Delegating Repression:
The Effect of Pro-Government Militias on Human Rights Violations

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Abstract

Does the presence of a pro-government militia worsen the human rights of a country? Previous research in human rights suggests that when faced with armed threats and civil war, governments are more likely to engage in violations. When governments face being held accountable for their actions by withdrawal of public support or international trade and investment, they are more likely to exercise restraint. Democracy and international trade tend to reduce the likelihood of violations. Little attention has been paid to the question of how repression is organized and how the choice of agent influences human rights. We develop the logic of accountability and examine how delegation to more informal armed groups influences human rights violations.
Governments exhibit very different levels of respect for the rights and physical well-being of their citizens. Researchers link this variation in the use of extrajudicial killings, torture, and detention without trial to domestic institutional, economic and demographic structures, to international institutions and actors, to strategic calculations concerning the level of threat posed by the opposition, and to the likelihood of withdrawal of public support (Bueno de Mesquita, Downs, Smith and Cherif 2005; Cingranelli and Richards; Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Gartner and Regan 1996; Poe and Tate 1994; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Landman 2005; Mitchell and McCormick 1988). However, questions of how repression is organized and implemented and of how the choice of agent influences the levels of violations have received little attention (see Mitchell 2004; Policzer 2004). This paper is the first large scale analysis that we know of that examines the consequences of the choice of agents for human rights protection.

Within the human rights literature there has been very little research on theorizing and analyzing repression as a policy choice, focusing on the institutional alternatives in the delivery of violence. To explore this issue of organizing and carrying out repression, we examine militias and informal armed groups that exist alongside regular security forces and investigate how these groups affect the level of violations in a country. Drawing on a well-established theoretical approach to the issue of delegation, and in line with the general theoretical thrust of existing human rights and conflict research that emphasizes the pivotal role of accountability, we expect the presence of these organisations to substantially increase the levels of human rights violations. We use a principal-agent argument to better understand the rationale behind using these groups and we draw out the implications that this choice is likely to have for civilians. We are interested in two sets of relationships: Internally, governments will be less able to exercise control over these informal armed groups compared
to the level of control they generally have over the regular security apparatus. The expectation is that member selection, monitoring of and discipline within these informal groups will be less rigorous than within regular forces. Externally, governments may seek to avoid their accountability to citizens or the international community for the violence by shifting responsibility to these groups.

In the first part of the paper we develop the theoretical argument for why a government would choose these groups and what impact these groups have on the delivery of repression. In the second part of the paper we describe our data and measures and discuss some very preliminary findings. At this early stage of the project we can report only a bivariate analysis. Theoretically, this paper links earlier findings on human rights performance to the issue of delegation through the idea of accountability and brings government violence within the wider policy analysis literature using a principal agent approach. Empirically, it presents new data on informal groups that have previously been examined using case study, comparative or historical approaches.

Delegating Repression

Research on human rights violations yields fairly consistent findings, pointing to the underlying importance of accountability in understanding the decision to violate human rights. The willingness of governments to use repression as a response to threats (Carey 2009; Gartner and Regan; Mitchell 2004; Poe 2004; Regan and Henderson 2002) is constrained by expected accountability costs. If government officials are held accountable to legislatures, judicial processes and to the electorate, and if government activities are more transparent, then they are likely to exercise restraint in the use of repression. Democracy, and in recent research most notably “full democracy” (Arat 1991; Bueno de Mesquita, Downs, Smith and
Cherif 2005; Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Keith 2002; Landman 2005; Poe and Tate 1994; Mitchell and McCormick), tends to reduce violations.

There are international as well as domestic accountability processes at work. The level of a country’s exposure to economic and political dimensions of globalization tends to influence violations. The volume of foreign direct investment and the amount of international trade are linked to levels of repression and repressive regimes attract attention and pressure from international institutions and NGOs (see Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Landman 2005; Risse, Ropp and Sikkink 1999). Thus more trade and foreign direct investment are accompanied by better human rights performance (Harrelson-Stephens and Callaway 2003; Richards, Gelleny and Sacko 2001). Increasingly, the continuation of trade is made conditional on human rights performance. Since the early 1990s, the European Union has systematically included a human rights clause in its trade agreements. For example, in October 2006 the European Parliament’s International Trade Committee decided not to consider a trade agreement with Turkmenistan “until its government significantly improved its human rights record” (Human Rights Watch 2006

http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/10/04/turkme14321.htm). Recent work by Hafner-Burton (2005) has shown the effectiveness of trade agreements as means of enforcing compliance with human rights standards. In this way, international actors and organisations have access to sanctions that enable them to hold countries in which human rights are violated, accountable for their actions.

