiness theory will be referred to as *rational readiness theory* (RRT).

The second part of this chapter is dedicated to mixed readiness theory – the main theoretical contribution of this thesis – which is a proposed update to Pruitt's framework that adds the non-rational component *attitudes*. The resultant model breaks with the dichotomous interpretation of decision making as either rational or emotional, and is therefore referred to as *mixed readiness theory* (MRT). The section goes on to define and describe the concept attitudes, including its components, dimensions, and dynamics. The model I propose is argued to be an improvement, as the integration of rational and emotional factors can improve the explanatory and predictive capacity of readiness theory, and thus its practical utility.

2.1 Rational Readiness Theory

This section first discusses ripeness theory as originally laid out by William Zartman. Second, it discusses Pruitt's individualistic adaptation entitled readiness theory, some of the main critiques and gaps, as well as how this research intends to address them. Finally, this section discusses the rational choice premises that underlie these theories and argues that to improve our understanding of decision making about peace negotiations, these premises need to change to include the simultaneous influence of emotions.

2.1.1 Zartman's Ripeness Theory

Ripeness theory (Zartman, 1985; 2000; 2001; 2015) is the most prominent theory that intends to explain when conflict parties perceive peace negotiations as preferable to continued fighting. The ripeness of a conflict depends on two conditions, the shared perception of a *mutually hurting stalemate* (MHS) and the shared perception of a *way out* (WO). Unless both of these conditions are met, negotiations will not be initiated.⁴ As the MHS and WO are dependent on both parties perceiving them at the same time, ripeness theory takes the ontological stance of relational

⁴ Zartman further develops his theory to also cover the success of negotiations through the concept mutually enticing opportunities which can be emphasized by a third-party facilitator. However, as that falls outside the scope of this research, those components are not discussed here. For more information, see Zartman (2001, p. 241).

interactions. Furthermore, the theory take a positivist epistemological approach, and argues these components are rationally determined through cost-benefit analysis (Zartman, 2001). An important critique of ripeness theory – the vagueness of the concepts MHS and WO (Kleiboer, 1994) – is addressed by readiness theory, which thoroughly develops the micro-foundations of its concepts.

2.1.2 Pruitt's Readiness Theory

When studying leaders' willingness to engage in peace negotiations, Dean Pruitt (2005a; 2005b; 2007; 2014) argues that it is more meaningful to look at the conflict parties individually than to look at relational aspects. In his rendition of ripeness – reformulated as *readiness* – he breaks with the ontological stance of relational interactions, and approaches the phenomenon from the ontological stance of individualism. Correspondingly, Pruitt reformulates the relational concept MHS to the individualistic concept *motivation* and WO to *optimism*. Readiness itself is defined as “a characteristic of a single disputant that encourages movement towards or participation in negotiation” (Pruitt, 2014, p. 126).

Readiness uses a model in which multiple factors – or variables – can compensate one another to generate readiness, as opposed to Zartman's framework, in which necessary conditions have to be met to create a ripe moment. Pruitt identifies multiple antecedents of motivation and optimism, such as perceived cost and working trust. The specificity of Pruitt's approach is meant to address the poorly defined micro-foundations of ripeness, but can in turn be criticized for reduced parsimony.⁵ Pruitt defends this by stating that increased complexity of a theory is expected “as more is learned about the subject under study” (2005b, p. 31). Though I agree with Pruitt that a theory that accounts for more phenomena – and thus is more heuristic – is preferable to one that is more parsimonious, what strikes me is a lack of synthesis in the many factors and relationships that Pruitt puts forth. Over the years, there have been many theorized additions and reformulations of concepts, without any serious attempt to combine, synthesize, and summarize them in one model. I contend there should be an ebb and flow in parsimony, reduced as new elements are added and increased when elements can be grouped and reformulated into more comprehensive components, or removed when support cannot be found in subsequent research.

Case in point, this research's attempt to create a model of readiness theory's core elements took some doing. Of Pruitt's many works, two most clearly state the core components of readiness theory (Pruitt, 2007; 2014). In an attempt to synthesize and depict the core of

⁵ The principle of parsimony – or logical simplicity – states that a theory should present the simplest possible explanation for a phenomenon. Parsimony is one of the six criteria that are widely accepted to assess the quality of a theory (Glaser, 2002; Littlejohn, Foss, & Oetzel, 2016).

readiness theory, this research proposes the model depicted in Figure 2.1. Four minor changes were made. (1) The motivation antecedents *perceived cost* and *perceived risk* were combined as they were similar and data often overlapped. (2) The antecedent *lowered aspirations* – which was not defined in the source material (Pruitt, 2007) – was changed to *divergence of interest* to remove the implied change in the term, which proved problematic in measurement. Thus, it is no longer phrased as a relative decrease in goals but as the absolute difference in goals. (3) The optimism antecedent *perceived light at the end of the tunnel* was rephrased as *perceived progress*. (4) The optimism antecedents *perceived progress* and *divergence of interest* were combined as they were similar and data often overlapped.

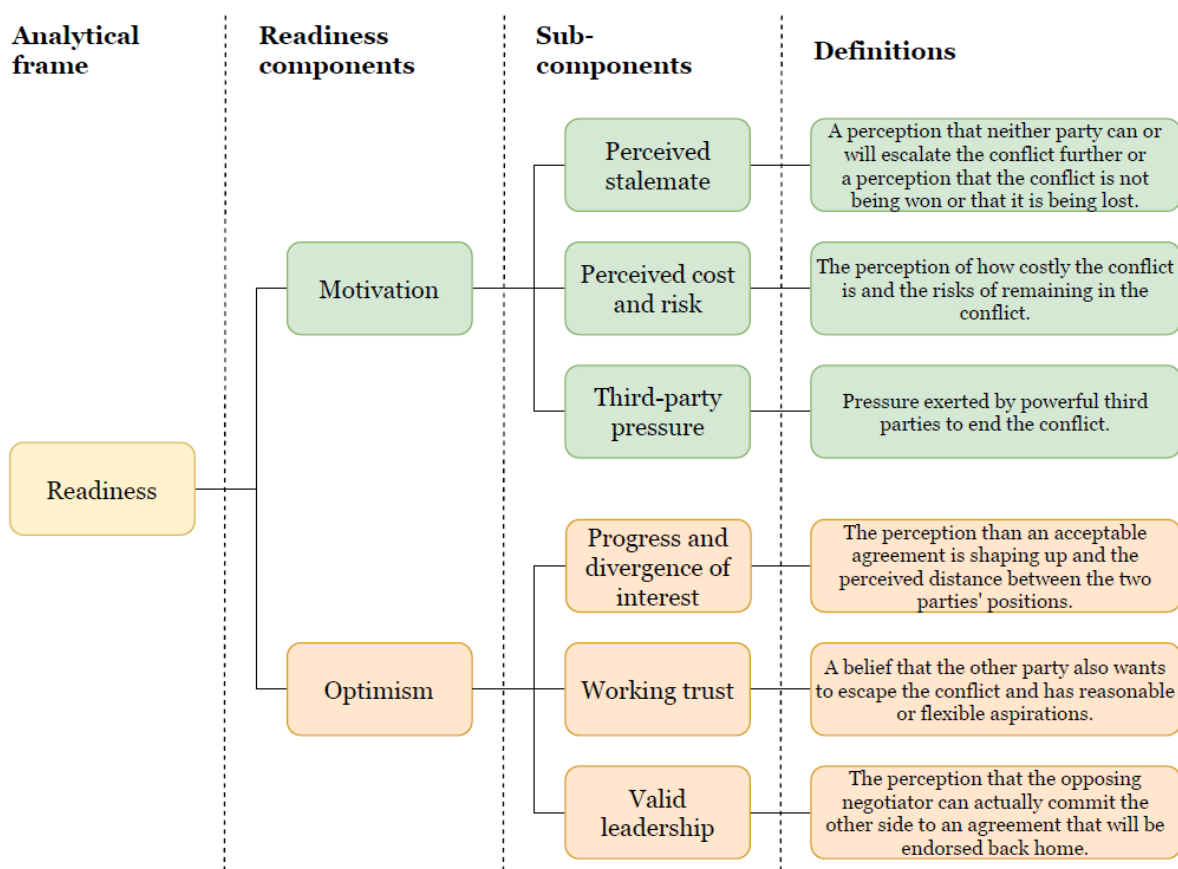


Figure 2.1 Model of rational readiness theory, including the antecedents of motivation and optimism and their definitions

One of the current gaps in knowledge surrounding this approach is the limited number of case studies that have been performed to support readiness theory (Frank, 2015; Schiff, 2013), as scholars continue to focus on ripeness theory despite its limitations. To fill this gap, this research will employ a deductive approach to provide support for the current model of readiness theory.

2.1.3 Rational Choice Approach

As discussed, both ripeness and readiness theory adhere to rational choice notions of decision making. However, there is growing consensus that leaders are not always rational. In their first attempt to incorporate the role of emotions in decision making, rational choice theorists built on dual systems models, which distinguish between two modes of thinking and deciding (Kahneman, 2003). Any irrationality encountered is linked to the emotional system, and rationality is attributed to the rational system. This way of thinking has influenced additions to ripeness theory, which attempt to identify and understand *impediments* to rational decision making (Aggestam & Jonsson, 1997; Pruitt, 2005b; Zartman, 2000). These scholars found that non-rational factors such as anger, a militant ideology, and a desire for revenge can prevent ripeness in situations where a rational actor would conclude peace negotiations are the most beneficial option. Removing these impediments leads to “a return” to rational thinking.

Though Pruitt writes extensively about these impediments (2005b, pp. 3-6), he does not address them in his framework. As such, readiness theory only “works” under conditions of rationality. I question the assumption of dichotomy, and instead argue that there is always some degree of irrationality involved in decision making. This view is supported by recent findings in affective and social neuroscience, which indicate that “rational choice theory is out of step with present-day neuroscience,” because

the main premise on which they are built — namely, that emotion and cognition can be treated as separate — is incongruent with neuroscientific evidence showing that these two functions are largely integrated in the brain and are mutually enabling. (Verweij, Senior, Domínguez, & Turner, 2015, p. 3)

In conclusion, if one seeks to more accurately predict and explain ripeness and readiness – the lack of which is one of the main critiques on both theories – it may be time to let go of the outdated premises of rational choice theory and embrace the simultaneous impact of emotion and rational thought on decision-making.

2.2 Mixed Readiness Theory

The inductive component of this research generated new theoretical insights into the non-rational factors that influence readiness. During analysis, several concepts and dynamics emerged that can be grouped under the concept *attitudes*. To emphasize the distinction between Pruitt’s readiness theory and my new model that contains non-rational components, the former is referred to as rational readiness theory and the latter as mixed readiness theory.

Section 2.2 first explains the concept attitudes and the placement of its components – affect, behavior, and cognitions – in the readiness theory model. Second, it discusses the three dimensions of attitudes, which are attitude valence, attitude strength, and attitude salience. Third, the section describes the dynamics of attitudes, such as attitude incompatibility and attitude ambivalence, and how these phenomena influence behavior.⁶

2.2.1 Components of Attitudes

In the grounded theory portion of this study it became clear that Duterte’s “personal connection” – to use the interviewees own words – to the rebels was central to his discourse concerning the peace negotiations. As his views and feelings about the rebels changed, so did his negotiating position. Abstracting from the descriptions and observations in Chapters 5-7, I detected both an emotional component and a belief-based component to this personal connection. This ties in with the fundamental and well-established psychological concept of attitudes, which replaced the notion “personal connection.”

An attitude is “a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols” (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005, p. 150). These socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols can simply be described as attitude objects. According to the ABC model, an attitude about an attitude object consists of three components: A for affect, B for behavior, and C for cognition (Breckler, 1984). The data of this research indicates the relevance of affect and cognition as antecedents to readiness, arguably by influencing motivation and/or optimism. The behavioral tendencies were not found, possibly because (1) they do not affect readiness, or (2) they are too closely linked to the outcome variable – Duterte’s negotiating position – which is also a behavioral construct.

The *affective component*, which entails the feelings and emotions about an attitude object, is theorized to have influenced Duterte’s motivation for peace negotiations. The connection between affect and motivation was made several decades ago. As early as 1955, Helen Peak put forward evidence “to support the contention that attitude and motivation are very closely related,” specifically citing the “affective loading of an attitude” (Peak, 1955, p. 149). More recently, a review of the literature surrounding positive affect and reward noted that “affective significance is central to determining the goals around which human behavior is organized” (Chiew & Braver, 2011, p. 1). This supports the placement of the affective component of attitudes as an antecedent of motivation.⁷ Though this component was formulated inductively, it can be

⁶ This chapter limits itself to the theoretical description of the concepts and their dynamics. How these concepts emerged from the data is described in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

⁷ Though this component was formulated inductively, it can be linked to a range of negative emotional reactions described in the ripeness/readiness literature, such as anger, a sense of injustice, and a desire for revenge (Aggestam & Jonsson, 1997; Pruitt, 2005b). However, these concepts were never synthesized and

linked to a range of negative emotional reactions described in the ripeness and readiness literatures, such as anger, a sense of injustice, and a desire for revenge (Aggestam & Jonsson, 1997; Pruitt, 2005b). However, these concepts were never synthesized and defined under a common heading, apart from their collective designation as impediments to rational thinking. The most appropriate designation – in Pruitt’s words – would be “hostile feelings” (Pruitt, 2005b, p. 21).

The *cognitive component*, which entails the beliefs and knowledge about an attitude object, appears to have influenced Duterte’s optimism about the peace negotiations. First of all, respondents explicitly posited that Duterte’s positive views about the CNN made him optimistic about achieving a peace deal with them.⁸ Furthermore, optimism is defined as a *belief* that outcomes will be positive (Chang, 2001). Therefore, optimism is by definition a cognitive construct, so it stands to reason that the cognitive component of attitudes would influence optimism, as opposed to motivation. This is also supported by Pruitt himself, when he describes enemy images of the adversary – a secondary component that is involved in certain dynamics in readiness theory – as “antithetical to optimism” (2005b, p. 19).

So why has this research opted to frame these constructs as attitudes, instead of adhering to the pre-existing notions of hostile feelings and enemy images? First, Pruitt’s treatment of these concepts was secondary at best, and he did not offer many conceptual tools to work with. In stark contrast, attitudes offers a wealth of information and solid research exists about the details, components, aspects, relations, and dynamics of the construct. This case alone benefits from this frame, as intricate dynamics can be interpreted using the dimensions of attitudes – valence, strength, and salience – and the dynamics of attitudes, namely compatibility and ambivalence. Second, affect and cognition are intimately linked (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005), which is properly reflected in the current theoretical conceptualization. The effects of affect and cognition on readiness may occur via different pathways, but it is difficult to, for instance, change one’s cognitions about an attitude object, without also impacting their emotions towards the object. The resultant mixed readiness model is synthesized in a model and presented in Figure 2.2.

Finally, it is important to note that there is a significant difference between the cognitive component of attitudes and Pruitt’s working trust. Working trust is defined as “a belief that the other party also wants to escape the conflict and has reasonable or flexible aspirations” (Pruitt, 2007, p. 1529). As such, working trust is still rational in the sense that it concerns an evaluation

defined under a common heading, apart from their collective designation as impediments to rational thinking. This most appropriate designation – in Pruitt’s words – would be “hostile feelings” (Pruitt, 2005b, p. 21).

⁸ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel, 26 March 2019, Utrecht, the Netherlands. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel, 16 April 2019, Makati, the Philippines. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel, 18 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines.

of qualities of the adversary that pertain to the negotiations, such as their sincerity and flexibility. Attitudes, on the other hand, can be very general or unrelated to the negotiations and are argued to still influence optimism about the negotiations.

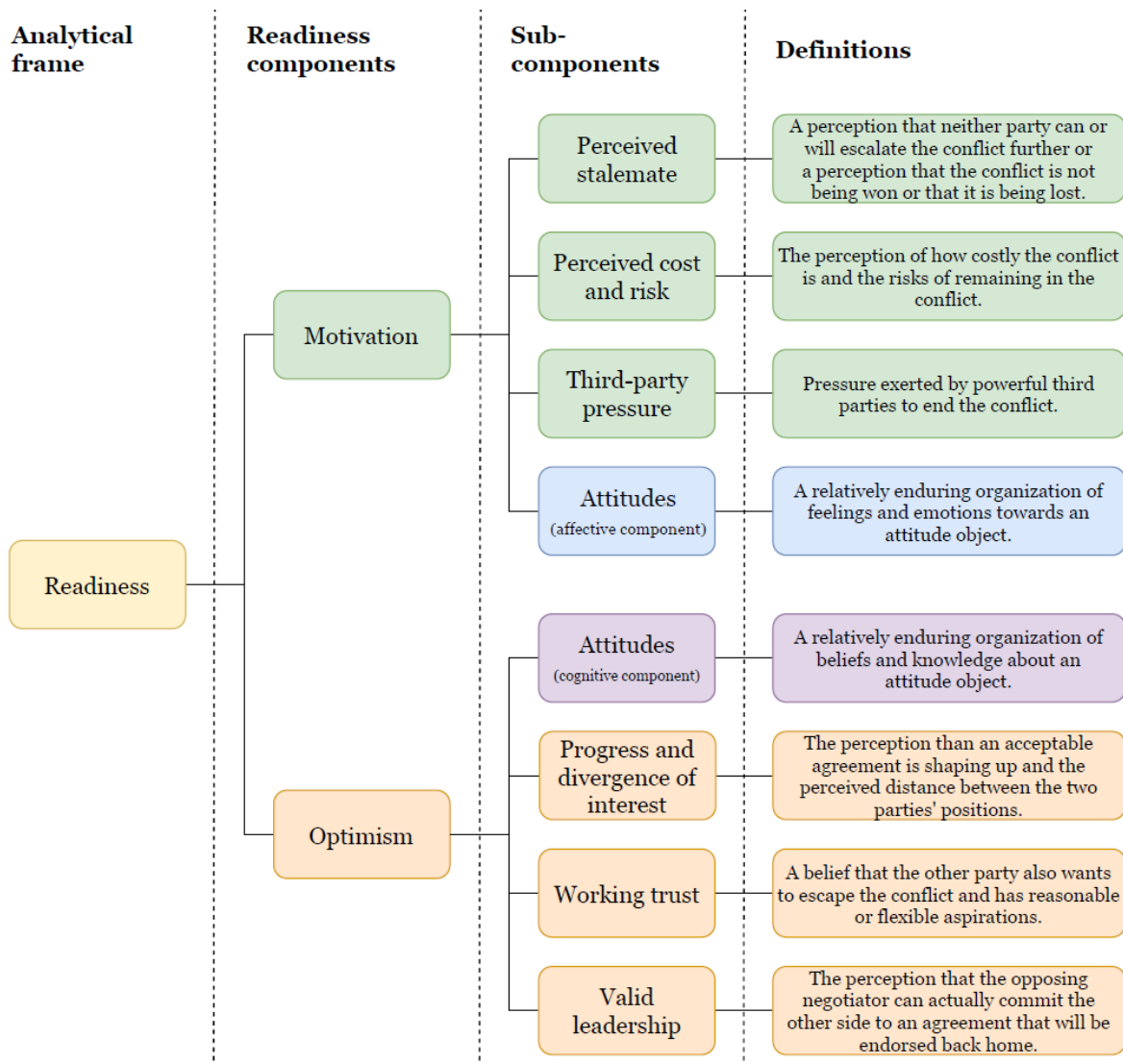


Figure 2.2 Model of mixed readiness theory, including the antecedents of motivation and optimism and their definitions.

2.2.2 Dimensions of Attitudes

An attitude has three dimensions or aspects on which it can vary: attitude valence, attitude strength, and attitude salience. *Attitude valence* refers to the degree of positivity or negativity of an attitude. The more extreme an attitude, the stronger the connection between the attitude and behavior (Bohner & Dickel, 2011). Attitude valence is influenced by the experiences with and knowledge of the attitude object, and is applicable to this case: Chapter 5 argues that in Time Period 1, Duterte developed a positive attitude towards the CNN, which made him more willing to negotiate with them than the previous president.

Attitude strength refers to how resistant an attitude is to challenges and how durable it is over time (Petty & Krosnick, 1995; Bassili, 2008; Howe & Krosnick, 2017). Stronger attitudes have a more powerful impact on behavior, which is again applicable to this case: Chapter 6 argues that in Time Period 2, Duterte's positive attitude about the military was strengthened, causing his readiness to decline due to attitude incompatibility (see Section 2.2.3).