In general, when governments face threats they are more likely to resort to repression and to violate human rights. Restraining governments is the threat of being held to account for their actions. The likely costs of repression are the withdrawal of international aid and assistance, international trade and investment, and public support. Emphasizing the importance of accountability in their detailed examination of the dimensions of democracy
and their impact on respect for human rights, Bueno de Mesquita, Downs, Smith and Cherif state that “accountability appears to be the critical feature that makes full-fledged democracies respect human rights; limited accountability generally retards improvements in human rights” (2005, 439). These authors think about accountability in terms of regime type. Fear of accountability might, as the existing literature suggests, lead government officials to forego repression. What has largely been overlooked to date, and this is the line of inquiry we pursue in this paper, the fear of accountability might lead officials to use repression but attempt to evade accountability. In this paper we develop two implications that suggest that the presence of militias and informal armed groups will increase the levels of human rights violations. These implications deal with the choice of delegation and evading accountability.

Why do governments delegate violence? Armed groups that are allied with the government but are not part of the regular armed forces are surprisingly common, despite the likely reputational and control costs that they pose for governments. Reputational costs include a group having a history of poor conduct – an example might be the Israeli use of the Lebanese Forces/Christian Phalange in Lebanon, the American use of Sunni militias in Iraq, or the forces of warlords in Afghanistan. Control costs refer to the decision to delegate to these groups. Delegating a security task to these groups carries the risk that there is some variance between the local goals of the group and the strategic goals of the government (see Kalyvas 2006). In Iraq, inter-tribal rivalry and conflict near the Syrian border in 2005 led one tribe to propose an alliance to the Americans in exchange for weapons and support (the other tribe had links to Al Qaeda). Local rivalry and the need for resources helped motivate the alliance with central authorities. These Sunni Awakening Groups rapidly grew in number such that by the end of 2007 there were 300 such groups operating in 12 provinces, with some 43,000 members in Baghdad province alone (see New York Times 2007, 23 December; Guardian 2007, 20 December). On the government side, we argue that the decision by
governments to use these types of groups is influenced by their particular characteristics and advantages.

There are both economic and political incentives for governments to delegate in this way. The “economic” incentives for governments to delegate to irregular armed groups are related to the trade-off between the loss of control entailed in delegation against getting tasks done and gaining expertise. We identify four types of economic incentive for using these groups. Delegating to these informal armed groups has the advantages of providing additional forces at low or even no direct cost to the government. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘force multiplier’ incentive. These groups represent a way of increasing the size of the security forces. An important component of the “surge” in the case of Iraq was the recruitment of pro-government/American Sunni militias. But there are additional incentives at work.

Second, allying with these groups may at the very least prevent them fighting against the government. We refer to this effort to limit opposition group recruitment as the “force subtractor” incentive. Tactically, allying with the group may be more cost-effective than fighting against it.

Third, these groups may offer more reliable forces than the regular security forces. This “force substitute” incentive is likely to be particularly important for revolutionary regimes where they inherit but distrust their agents in existing security forces. An example of the force substitute incentive is the Iranian government’s use of its Revolutionary Guard and Basij militia. An alternative method of addressing this problem is to insert trusted agents within the old structures. The Red Army in the Russian Civil War appointed commissars to monitor former Czarist officers.

The fourth economic incentive relates to the local knowledge possessed by these sorts of groups. Beyond numbers of forces, governments face information and expertise problems
in dealing with insurgencies and opposition. These groups may offer the particular expertise
needed to overcome this problem, such as useful local knowledge of the geographical or
cultural terrain.