Attitude salience is the ease with which an attitude comes to mind (Rocklage & Fazio, 2017). Salient attitudes have a more powerful impact on behavior (Starzyk, Fabrigar, Soryal, & Fanning, 2009; Mirels & Dean, 2006; Young & Fazio, 2013). Attitude salience is influenced mainly by recency and frequency (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2005; Higgins, 1996). Chapter 7 argues that changes in attitude salience are what caused Duterte's negotiating position to change to frequently, due to the persuasion tactics of Duterte's advisers. Those in favor of peace talks – the so-called doves – convinced him to resume negotiations by reminding him of the positive aspects of the adversary and peace in general, and those against the peace talks – the so-called hawks – would talk him out of it.

2.2.3 Dynamics of Attitudes

As there is a wealth of research available on the dynamics of attitudes, not all is discussed here. Instead, this section focuses on the two dynamics that seemed most relevant to this case: attitude incompatibility and attitude ambivalence.

The first dynamic that seems to play a role in this case is the combination of two competing attitudes, or *incompatible attitudes*. Incompatible attitudes are attitudes about two different attitude objects that have opposing effects on behavior (Young & Fazio, 2013). This inconsistency leads to competition between the attitudes, and as a result the impact of one (or both) on behavior is reduced. Which attitude wins out over the other depends on attitude strength and attitude salience: The stronger and more salient attitude tends to win out over the weaker, less salient one. In the case of Duterte, there was incompatibility due to the existence of positive attitudes about both the CNN and AFP in Time Periods 2 and 3. These parties are enemies and one is in favor of peace talks, the other against.

When someone is presented with attitude incongruent information, instead of adjusting the existing attitude, one can create a new, parallel attitude about the same attitude object. Having both a positive attitude and a negative attitude about the same attitude object is called *attitude ambivalence* (Bassili, 2008; Conner & Armitage, 2008; Wood, 2000). This leads to a similar dynamic to attitude incompatibility: There is competition and the stronger, more salient attitude tends to win out over the weaker, less salient one. In the case of Duterte, it appears that the president developed negative attitudes about the CNN, yet nonetheless also retained some

positive attitudes about them. This research argues that the resulting ambivalence enabled the frequent changes in willingness to negotiate in Time Period 3.

2.3 Conclusion

In short, the review of Zartman's ripeness theory and Pruitt's rational readiness theory uncovered several gaps in theoretical knowledge. First, an attempt at synthesis of Pruitt's core components to readiness theory is made, resulting in a model of rational readiness theory. This model was used in the deductive phase of this research to analyze Duterte's willingness to negotiate. Second, the apparent rational choice fallacy is addressed by adding non-rational components to readiness theory, resulting in a model of mixed readiness theory. These additions – which are conveniently grouped under one powerful concept, attitudes – were the result of the inductive phase of this research. This research argued that these additions address a major criticism of readiness theory: its limited predictive capacity.

As this study has – to a limited extent – an explanatory element, some hypotheses are prudent. The hypothesized relations between components in rational readiness theory are summarized in Figure 2.1. Mixed readiness theory hypothesizes that a decrease in motivation and/or optimism can be caused by⁹ (1) a concurrent decrease in positive attitudes about the adversary, (2) an increase in negative attitudes about the adversary, (3) a reduced influence of positive attitudes (or more influence of negative attitudes) on behavior due to changes in attitude strength and attitude salience. The third hypothesis is dependent on the existence of attitude ambivalence or attitude incompatibility.

The following chapter describes how, in two separate analytical phases, a process-tracing method was used to test the synthesized RRT model in the first, deductive phase of this research, and a grounded theory method was used to develop the MRT model in the second, inductive phase of this research. It then discusses data collection, which consisted of event cataloguing, in-depth topical interviews, and document analysis, and the limitations that were encountered during the research.

⁹ I specifically write “can be caused by,” because MRT employs a multiple causal factor model, the same as RRT. Thus, changes in motivation and optimism might also be attributed to other factors in the model. They do not necessarily have stem from the non-rational attitude component.

3. Methodology

After the in-depth discussion of this study's theoretical framework, let us now refocus on the main question guiding this thesis: How have motivation and optimism facilitated or impeded the willingness to negotiate of the GRP with the CPP/NPA/NDF since Rodrigo Duterte was elected President of the Philippines in mid-2016? This question seeks to fulfil two objectives: First, providing evidence for or against the synthesized model of rational readiness theory. Second, uncovering and describing new components that influence readiness present in this case-study that appear to influence Duterte's willingness to negotiate. These two goals require diverging approaches, methods and analyses. Throughout this thesis, the analyses are presented in two phases, namely (1) the deductive phase, which discusses the application and testing of rational readiness theory, and (2) the inductive phase, which discusses mixed readiness theory, particularly the component "attitudes." This chapter details the research strategies employed in the deductive and inductive phases (Sections 3.1 and 3.2), the data collection methods used (Section 3.3), and the limitations encountered (Section 3.4).

3.1 Deductive Phase: Rational Readiness Theory

3.1.1 Analysis Selection: Theory-Testing Process-Tracing

Rational readiness theory positions itself as ontologically individualistic and epistemologically explaining: in other words, a realist approach that attempts to understand the world from an objective point of view (Madill, 2008). The components of readiness, which concern perceptions, are theoretically linked to the objective world through the use of objective referents,¹⁰ which includes an element of rational thought. Methodologically, a discrepancy exists between the realist school – and the explaining epistemology in general – which prefers statistical logic and quantitative research methods, and ripeness and readiness scholars who primarily employ qualitative designs.¹¹ This methodological inconsistency is overcome through the use of a solid qualitative methodology: process-tracing.

Pruitt's methodology consists of three steps, namely (1) constructing a chronology, (2) identifying the most important events, and (3) using process analysis to identify readiness antecedents. He interprets process-tracing as a method in which "social science theory, common sense, and judgements by reliable observers [are] used to develop hypotheses about the

¹⁰ An objective referent can be described as "circumstances under which a well-informed, dispassionate, and rational decision maker would conclude that negotiation is appropriate" (Pruitt, 2005b, p. 2).

¹¹ There are some ripeness and readiness studies that use a quantitative approach. Most notably, "perceived stalemate" has been operationalized successfully through one of its objective referents, the change in number of casualties suffered or levels of violence (Mooradian & Druckman, 1999; Schrodt, Yilmaz, & Gerner, 2003; Zartman, 2001).

antecedents of important events” (Pruitt, 2014, p. 123). In other words, Pruitt used common sense to detect patterns and develop hypotheses of causal relationships. However, these hypotheses require more evidence as they were based on only a few cases and the fluidity of Pruitt’s approach leaves uncertainty with regard to their generalizability. This research addresses the issue of causality by using a more rigorous version of process-tracing. Beach and Pedersen’s (2013) theory-testing process-tracing is a thorough, coherent method of step-by-step testing of a hypothesized mechanism: Confirmation of the hypothesis increases the confidence level of the postulated relationship between two of the mechanism’s components, and thus lends credence to causal claims. In other words, whereas Pruitt uses a fluid method of process-tracing to *generate* hypotheses, I use a rigid form to *test* these hypotheses.

In the selected timeframe, President Duterte changed his formal negotiating position no fewer than eight times. As process-tracing analyses are quite extensive and time-consuming, these eight changes were condensed into three analytically significant time periods. Time Period 1 conducts a readiness process-tracing analysis of Duterte’s initial willingness to negotiate in mid-2016. Time Period 2 conducts a readiness process-tracing analysis of the termination of the formal peace talks in May 2017. Time Period 3, which runs from May 2017 to the present, is analytically significant because it is characterized by frequent instances of initiation and collapse, which is why a more general approach to readiness analysis is employed. The scope of this research was further reduced: Instead of analyzing both sides of the conflict as originally intended, I chose to focus on the GRP side, as no changes in negotiating position on the NDFP side were identified in the selected timeframe.

3.1.2 Case Selection: GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations Under Duterte

The lacking generalizability of Pruitt’s hypotheses can be addressed by using new and diverging cases. This case is new, because empirical reporting of the peace negotiations between the communist rebels and the Philippine government has been largely neglected by previous research (Walch, 2016). The case is also divergent, as Duterte has a distinct leadership style which is not adequately represented in readiness research. However, it is important that we pay more attention, because such figures – often described as strongmen – are on the rise in international politics and thus more frequently occupy a seat at the negotiating table (Bremmer, 2018; Yarhi-Milo, 2018). One need only look to U.S. President Donald Trump’s efforts to negotiate with North Korea to recognize the relevance of strongmen in negotiations. Therefore, it would be interesting to see whether readiness theory can be generalized to these actors.

3.1.3 Relevant Empirical Evidence

To assess the importance of readiness factors in the case of the Philippines, three kinds of evidence are available to this research:

- (1) We can identify a change in the objective referent and, according to readiness' rationality logic, assume the change in reality also led to a change in Duterte's perception.
- (2) We can analyze statements made by Duterte (and his representatives) which address these perceptions, keeping in mind that he may not have been truthful in his public statements.
- (3) We can ask those involved in the negotiations to reflect on Duterte's behavior, acknowledging that the resulting statements and views may be distorted by factors such as their perceptions or political incentives.

It is important to realize that there is no way of definitively knowing what Duterte thought at any given time or what his "true" motivations were. However, this is true of all leaders, and despite these limitations, valuable work has been done in developing theories regarding their behavior and underlying perceptions. This includes Zartman's ripeness theory and Pruitt's readiness theory, which have become staples of the literature on peace negotiations. The current research is consistent with these approaches and will attempt to further develop readiness theory, mindful of these caveats.

Information that pertains to each of the readiness components and antecedents was structured using coding with a prepared scheme (Boeije, 2010). During data collection, the value of the grounded theory findings soon became apparent. Consequently, the research focus shifted from deductive analysis – which intended to conduct formal tests to increase or decrease the level of confidence in theorized causal relationships in rational readiness theory – to inductive analysis, which intended to identify and develop new components that affect readiness. Instead of these formal tests, the research discusses how well the observations "fit" with the readiness hypotheses. The choice and use of indicators are discussed in the analytical chapters.

3.2 Inductive Phase: Mixed Readiness Theory

3.2.1 Analysis Selection: Grounded Theory

Duterte's many changes in willingness to negotiate suggest there is more to this case than rational readiness components. After all, it seems unlikely that objective referents such as number of casualties fluctuated so much that they would explain Duterte's behavior from a rationality perspective. Indeed, the inductive phase offered new insights, which were discussed and developed in Chapter 2, to form mixed readiness theory.

The inductive phase still approaches the case from an individualist and explaining perspective, but this is now better classified as *exploratory explaining*. In line with the grounded theory approach as laid out by Astalin (2013), open questions were added to the interviews and open coding of this data (using NVivo computer software) was performed to distill new analytical categories. Upon consultation, the literature revealed how these categories could be placed in the theoretical framework of attitudes, and how this plausibly related to readiness theory. This resulted in a new model, as depicted in Figure 2.2. These insights help to understand the observed dynamics in the case of Duterte.

3.2.2 Relevant Empirical Evidence

This research is interested in the following aspects of attitudes: affect, cognition, valence, strength, and salience. To assess Duterte's attitudes, this study focuses on Duterte's speech patterns in his public statements, which hold three areas of interest:

- (1) Content: What words does Duterte use to describe his feelings and views about attitude objects (affect, cognition, valence, and strength).
- (2) Emotionality: What non-verbal signs of emotion does Duterte display when speaking about an attitude object (affect and valence).
- (3) Frequency: How often does Duterte speak about an attitude object, and does he require prompting to start speaking about the attitude object (salience).

These aspects can be assessed in the following ways:

- (a) We can look at existing reflections on Duterte's statements, such as journalists writing about a speech and assessing it themselves, media reports that quote others who assess the statements, and reflections or comments published on official webpages.
- (b) We can ask those involved – ideally those who knew him personally – to reflect on his behavior.
- (c) I can analyze the statements myself for content and frequency. I will not attempt to assess emotionality myself, but prefer to let the data “speak.”

Additionally, during analysis a new type of evidence presented itself: imagery. Photos were found to quite vividly and aptly capture nonverbal signs of social relationships between individuals and their emotions. These materials are used merely to support and illustrate; no methodology was developed to structure this data collection. Again, it is important to note that there is no way of definitely knowing what Duterte felt or thought at any given time, and that these data sources are all interpretations, thus by nature subject to bias. Nevertheless, through these measures, we should be able to glean some insight into Duterte's attitudes.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

3.3.1 Chronology and Selection of Key Events

A timeline was made of events in the GRP-NDFP negotiations since Duterte was elected president of the Philippines, organized in an event catalogue (see Annex 2 for a concise version). Two main data sources were used: First, timelines of the negotiations made by the NDFP (Agcaoili, 2018; Casambre, 2013; NDFP Monitoring Committee, 2006; 2018) and the GRP (OPAPP, 2016). Second, online news reports from international, national, and local news sites (BBC, The Guardian, The New York Times, The Philippine Star, ABS-CBN News, Manila Bulletin, Rappler, MindaNews).¹² For the international sources, several search queries were used, such as “Duterte,” “NDFP,” “NPA,” “peace Philippines.” The national and local sources typically had pre-existing filters or tags, such as “peace process” or “NDF,” which were used to generate a selection. This process continued until data saturation was reached.

From this event catalogue, moments of “readiness” were identified. Readiness was operationalized as “willingness to negotiate” and measured as “formal negotiating position.” An increase in willingness to negotiate is defined as: The start or resumption of communication channels between the NDFP Peace Panel and official representatives of the GRP, only when it is followed by the scheduling of a round of formal talks, which is announced to the public. A decrease in willingness to negotiate is defined as: Duterte or the NDFP publicly announcing the cancellation of peace talks and ordering their panel home or canceling a scheduled round of talks. This resulted in eight changes in readiness, which are further described in Chapter 4. For each of these eight changes, an “event description” was made: an individual timeline containing the most important events leading up to the change in negotiating position. These events were described in more detail than in the event catalogue and served to guide the interviews and minimize memory distortion, as the respondents’ current views could influence their recollections of past events (Berney & Blane, 1997). Interviewees often added significant details or new events to these event descriptions, based on their experience and private information.

3.3.2 Interviews

Goal and access

The objective was to conduct in-depth topical interviews (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 168; Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 28) with those involved in or knowledgeable about the peace process, striving for an even distribution of respondents according to their group affiliation: NDFP, GRP, IC, CSO, and

¹² Media reporting in the Philippines was described as relatively independent by Respondent 10. However, they are under increasing pressure and some are accused as endorsing communism or even being involved in plots to overthrow the president. I have used my best judgment in this regard, by utilizing various news outlets to confirm the same information and to gather journalists’ views.

RNG. The selection of respondents was based on purposive snowball sampling. Potential participants were emailed and existing contacts (such as professors) were asked for introductions to networks. Respondents were asked who else the researcher should speak to and if they could make an introduction.

Results

19 interviews were included in this research, during which I spoke to 24 individuals. The distribution of interviewees over the target groups is graphically represented in Figure 3.1. The interviewees were those actively involved in the peace negotiations or process, such as founder of the CPP Jose Maria Sison, negotiators on the NDFP and GRP Peace Panels such as Rene Sarmiento and Fidel Agcaoili, NDFP and GRP consultants, members of the RWC/RWGs who worked on draft agreements, members of the international community who facilitated or were otherwise involved in the negotiations, and leaders of Philippine civil society who advocated for peace and/or organized consultations throughout the Philippines to discuss drafts of the agreements with stakeholders and regular Filipinos. Interviews were conducted in March and April of 2019, lasted 1.5-2 hours on average, and took place in Utrecht, the Netherlands – where the NDFP Peace Panel live in self-exile – and in the greater Metro Manila area in the Philippines – which is host to the Philippine government, most embassies and INGOs, and national offices of civil society. A list of interviewees is included in Annex 1.

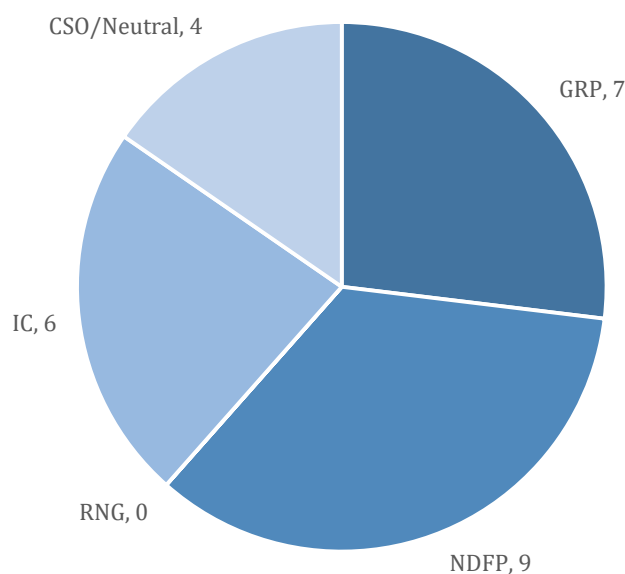
Interview tools

Several tools were used during the interviews (see Annex 3). (1) Beforehand, all interviewees received a two-page *research summary* via email, containing an introduction of the researcher, the research goals, sample questions, and information on consent and the use of data. (2) The previously described *event descriptions*. (3) Based on the rational readiness model, a list of questions – or *topic guide* – was composed to measure the readiness components based on their definitions (see Figure 2.1).

Documentation and consent

Most interviews were recorded¹³ and later transcribed. At the end of each interview, respondents were asked if the statements could be quoted directly, how the research should refer to them (level of attribution), and if there were any parts to the interview that should be omitted

¹³ There are some exceptions. In several cases, no recording was made because (1) the respondent(s) did not want to be recorded, (2) the interview was conducted in a secure facility that did not allow electronics, (3) the interview was short and informal, and permission to use the data was requested later. Written notes were always made during unrecorded interviews.

Figure 3.1 Organizational Affiliation of Respondents

Note: Two respondents working for the international community (IC) previously worked for the government at OPAPP. They have been included in both categories, which explains the discrepancy between the total number of interviewees included in this research (24) and the sum of all categories in this graph (26).

completely.¹⁴ Interviews are often anonymized, in which case only their group affiliation and level of involvement in the peace process is provided (see Annex 1).

3.3.3 Documents

Documents consisted mainly of statements and speeches made by Duterte and his representatives – which were preferably collected through official government information agencies¹⁵ – and news articles (see Section 3.3.1).

3.4 Limitations

The main limitation in this research was reduced access, which was in turn mainly due to the worrisome security situation in the Philippines: In recent years, the Philippine government has arrested a conspicuous number of political opponents and individuals associated with the Left.

¹⁴ The most common reasons for omitting specific information were because it could be traced back to the respondent or the information could negatively affect a person, organization or the peace process in general.

¹⁵ These government websites included the Office for the Presidential Adviser of the Peace Process (OPAPP, <https://peace.gov.ph/>), Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO, <https://pcoo.gov.ph/>), Official Gazette (<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/>), and Philippine Information Agency (PIA, <https://pia.gov.ph/>).

Furthermore, in a phenomenon known as “red-tagging,” allegations have been made that anyone the government wishes to arrest is claimed to be a communist (Amnesty International, 2019). Since December 2018, six NDFP consultants have been arrested on what they claim are trumped-up charges (Inquirer Research, 2019).¹⁶ In fact, one of the interviews was conducted in a Filipino prison. Furthermore, though it is unclear who is responsible for the incidents, in January 2019 NDFP consultant Randy Malayao was shot dead by masked men on a passenger bus (Buan & Dullana, 2019; CNN Philippines, 2019a) and in June 2019 four activists associated with the Left were shot and killed (Amnesty International, 2019). This security situation introduced several limitations to this research. Some information – and some events even – was off the record and thus not included in this research directly. It also influenced the general atmosphere during interviews with the Left, but there were ways of navigating this by offering anonymity, turning off the recorder, and reiterating that the purpose of the research was not to portray any kind of political view or “out” anyone.

Unexpectedly, establishing contact with the government proved more difficult. Many officials were approached, but these requests were often turned down or ignored. Reasons for not wanting to participate were mostly due to confidentiality or “feeling uncomfortable.” It is not altogether surprising that government officials were not keen on being interviewed when one considers the context. In his second SONA, which is far from an isolated incident, Duterte heavily criticized his government employees and actively urged the public to report any “misconduct,” ominously stating, “You name the public official. Name his sins [...] and I will take it from there” (PCOO, 2017b). Furthermore, as the research was geographically limited to the Netherlands and the Philippines and those facilitating the negotiations reside in Norway, I did not end up speaking with the RNG. Despite these security concerns and limitations in access, the research managed to reach a substantial number of respondents, including seven from the GRP.

3.5 Conclusion

The employed methodology has bearing on representativeness, validity and reliability of the research. As this study does not aim for statistical representation of a research population, *representativeness* is not relevant to this research. This research claims high *validity*, as a combination of multiple data collection methods are used for triangulation to ensure accuracy of data. The *reliability* of this research is also high, as the steps and procedures are well-documented, allowing for the replication of the study with the expectation of finding similar results.

In sum, this research first created a timeline of events in the peace negotiations under Duterte. The results of this effort are presented in Chapter 4, and additionally as a structured

¹⁶ Interview with Coni Ledesma, member of the NDFP Peace Panel, 4 March 2019, Utrecht, the Netherlands.

event catalogue in Annex 2. Then, data was collected in interviews and document analysis. The first analytical phase of the research was deductive in nature, and used process-tracing to test the synthesized rational readiness model. The second analytical phase was inductive in nature, and used a grounded theory approach to develop the mixed readiness model. The results of these two analytical phases are presented side-by-side in Chapters 5-7 according to three distinct time periods. Chapter 5 covers Time Period 1, which centers on Duterte's initial willingness to negotiate in mid-2016. Chapter 6 covers Time Period 2, which centers on the termination of peace negotiations in May 2017. Chapter 7 covers Time Period 3, which discusses and analyzes the repeated initiation and collapse of the peace talks after May 2017.

4. Chronology

The period under investigation cannot be faulted for a lack of interesting developments. Since Duterte came into office, he initiated and terminated formal peace talks with the communists no fewer than eight times. To perform process-tracing analyses, we must first develop a clear understanding of the most important events that led up to these changes, so that we may elicit meaning from them. Therefore, the first step in the methodology was making a context description and chronology. As such, this chapter first describes the context of this case, specifically the history of the conflict, the history of the negotiations, the actors in the conflict and in the negotiations, and the negotiation structure (Section 4.1). Second, it describes the changes in GRP negotiating position and the most important developments leading up to them (Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4). Due to the many changes in GRP negotiating position, they were divided into three time periods, each with its own analytical significance. The justification of these periods is explicated in the chapter conclusion (Section 4.5).

4.1 Context

In 1968, in response to the dictatorial regime of Ferdinand Marcos, professor and activist Jose Maria “Joma” Sison founded the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and launched a protracted people’s war aiming to overthrow the Philippine government (Chapman, 1987; MMO, 2015). Within a few years, the CPP was supported by an armed movement, the New People’s Army (NPA), and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP or NDF), a political wing that aimed to unify revolutionary organizations in the Philippines and build international relations with other communist parties (ICG, 2011; Jones, 1989; NDFP, 2019). This started a long and bloody conflict, which recently commemorated its 50th anniversary and has claimed between 30.000 and 40.000 lives¹⁷ to date (ICG, 2011; Wilson, 2017).

4.1.1 History of the Peace Negotiations

Since 1992, the GRP and NDFP – which typically negotiates on behalf of the CPP and NPA – have been engaged in peace negotiations with each other (NDFP, 2019; Walch, 2016). In the 1992 Hague Joint Declaration, both parties agreed to sequentially draft separate agreements in four areas, namely (1) the Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), (2) the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER), (3) an agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms (PCR), and (4) on the End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces (EH/DF) (NDFP Monitoring Committee,

¹⁷ Estimates of the death toll vary: International Crisis Group puts the number at 40.000, based on military statistics (ICG, 2011). BBC Monitoring puts it at 30.000, but does not reference a source (Wilson, 2017).

2006; 2018; OPAPP, 2019). Since then, a number of agreements has been signed, most notably the Joint Agreement of Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) in 1995 and CARHRIHL in 1998 (NDFP, 2019). The negotiations have been on and off after the signing of CARHRIHL, with a renewed impetus for negotiations on the GRP side with every new president.¹⁸ The NDFP have been remarkably consistent in their willingness to negotiate, only wavering once in 2014 (NDFP Monitoring Committee, 2006, p. 193). Indeed, it was typically the GRP who bowed out of negotiations after one or two rounds of formal talks, though at times this was in response to the NDFP renegeing on tentative agreements (Walch, 2016, p. 95). Considering these frequent interruptions, it is unsurprising that after CARHRIHL not much progress was made on the subsequent agenda items (ICG, 2011).

4.1.2 Actors, Objectives, and Structures

Historically, the communist insurgency's main goal was to create a new people's democratic state by overthrowing the government through a protracted people's war (ICG, 2011; MMO, 2015). These are still core to the CNN's principles, but they are ultimately incompatible with peace negotiations which would see the current government remain in power (CPP, 2016). It can thus be said that their focus shifted from the military defeat of their enemy to addressing the conflict's root causes through land redistribution and political and constitutional reform (ICG, 2011; MMO, 2015). These goals for reform are most accurately summarized by the four substantive agenda points of the peace talks. Furthermore, the CNN's position is that they do not cease fighting until a peace deal is signed, because their violent rebellion is what grants them their leverage.¹⁹

The government, on the other hand, essentially wants the rebellion to come to an end without changing government policies or structures.²⁰ What irks them most about the rebellion is the violence towards their military and police, civilian casualties, levying of "revolutionary taxes" which the government equates to extortion, and the parallel governance structures the communists have set up – or "revolutionary government" – which challenge the GRP's authority (Fonbuena, 2017b).²¹ Alternatively, some claim that the communist insurgency is good for the

¹⁸ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant, 7 March 2019, Utrecht, the Netherlands. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process, 10 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel, 29 April 2019, Pasig City, the Philippines.

¹⁹ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel, 19 April 2019, Taguig City, the Philippines.

²⁰ Interview 9, former GRP official, 5 April 2019, Mandaluyong, the Philippines. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process, 15 April 2019, Pasig City, the Philippines.

²¹ Interview 1, member of international community working on the Moro peace process, 26 February 2019, Utrecht, the Netherlands. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

government, because it can count on support from the United States, who are ideologically opposed to communism, and is good for the military, because it can count on extra funding to combat the NPA.²²

The CPP Central Command is said to have control over the NDFP and NPA (MMO, 2015). The NDFP is mandated by the CPP to negotiate on their behalf with the GRP about a peace deal. The members of the NDFP Peace Panel are in self-exile in the Netherlands, as they fear arrest in the Philippines. This panel is chaired by Fidel Agcaoili, and further consists of, among others, Coni Ledesma, Benito Tiamzon, Julieta de Lima, and Asterio Palima (NDFP Monitoring Committee, 2018). Joma Sison – the founder of the CPP – is not officially on the Panel, but as the face of the communist rebellion often makes statements to the media regarding the negotiations and has delivered statements during the formal talks. He is thus still intimately involved in the negotiations.

On the GRP side, the president is the main decision maker in the peace negotiations. The House and Senate can make recommendations, but their main power is the approval of legislation resulting from the negotiations (Official Gazette, 2016a). In June 2016, President Benigno Aquino III was succeeded by Rodrigo Roa Duterte (Winter, 2016b), whose term lasts until 2022.²³ The most important government body in the negotiations is the Office for the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), which aims to resolve several conflicts in the Philippines (OPAPP, 2019). Jesus Dureza (also Secretary of Labor) served as the head of OPAPP under Duterte until his resignation in December 2018 (Ranada, 2018a). He was left-leaning and in favor of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. After his resignation, Duterte appointed Carlito Galvez Jr., a retired general opposed to the peace negotiations with the NDFP (Corrales, 2019; Guzman, 2019; Roxas, 2019). The GRP Peace Panel is chaired by Silvestre Bello III, and its members are Rene Sarmiento, Hernani Braganza, Antonio Arellano, and Angela Trinidad (NDFP Monitoring Committee, 2018; OPAPP, 2019). The Philippine military (Armed Forces of the Philippines or AFP) and police (Philippine National Police or PNP) are directed by Duterte, but opposed to peace talks with the NDFP (see Chapters 6 and 7).

The peace process is supported by the Royal Norwegian Government (RNG) and has a designated Special Envoy to participate in discussions on the Panel level and facilitate informal talks – also known as backchannel talks – between members of the Panels if they are needed to get the formal talks started up again (CHD, 2019). Until October 2017 this was Elisabeth Slåttum, who was succeeded by Idun Tvedt (Placido, 2018a).

²² Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel, 10 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

²³ Presidents in the Philippines are elected for a term of six years and cannot be re-elected.

The structure of the negotiations is graphically represented in Figure 4.1. Both the GRP and NDFP have a group of delegates that participates in the peace negotiations, called Peace Panels or Negotiating Panels. “Formal talks” refers to discussions on the Panel level (NDFP Monitoring Committee, 2018). Below the Panels, a Reciprocal Working Committee (RWC) prepares a draft for the current phase of negotiations, which has been CASER since 1995. Once a draft is agreed upon by the RWC – give or take a few contentious issues – it is introduced on the Panel level for further discussion and to be finalized. To circumvent the sequential nature of the substantive talks, Reciprocal Working Groups (RWGs) were introduced under Duterte, allowing discussions on subsequent agenda items – PCR and EH/DF – to be held simultaneously, which could significantly speed up the process.²⁴

4.2 Time Period 1 – Start of Negotiations

Before his presidential bid, Rodrigo Duterte served as mayor of Davao for 22 years. He was known for his hardline stance and controversial methods in fighting crime and drug use, earning him the nickname “the Punisher” (BBC, 2019; Ressa, 2015). It was effective, as his mayoralty saw a marked drop in crime statistics. One of Duterte’s eccentricities was his relationship with the communists: He was once a student of Joma Sison and was on good terms with the NPA as mayor, regularly visiting them and speaking at their camps in Davao (Mogato, 2016; Sabillo, 2016b).²⁵ On 21 November 2015, Mayor Duterte announced his presidential campaign, one of his campaign promises being to end the 45-year communist insurgency through peace negotiations (BBC, 2016). The communists and Sison in particular openly supported his presidential run (Sabillo, 2016a), and afterwards even claimed they “got him elected.”²⁶

On 10 May 2016, Duterte won the Philippine national elections in a landslide victory (BBC, 2016). A week later, he invited Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel, to a public meeting in Davao, where they discussed the resumption of peace talks.²⁷ Duterte agreed to all of the NDFP’s requirements for the peace negotiations to resume – including the release of political prisoners – and even surpassed them by offering the Left four key positions in his cabinet and promising a general amnesty for political detainees.²⁸ In the following months, several prisoners were released by the GRP, which has been described as an unprecedented move that no other president had managed before.²⁹ During preliminary talks in Oslo, a joint statement was signed

²⁴ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel.

²⁵ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

²⁶ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant.

²⁷ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

²⁸ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

²⁹ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

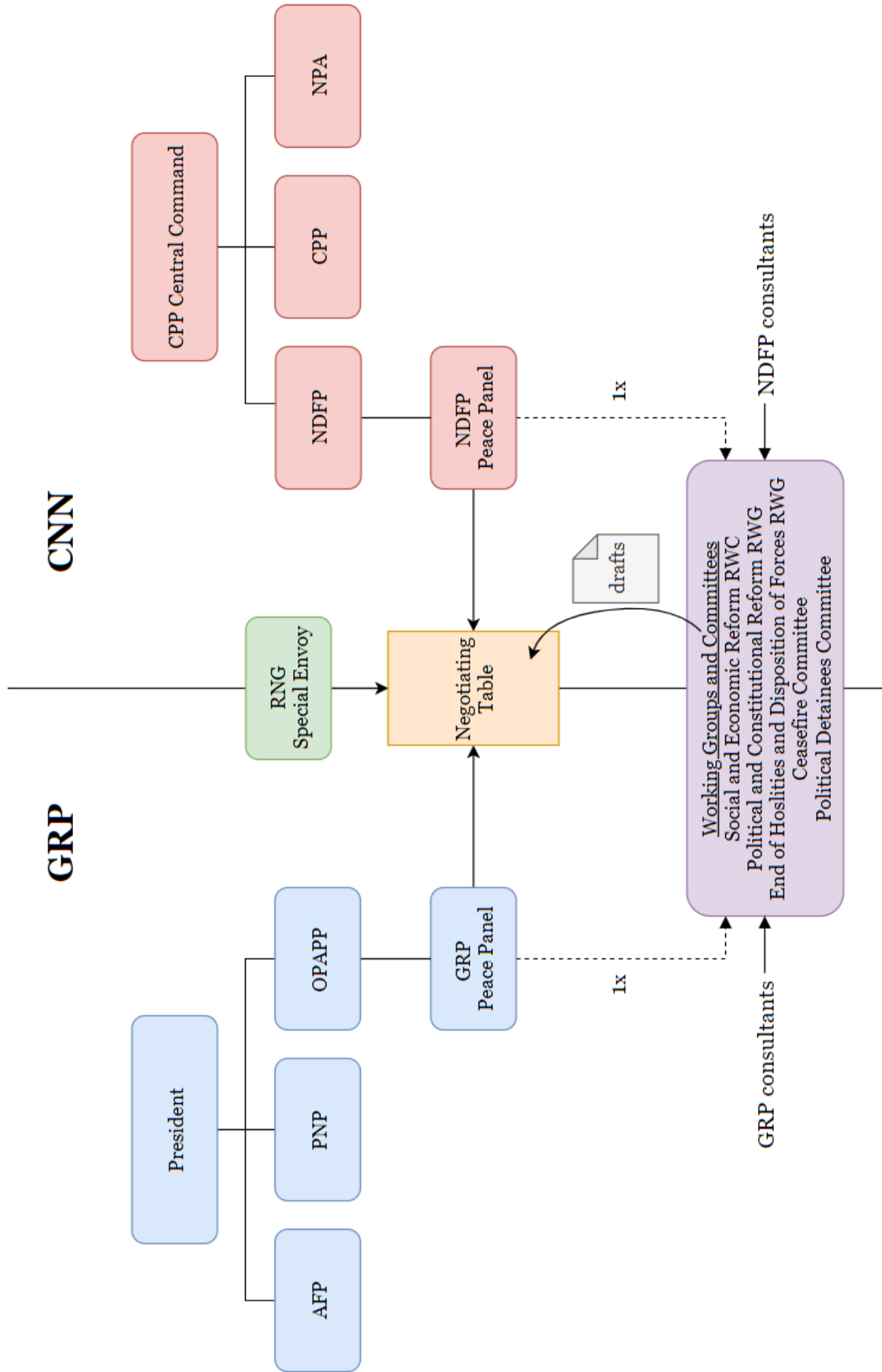


Figure 4.1 Structure of the formal peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the CPP/NPA/NDFP

agreeing on terms for the resumption of the talks (Winter, 2016a) and both sides came out with optimistic statements (Official Gazette, 2016b; Winter, 2016b). On June 30th, Duterte was sworn in as President of the Philippines, and by July 18th, Duterte had approved a peace and development agenda that included the accelerated timeline for the GRP-NDFP negotiations (Manulig & Salaverria, 2017).

During his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 25th, Duterte declared a unilateral ceasefire to provide an enabling environment for the peace talks, hoping that the communists would reciprocate (Official Gazette, 2016b). When the CNN did not meet his deadline, however, Duterte lifted the ceasefire (ABS-CBN News, 2016). In a later press briefing, he said:

“Along the way, it's always a rocky road. There is no negotiation that comes easy to us, especially given the turmoil of our country. We're hoping that we could just talk, maybe we did not understand each other. So, the best way is really to talk again and find out whether it is reachable or beyond our reach” (ABS-CBN News, 2016).

A month later, at the start of the first round of formal talks, the CPP declared a unilateral ceasefire and Duterte was quick to reciprocate (Rappler, 2016a; The Guardian, 2016b). The unilateral ceasefires held for 5 months, from August 2016 to February 2017, though both parties accused the other of conducting military operations and both the GRP and CNN believed the other side was benefitting militarily from the ceasefire (ABS-CBN News, 2017a; Fonbuena, 2018; Rappler, 2016b). During the ceasefire period, a second round of formal talks was held in October. Though both sides were satisfied with the progress made, in December 2016, Duterte said that he had given the communists too much, too soon by releasing their leaders from prison (Rappler, 2016b). This signaled a change in views by Duterte, and thus concludes the first time period.

4.3 Time Period 2 – Collapse of Negotiations

From 2017 onwards, the process became more and more strained. Amid complaints by the NPA that the AFP was violating the ceasefire (Manulig, & Salaverria, 2017), the NDF proposed a new timeline for the peace talks – an extension of 24 months – to which the government responded that it would stick to its initial goal of forging a peace deal by August 2017 (Fonbuena, 2017a; Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2017). Furthermore, during the third round of formal talks from 19 to 25 January 2017, fighting broke out between NPA and government troops (Mongaya, 2017). Within days of the incident, the CPP terminated its unilateral ceasefire. When several AFP soldiers were killed by suspected members of the NPA, Duterte became visibly upset (Bacungan, 2017) and on February 5th, he canceled the peace talks:

“I tried everything, I walked the extra mile, released prisoners, released their leaders so they can go to Oslo to talk, now they want 400 prisoners who fought the government under a rebellion released. That is only given after a successful talk. What is there to talk about *kung i-release ko sila?* [What is there to talk about after I release them all?]" (Nicolas, 2017)

After the cancellation of the formal peace talks, Duterte’s rhetoric changed. “Go ahead, flatten the hills,” he declared as he ordered the army and police to use all weapons against the NPA, meanwhile warning civilians of possible collateral damage (Mongaya, 2017). Despite his heated words, Duterte almost immediately set to work on getting the formal peace talks back on track. In March 2017, Duterte’s trusted aides conducted informal talks in the Netherlands, which led to the resumption of the fourth round of formal talks in April 2017.³⁰ However, the NPA was not the only group Duterte was in conflict with. On 23 May 2017, a conflict in Marawi started between the GRP and a terrorist group called Maute, causing Duterte to declare martial law on all of Mindanao (BBC, 2017; PhilStar, 2017). In a statement, Defense Secretary Lorenzana hinted that the martial law declaration might also be aimed at the NPA (Wakefield, 2017), to which the CPP responded by calling for intensified fighting by the NPA (Mangosing, 2017). Though the peace panels – who were already present in the Netherlands for the fifth round of talks – tried to convince their bases that this was a misunderstanding, the damage was done. In their opening statement, the GRP Panel announced that Duterte had withdrawn GRP participation in the fifth round of talks and ordered them home (Davao Today, 2017). Dureza cited the order for intensified attacks as the main reason for the president’s decision.

4.4 Time Period 3 – Repeated Initiation and Collapse

It has been up and down since then, with Duterte repeatedly resuming and terminating the peace negotiations. After the May 2017 cancellation, not much happened until October, when another series of informal talks was initiated and a new date was set for the fifth (5.2) round of talks in November 2017 (ABS-CBN News, 2017c). The parties were planning to initial a draft of CASER and agreements on general amnesty, the release of political prisoners, and coordinated unilateral ceasefires (‘House Resolution 1803’, 2018). However, two days before the talks, Duterte signed Proclamation 360 officially ending the peace talks, and two weeks later signed Proclamation 374, declaring the CPP/NPA terror groups, citing acts of violence and hostilities engaged in by the CPP/NPA/NDF and the rebels’ lack of sincerity (‘House Resolution 1803’, 2018; ABS-CBN News,

³⁰ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

2017c). Some have connected this decision to the death of a baby in an NPA ambush a few days earlier.³¹

Despite this setback, another series of backchannel talks took place from January 2018 onwards. This culminated in a public announcement by Duterte that he wanted to “give this another last shot” in April 2018 and the scheduling of the fifth (5.3) round of peace talks for 28 June 2018 (Colina, 2018a). The media was again filled with positive, optimistic statements by Duterte, his Peace Panel, and the NDFP, but the AFP did not share their positive outlook. Ultimately, and almost inevitably it seems, on June 14th Duterte canceled the talks again, claiming that he wanted to consult with “stakeholders on the ground” to make sure the peace agreement would have the public’s support (Manlupig, 2018; Placido, 2018b). The NDFP claimed that the military intervened and convinced Duterte to give the military strategy another try (Manlupig, 2018; MindaNews, 2018).³²

Moreover, though they do not meet the criteria of initiation and collapse set out in Chapter 3, there were two more notable changes in negotiating position. Another attempt was made to restart the informal talks as recent as March 2019, which ended in spectacular fashion when Duterte – a few days before his chief negotiators were scheduled to travel to the Netherlands – fired the entire GRP Peace Panel (Corrales, 2019; Guzman, 2019).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter intended to provide the requisite information to place in context the analysis presented in the following chapters. Based on the criteria of initiation and collapse defined in Chapter 3, eight clear-cut moments of initiation and collapse of the peace talks were identified. In the presentation of the analysis, I have opted to divide these eight moments into three time periods. This selection is far from random: Each period is analytically significant and helps structure the interpretations and explanations provided in the next three chapters on analysis. In each of these chapters, one of the above time periods is discussed and analyzed using (1) process-tracing of the rational readiness theory mechanism and (2) the grounded theory approach which resulted in mixed readiness theory. In sum, the chronology raises three new questions which Chapters 5-7 intend to answer: Why was Duterte so eager to negotiate with the communists in Time Period 1? Why did this determination falter in Time Period 2? And why did Duterte change his negotiating position so frequently in Time Period 3?