In addition to the “economic” incentives, we argue there are also less familiar political
incentives to delegate to irregular armed groups (Fiorina 1985; Hood 2002, 2007). These
political incentives are linked to issues of legitimacy and shifting responsibility for violence.
These groups are particularly attractive to governments within a high risk and high visibility
policy area such as the use of force and violence. These groups offer the opportunity to shift
responsibility for what may be the controversial and politically costly use of violence and
related losses in legitimacy. These groups serve to put some distance between the government
and the violence committed by them. Sudan’s projection of force in Darfur is an obvious
example, yet other governments may rely on such groups for strategic benefits. Governments
deliberately attempt to obfuscate and conceal the nature of the relationship with such
irregular forces to avoid accountability for strategically useful violence that is carried out by
these groups. In their research on death squads, Campbell and Brenner and associates point
specifically to the importance of deniability and to the world-wide presence of death squads
from Nicaragua to Indonesia (2000). In short, government demand for these types of groups
stems from both economic and political incentives. Use of these groups is likely to generate
severe control issues for governments. But governments may also decide to refuse control for
as long as the group is perceived to produce strategic benefits. The problem for analysis is
distinguishing cases of can’t control from cases of won’t control (see Mitchell 2004).

Implications for Civilians

As accountability is what encourages governments to respect human right, so it is a
critical feature that makes the individuals who implement security policy respect human
Accountability “implies that some actors have the right to hold other actors to a set of standards to judge whether they have fulfilled their responsibilities … and to impose sanctions if they determine responsibilities have not been met” (Grant and Keohane 2005, 29). It follows that, “the availability of information is crucial for all forms of accountability” (Grant and Keohane 2005, 39). Principal-agent logic suggests that goal variance between principals and agents combined with a balance of information that generally favors the agents will make it important but difficult to hold them accountable for their actions. To the degree that agents charged with carrying out repression engage in hidden actions for strategic or private gain, be it revenge, violence for its own sake, or violence or the threat of violence for the sake of bribes and financial gain, then the level and nature of human rights violations will exceed that intended by the government (Butler, Gluch and Mitchell 2007; Bohara, Mitchell, Nepal and Raheem 2008). This problem of controlling the agents is likely to be particularly severe where agents are organizationally separated from formal government agencies and where the lines of accountability are fuzzy. Principal-agent logic suggests that goal variance between principals and agents, combined with a balance of information that generally favours the agents, will make it important but difficult to hold the agents accountable for their actions.

Informal armed groups are likely to be less selective in their recruitment procedures than the military or the police. In Elster’s categories of “wrongdoers” we can think about these groups attracting both “fanatics” and “opportunists” (see Elster 2004, 137). Through entrepreneurial direction supplied by committed local leaders, and in which governments may have a role, these groups form around the strategic motivations of the dispute, as it is linked to a political agenda, regional or national identities, or religious beliefs. They also form around the private motivations of those who value the intrinsic rewards of violence and plunder (Ross 2004). In other words, these organisations are more likely to encounter
“adverse selection” problems and are made up of individuals with a less developed awareness of “combat morality,” either for reasons of fanaticism or opportunism. These organisations are likely to recruit strategic extremists and those interested in private gain.

Even assuming that they aim to inculcate a code of conduct, these informal organizations are unlikely to be as well equipped for that task as state agencies. Informal organisations are generally less likely to provide the levels of monetary compensation and sanctions that help to control agents in state organizations or to be able to communicate appropriate professional values: “there is a whole world of rewards and penalties that take social rather than monetary forms. Professional responsibility is clearly enforced in good measure by systems of ethics, internalized during the education process and enforced in some measure by formal punishments and more broadly by reputations” (Arrow 1985, 50). Members of militias are less likely to have internalized systems of ethics, less likely to value their positions, and are more likely to make the most of opportunities to seek private goods, either in the enjoyment of violence for its own sake or for other material benefits. At the same time, they are less likely to have this impulse checked by being held to account either by the militia leader or government leaders - the formal accountability holders.

The conventional responses to private goods-seeking agents are the activities of monitoring and holding agents accountable. Under this condition of organizational separation from the conventional chain of command and formal government agencies, these responses are less likely to be undertaken. The actions of the agents of these informal groups are likely to be less transparent to government leaders and these leaders have a reduced incentive to attempt to overcome information asymmetries. These considerations about the accountability of individual agents suggest that if there are pro-government informal armed groups or militias, then there are likely to be higher levels of human rights violations.
The second implication of focusing on accountability concerns government leaders’ relationship to external audiences. As a tool to evade accountability, the militias provide a response to the threat, yet they are not part of the state bureaucracy. Therefore, government leaders can claim a lack of control if challenged by citizens, other state actors, or the international community.