³¹ Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

³² Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview 11, member of a neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process, 10 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines. Interview 12, member of a neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

5. Time Period 1 – Start of Negotiations

“It started out very promising”³³

This chapter is the first of three to analyze the events described in Chapter 4, specifically those in Time Period 1. On June 30, 2016, the GRP changed its position about peace negotiations with the NDFP: Rodrigo Duterte’s inauguration as President of the Philippines meant a renewed vigor and motivation for ending the communist insurgency with a peace deal. The question remains why Duterte was so eager to negotiate with the rebels at the start of his presidency. This chapter intends to answer this question from two angles: rational readiness theory (RRT) and mixed readiness theory (MRT).

Section 5.1 applies rational readiness theory to Time Period 1. RRT hypothesizes that Duterte had different perceptions of the objective referents of readiness than outgoing President Aquino and therefore was willing to negotiate when his predecessor was not. The section discusses the process-tracing analysis conducted and presents evidence for and against the posited readiness mechanism in Time Period 1. Subsequently, in Section 5.2, the research discusses the reasons for Duterte’s initial willingness to negotiate identified by respondents and documents, to generate new insights. This grounded theory approach identifies a new factor that is argued to play an important part in bringing about Duterte’s readiness: attitudes. This section describes Duterte’s positive affective and cognitive attitudes about the communists, and argues they can explain his motivation and optimism – and thus his readiness.

5.1 Rational Readiness Theory

Rational readiness theory posits that Duterte’s initial willingness to negotiate was the result of different perceptions of objective referents than his predecessor. This would explain why there was a change in GRP negotiating position when Duterte assumed the presidency. As this is our starting point and we lack data on Duterte’s previous perceptions of the components, we will not assess changes yet. We will simply investigate whether the estimated “levels” of components correspond to their hypothesized levels. This is further explained as the results are discussed.

The method for conducting a theory-testing process-tracing analysis dictates the testing of each component of a theorized mechanism. Beach and Pedersen (2013, p. 5) argue that this is best presented as such, thus as a systematic and step-wise discussion of each test as opposed to a chronological narrative account. Therefore, this section first discusses the component motivation and each of its three antecedents, after which it does the same for optimism. Section

³³ Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

5.3, the chapter conclusion, provides a global assessment of how well rational readiness theory fits as an explanation of the developments in this time period.

5.1.1 Motivation

Motivation

The first component of the postulated mechanism is motivation. RRT hypothesizes that Duterte's high readiness is due to either high motivation, high optimism, or both. We will first assess the evidence for and against high motivation: In his public statements, Duterte repeatedly iterates his motivation to end the conflict. His first State of the Nation Address (SONA) sums this up perfectly, when he declared, "We will strive to have a permanent and lasting peace before my term ends. That is my goal. That is my dream" (Official Gazette, 2016b). Similarly, NDFP Chief Negotiator Fidel Agcaoili recounts that after the election, he was invited by Duterte to a prominent meeting in Davao. "Many people were there. But to his credit, he [Duterte] called for us as one of the first to meet him. [...] And he asked, I would like the peace negotiations to resume."³⁴ This again demonstrates Duterte's motivation to end the conflict.

Furthermore, most interviewees agree that he was genuinely motivated to end the conflict at the start of his presidency. Respondents from the GRP, NDFP, and international community (IC) alike³⁵ made statements such as "Duterte had the genuine intention to resolve the conflict,"³⁶ "Duterte wanted to revive the talks,"³⁷ and "the president seemed eager to resume negotiations."³⁸ Some on the NDFP side claim that Duterte's change of heart in Time Period 2 showed he was never actually interested in achieving peace, but part of a ploy to "hoodwink" the Left into a "negotiated capitulation."³⁹ However, this view is held by a minority of respondents and those that express this belief usually did so in response to the event descriptions of Time Period 2. When discussing the events of Time Period 1, they often made statements that would contradict their remarks in Time Period 2, saying that Duterte *was* motivated to reach a peace deal.

³⁴ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

³⁵ For example: Interview 1, member of international community working on the Moro peace process. Interview 10, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process, 8 April 2019, Makati, the Philippines. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

³⁶ Interview 10, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

³⁷ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel.

³⁸ Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

³⁹ Sources include, for example: Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

In conclusion, it seems that Duterte was genuinely motivated to end the conflict, which confirms the RRT hypothesis about the relation between motivation and readiness. This means we can proceed to look for evidence of the antecedents that can account for this motivation (according to the postulated mechanism). RRT hypothesized that high motivation can be caused by a perceived stalemate, high perceived cost and risk, or third-party pressure. These hypotheses are discussed step by step in the next subsections.

Perceived stalemate

The first antecedent of motivation in the hypothesized mechanism is the perception of stalemate, which contains elements of not being able to win or escalate the conflict. In the assessment of evidence in favor or against this component, Duterte's public statements certainly make it seem like he perceived a stalemate. In his first SONA, Duterte explicitly stated that "we are going nowhere" and "it is endless" (Official Gazette, 2016b). Interviewees in general did not concur.⁴⁰ As one of the NDFP technical advisers eloquently put it:

He [Duterte] had not shown anything in his political trajectory or behavior as mayor that he is not inclined to violence when it suits his purposes or it fits whatever objectives he has. [...] I think if anything, he's always been open to increasing the conflict.⁴¹

I am inclined to put more stock in Duterte's own words than the perceptions of others. However, as the evidence is ambiguous, Duterte's statements are not deemed sufficient to claim he had the perception of a stalemate. Thus, this hypothesis could not be confirmed.

Perceived cost and risk

The second antecedent of motivation is perceived cost and risk, the evidence of which we shall review next. RRT hypothesizes that Duterte's high motivation could be due to high perceived cost and risk. Duterte's public statements emphasize the costs and risks associated with the conflict regularly. In his first SONA, Duterte describes that the costs of the conflict are front and central in his mind, saying, "what I see instead are the widows and the orphans" and "no amount of cash assistance or the number of medals can compensate the loss of a human life" (Official Gazette, 2016b). He also emphasizes risks, stating that "it's getting bloodier by the day" (Official Gazette,

⁴⁰ Interview 9, former GRP official. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Edre Olalia, legal consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel, 22 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁴¹ Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

2016b). Interviewees either felt they could not estimate Duterte's perceptions of the conflict, or the question was not asked because the inductive questions and explanations became the focus of the interviews. In conclusion, there is some evidence that Duterte perceived high costs and risks, which – with due caution – indicates this hypothesis might be correct.

Third-party pressure

The third and final antecedent of motivation in RRT is pressure by powerful third parties to end the conflict. Documents show no hint of a powerful third party exerting influence over Duterte or the GRP in general to end the conflict. Data collection in interviews on this antecedent was quite extensive, and interviewees across the aisle concur with the documents that “there was no international pressure to end the conflict.”⁴² The only major party in favor of peace talks was the RNG, but as a member of the international community that worked closely with the RNG described, “It was a lonely process for the Norwegians.”⁴³ Furthermore, the interviewees do not describe the RNG as powerful, nor would exerting pressure benefit their role. One of the NDFP technical advisers said, “I wouldn't even call Norway a third force in that sense, because again, technically their role is just the mediator.”⁴⁴ When the negotiations went sideways in November 2017, the RNG was actually asked “to back off” by the GRP, signaling they did not have enough power to motivate the GRP to engage in peace negotiations.⁴⁵ Thus, the evidence disconfirms the hypothesis.

5.1.2 Optimism

Optimism

The second factor that influences readiness in the postulated mechanism is optimism. RRT hypothesizes that Duterte's high readiness could be the result of high optimism. The assessment yielded much evidence in favor of optimism: The term was often used in statements, media reports, and interviews to describe Time Period 1 as a whole (Arguillas, 2016; Cabuso, 2016; Dumaul, 2016; The Guardian, 2016b; Winter, 2016a).⁴⁶ For example, Secretary Dureza said on multiple occasions that the two sides were “very optimistic” that the peace talks would succeed,

⁴² Quoted remark: Interview 1, member of international community working on the Moro peace process. Concurring interviews are, among others: Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 9, former GRP official. Interview 10, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁴³ Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process.

⁴⁴ Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁴⁵ Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

⁴⁶ Interview 7, GRP employee, 3 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines. Interview 9, former GRP official. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 16, IC member with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

including in the opening speech of the first round of negotiations in August 2016 (The Guardian, 2016b; Winter, 2016a). This view was reflected by Sison, who was described as optimistic by a reporter, and said “prospects are bright” for the release of political prisoners, adding that he thought both sides were committed to the peace talks (Cabuso, 2016).

Furthermore, Duterte approved a 12-month timeline for forging the peace deal, and expressed his confidence that this was attainable, emphasizing that he wanted to use the remaining five years of his presidency to work on the implementation of the peace agreement (Arguillas, 2016; Official Gazette, 2016a). This seems like a strong indication that Duterte had faith that a final agreement would be possible. This confirms the RRT hypothesis of high optimism in Time Period 1, and thus allows for further assessment of the relationship between optimism and its antecedents: high perceived progress and low divergence of interest, high working trust, and valid leadership.

Perceived progress and divergence of interest⁴⁷

As the negotiations had not started at this point in time, the perceived progress component of this optimism antecedent is not relevant in this time period and cannot account for Duterte’s optimism. With the change in leadership from President Aquino to Duterte, there was, however, a notable change in divergence of interest: Duterte’s goals were much more aligned with those of the Left. In December 2014, a year and a half before he was elected president, Duterte insisted:

What Sison is after, I am after that also. We have a common program for action: real and national independence and territorial integrity, democratic empowerment of the working people – I want that also. Economic development through national industrialization, I want that too. (Eco, 2017)

This is just one of many instances where Duterte publicly aligned his goals with the communists. However, he does make a distinction. At a campaign rally in April 2016, he clarified “*ako sosyalista, hindi ako komunista. Kaming mga sosyalista, para kami sa tao* [I am a socialist, not a communist. We socialists are for the people]” (Eco, 2017). Interviewees agree with this view, claiming that Duterte was able to identify with the causes of the movement.⁴⁸ According to GRP Consultant Sedfrey Candelaria, Duterte, a former student of Sison, had a “close affinity with the advocacy of

⁴⁷ As discussed in Chapter 2, perceived progress and divergence of interest were combined as they were conceptually similar and data often overlapped.

⁴⁸ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

the CPP.”⁴⁹ In sum, the evidence confirms the RRT hypothesis of low divergence of interest as an antecedent of high optimism.

Working trust

The second optimism antecedent is working trust, which is defined as “a belief that the other party also wants to escape the conflict and has reasonable or flexible aspirations” (Pruitt, 2007, p. 1529). RRT hypothesizes a high level of working trust to account for the high level of optimism. In Time Period 1, Duterte made several public statements that convey the belief that the CPP/NPA/NDF wants to end the conflict as well. In his first SONA, he said “all of us want peace” (Official Gazette, 2016b) and in August 2016 he said he was “joining the Communist Party of the Philippines in its desire to seek peace for this nation” (Rappler, 2016a). Interviewees Agcaoili and Candelaria concur, saying trust was built between the parties during Duterte’s period as mayor of Davao.⁵⁰ In sum, there is evidence that Duterte had a high level of working trust, which confirms the RRT hypothesis.

Valid leadership

Finally, RRT hypothesizes a strong perception of the NDFP as valid leadership of the CNN to explain Duterte’s high level of optimism. For years, the GRP has claimed that there are divisions between the NDFP Peace Panel in the Netherlands and the CPP-NPA leadership in the Philippines, which the government alleged negatively impacted the peace talks (ICG, 2011; Walch, 2016). Bello, however, said it would not be a problem, as “our military intelligence has determined that the people we are talking to have almost complete control over forces in the Philippines” (Winter, 2016b). Furthermore, Duterte’s behavior is indicative of the view that the NDF Peace Panel and other negotiators were valid spokespersons. He invited them over repeatedly and publicly, thereby signaling his acceptance of their authority. Figure 5.1 shows one such event on 26 September 2016, when leaders of the NDF were invited to the Presidential Palace *Malacañang*. This evidence indicates that Duterte viewed the NDFP as valid leaders, which confirms the RRT hypothesis.

In conclusion, of the various RRT hypotheses, the majority was confirmed. However, the readiness components were much better at explaining Duterte’s increased optimism than his increased motivation for the peace negotiations. The next section argues how MRT can increase our understanding of Duterte’s readiness.

⁴⁹ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel.

⁵⁰ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel.



Figure 5.1 Duterte poses with various communist leaders and government representatives in Malacañang Palace on 26 September 2016 (credit: Malacañang Photo)

5.2 Mixed Readiness Theory

The inductive phase of this research yielded new insights into the possible antecedents of motivation and optimism. When asked to provide their own explanations of Duterte’s initial willingness to negotiate in Time Period 1, respondents often started by telling me about Duterte’s time as mayor of Davao.⁵¹ To them, this is significant, as it shows how Duterte developed a “personal connection” to the communists and their ideology. They claim it motivated him to pursue the issue of peace negotiations, and made him optimistic about the possibility of achieving peace. This is supported by analyses in the media (Fonbuena, 2017c; Mogato, 2016; Winter, 2016a). The term personal connection – as the interviewees took to describing it – was replaced by the psychological concept attitudes, with its affective component theorized as an antecedent of motivation and its cognitive component of optimism (see Chapter 2). How these concepts present themselves in the data is described in the following sections.

5.2.1 Positive Attitudes About CNN: Affective Component

The affective component of attitudes is argued to be an antecedent of motivation, and is simply described as feelings and emotions towards an attitude object. The attitude object discussed here

⁵¹ Most notably: Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

is the CPP/NPA/NDF. The most prominent indicator of positive affect in this case is friendship. Friendship is said to have both an emotional and cognitive component (Van Hoef, 2018), thus it can serve as an indicator of both the affective and cognitive components of attitudes. Specifically, Van Hoef (2018) approaches friendship as “an affective emotional bond between political actors” (p. 56), which supports the approach taken in this section on affect.

Several interviewees, whether affiliated with the GRP, NDFP or otherwise, claimed that Duterte had a fondness for the communists; that he was able to connect with them in a way that previous presidents could not.⁵² An NDFP consultant, for example, recounts how the resumption of formal talks was preceded by very friendly talks between Duterte and Sison.⁵³ Media reports at the time also described the relationship between Duterte and the communists as a friendship (Arguillas, 2016; Mogato, 2016; Sabillo, 2016b), and President Aquino III, Duterte’s predecessor, even warned voters that he might be a little too close to the Left (Sabillo, 2016b).

Duterte himself has never shied away from these assessments. He regularly made statements such as “*ito namang mga komunista, kaibigan kami* [these are communists, our friends]” (Eco, 2017), even encouraging the military – sworn enemies of the communists – “to be friendly with the forces [...] of the Communist Party of the Philippines” (Fonbuena, 2017c). These positive feelings are illustrated by Figure 5.2, which shows an upbeat Duterte shaking hands with a laughing Luis Jalandoni of the NDFP Negotiating Panel during a visit of the communists to Presidential Palace *Malacañang*.

In sum, the data strongly suggests that Duterte had positive feelings towards the communists. As Section 5.1.1 demonstrated that Duterte had high motivation for the peace negotiations, this is consistent with the proposed framework, which posits that the affective component of attitudes functions as an antecedent of motivation.

5.2.2 Positive Attitudes about CNN: Cognitive Component

The cognitive component of attitudes is argued to be an antecedent of optimism, and is simply described as beliefs about an attitude object. The attitude objects discussed here are the CPP/NPA/NDF and their ideology. The point argued here is that Duterte not only had positive feelings towards the communists, he also viewed them and their ideology positively. The

⁵² Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 9, former GRP official. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 14, peace advocate, 11 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines. Interview 15, peace advocate, 11 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁵³ Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.



Figure 5.2 Duterte shakes hands with NDFP Peace Panel member Luis Jalandoni during a meeting with various communist leaders and government representatives in Malacañang Palace on 26 September 2016 (credit: Malacañang Photo)

indicators of positive cognitions are: friendship, reflections in interviews, association, and positive descriptions by Duterte. First of all, the friendship evidence in favor of the affective component presented in the previous section also supports the cognitive component in this section.

Interviewees claim that Duterte viewed the CNN and their ideology positively.⁵⁴ In regard to ideology, GRP Consultant Sedfrey Candelaria, for example, states that Duterte was able to identify with the causes of the movement and that he had a close affinity with the advocacy of the CPP.⁵⁵ In fact, he recounts that Duterte was once Sison's student and that they were in the advocacy *together*, which certainly speaks to Duterte's views of the movement. Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP, narrates how in Duterte's time as mayor of Davao, he had positive relations with the local NPA. Agcaoili describes how there was not enough trust between the NPA and AFP to release prisoners of war held by the NPA. However, "they were released to him [Duterte], because at that time he was saying that he understood the roots, the causes of the

⁵⁴ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 9, former GRP official. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 14, peace advocate. Interview 15, peace advocate. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁵⁵ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel

rebellion."⁵⁶ This again implies how Duterte had a positive view of the communist group, because he had good relations with them, and their ideology, because he understood the roots. Agcaoili's statement also implies a level of association with the rebels, which is confirmed and illustrated by images of Duterte visiting NPA camps during his time as mayor (see Figure 5.3). This apparently happened quite frequently: He is regularly photographed visiting and speaking at NPA events, signaling he had positive views of the group and wanted to be associated with them (Caduaya, 2015; Sabillo, 2016b).



Figure 5.3 Duterte speaks at NPA camp as mayor of Davao City (source: Facebook)

In addition to inferences based on friendship and level of association, and the reflections of others on Duterte's views about the rebels, we can study how Duterte has described the rebels himself. The content of Duterte's speech patterns in Time Period 1 contains sympathetic views: A few years before becoming President, he stated that "I can't talk them out of their ideology. [...] You have to admit there's been historical injustice committed on the people" (Davao Today, 2013). More recently, in August 2016, he said that "you rebel because you want a better setup or a better life for the people" (Macas, 2016). Furthermore, he went on at length about the differences between rebels and criminals in an interview, emphasizing that rebels do not fight for personal gain but for a cause (Ressa, 2015). These are just a few examples of Duterte expressing positive views about the communists and their ideology. In sum, the data clearly indicates that Duterte had positive beliefs about the communists and their ideology. As Section 5.1.2 demonstrated that Duterte had high optimism about the outcome of the peace negotiations, this is consistent with

⁵⁶ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

the proposed framework, which posits that the cognitive component of attitudes functions as an antecedent of optimism.

5.3 Conclusion

At the start of this chapter, the postulated RRT mechanism hypothesized that Duterte's high readiness would be caused by high motivation or high optimism, which in turn would be caused by one or more of their antecedents. In Section 5.1, the high motivation hypothesis was confirmed, yet none of its antecedent could be convincingly demonstrated. The high optimism hypothesis was also confirmed, and congruent relationships with divergence of interest, working trust, and valid leadership were supported. Thus, RRT seems better at explaining Duterte's increased optimism than his motivation for the peace negotiations.

Section 5.2 discussed the grounded theory portion of the analysis, which yielded convincing data in support of the concept attitudes. Both the affective and cognitive components of positive attitudes were substantially supported by evidence from interviews, media reports, and statements. I argue this explains Duterte's motivation, whereas RRT could not, and improves our understanding of Duterte's optimism in Time Period 1. Though this is an interesting finding in and of itself, its relevance and value only seem to increase in the next time period, where it is argued that the development of negative attitudes about the communists spurred Duterte's decreased motivation and optimism. This proposed effect is amplified by the concurrent development of positive attitudes about the military and police, which are incompatible with the objective of a peace deal.

6. Time Period 2 – Collapse of Negotiations

“And then Duterte got angry.”⁵⁷

After discussing Duterte’s initial willingness to negotiate in Chapter 5, this chapter moves on to Time Period 2 and analyzes the events leading up to the collapse of the peace talks in May 2017. Despite the promising start to the negotiations, relations soured when both sides terminated their unilateral ceasefires and Duterte subsequently canceled the talks in February 2017 (ABS-CBN News, 2017a; 2017b; The Guardian, 2017). Though the peace talks were quickly revived in March, it wasn’t long before they collapsed again in May 2017, after which no formal round of peace talks was held (Davao Today). The question remains why, despite showing such enthusiasm for the talks in 2016, Duterte completely reversed his negotiating position in May 2017. This chapter attempts to answer this question from two perspectives: rational readiness theory (RRT) and mixed readiness theory (MRT).

In light of the events described in Chapter 4, Section 6.1 conducts a process-tracing analysis and presents evidence for and against the postulated RRT mechanism in Time Period 2. RRT hypothesizes that Duterte’s perceptions of the objective referents of readiness changed and became more negative, leading to decreased motivation and/or optimism, and thus a decrease in willingness to negotiate. Section 6.2 generates new insights as it present and analyzes the explanations of events provided by interviewees and documents. Whereas in Time Period 1, Duterte’s motivation and optimism were in part attributed to positive attitudes towards the communists, I argue that Time Period 2 saw the development of negative attitudes about the rebels and the development of positive attitudes about the military and police. These attitudes negatively affected the motivation for and optimism about the peace negotiations.

6.1 Rational Readiness Theory

Rational readiness theory posits that Duterte’s reduced willingness to negotiate resulted from negative changes in the objective referents since Time Period 1, which caused more negative perceptions. As in the previous chapter, this section presents a systematic step-by-step discussion of each antecedent of motivation (6.1.1) and optimism (6.1.2). A global assessment of how well RRT explains the change in negotiating position that defines this time period is provided in the chapter conclusion (6.3).

⁵⁷ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

6.1.1 Motivation

Motivation

RRT hypothesizes that Duterte's lowered readiness was due to either a decrease in motivation, a decrease in optimism, or both. Chapter 5 established that Duterte was highly motivated for the peace talks at the start of his presidency. We will now assess the evidence – public statements and interviews – for and against a decrease in this motivation. Public statements voicing Duterte's motivation to end the conflict through peace negotiations can be found throughout the second time period. For example, in December 2016, Duterte tried to convince his troops that negotiations were necessary, saying “we have to somehow end this war. This has been going on for 45 years” (Rappler, 2016b). Furthermore, in May 2017 Bello and the GRP said they “reaffirm our commitment and remain confident in winning our quest for lasting peace” (OPAPP, 2017). However, Duterte's conviction that negotiations are the solution seems to drop from February 2017 onwards, as he states that he has no choice but to continue fighting: “I really would like to express my sadness. We cannot have a peaceful generation. There will be always be fights. [...] But let it not be said that I did not try” (ABS-CBN News, 2017b).

Interviewees have diverging views. Representatives on the GRP side maintain that Duterte was still motivated to end the conflict, though perhaps not as enthusiastically as before,⁵⁸ whereas those on the NDFP side have increasing doubts about Duterte's motivation.⁵⁹ As NDFP Chief Negotiator Fidel Agcaoili thought at the time, “oh no, he's turning around.”⁶⁰ In conclusion, it seems that Duterte was still motivated to end the conflict, but not as much as before. This confirms the RRT hypothesis: Decreased motivation can account for Duterte's change in willingness to negotiate. This allows for further assessment of the relationship between motivation and its antecedents.

Perceived stalemate

The first antecedent of motivation is perceived stalemate, which Duterte's statements indicate was present in Time Period 1. RRT expects a decreased perception of a stalemate on Duterte's part, meaning that he would have increased faith in his ability to win the conflict through military means.

In a speech delivered on 9 March 2017, President Duterte said “I'm ready for all-out war, another 50 years” (PCOO, 2017a). This statement is as confusing to analyze as it is discouraging

⁵⁸ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁵⁹ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁶⁰ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

to those in favor of peace talks. Perceived stalemate refers to the perception that the conflict is not being won or of not being able to escalate the conflict further. The first part of Duterte's statement signals he is very much willing to escalate the conflict. This is confirmed in the rest of his speech, when he makes remarks such as "This time I'm using everything. [...] Make use of the rockets *kanang sa bomba* [and bomb them]" (PCOO, 2017a). This ties in with interviewees' assessments of Duterte's general character – more fully discussed in Chapter 5 – stating that "I think if anything, he's always been open to increasing the conflict."⁶¹ The second part of Duterte's statement, however, signals the perception of a stalemate. Though Duterte is willing and able to escalate the conflict, he seems to have little hope of winning it anytime soon. As these reflections on the perception of a stalemate seem ambiguous – though leaning towards a lowering of stalemate perceptions – it might be more meaningful to look at changes in context: changes in the objective referents that RRT argues form the basis of any stalemate perception.

A clear, objective change in Duterte's ability to escalate the conflict stems from his successful martial law declaration on the island of Mindanao on May 23rd, where the communist rebellion has a large presence (PhilStar, 2017). This granted the president the power to detain people for long periods without charging them with a crime and the power to use the military to enforce the law (BBC, 2017). This meant that from then on the GRP *could* escalate the conflict further and potentially win through military means. Upon observing this change in the objective referent, a rational decision maker would have a reduced stalemate perception. This is confirmed by another NDFP consultant, who said that Duterte and the AFP were at this point convinced they could crush the rebellion.⁶² Based on this evidence, it can be concluded that Duterte had a reduced stalemate perception, thus confirming the RRT hypothesis.

Perceived cost and risk

RRT would expect perceived cost and risk to decrease if it were to explain Duterte's reduced willingness to negotiate in Time Period 2. In his public statements, Duterte seemed both more and less bothered about the loss of life due to the conflict. He mourns every life lost to the communists and decries every NPA ambush, such as the attack on three unarmed soldiers in January, saying they were "killed like pigs" (MindaNews, 2017; The Guardian, 2017). His words have significance, as the February 2017 cancellation of the peace talks was a direct response to NPA attacks which cost the lives of his soldiers. At the same time, he seems unconcerned about the potential future human cost, saying "Go ahead, flatten the hills. [...] If there is a collateral damage, *pasensiya* [then sorry]" (Morallo, 2017), which is confusing to say the least and casts doubts over Duterte's willingness to incur costs in the conflict. Conversely, Duterte is not known

⁶¹ Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

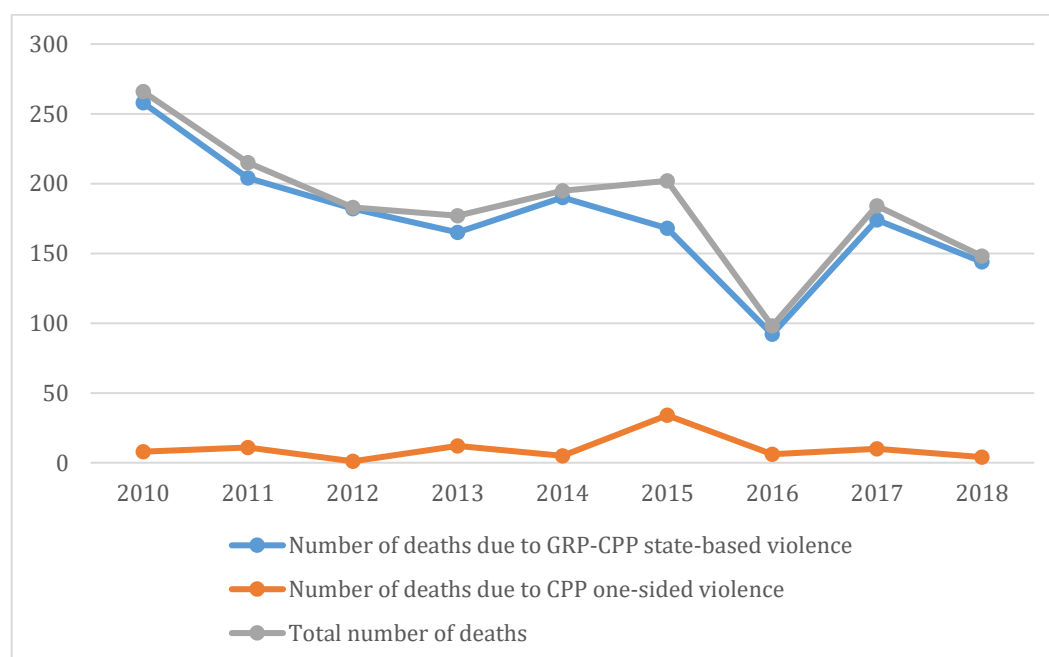
⁶² Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

to emphasize the material costs of the conflict. In fact, he only mentions resources as part of his promises of revenge, such as “this time I’m using everything” (PCOO, 2017a). This evidence is rather ambiguous: Duterte seemed to have both an increased and decreased perception of the costs of the conflict. As with the previous readiness component, it may prove fruitful to examine objective referents.

Perceived cost is one of the few components that has a tested, quantitative operationalization of an objective referent. In a quantitative study aimed at developing a solid measure for perceived cost, Schrodt, Yilmaz, and Gerner (2003) found that perceived cost could be inferred by measuring the actual human cost of the conflict. According to the Uppsala Conflict Database Program (UCDP, 2019), the total number of deaths due to the GPH-CPP/NPA/NDF conflict decreased from 202 deaths in 2015 to 98 deaths in 2016 (see Figure 6.1). This marked drop of over 50 percent is most likely due to the ceasefires, which went into effect in August 2016. RRT argues that a rational decision maker would observe the reduced cost of the conflict and conclude that negotiations are not as important. Thus, as readiness theory would predict, this drop in perceived costs could have led to a drop in Duterte’s motivation and thus in his willingness to negotiate.

In sum, Duterte’s statements yield ambiguous evidence of perceived stalemate, yet the objective referent “number of casualties” confirms the RRT hypothesis about the relation between perceived costs and motivation and readiness.

Figure 6.1. *Number of deaths in the GRP-CNN conflict, 2010-2018 (UCDP, 2019)*



Third-party pressure

Finally, RRT would hypothesize a decrease in third-party pressure, which would reduce motivation to engage in peace negotiations. However, document analysis did not yield any evidence of such a change, and statements by interviewees about the absence of third-party pressure pertained to all three time periods (see Section 5.1.1). As there was no apparent change in this antecedent, it cannot explain Duterte's decreased motivation or readiness in Time Period 2.

6.1.2 Optimism*Optimism*

The second factor that influences readiness in the postulated mechanism is optimism. RRT hypothesizes that Duterte's reduced readiness could be the result of a drop in his optimism compared to Time Period 1. Analysis found that, however often the term 'optimistic' was used to describe the moods of the GRP and NDFP in Time Period 1, this was not the case in Time Period 2. Though there is the odd instance of Sison claiming he is optimistic about signing the CASER within a year (Nazareno, 2017), this was often reported in contrast to the dominant pessimistic outlook at the time. Furthermore, media reports and statements made by GRP officials and Duterte himself do not mention optimism, which – considering the generous use of this term at the start of the negotiations – it is reasonable to expect they would continue to do if it were still true. Additionally, Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel, said clashes between the NPA and AFP in 2017 "soured the atmosphere" and reduced optimism.⁶³ These are strong indications of decreased optimism in Time Period 2, thus confirming the RRT hypothesis. This allows for further assessment of the relationship between optimism and its antecedents.

Perceived progress and divergence of interest

With regard to the first antecedent of optimism, RRT hypothesizes a negative view of perceived progress and an increased divergence of interest, to explain the reduced optimism. Perceived progress was not applicable in Time Period 1, but divergence of interest was shown to be low starting out.

Document analysis suggests that, objectively, quite some *progress* was made on the substantive points in the peace process, most notably with regard to negotiating a draft CASER (NDFP Monitoring Committee, 2018). This finding is supported by statements in news reports (Geducos & Ocampo, 2017; Nazareno, 2017) and interviews.⁶⁴ For example, an NDFP consultant

⁶³ Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁶⁴ Interview with Coni Ledesma, member of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society

recounts how the GRP unexpectedly submitted their draft proposals for CASER and PCR in December 2017.⁶⁵ As these proposals were more similar to the NDFP's than expected, this was cause for optimism on the communist side and prompted Sison to declare that on the basis of these drafts they should have negotiations that are non-adversarial. He added that they could aim to sign CASER by the end of the year and PCR could follow shortly after (Nazareno, 2017).

However, for a president who had imposed a 12-month deadline for signing a final peace deal, the progress attained in 6 months was likely a letdown. The media frequently reported on Duterte's frustration in not being able to hammer out a ceasefire (Cruz, 2017; Fonbuena, 2017c). Moreover, Sedfrey Candelaria of the GRP, claims that Duterte was rather ambitious at the start of the negotiations and suggested that the pace of the negotiations, the slower track they were constitutionally forced into,⁶⁶ and the falling apart of the unilateral ceasefires "may have also influenced the president's perception of how fast and how quick he can do things in the process. [...] There were expectations that perhaps may not have been satisfied within a certain timeframe."⁶⁷

With regard to *divergence of interest*, Duterte included four new conditions for the reinstatement of the unilateral ceasefire in April 2017 (Geducos & Ocampo, 2017), such as the NPA ending the collection of "revolutionary taxes" and renouncing any territorial claims the rebels have made in the past, saying "that's crazy," the NPA has no territory (Alconaba, 2017). Furthermore, he claimed that he had given the rebels "too much, too soon" and was no longer willing to follow up on previously made promises regarding prisoner releases (Rappler, 2016b). This signals a clear increase in divergence of interest: Duterte moved his goalposts up, further away from the communists, whose goals remained the same.

In sum, divergence of interest increased, which is in line with the RRT hypothesis. On the other hand, objectively, one could claim that progress was made in the negotiations, which should lead a rational actor to be more optimistic about the success of negotiations. However, from interviews and public statements it appears that Duterte's perception of progress was quite negative. Though this objective referent does not support a rational interpretation of Duterte's

organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 14, peace advocate. Interview 15, peace advocate. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 21, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel, 25 April 2019, Quezon City, the Philippines.

⁶⁵ Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁶⁶ Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel and Dean of the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law, explained in our interview that Duterte was interested in fast-tracking changes to the constitution. However, in a 2009 landmark case entitled *North Cotabato vs. the GRP Panel*, it was decided that any proposed changes to the constitution must pass through the appropriate mechanisms of constitutional change, which the GRP Panel cannot bypass. This forced the government panel into a track that was more cautious.

⁶⁷ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel.

thought process, the account of his perceptions support the hypothesized link between perceived progress and divergence of interest and optimism. This inconsistency is further discussed in Section 6.2, where I argue MRT's non-rational component attitudes provides a more satisfactory explanation of Duterte's decision making.

Working trust

Apart from substantive components such as progress and divergence of interest, working trust is said to influence optimism. Pruitt describes this antecedent as an evaluation of the adversary as a negotiation partner: Do they want to escape the conflict and are they flexible enough to do so? RRT would hypothesize a decrease in working trust to explain the decrease in Duterte's optimism in Time Period 2. At the start of the negotiations, Duterte's working trust was high. However, by May 2017, Duterte no longer thought the communists wanted to escape the conflict. Through his spokespersons, he declared that the CPP's order for intensified attacks should be interpreted as a sign that the communists were not interested in reaching a peace agreement: "It betrays the absence of sincerity of the CPP in the negotiation table" (Davao Today, 2017). Furthermore, Duterte questioned the CNN's flexibility as early as December 2016:

Gusto nila 130 na naman ang i-release ko. Sabi ko, [They want me to release 130 more prisoners. I told them,] 'No, I cannot.' As a matter of fact, I conceded too much, too soon. [...] Nandiyan, ipinalabas ko na 'yung mga lider ninya, lahat na, nandoon nan ga sa Norway eh. [Their leaders have already been released, they even went to Norway.] What more do you ask of us? (Rappler, 2016b)

Indeed, GRP Consultant Rene Sarmiento explained that the NPA attacks against government forces changed the atmosphere in Time Period 2 and made Duterte question the rebels' sincerity.⁶⁸ Based on this evidence of reduced perceptions of sincerity and flexibility, the RRT hypothesis is confirmed.

Valid leadership

The third antecedent of optimism is valid leadership, which RRT would expect to deteriorate if it were to explain decreased optimism. At the start of the negotiations, Duterte had a positive view of the NDFP as valid leadership. By May 2017, however, the GRP's opening statement during the fifth round of talks – talks which they immediately withdrew from – cited concerns about "the public admission of some panel members of the CPP/NPA/NDF leaders that they have no control

⁶⁸ Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

over their forces on the ground” (Davao Today, 2017), an accusation the NDFP vehemently denies. This was reflected in the interviews, with a sharp contrast between answers by the GRP and IC,⁶⁹ whom decidedly expressed concerns about the CNN’s internal cohesion and leadership, and the NDFP and CSO groups,⁷⁰ whom were convinced this was not true and used as an excuse by the GRP to end the negotiations.⁷¹ Due to the varying accounts of Duterte’s perceptions of the validity of the NDFP leadership and the inability of this research to ascertain whether these were rationales or rationalizations, I would be uncomfortable drawing inferences about this component. Thus, the evidence is considered inconclusive; the RRT hypothesis could not be confirmed.

On the whole, RRT can arguably account for Duterte’s change in negotiating position, but it was striking how frequently objective referents and perceptions did not line up. This indicates that his thinking was not always rational. In this light, we now focus our attention once more on MRT and the non-rational components it contributes to our analysis.

6.2 Mixed Readiness Theory

The inductive phase of this research provided alternative explanations for Duterte’s reduced willingness to negotiate in May 2017. Whereas respondents collectively pointed to Duterte’s time as mayor of Davao to explain his initial willingness to negotiate, they now point to “Marawi” to explain his termination of the peace talks.⁷² They argue Marawi was significant, because the CPP order for intensified attacks caused Duterte to feel betrayed by the Left *and* because he grew fonder of the military as they supported him in this difficult time. Both of these

⁶⁹ Interview 1, member of international community working on the Moro peace process. Interview 9, former GRP official and current member of the IC. Interview 10, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 22, former OPAPP official and current member of the IC, 26 April 2019, Pasig City, the Philippines. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁷⁰ Interview with Coni Ledesma, member of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 14, peace advocate. Interview 15, peace advocate. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 21, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁷¹ Though not immediately relevant to this research, the similarity between the IC and the GRP perspective and overlap between the NDFP and CSO perspectives was quite interesting. Respondent 9 mentioned that it is commonplace for GRP and IC employees to switch between organizations, even referencing them as a “hiring pool,” which could explain why they share narratives and interpretations of events. This respondent was a perfect example, having worked for both OPAPP and two INGOs.

⁷² Most notably: Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

explanations tie to the attitudes component of mixed readiness theory. Section 6.2.1 argues this “betrayal” exemplifies that Duterte developed negative attitudes about the CNN, which negatively affected his willingness to negotiate. Section 6.2.2 first argues the aforementioned “fondness” signifies that Duterte developed positive attitudes about the AFP and PNP. Second, it establishes that positive views about the AFP and PNP are incompatible with pursuing peace talks, thus reducing Duterte’s willingness to negotiate.

6.2.1 Negative Attitudes About CNN

Affective component

The affective component of attitudes is simply described as feelings or emotions towards an attitude object. MRT argues that the observed decrease in motivation in Time Period 2 can be attributed to the development of negative feelings towards the CNN and their ideology. Despite the positive emotions Duterte exhibited at the start of his presidency, his later statements indicate negative feelings. Journalist Carmela Fonbuena reported that “there are those who believe that the CPP’s decision to withdraw its ceasefire declaration in February 2017 caused Duterte to turn against them. He supposedly saw it as a ‘betrayal’ of his own friends” (Fonbuena, 2017c). Furthermore, during a visit to the wake of police officers who were killed in an alleged NPA ambush, journalist Audrey Morallo describes how “a visibly upset and angry Duterte urged the army to ‘go ahead, flatten the hills’” (Morallo, 2017). These reflections on Duterte’s emotions are supported by an interview with the NDFP chief negotiator, who said “Duterte got angry” when fighting resumed in February 2017.⁷³

By May 2017, after the orders of intensified attacks by CPP, it appears Duterte had had enough. At Duterte’s instructions, his representatives issued statements detailing his feelings of betrayal, accusing the CPP of making “a false reading of the intents of President Duterte,” “despite the personal show of goodwill and trust that the president” had shown, and of a “grossly distorted appreciation” of the president, and “at the very least, it was an insult to the candor and genuineness displayed by the president” (Davao Today, 2017; OPAPP, 2017).