This paper argues that this second implication is consistent with the theoretical thrust of earlier conflict and human rights research. Governments have been conceived as willing to use repression - unless they face the prospect of being held to account, operationalized as formal regime mechanisms or the level of engagement in trade or aid relationships with other state actors or international organizations. If they face the prospect of accountability and sanctions they may choose to avoid repression. But an alternative choice, one recommended by Machiavelli, is to seek to evade accountability; that is to use repressive measures without being held accountable for their use. Where the government has the opportunity to evade accountability, government restraint will lapse and human rights will be violated. Thus rather than forgo repression, another option for both full-fledged democratic and non-democratic governments is to evade accountability for repression through the use of non-state actors. This idea has yet to be represented in the analysis of human rights violations.

A government will tolerate these informal armed groups or militias so long as the violence that they do is linked to the strategic goals and so long as the government is not held directly accountable. Accountability is evaded by the militia’s organizational separation from the regular security forces. The members of various armed groups in the Balkans in the 1990s, the Christian Phalange in Beirut in the early 1980s, or the Janjaweed in Sudan committed widespread violence, while dealing with the strategic threat or provoking panic and population flight that was perceived of strategic value (see Friedman 1989; Sachar 1996 for discussion of Beirut).
While there has been a lack of systematic quantitative analyses of these types of organizations, Janice Thomson’s work (1994) provides an account of the development and demise of mercenaries and pirates. The motive she identifies on the part of non-state actors was commercial gain and on the part of the authorizing states the motives of avoiding expense and the inability “to resist the temptation to allow or even authorize nonstate violence while they denied responsibility and accountability for its consequences” (1994, 42). In the nineteenth century, according to Thomson, states asserted their “monopoly on external violence” (1994, 143). Her work does not deal with contemporary developments that challenge norms against non-state violence, but she refers to the Nicaraguan contras and says that “exploiting nonstate violence remains a powerful temptation for state rulers” though “contemporary state leaders must do this in secret” (1994, 152). Our focus is contemporary rather than historical, and on the domestic consequences of these institutions for human rights violations rather than their use by foreign governments. But we identify similar motives at work on the part of states in terms of the effort to exploit opportunities to use non-state violence and deny responsibility. As the Contras and the other examples suggest, governments exploiting the opportunity to evade accountability often operate with a fairly minimal view of the credibility threshold that their denials have to achieve. Generally, government leaders must calculate that there will be domestic support for strategic goals among their core constituencies (the Israeli protest in 1982 against the massacres in Lebanon by the Christian Phalange was unusual), and that the international regime is relatively weak. In this situation, even flimsy denials of responsibility for the activities of the “bad apples” and “rogue elements” in these groups may prove sufficient.

In short, we argue that the development of non-state actors such as militias is an institutional choice for governments interested in the delivery of violence at reduced cost. We hypothesize that higher levels of human rights violations accompany the use of these
militias. The general nature of the incentives we describe here implies that the violations attributable to these militias will be a general rather than a cultural or regional phenomenon. First, even when governments have purely “economic” incentives for using these groups, principal-agent logic suggests that agents within these organizations will have greater inclination and discretion to pursue private goods. Second, governments may have a political incentive for delegating to these groups. They present an opportunity for governments to evade accountability for violence expected to be of strategic benefit. As a consequence, we anticipate that the presence of a pro-government militia will substantially increase the level of violations beyond the factors generally included in statistical models by human rights scholars.

**Data and Measures**

The Pro-Government Armed Groups dataset contains information about organised armed groups that are identified by documentary, media and other sources to be pro-government but are not part of regular state security forces. The information covers all countries during the time period from 1981 to 2007 and is not restricted to ongoing conflicts. The main unit of observation is the pro-government armed group (PGAG). We use English language news sources from around the world, primarily relying on LexisNexis. We expect that one problem with the dataset is the likely under-representation of pro-government armed groups (PGAGs). To minimise this problem, we plan to supplement LexisNexis with a range of other sources: for example Keesings, US State Department Country Reports, Military Balance and UN documents. Since we track countries through more than two decades of reports, we reduce the problem of bias due to news reports only mentioning groups when they are active.
As we rely on news sources to describe the link of a group to government, the other difficulty is the potential misspecification of a PGAG’s relationship to the government by the source. Using multiple sources across time is likely to reduce this problem. If the source is ambiguous about the relationship between the national government and the group, or if different sources contradict each other in their classification of the link between the government and the group, more information is sought from country-specific sources and academic research. Additionally, we are checking the classification of our PGAGs against other databases that capture anti-government forces for disagreements on the relationship between the group and the government. If the classification of the relationship between PGAG and government cannot be clarified, then the group is still incorporated in the dataset but its link to the government is categorised as unclear.