In short, there is ample evidence that by the end of Time Period 2, Duterte had developed negative feelings – or an affective attitude characterized by negative valence – towards the communists. According to MRT, this can account for Duterte’s subsequent drop in motivation and readiness.

⁷³ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

Cognitive component

The cognitive component of attitudes refers to beliefs about an attitude object. MRT argues that the observed decrease in optimism in Time Period 2 can be attributed to the development of negative beliefs about the communists. In Time Period 1, Duterte had a positive view of the CPP/NPA/NDF, but from December 2016 onwards, Duterte grew noticeably frustrated with the rebels. It started subtle, with statements such as “their leaders have already been released [...] What more do you ask of us?” (Rappler, 2016b). By May 2017, Duterte’s rhetoric had changed significantly. Whereas in Time Period 1 Duterte earnestly explained the differences between rebels and criminals to reporters (Ressa, 2015), he currently spoke of the “outlawed CPP/NPA/NDF” (Davao Today, 2017) and their “abetting the criminal and terror acts” of other groups in Marawi (OPAPP, 2017). This so-called demonization of the CNN took various forms, such as accusing them of “ideological cannibalism” (Fonbuena, 2017c), but is perhaps best illustrated by an interview Duterte gave after his second SONA, when he went on at length about his dislike of the communists. His unprompted tirade lasted for more than 2,000 words, calling the NPA “rats,” Sison a “bastard,” and saying such things as “just kill them,” before finally asking the reporter, “Any question?” (PCOO, 2017c). Another telling example of Duterte’s changed views is shared by Fidel Agcaoili:

And because Marawi happened, he wanted us to join him in the fight against ISIS. [...] And we offered. And then he changed his mind. He said, ‘oh no, you might only shoot at my soldiers in the back.’⁷⁴

In sum, it appears that Duterte had developed a negative cognitive attitude about the CNN. This fits with mixed readiness theory, and would explain Duterte’s reduced optimism and thus readiness in Time Period 2.

6.2.2 Positive Attitudes About AFP/PNP

This section first details how Duterte arguably developed positive feelings and beliefs towards the AFP and PNP in Time Period 2. This functions as the basis for its second part, where it is established that these positive attitudes are incompatible with peace negotiations. As the military and police are opposed to peace talks and bear animosity towards the communists, I argue that these positive attitudes negatively affected Duterte’s willingness to engage in peace negotiations.

It is important to note that, up to this point, affective and cognitive attitudes have been discussed separately, as they are theorized to influence readiness via the pathways of motivation

⁷⁴ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

and optimism respectively. Therefore, it was pertinent to emphasize the difference between the two concepts in the analysis. However, as we delve deeper into the dynamics of attitudes and discuss topics such as attitude compatibility and attitude ambivalence, the distinction between affect and cognition becomes less important. From now on, discussions will treat attitudes as one concept, allowing us to concentrate instead on its aspects and dynamics.

Attitudes

I argue that in Time Period 2, President Duterte developed positive attitudes (feelings *and* beliefs) towards the military and police. Whereas the Marawi events cause Duterte to feel betrayed by the Left, they had the opposite effect with regard to the AFP and PNP. When asked about the most important factors that caused Duterte to terminate the peace talks, Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel, said:

[...] I think the reaction from the military and the police. Because the military and the police are important stakeholders in this government, in this administration. So especially after the Marawi incident, the military played an important role. The military and the police started to have a spot, a place in the heart of President Duterte.⁷⁵

Not only does this statement describe how Duterte's affection for the AFP and PNP grew, it links this positivity to his decision making about the termination of talks in Time Period 2. Sarmiento was far from the only one to make this connection, with NDFP consultants, and members of civil society and the IC agreeing.⁷⁶ Furthermore, in his second State of the Nation Address (SONA) in July 2017, Duterte expressed his "unwavering support and commitment to the soldiers of our Armed Forces and the members of our police force" and on a more emotional note added, "I am here [in Marawi] because my soldiers are here and I came here to die also" (PCOO, 2017b).

Additionally, two interviewees suggested Duterte grew closer to the police and military due to the war on drugs.⁷⁷ Duterte faced constant criticism from civil society groups, the international community, media and political opponents (Morallo, 2017; Muggah, 2017; Takumi, 2017; The Guardian, 2016a), but the military and police supported him in this, which the

⁷⁵ Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁷⁶ Interview with Coni Ledesma, member of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁷⁷ Interview 15, peace advocate. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

respondents believe made Duterte grateful and “beholden” to the AFP and PNP. Furthermore, Duterte’s anger whenever soldiers or policemen were attacked is indicative of positive attitudes towards them. Duterte often visited wakes of soldiers and pinned medals on the survivors, ranting against the NPA when he could (Fonbuena, 2017c; PCOO, 2017a; Ranada, 2016). In fact, Duterte’s cancellation of the negotiations in February 2017 was in response to the deaths of three unarmed soldiers in an alleged NPA ambush (MindaNews, 2017). In sum, the grounded theory approach yielded evidence indicating that Duterte developed positive attitudes towards the AFP and PNP in Time Period 2.

Incompatibility of attitudes

Then how did positive attitudes about the military and police influence Duterte’s willingness to engage in peace negotiations? Finally, I argue that positive attitudes about the military and police are incompatible with peace negotiations, as the AFP and PNP are opposed to peace talks and consider the communists their sworn enemies. This would negatively affect Duterte’s willingness to engage in peace negotiations.

It is not hard to imagine that during their 50 years of fighting each other, the AFP/PNP and CNN developed animosity towards one another. The communist leaders Duterte so generously set free at the start of his term are the same leaders that the military and police spent years finding and capturing. This point is emphasized by interviewees across the aisle, also adding that Duterte actively worked to “convince the AFP that military force is not the solution.”⁷⁸ This is supported by the media, who describe the CNN-AFP/PNP relationship as diametrically opposed to one another (Mogato, 2016) or calling them “sworn enemies” (Fonbuena, 2017c).

From the outset, Duterte acknowledged that accommodating the Left would be hard for the military and police, saying “*alam ko masakit so inyo ‘yan* [I know this process is painful for you]. [...] I am just doing it for the sake of my country” (Rappler, 2016b). To the communists he was just as clear, for example when he told them, “*Huwag n’yo akong ipitin* [Do not coerce me] because the military might not like it. And then the military would oust me, would kill me, [and] you have nobody talking to you” (Capistrano, 2017). Such statements not only demonstrate that engaging in peace negotiations was incongruent with positivity about the military – or else there would have been no need to be apologetic – they show that Duterte was acutely aware of their incompatibility. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that an increase in positive attitudes about

⁷⁸ Quotation: Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Other sources: Interview 10, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel.

the AFP and PNP led to a decrease in Duterte's willingness to engage in peace negotiations and thus can contribute to an explanation of why Duterte terminated the peace talks in May 2017.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to explain Duterte's complete reversal in negotiating position in May 2017 from the perspectives of RRT and MRT. Though the evidence was at times ambiguous, I conclude that rational readiness theory can explain the decrease in President Duterte's willingness to negotiate rather well. Based on objective referent information, Duterte's reduced motivation can be linked to a concurrent drop in perceived stalemate and in perceived cost and risk. Optimism appears to have diminished due to perceived progress and divergence of interest, and decreased working trust. Though RRT can arguably account for Duterte's change in negotiating position, it was striking how frequently objective referents and perceptions did not line up. This indicates that his thinking was not always rational.

Mixed readiness theory concludes that, in the same way that positive attitudes about the communists increased Duterte's willingness to negotiate in Time Period 1, negative attitudes about them decreased his willingness in Time Period 2. Additionally, the positive attitudes Duterte developed about the military and police were incompatible with pursuing peace talks, thus also contributed to Duterte's changed negotiating position in May 2017. In light of these promising findings, the next chapter moves on to a deeper analysis of MRT and the complex dynamics of Duterte's attitudes in Time Period 3.

7. Time Period 3 – Repeated Initiation and Collapse

“Since then it was flip-flopping”⁷⁹

This chapter analyzes the events in the third and final period of the selected timeframe. Whereas the previous chapters focused on one specific change in negotiating position, this chapter analyzes a *pattern* of sudden changes in negotiating position. In October 2017, backchannel talks started up again, but in November 2017, two days before the fifth round of formal talks was scheduled to start, Duterte issued Proclamation 360, officially terminating the peace talks (Official Gazette, 2017). Nevertheless, in April 2018, Duterte asked his Panel to work on the resumption of talks. The fifth round was scheduled for 28 June 2018, but on the 14th Duterte called it quits again (Manlupig, 2018; Placido, 2018b). Additionally, in March 2019 informal talks were scheduled, which were cancelled abruptly when Duterte fired the entire GRP Peace Panel on March 21st,⁸⁰ a mere three days before they were to arrive in the Netherlands and discuss the resumption of formal talks (Corrales, 2019).⁸¹ The question remains why Duterte changed his mind so frequently after the termination of the peace negotiations in May 2017.

This pattern seems hard to explain using rational readiness theory: Is it plausible that objective referents fluctuated so often during this time? Would a rational actor change his mind this often? Time Period 3 saw no ceasefire terminations, no martial law declarations, nor other major events that could be linked to changes in for instance perceived stalemate or the objective costs of the conflict. Instead, I argue that different forces in the GRP were influencing Duterte’s negotiating position to suit their own purposes. As such, this chapter does not perform a step-by-step process-tracing analysis, but describes the potential application of rational readiness theory as a chronological narrative account. This is to illustrate the difficulty of finding evidence connecting perceptual changes – or objective reasons that could have caused such changes – to Duterte’s changes in negotiating position. Instead, the focus of analysis shifts to the grounded theory analysis that formed the basis for mixed readiness theory. Section 7.2 discusses how the events of this time period uniquely illustrate how attitudes can be influenced to bring about short-term behavioral changes.

⁷⁹ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁸⁰ Technically, the March 2019 changes in negotiating position do not meet this study’s criteria of initiation and collapse, because no formal talks were scheduled and canceled (see Chapter 3). However, these instances are included in this chapter, as they contribute to the discussion of Duterte’s frequent changes in willingness to negotiate.

⁸¹ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

7.1 Rational Readiness Theory

RRT posits that Duterte changed his mind frequently because there were equally frequent changes in the objective referents of his readiness perceptions. It would thus argue that it was rational to start negotiations in October 2017, end them in November 2017, start them in April 2018, end them in June 2018, start them in January 2019, and end them in March 2019. This seems unlikely, but supporting this suspicion with evidence would require six separate process-tracing analyses, which would exceed the scope of this research. Instead, I opt for a description of the changes in negotiating position and a brief overview of important events or other changes that could rationally have impacted Duterte's readiness.

In October 2017, Duterte changed his negotiating position by initiating secret informal talks. Interviewees could not explain this change and the only major event to occur around this time was the end of the Marawi conflict (ABC News, 2017). However, in contrast to the start of the Marawi conflict in May 2017, its end cannot be said to have increased Duterte's stalemate perception. Objectively, his ability to escalate the conflict increased in May due to his successful martial law declaration on Mindanao, potentially explaining his decreased willingness to negotiate. However, the reverse cannot be said about the end of the Marawi conflict, as the martial law declaration was still in effect until 31 December 2017 (Santos & Garcia, 2017). In fact, the event may have lowered his stalemate perception as it freed up military resources.

In November 2017, Duterte canceled the planned formal talks by issuing Proclamation 360 (ABS-CBN News, 2017c). In this case, a clear event precipitated and likely influenced Duterte's decision: the death of a four-month-old baby in an NPA ambush (Romero, 2017; Saliring, 2017).⁸² Duterte said the ambush called into question the sincerity of the rebels – equivalent to the optimism antecedent working trust – and expressed his doubts of their “commitment in pursuing genuine and meaningful peace negotiations as it engaged in acts of violence and hostilities” (Official Gazette, 2017). At first glance, it appears that RRT has potential to account for this change in negotiating position.

In April 2018, Duterte wanted to “give this another last chance” (Colina, 2018a). Duterte's statements indicate that he was optimistic about the negotiations (Mallari, 2018), yet no clues were found to indicate a change in rational optimism antecedents, nor were any major events identified that would logically influence these antecedents. Alternatively, Section 7.2.5 finds evidence that the non-rational antecedent of optimism, attitudes, did play a role around this time.

In June 2018, Duterte said “let's reset” (Manlupig, 2018), providing no other reason for canceling the talks than he wanted to make sure the proposed agreements would be supported by stakeholders on the ground (Placido, 2018b). However, the CPP believes the blame lies with a

⁸² Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

new military plan presented to Duterte days before the cancellation (MindaNews, 2018). In it, the military claims they could defeat the communists in three to six months. If true, this indicates a decrease in *perceived stalemate*, which could account for lowered motivation and thus a change in negotiating position on Duterte's side.

In March 2019, another round of informal talks was scheduled.⁸³ Again, no preceding events plausibly connected to this change in negotiating positions could be identified. However, this time not even the informal talks proceeded: Days before their departure, Duterte fired his entire Peace Panel, effectuating another change in negotiating position (Corrales, 2019; Guzman, 2019). The only event that could be connected to these events is the resignation of peace advocate Dureza as the head of OPAPP, and the appointment of former AFP Chief Galvez (OPAPP, 2018; Ranada, 2018a). I argue that it is likely that Galvez intervened at this point to stop the informal talks. This influence of Duterte's advisers cannot be adequately explained by RRT, whereas the proposed MRT model can provide insights into this dynamic.

7.2 Mixed Readiness Theory

Though RRT in all likelihood cannot adequately explain Duterte's frequent changes in negotiating position, I argue that MRT can account for them particularly well through the use of the attitudes component. This argument is structured as follows: Section 7.2.1 provides the building blocks of the dynamics analysis, by establishing that Duterte simultaneously had positive attitudes about the CNN, negative attitudes about the CNN, and positive attitudes about the AFP/PNP. Section 7.2.2 argues that the simultaneous existence of positive and negative attitudes about the CNN caused attitude ambivalence. Section 7.2.3 argues that the simultaneous existence of positive attitudes about the CNN and positive attitudes about the AFP/PNP caused attitude incompatibility. Section 7.2.4 explicates how attitudes can be influenced to bring about short-term behavioral changes. Section 7.2.5 concludes by presenting several cases of attitude manipulation by the doves and hawks in Duterte's cabinet.

7.2.1 Attitudes About CNN and AFP/PNP

Negative attitudes about CNN

Since the negotiations were terminated in May 2017, the discourse between the GRP and CNN – and more specifically between Duterte and Sison – has been described as a “word war” (Fonbuena, 2017c; Mendez, 2018; Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2018).⁸⁴ Whereas in his first State of

⁸³ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁸⁴ Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

the Nation Address, Duterte expressed hopes of one day loving one another, by his second in July 2017, he said:

“This bully, you know I had dinner with them *sa* [in] Bayan. *Itong* [This] NDF because I used to be friends really with the NDF. I was crossing ideological borders before. *Ako’yung nakakapasok sa teritoryo* [I was in the territory] and we were friends really. But times have changed [...]” (PCOO, 2017b).

In this statement, Duterte explicitly describes a variation in his thinking between Time Periods 1 and 3. Duterte also took to branding the communists as “terrorists” and “criminals,” a significant shift, as Duterte has stated several times from 2015 onwards that rebels were much better than criminals because they fight for an ideology, not for their own personal gain (ABS-CBN News, 2017c; Placido, 2017; Ressa, 2015). He even formalized this distinction when he signed Proclamation 374, officially designating the CPP/NPA as terrorist organizations. Furthermore, in January 2018, he stressed that his former friends had become “so arrogant” (Arguillas, 2018a) and in February 2019 claimed that the NPA – of whom 40 percent are gay, if Duterte is to be believed – abused his son (Orellana, 2019). In another display of contempt, he told former communist soldiers that “we will shoot you in the vagina” (Ellis-Petersen, 2018). This demonstrates that Duterte had negative attitudes about the CNN in Time Period 3.

Positive attitudes about CNN

Though Duterte’s rhetoric about the CNN during this time was mostly negative, he also displayed signs of positive thinking about the communists. In April 2018, he said: “*Magkaibigan tayo, alam ng buong Pilipinas ‘yan. Alam ng military, alam ng pulis* [We are friends, the entire Philippines knows. The military knows, the police knows]” (Colina, 2018a). Similarly, in October of 2018, Duterte credited the rebels for helping win the presidency, again declaring “I don’t want to fight with you. I also don’t want to kill you. We are friends” (Calapano, 2018). What is striking, is that Duterte does not display some middle ground here, some moderation in his views. Instead, he seems to revert back to the positive views that dominated in his time as mayor and at the start of the negotiations. This signals that, in addition to negative attitudes, Duterte had positive attitudes about the communists as well.

Positive attitudes about AFP/PNP

With regard to the military, GRP Consultant Rene Sarmiento’s statement about the most important factors that caused Duterte to terminate the peace talks is telling:

I think the attacks. I think the reaction from the military and the police. Because the military and the police are important stakeholders in this government, in this administration. So especially after the Marawi incident, the military played an important role. The military and the police started to have a spot, a place in the heart of President Duterte. They became important allies. The leadership of President Duterte, when they are complaining [the president] gives them a listening ear, [a] sympathetic ear.⁸⁵

This interpretation is corroborated by the president's public statements. In his 2017 SONA, Duterte rather formally reiterated his "unwavering support and commitment to the soldiers of our Armed Forces and the members of our police force" (PCOO, 2017b). Furthermore, in the SONA's seemingly unscripted parts – when he speaks Tagalog and narrates personal experiences – he confirms this view, saying "I am here [in Marawi] because my soldiers are here and I came here to die also" (PCOO, 2017b). In the years after, Duterte would refer to the AFP as "the best armed forces of the world and of the universe" (PCOO, 2018a) and express his "special fondness for the military for being fundamentally honest and industrious" (CNN Philippines, 2019b; Ocampo, 2018). He even went as far as telling his soldiers that he was "very happy. I'd like to embrace you. I really love you as a human being. *Talagang mahal ko kayo* [I really love you]" (CNN Philippines, 2019b). His statements of positivity are backed up by the positions he affords its members. By the end of 2018, a third of Duterte's cabinet consisted of retired military men (Ranada, 2018b). All in all, there are clear indications that Duterte had positive attitudes about the AFP and PNP in Time Period 3.

7.2.2 Attitude Ambivalence

The simultaneous existence of positive and negative attitudes about the communists (the same attitude object) is classified as attitude ambivalence (Bassili, 2008; Conner & Armitage, 2008; Wood, 2000). This refers to a situation in which two attitudes about the same attitude object have opposing influences on behavior. This inconsistency leads to competition between the attitudes, and as a result the impact of one (or both) on behavior is reduced. Which attitude prevails over the other and why is explained in Section 7.2.4; this section focuses on establishing ambivalence. Research points out that ambivalence can cause unpredictable behavior (Bell & Esses, 1997; Jonas, Broemer & Diehl, 2000), which in Duterte's case, features two indicators: First, the alternation between very positive and very negative statements about the CNN. This would reveal that Duterte did not modify his attitudes to some middle ground, but has two attitudes that take

⁸⁵ Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

turns informing his statements and behavior. Second, the relatively quick succession of these alternations. This is important, because an attitude is by definition “relatively enduring” (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005), therefore, from changes in swift succession we can infer that Duterte did not change his attitude in the interim.

Placing Duterte’s statements in chronological order shows the sharp contrast in his positions. For example, on November 23rd, 2017, he branded the communists terrorists and criminals (ABS-CBN News, 2017c), on December 5th he officially declared the CPP/NPA a terrorist organization (Placido, 2017), on December 8th he made conciliatory statements, saying it was “just a disagreement” (Fonbuena, 2017c), and days later he demonized the CPP in another of his speeches (Fonbuena, 2017c). Similarly, in 2018, Duterte called the communists arrogant and told the military to “destroy the NPA” in January (Arguillas, 2018a; 2018b), called them his friends and resumed formal negotiations in April (Colina, 2018a), canceled the planned talks in June (Manlupig, 2018; Placido, 2018b), called them his friends again in October (Calapano, 2018), called the NPA pitiful in November (Colina, 2018c), before announcing he had invited NDFP leaders Agcaoili and Jalandoni over for informal talks three days later (Colina, 2018c). This sequence of events clearly shows that in Duterte’s statements and behavior, positive and negative evaluations of the communists alternate (indicator one) and that these changes follow each other quickly (indicator two). Thus we can conclude that Duterte had ambivalent attitudes towards the communists.

7.2.3 Attitude Incompatibility

In addition to attitude ambivalence, Section 7.2.1 established the simultaneous existence of positive attitudes about the CNN and positive attitudes about the AFP and PNP, which can be classified as attitude incompatibility (Young & Fazio, 2013). This refers to a situation in which two attitudes about different attitude objects have opposing effects on behavior and are therefore in competition.

One need not look far to find evidence that the AFP/PNP and CNN are not on great terms. On the CPP’s 50th anniversary last December, AFP spokesperson Noel Detoyato said, “There is nothing to celebrate. What’s there to celebrate? Fifty years of atrocities? Fifty years of lies, violence and killings of innocent people?” (ABS-CBN News, 2018). This is far from the only instance of accusations and insults flying between the AFP and CNN. In February 2018, when a member of an AFP auxiliary force was beheaded, AFP public affairs chief Emmanuel Garcia said the NPA’s action was “proof of the numerous atrocities [...] and barbarism that is comparable to the Abu Sayyaf and Daesh-inspired Maute terrorists who behead their helpless victims” (Mangosing, 2018a). NPA regional spokesperson Montero said the NPA had nothing to do with the killing and claimed the accusation was “a big lie and a desperate move” intended to hide the

AFP's own involvement (Mangosing, 2018a). "It is a planned move by the AFP to destroy the unity of the Lumad and wreak havoc in the area," Montero added (Mangosing, 2018a). The PNP, though not as vocal as the AFP, has made similar remarks, calling the CNN "terrorists" and accusing them of waging a "campaign of terror and oppression against the peasants, and tribal communities in the countryside" (SunStar Philippines, 2019). The CNN have responded in kind, accusing the AFP and PNP of "concocted stories," and using government-financed return programs to enrich themselves by coming up with a list of "ghost NPA surrenderees" and pocketing the money (Mangosing, 2018b).⁸⁶

It is thus unsurprising that onlookers have come to the conclusion that the AFP/PNP and CNN are enemies. The media has described the parties as "sworn enemies" (Fonbuena, 2017c; Mogato, 2016), a view that was confirmed by the majority of respondents.⁸⁷ Even Duterte acknowledged their antagonism, telling the military and police, "*alam ko masakit so inyo 'yan* [I know this process is painful for you]. [...] I am just doing it for the sake of my country" (Rappler, 2016b), and warning the communists not to ask too much of him in the negotiations, saying, "*Huwag n'yo akong ipitin* [Do not coerce me] because the military might not like it. And then the military would oust me, would kill me, [and] you have nobody talking to you" (Capistrano, 2017). In sum, we can conclude that the AFP/PNP and the CNN were enemies, thus creating a situation of attitude incompatibility.

7.2.4 Attitude Dynamics

Attitude dimensions

The analysis proceeds with a discussion of relevant factors that influence which of these conflicting attitudes most impacts behavior. *Attitude strength* – how resistant an attitude is to challenges and how durable it is over time – is an important factor that determines which attitude prevails over another: Stronger attitudes have a more powerful impact on behavior (Petty & Krosnick, 1995; Bassili, 2008; Howe & Krosnick, 2017). Attitude strength is influenced by factors such as personal relevance, the intensity and frequency of experiences with and knowledge of the attitude object, and certainty that the attitude is correct (Lavrakas, 2008; Petty & Krosnick, 1995;

⁸⁶ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 14, peace advocate. Interview 15, peace advocate. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

⁸⁷ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 9, former GRP official. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 14, peace advocate. Interview 15, peace advocate. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Edre Olalia, legal consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

Howe & Krosnick, 2017). In an attempt at persuasion, others can attempt to influence attitude strength, for instance by repeating a message or presenting new instances that support or contradict the held attitude.

Attitude salience – how easily an attitude comes to mind – is the most important factor for our analysis, because, of the factors determining the outcome of attitude competition, salience is most subject to change (Rocklage & Fazio, 2017). Salient attitudes have a more powerful impact on behavior (Starzyk et al., 2009; Mirels & Dean, 2006; Young & Fazio, 2013), and attitude salience is influenced mainly by recency and frequency (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2005; Higgins, 1996). Thus, the more recently someone thought of or was presented with information about an attitude, the more salient and accessible it is. The same goes for frequency: The more often an attitude is recalled, the more salient the attitude becomes.

It is important to note that salience – in contrast to attitude strength – is a *short-term dimension* and therefore less stable. It is far easier to affect a person’s attitude salience – through persuasion, for example – than it is to affect their attitude strength (Petty & Krosnick, 1995; Schwarz & Bohner, 2001). However, as it is less stable, effects of persuasion through attitude salience are also less durable than if one were to successfully influence attitude strength.

Units of influence

Based on the observations in this case, I identified three “units” that affected these dimensions: events, surroundings, and people. *Events* can influence attitude strength by providing new instances of congruent information and they can influence attitude salience by activating a related attitude. In the case of Duterte, events feature prominently in his decision making, as his changes in negotiating position are often preceded by a major event. I argue that in Time Period 3, these events activated matching attitudes, thus increasing their salience and their influence on Duterte’s behavior. For example, I argue that when in November 2017 a baby died in an NPA ambush, this activated Duterte’s negative attitudes about the CNN, increasing their influence on decision making, and leading him to terminate the peace talks.

Surroundings are argued to be important, as environmental exposure triggers memories that are linked to attitudes, which are activated through association. In the case of Duterte, his surroundings strongly influence his rhetoric. In front of military personnel, Duterte tends to be highly critical of the CNN, proclaiming “destroy the NPA” (Fonbuena, 2017c) and accusing them of “ideological cannibalism” (PCOO, 2017a). Conversely, when he called the communists his friends in October 2018 – amid many instances of negativity about them – he was visiting Davao, the place where he as mayor developed his good relations with the NPA (Calapano, 2018; Eco, 2017). I argue was the result of surroundings increasing the salience of congruent attitudes.

An alternative explanation for the influence of surroundings is that Duterte made the strategic choice to tailor his speech to his audience to placate them or gain their support. However, I argue this does not fit the data as well for three reasons: First, these events with their varying surroundings are highly publicized, thus their impact is not confined to that setting, making it a poor strategic choice to base one's entire demeanor and rhetoric on the part of the audience you can immediately see. Second, the alternative interpretation of strategic choices stands on its own and explains one aspect of the case, whereas the current interpretation of attitude salience fits within a larger context of attitudinal influences which explain a wide range of Duterte's behaviors. Third, Duterte only started showing this behavior halfway through Time Period 2, when this research claims attitude ambivalence and incompatibility started developing. If it were a rational strategy, he would not have spent considerable energy in Time Period 1 pleading with the military not to be angry with him for engaging in the peace negotiations (Rappler, 2016b), but would have framed it as a ploy to trick the communists: something the AFP/PNP would have much preferred to hear.

Finally, *people* can influence attitude strength and salience through persuasion and exposure, which both activate an accompanying attitude. This research found considerable evidence that people play an important role in attitude dynamics in this case, it repeatedly being referenced in media reports, statements, and interviews (see Section 7.2.5). I have opted to discuss events and surroundings briefly in the previous paragraphs. However, as the role of people is the key issue of Time Period 3, it is discussed more extensively in the next section.

7.2.5 Doves and Hawks

In Time Period 1 and to a certain extent Time Period 2, Duterte was referred to as "his own man" and a "strong-willed person" who makes his own choices (BBC, 2019; Geducos, 2017).⁸⁸ However, in Time Period 3, interviewees increasingly discuss the influences of others on his decision making in the context of the peace negotiations. When asked why Duterte changed his mind at any point in Time Period 3, most respondents shrugged and said, "I don't know why he canceled the talks,"⁸⁹ or used various ways to describe the influence of Duterte's advisers: "forces of gravity"⁹⁰; "pushing and pulling in the GRP"⁹¹; not all decisions came from Duterte⁹²; or simply "doves and hawks."⁹³ Doves and hawks is a common metaphor, with doves representing those in

⁸⁸ Interview with Sedfrey Candelaria, consultant to the GRP Peace Panel. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁸⁹ Interview with Coni Ledesma, member of the NDFP Peace Panel. Also: Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁹⁰ Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁹¹ Interview 21, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

⁹² Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

⁹³ Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel.

favor of peace talks – most notably Dureza (head OPAPP) and Bello (chair GRP Panel) – and hawks representing those against peace talks, typically those connected to the army or police. This section identifies some of the strategies employed by said doves and hawks to influence Duterte’s negotiating position.

Año’s daily incident reports

After the collapse of the GRP and NPA ceasefires in February 2017, Eduardo Año, a veteran intelligence officer, began sending Duterte daily incidents reports of every fight, collection of revolutionary taxes, and burning of equipment committed by the NPA (Fonbuena, 2018). Rappler, a news outlet whose investigative journalism uncovered the system, reports that “as he received one military report after another, Duterte’s resolve and commitment to his longtime allies began to crumble” (Fonbuena, 2018). If Año sought to systematically target Duterte’s attitude strength and salience, this plan was a masterstroke. As mentioned, attitude strength is influenced by the number of congruent experiences with the attitude object. Through this system, Año was shifting the odds against the CNN and by extension the peace talks by systematically presenting him with negative information about the communists. It follows that Duterte’s negative attitudes about the CNN became stronger from February 2017 onwards.

Furthermore, this arrangement can be said to have influenced attitude salience through recency and frequency. Frequent exposure to negative information about the CNN will have made them much more salient. Moreover, the systematic daily presentation of this information also effectively targeted recency: It would have been hard to find a moment when Duterte was not recently exposed to negative information. Consequently, Duterte’s negative attitudes about the CNN were also made more salient. Though it is doubtful Año deliberately intended to influence attitude strength and attitude salience, he likely intuited the effects his plan would have on Duterte’s negotiating position, thereby effectively undermining the peace talks.

Doves: Dureza and Bello’s appeals

Apart from basic strategies targeting recency and frequency, an often-used strategy was persuasion. Duterte’s attitude ambivalence in particular made him susceptible to this, as “people with ambivalent attitudes [...] are more likely to yield to persuasive arguments” (Bassili, 2008, pp. 241-242). At various points in time, the media, interviewees, and statements identified the negotiators as the ones who initiated or propagated the talks (Arguillas, 2018a; Fonbuena, 2017c; Guzman, 2019; Palatino, 2017).⁹⁴ Admittedly, these claims frequently originate from the NDFP

⁹⁴ Interview with Coni Ledesma, member of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13,

side, but they are supported by several members of CSOs, the IC and even by Duterte himself. For example, an interviewee with a facilitative role in the negotiations claimed the decision to resume talks in April 2018 did not come from Duterte, but was initiated by Dureza.⁹⁵ A CSO member furthermore claimed that at several points in time, “the doves gained the upper hand.”⁹⁶ Similarly, in 2017, a news report describes how in February, despite Duterte’s inclinations, “negotiators were able to revive the talks” and in November “negotiators from both sides worked hard to save the talks even as the word war [between Duterte and Sison] and the clashes on the ground escalated” (Fonbuena, 2017c). In both cases, the GRP’s initiative is placed with Dureza and Bello instead of Duterte. Indeed, in a January 2018 interview, Duterte describes how Dureza and Bello “came to me several times. I said I’m not in the mood for love and talks” (Arguillas, 2018a).

In April 2018, their efforts seemingly paid off when – despite objections from the military – Duterte directed the GRP Peace Panel to work on the resumption of formal talks (Colina, 2018b). The announcement came after a meeting with Dureza and Bello, seen in Figure 7.1 in a huddle with President Duterte, who had been holding informal talks with the communists to lay the groundwork for a potential next round of negotiations. The image appears to support the presumed dynamics: When Duterte is surrounded by the doves in his cabinet, he does want to negotiate, arguably due to increased salience of positive attitudes about the CNN. Ultimately, their attempts came to a rather dramatic end when in December 2018, Dureza resigned as head of OPAPP amid allegations of corruption in the department (Arguillas, 2018c; Ranada, 2018a), and when in March 2019, Duterte fired his entire Peace Panel – Bello included – and said he was “no longer entertaining any interventions or moves to persuade him to change his mind” (Guzman, 2019). Especially this last statement by Duterte is solid evidence that in Time Period 3, Bello and Dureza attempted to influence their president to restart the peace negotiations.

Hawks: The AFP intervenes

If the doves were repeatedly trying to persuade Duterte by reminding him of the positive aspects of the negotiations and of the CNN in general, why did no formal talks take place in this period? The answer might be simple: They were not the only ones trying to persuade Duterte. In November 2017, Bello and Dureza worked hard to save the talks, but they were canceled nonetheless. Joma Sison claims that the military prevailed upon Duterte to terminate the

consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 19, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Edre Olalia, legal consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 21, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁹⁵ Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process.

⁹⁶ Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process.



Figure 7.1 Duterte is in a huddle with Silvestre Bello III and Jesus Dureza prior to a cabinet meeting at the Malacañang Palace on 4 April 2018 (credit: Ace Morandante/Presidential Photos)

negotiations.⁹⁷ Similarly, in June 2018, Bello and Dureza had managed to schedule another round of talks, yet two weeks out, Duterte canceled them again, citing his wish to consult with stakeholders on the ground (Manlupig, 2018; Placido, 2018b). A CPP statement claimed this was after “being briefed on the status of *Oplan Kapayapaan* [a military plan] in a meeting with the top brass of the AFP and defense officials” (MindaNews, 2018). From this a pattern emerges: Every time formal talks are in the offing, they are canceled a few days prior.

Interviewees across the aisle – though this point is more vigorously argued by the NDFP side than the GRP, IC, and CSO sides – argue that in these cases, the hawks swoop in to change Duterte’s mind.⁹⁸ One of the NDFP consultants observes that “every time the talks are terminated, this is preceded by a meeting with his generals.”⁹⁹ The consultant further claimed that the AFP and PNP convinced Duterte to use the military solution, an assessment that is supported by CSO members who labeled the AFP “spoilors.”¹⁰⁰ Sison concurs, adding that certain retired generals

⁹⁷ Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant.

⁹⁸ Interview with Coni Ledesma, member of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Jose Maria Sison, CPP founder and NDFP chief political consultant. Interview with Fidel Agcaoili, chief negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview 15, peace advocate. Interview 16, member of international community with a facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 18, technical consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel. Interview with Rene Sarmiento, member of the GRP Peace Panel.

⁹⁹ Interview 13, consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel.

¹⁰⁰ Interview 11, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process. Interview 12, member of neutral and independent civil society organization working on the GRP-NDFP peace process.

are the most influential in Duterte's major decisions regarding the Left (Fonbuena, 2018). Indeed, Duterte confirms heeding their counsel, stating, "I do not own the Republic of the Philippines. I do not decide alone. I consult people, particularly the military" (ABS-CBN News, 2017b). In sum, the persuasive strategies employed by the doves were strong enough to convince Duterte to initiate the talks, but could not overcome the strategies employed by the hawks, whose arguments in the end more effectively targeted Duterte's the strength and salience of negative attitudes about the CNN.

Duterte's cabinet composition

As time wore on, the influence of the military on Duterte grew. Journalist Fonbuena writes that "the commander in chief has come to depend more on the military for his key decisions and firefighting moves" (Fonbuena, 2018). This is reflected in the composition of Duterte's advisers. Whereas at the start of his presidency, Duterte promised to appoint four left-leaning individuals to his cabinet, by 2019 none of them remained (Maru, 2019). In fact, the composition of his overall cabinet has shifted significantly. In a 2018 end-of-year review article, journalist Pia Ranada presented her views on the "militarization" of Duterte's cabinet:

Of the roughly 30 members of the Duterte Cabinet, 9 are retired military men and one is an ex-police official – or a 3rd of the Cabinet. Many of them are former military chiefs. [...] Several times in the year, Duterte found it necessary to explain his preference for former military men when it comes to government work. Military men, unlike "bureaucrats," never debate with him, he said. They are action men who will execute orders faithfully and promptly. (Ranada, 2018b)

Another telling example is when dove Dureze resigned as the head of OPAPP in December 2018, he was replaced by Carlito Galvez Jr., a former chief general of the AFP who previously accused Sison and the CPP of masterminding the "Red October" plot that aimed to oust Duterte (Fonbuena, 2018; OPAPP, 2018). Similarly, in March 2019 – days before they were set to travel to the Netherlands for informal talks – Duterte terminated the appointment of his Peace Panel in favor of a local approach (Corrales, 2019; Guzman, 2019). Local peace panels were formed, consisting mostly of military personnel, raising suspicions from peace advocates that the move is a "prelude to a more intensified militaristic solution" (Roxas, 2019). In April 2019, Duterte considered reconstituting the GRP Peace Panel on a national level, but said it would have to include at least 3 military officials (Regalado, 2019).

I argue that, as Duterte is increasingly surrounded by hawks, the views he shares with them – that the CNN is bad and the AFP/PNP is good – have become more salient through

increased exposure. Meanwhile, the absence of persuasive appeals by Dureza and Bello has most likely negatively affected the strength and salience of Duterte's positive views about the communists. This could explain why attempts to restart the peace negotiations have become less frequent and less durable. The last real attempt to restart the negotiations was interrupted before the informal talks could commence, whereas past attempts were usually undercut before a formal round was set to take place. All in all, it seems that the hawks are consolidating their grip on Duterte's decision making in the peace negotiations.

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter examined the frequent changes in Duterte's negotiating position after the termination of the peace negotiations in May 2017, and argued that rational readiness theory could not reasonably explain the erratic events of Time Period 3. Instead, it appeared that a specific combination of attitudes created a situation in which Duterte was vulnerable to short-term persuasion by events, his surroundings, and most importantly his advisers. It is crucial to remember that these could not be "ordinary" persuasive strategies. Such persuasion depends on attitude *change*, whereas Section 7.2.2 demonstrated that Duterte's changes were too frequent to be alterations. Instead, he maintained both his positive and negative attitudes about the CNN and switched between them, which is why we speak of short-term persuasive appeals that do not fundamentally alter the content of the attitudes in question.

As a final point, this chapter took a detailed approach and focused on a combination of attitudes that enabled certain dynamics, because they were relevant to this case in this time period. The foundation of MRT, however, remains that affective attitudes influence motivation for peace negotiations, and cognitive attitudes influence optimism about the outcome of negotiations. All in all, attitudes and its many facets could make sense of the tumultuous events in Time Periods 1, 2, and 3.

8. Conclusion: Emotions in Readiness Theory

This research set out to fulfil two objectives: The first to provide evidence for or against a newly synthesized model of readiness theory, the second to uncover new components that influence readiness. These goals are combined in the main question guiding this thesis:

How have motivation and optimism facilitated or impeded the willingness to negotiate of the GRP with the CPP/NPA/NDF since Rodrigo Duterte was elected President of the Philippines in mid-2016?

This research proposes a simple answer to this question: Motivation and optimism, and thus readiness, are influenced by both rational and emotional factors. Together, they can account for Duterte's willingness to negotiate by on the hand emphasizing objective elements – such as policy goals that were far more similar to those of the communists – and on the other hand highlighting subjective elements, such as his long-time friendship with the adversary. Arriving at this answer, however, was anything but simple.

8.1 Mixed Readiness Theory

Pursuant to the first objective, a chronology of the many events of this case was created, the most important changes in negotiating position were selected, and two process-tracing analyses were conducted. The findings indicate that rational readiness theory is valuable, but not sufficient to understand President Duterte's fluctuating willingness to negotiate. To meet the second objective, a grounded theory method was employed from which new concepts emerged that challenge the framework's rational choice premises. A case was made to abandon the dichotomous interpretation of decision making as either rational or emotional, and to include non-rational components on the same level of the framework.

Consequently, this research presented mixed readiness theory, which includes the non-rational component attitudes. Three distinct time periods in the negotiations were analyzed to explore the relevance and potential explanatory value of this concept. In Time Period 1, I argued that Duterte's initial willingness to negotiate was the result of positive attitudes towards the communist rebels. I explained the cancellation of peace talks in Time Period 2 through the development of negative attitudes about the communists and positive attitudes about the military and police. In Time Period 3, I argued that Duterte's frequent changes in negotiating position were a symptom of attitude incompatibility and attitude ambivalence, which rendered Duterte susceptible to persuasion by the doves and hawks in his cabinet, who prevailed upon attitude strength and attitude salience to influence Duterte's willingness to engage in peace negotiations.

Based on these findings, we can perform a first assessment of mixed readiness theory using Glaser's (2002) six criteria for evaluating a grounded theory study.¹⁰¹ First, the attitude concept is a good *fit* for the findings, as it is closely related to the incidents and pattern it represents. Second, it is *relevant* as RRT could not explain certain aspects of this case. MRT offers a new explanation to a phenomenon that is of practical interest: Duterte's frequent changes in negotiating position. Third, the theory possesses *workability*, as it explained the events of this case particularly well and with great variation. Fourth, the addition of attitudes is *parsimonious*, as it took no more than one central concept to explain the many variations in Duterte's behavior.

In sum, with regard to RRT, the research efforts have both improved its focus by developing and successfully applying a synthesized model of the framework, and contributed a new empirical case supporting the validity of readiness theory, using a rigorous methodology. More importantly, the research proposes a fundamental shift in thinking when it comes to leadership decision making by including non-rational components in the framework. The resultant model of mixed readiness theory (see Figure 8.1) scores well on Glaser's criteria of fit, relevance, workability and parsimony.

8.2 Limitations and Future Research

The assessment of MRT using Glaser's criteria revealed two weaknesses in the current research, regarding modifiability and scope. However, before discussing how these manifested and could be addressed in future research, it is important to restate the limitations stemming from *access*. This research could have benefited from more interviews with the GRP and RNG. As it is, the research relies heavily on two interviews GRP negotiators and tries to supplement this with interviews with former GRP officials and official statements issued on government websites. However, it is possible that due to the abundance of information from the NDFP side, their views may be represented more prominently in this research. Nevertheless, in my estimation, this has a limited bearing on the development of the MRT model, as such a theoretical perspective neither helps nor hinders either party in the conflict.

In the interest of Glaser's criteria, *modifiability*, one might reconsider the relevance of third-party pressure. The principle of modifiability dictates that cases that do not fit the theory should result in the modification of that theory. The component third-party pressure was not found to be an important factor in this case. However, this research is limited in its ability to disconfirm the validity of this component. If subsequent research indicates that this factor is indeed of secondary importance, it should thus be removed from the RRT/MRT models.

¹⁰¹ These six criteria are fit, relevance, workability, parsimony, modifiability, and scope (Glaser, 2002). Modifiability and scope are discussed in Section 8.2 Limitations and Future Research.

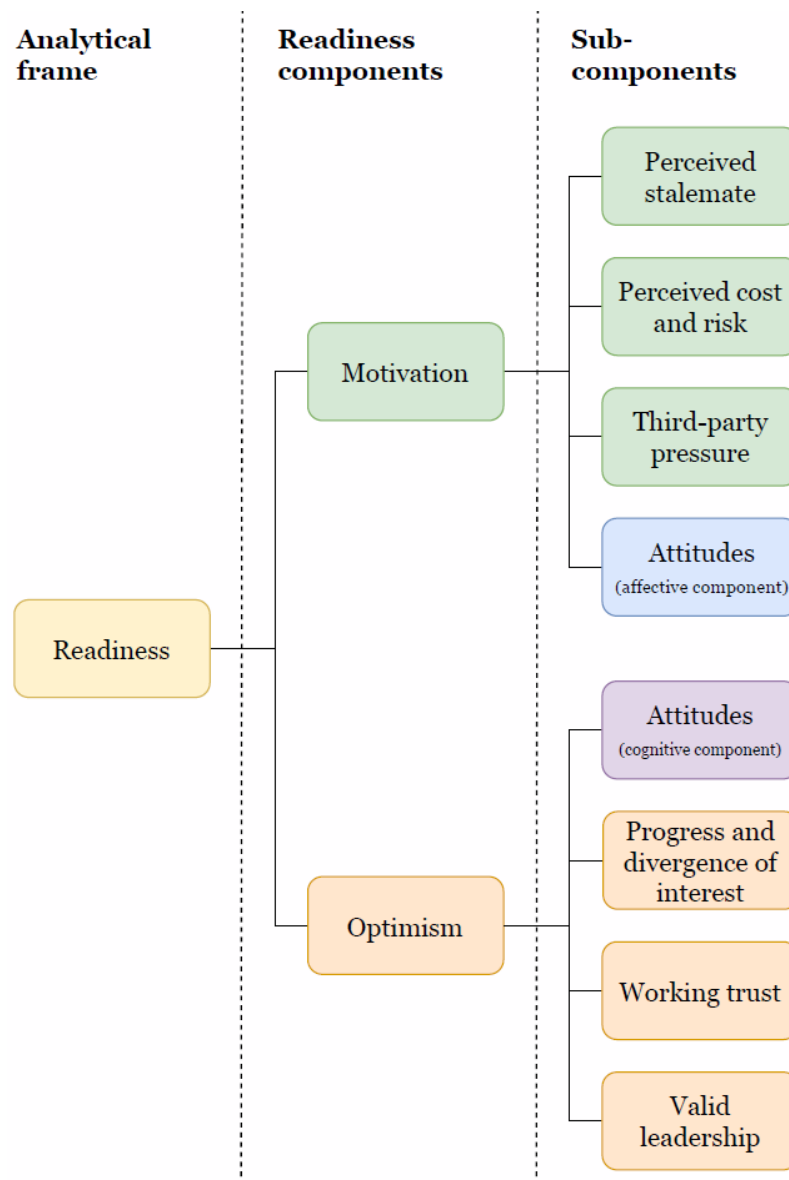


Figure 8.1 *Model of mixed readiness theory*

Alternatively, scholars of readiness might reconsider its scope to not only include pressure in favor of peace talks, but also against, thus including the influential concept ‘spoilers’ in the framework (Stedman, 1991). Though spoilers are typically conceptualized as sabotaging a signed peace agreement, the considerable influence of the hawks on Duterte’s decisions to terminate the peace talks strongly suggests that they can spoil (an opportunity for) peace negotiations as well.

To further improve the *parsimony* of MRT, scholars should consider reviewing the existing readiness literature and synthesizing the emotional factors that are identified in it. Instead of interpreting these factors as “impediments” to rational thinking, as Pruitt and Zartman do, MRT proposes integrating them on the same level as rational readiness components. Some may be covered by the attitude component, while others may prove to influence readiness

through another pathway. Though such a review was beyond the scope of the current research, existing knowledge may prove invaluable in efforts to further develop and refine MRT.

In the interest of *scope*, more case studies should be conducted to test the generalizability of MRT. Though its scope remains uncertain based on only one case study, the proposed model is supported by developments in the field of social neuroscience and the emotional turn in international relations, and utilizes well-established theoretical concepts. Therefore my expectation is that, if not the component of attitudes itself, then at least the mixed approach more accurately reflects the empirical reality of leadership decision making. A logical place to start is the application of the MRT model to ostensibly similar cases, such as US President Donald Trump's efforts to negotiate with North Korea or to similar leaders in general, such as Turkish President Erdogan or Hungarian Prime Minister Orbán (Bremmer, 2018). Nevertheless, I argue that MRT is also applicable to traditional leaders, as findings in social neuroscience (Verweij et al., 2015) indicate that emotions always play a role in decision making. As such, applying the mixed model of readiness to any type of leader seems like a promising direction for future research.

8.3 Relevance

The advancement of readiness theory – or any theory about peace negotiations for that matter – is important due to its social relevance. An improved understanding of leaders' motives to resolve intractable conflicts could be of great value to those trying to stimulate or facilitate peace processes. Especially the rise of strongmen and their distinct leadership styles have puzzled practitioners and have created uncertainty in the international arena. A better understanding of the threats these leaders pose to peace and the opportunities they offer would undoubtedly be of practical value.

The question that remains is whether peace is soon possible between the communists and the government. Despite the setbacks in the negotiations, one cannot deny that Rodrigo Duterte's presidency brought with it a unique opportunity for peace after 50 years of conflict. Though saddened by the lack of current progress, respondents emphasized the unprecedented gains made during the four rounds of formal talks. Whenever such time comes that negotiations are again possible, the foundations of draft agreements on CASER, PCR and EH/DF lie at the ready. Some predict that this will take at least another three years, until a new president is elected. Others, such as Sedfrey Candelaria, are more optimistic about the coming years: "The president is a very strong-willed person. You never know how far he could reinvent the wheel after this. He still has three more years anyway, he has three more years to try."

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Annex 1 – List of Interviews

No.	Name	Affiliation	Title, relation to negotiations	Date	Location
1	1	IC	Member of international community working on Moro peace process	26 Feb 2019	Utrecht, the Netherlands
2	Coni Ledesma	NDFP	Member of the NDFP Peace Panel	4 Mar 2019	Utrecht, the Netherlands
3	Jose Maria Sison	NDFP	Founder of CPP, NDFP Chief Political Consultant	7 Mar 2019	Utrecht, the Netherlands
4	Fidel Agcaoili	NDFP	Chief Negotiator of the NDFP Peace Panel	26 Mar 2019	Utrecht, the Netherlands
5	Marissa Dumanjug-Palo	NDFP	Head of Joint Secretariat of the JMC-NDFP	2 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
6	6	GRP	GRP employee, working on GRP-NDFP peace process	3 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
7	7	GRP	GRP employee, working on GRP-NDFP peace process	3 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
8	8	GRP	GRP employee, working on GRP-NDFP peace process	3 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
9	9	GRP; IC	Former OPAPP official, working on Moro peace process; member of international community working on Moro peace process	5 Apr 2019	Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, the Philippines
10	10	IC	Member of international community, facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process	8 Apr 2019	Makati, Metro Manila, the Philippines
11	11	CSO	Member of independent, neutral civil society organization, working on GRP-NDFP peace process	10 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
12	12	CSO	Member of independent, neutral civil society organization, working on GRP-NDFP peace process	10 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
13	13	NDFP	Consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel	10 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines

No.	Name	Affiliation	Title, relation to negotiations	Date	Location
14	14	CSO	Peace advocate	11 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
15	15	CSO	Peace advocate	11 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
16	16	IC	Member of international community, facilitative role in the GRP-NDFP peace process	15 Apr 2019	Pasig City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
17	Sedfrey Candelaria	GRP	Consultant to the GRP Peace Panel	16 Apr 2019	Makati, Metro Manila, the Philippines
18	18	NDFP	Technical Consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel	18 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
19	19	NDFP	Technical Consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel	19 Apr 2019	Taguig City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
20	Edre Olalia	NDFP	Legal Consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel	22 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
21	21	NDFP	Consultant to the NDFP Peace Panel	25 Apr 2019	Quezon City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
22	22	GRP; IC	Former OPAPP official, working on Moro peace process; member of international community, facilitative role in Moro peace process	26 Apr 2019	Pasig City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
23	23	IC	Member of international community, facilitative role in Moro peace process	26 Apr 2019	Pasig City, Metro Manila, the Philippines
24	Rene Sarmiento	GRP	Member of GRP Peace Panel	29 Apr 2019	Pasig City, Metro Manila, the Philippines

Annex 2 – Event Catalogue

2016

Date	Event
Apr 27	Aquino warns voters that Duterte is too close to the CPP/NPA/NDF
May 10	Duterte wins presidential election
May 16	Duterte meets with Agcaoili in Davao
Jun 15-16	Preliminary peace talks in Oslo
Jun 30	Duterte is inaugurated as president
Jul 18	Duterte approves six-point peace and development agenda, incl. accelerated timeline for negotiations with the CNN
Jul 25	Duterte delivers first SONA
Jul 25	Duterte declares unilateral GRP ceasefire
Jul 27	NPA ambush in Caggu
Jul 30	Duterte lifts unilateral GRP ceasefire
Aug 1	Duterte says peace talks will continue
Aug 5	NPA ambush in Compostela Valley kills four soldiers
Aug 7	Duterte asks NPA to stop using landmines
Aug 8	Jalandoni says no agreements were violated, discuss landmines during talks
Aug 15	Sison expresses optimism about peace talks
Aug 19	Tiamzons released for peace talks, both express optimism
Aug 20	CPP declares unilateral ceasefire until Aug 27
Aug 21	GRP declares indefinite unilateral ceasefire
Aug 22-26	First round of GRP-NDFP formal peace talks in Oslo, Norway
Aug 27	CPP extends unilateral ceasefire indefinitely
Sep 23	Duterte orders AFP to stop paramilitaries from undermining peace talks
Sep 26	Jalandoni describes potential new role for NPA after peace agreement
Oct 6-10	Second round of GRP-NDFP formal peace talks in Oslo, Norway
Oct 8	NPA expresses frustration about AFP operations during ceasefires
Nov 18	Dictator Marcos receives hero's burial
Dec 11	Duterte declares he will not release additional prisoners

2017

Date	Event
Jan 17	NDFP extends timeline of talks by 24 months
Jan 19-25	Third round of GRP-NDFP formal peace talks in Rome, Italy
Jan 23	Fighting between NPA and AFP in Cotabato
Feb 1	CPP withdraws unilateral ceasefire
Feb 3	Duterte withdraws GRP unilateral ceasefire
Feb 5	Duterte cancels peace talks
Feb 7	Duterte calls CNN terrorists for the first time
Mar 9	Duterte visits military and makes “flatten the hills” comment
Mar 10	Informal talks conducted by heads of panels
Mar 11	Panels agree on restoration of ceasefires, announcement scheduled but never made
Apr 4	Duterte sets four conditions for resumption of talks and truce
Apr 3-6	Fourth round of GRP-NDFP peace talks in Noordwijk, the Netherlands
May 9	Duterte and Agcaoili meet in <i>Malacañang</i> , president asks for help in fighting terrorists
May 23	Start Marawi conflict; Duterte declares martial law in Mindanao
May 24	Lorenzana hints martial law might also be aimed at rebels
May 25	CPP calls for intensified fighting by NPA
May 25	GRP clarifies that martial law is not aimed at rebels
May 26	Sison recommends CPP rescinds its orders
May 27	Duterte cancels peace talks
May 27 – Jun 1	Fifth (5.1) round of formal peace talks scheduled in Noordwijk, the Netherlands [CANCELED]
May 28	Duterte asks NPA to join fight against Maute
Jul 22	Martial law on Mindanao extended to 31 December 2017
Jul 24	Duterte delivers second SONA
Oct 23	End of Marawi conflict
Oct-Nov	Informal talks
Nov 9	NPA ambush kills baby
Nov 23	Duterte issues Proclamation 360, cancels peace talks
Nov 25	Fifth (5.2) round of formal peace talks scheduled [CANCELED]
Dec 5	Duterte issues Proclamation 374, labels CPP-NPA terrorists

2018

Date	Event
Jan 13	Duterte says he and Sison should talk
Jan 23	Duterte tells troops to destroy the NPA
Feb 13	Duterte tells soldiers to shoot female rebels “in the vagina”
Feb 15	Duterte meets Idun Tvedt, new RNG Special Envoy
Mar 22	House Resolution 1803 adopted
Mar 25	Dureza welcomes House Resolution 1803
Apr 4	Duterte asks GRP Panel to work on the resumption of peace talks
Apr 17	Dureza says peace talks are back on track
May 3	Duterte expresses optimism about peace talks
Jun 9-10	Informal talks, some claim agreements were signed
Jun 13	Duterte cancels scheduled peace talks
Jun 28	Fifth (5.3) round of formal peace talks scheduled [CANCELED]
Jul 11	Duterte approves guidelines for localized peace talks
Jul 14	CPP rejects localized peace talks, refers back to NDFP Panel
Jul 23	Duterte delivers third SONA
Nov 12	Report: Duterte to meet with NDFP leaders about possible resumption of talks
Nov 27	Dureza resigns as head of OPAPP
Dec 4	Executive Order 70 signed
Dec 21	Galvez becomes head of OPAPP
Dec 27	Bello says GRP Panel will take a back seat

2019

Date	Event
Jan 9	Agcaoili says NDFP always open to peace talks
Jan 30	NDFP consultant Randy Malayao is shot and killed
Jan 31	Bello says GRP still hopes for peaceful settlement of conflict
Feb 20	Duterte wants to talk peace again with communists
Mar 18	Duterte terminates appointment of GRP Peace Panel
Mar 25	Informal talks [CANCELED]
Apr 15	Duterte considers creating new GRP Peace Panel

Annex 3 – Topic Guide

As the actual topic guide was constantly updated and contained some 30-40 pages, this Annex provides an overview of its components.

Introduction

About the researcher: name, degree.

About the interview: informed consent, use of recorder.

About the research: purposes, date of online publication, no prior affiliation to the Philippines or the conflict groups, no personal stake in the issue or outcome of the research.

Overview

I want to describe a few important moments in the peace negotiations and understand why certain things were said and actions were taken.

[overview of main events]

Are any major events missing? Do any of these events strike you as not crucial?

In-Depth Topical Questions

For every event, a description was made of the outcome event, and the timeline with preceding events. This timeline included questions about events or points that required clarification or additional views. As this part was quite extensive, I'm providing a short example:

Event 1: Rodrigo Duterte becomes president	30 June 2016
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21 November 2015: Mayor Duterte announces presidential campaign

10 May 2016: Duterte is elected president

16 May 2016: Duterte and Agcaoili meet in Davao. Agcaoili asks for (1) upholding signed agreements, (2) release JASIG persons, and (3) release all political prisoners. Duterte agrees, promises amnesty for political prisoners, and offers four cabinet positions.

- *Why do you think Duterte wanted to resume the peace negotiations?*
- *What were Duterte's goals for the peace negotiations?*
- *Why do you think Duterte went beyond the NDFP's requests?*
- *How likely do you think a military victory for the GRP was at this point?*

Structured Questions

These questions were composed at the start of the study and cast a wide net. They were gradually condensed.

1. **What were the actions taken, statements made, and relevant contextual factors (and changes in these factors) that influenced the course of events / willingness to negotiate?**
2. **How have NDFP (and its members) and GRP party leaders' perceptions that neither they nor the opposing party could or would escalate the conflict further changed since 2016?** (*motivation – perceived stalemate*)
 - a. What are the self-reported reasons of these changes? (*perception perceived stalemate*)
 - b. How has the failure of contentious tactics contributed to these changes in perceived stalemate? (*objective referent – failure of contentious tactics*)
 - c. How has the exhaustion of necessary resources contributed to these changes in perceived stalemate? (*objective referent – exhaustion of necessary resources*)
 - d. How has the loss of social support contributed to these changes in perceived stalemate? (*objective referent – loss of social support*)
 - e. How have perceptions of unacceptable cost and risk contributed to these changes in perceived stalemate? (*objective referent – unacceptable cost and risk*)
3. **How did powerful third parties pressure NDFP (and its members) and GRP to engage in negotiations?** (*motivation – pressure third parties*)
4. **How have NDFP (and its members) and GRP party leaders' faith that the final agreement will satisfy their goals and aspirations without too much cost changed since 2016?** (*optimism*)
 - a. How ambitious were NDFP and GRP party leaders' goals for the peace process? (*lowered aspirations*)
 - b. How did NDFP and GRP party leaders believe that the other party also wanted to escape the conflict and had reasonable or flexible aspirations? (*working trust*)
 - c. How did NDFP and GRP party leaders perceive that the other party was ready to make the concessions they needed? (*perceived light at the end of the tunnel*)
5. **How has the internal cohesion of NDFP and GRP changed since 2016?** (*leadership*)

- a. How many *changes in leadership* were there since 2016?
 - b. How did *demands change* since 2016?
 - c. How did *communication channels* with and between political (CPP / Presidential Office) and military (NPA / AFP) branches of NDFP and GRP change since 2016?
6. **How have NDFP (and its members) and GRP party leaders' goals of the peace negotiations changed since 2016?** (*ulterior motives*)
- a. Are NDFP (and its members) and GRP party leaders genuinely interested in achieving a sustainable peace? (*sincere motive*)
 - b. Are there any other benefits of peace negotiations for NDFP (and its members) and the GRP? (*other benefits*)

Consent

- Do you think we covered the most important issues? Is there anything you want to add?
- Is there anything you said you want to take back? If you change your mind about anything you told me or about the entire interview, you can always contact me.
- Do you have my contact information?
- Is there anyone else you think I should speak with?

As mentioned, I am conducting research for my Master's degree. The information I gather during interviews will be used for academic purposes only. I have no personal interest or agenda other than to learn from you and to hopefully better understand why the GRP and NDFP are (not) willing to negotiate with each other. Prior to this research project, I had no personal connection to the Philippines.

I will use the information from interviews to write my thesis, which will be read by my two supervisors and uploaded to an online database. It is up to you how I may use the information you provide, with regard to attribution, anonymity and for instance direct quoting. We can of course be selective in the pieces of information that can be attributed and which information cannot. Furthermore, if you change your mind after the interview, you can contact me and I will anonymize or delete any information you shared. As this will influence my analysis and conclusions, I ask that you do this no later than 21 May 2019. However, if there are new security concerns after the 21st or other changes in the situation, I will of course do my best to grant your request anyway.

Thank you so much for your time!