Other labels used for such groups are “militias”, “paramilitary groups”, “irregular forces”, “death squads” or “vigilantes.” Additionally, the dataset includes private military companies, which are also labelled “military contractor”, “private security company” or “private military firm,” if they satisfy the definition of pro-government armed groups. We define a pro-government armed group as a group that

1. is identified by the source as pro-government or sponsored by the government (national or sub-national),
2. is identified as not part of the regular security forces,
3. is armed and
4. has some level of organisation.

Criterion 1: The group is identified as pro-government or sponsored by the government by the source, either national or sub-national. Our focus is national governments, but if a group is allied with a sub-national government and the national (e.g. federal) government is neutral
in its position towards this group, it is included as a PGAG. However, if the national (e.g. federal) government classifies this group as anti-government, or is against this group, then this group cannot be defined as being pro-government and therefore is not classified as a PGAG. For example, in 2000 several armed groups were fighting crime in Nigeria. Those groups had strong links to the state governments and were initially at least tolerated by the national government. Later that year, the federal government is reported to have condemned these groups, withdrew any support and urged the state governments to do the same. Based on our definition, the groups cease to exist as PGAGs with the actions of the federal government.

We use the following sources to identify the groups: local, regional and international media, UN documents, U.S. State Department Country reports and other conflict-related sources and databases to eliminate from the dataset insurgent or rebel groups. This identification might be based upon a variety of possible links between the group and the national government, including information sharing, financing, equipping, training and an operational link. If the target of the group happens to be an enemy of the government, for example members of an opposition party or of an ethnic group that is not part of the government, and the sources do not identify or refer to the group as pro-government, then this is insufficient evidence for this armed group to be categorized as PGAG in our dataset. We focus on domestic groups, meaning pro-government groups that are active within their own borders. For private military companies, this means that they are recorded as being present in the country they are operating in, i.e. the country for which they contracted to operate on the government’s side. PMC’s are not the focus of the project. There is a fast developing literature on these organisations. For our purposes, it is important to sort PMCs as a separate category of PGAG.
Criterion 2: The group is not the regular state security force as described in government information or other sources on armed forces and police, although the group may operate with the regular state security forces, or even be composed of members of the security forces organized clandestinely as an unofficial or informal group (death squads). This relationship with the regular forces might include, in addition to sharing of personnel as in the above example, information sharing, joint operations or training. Not identified as PGAG are therefore the police and regular military forces.

Criterion 3: The group is armed. They are equipped for violence, but do not have to commit violence to be included.

Criterion 4: The group has some evidence of organisation (for example an identifiable leader, or name, or a geographical, ethnic, religious or political basis) to exclude a “flash” or spontaneous mob.

**Descriptive Statistics**

At this point, with data collection still in progress, we can only present preliminary findings that speak to the frequency of these groups and to their relationship to human rights conditions without controlling for other factors. The data on the frequency of these groups support the argument that they represent a common institutional solution for managing the use of force by governments.

Figure 1 shows the number of active PGAGs per year from 1981 to 2007. The data are provisional, since some countries are left to code (e.g., former Yugoslavia, Colombia), which are likely to increase the overall numbers of active groups during this time period. The figure shows a general upward trend throughout the 1980s and 1990s. We do not expect this
trend to change very much after the completion of the coding process. The number of groups spike in 1987, 1993 and 1999. We observe a decline in these groups in recent years. The exploration of the reason for this trend will be carried out after the completion of the coding.

Organising the data by the number of countries with active PGAGs, shown in Figure 2, presents a roughly comparable picture. The mid-1980s and late 1990s mark the high tides for these groups. The number of countries with pro-government militias has declined quite drastically since 2002. In future research we hope to explain these highs and lows in the incidence of these types of groups using both aggregate and individual level analyses.

Figure 1. Number of Active PGAGs per Year
Table 1: Type of Link between PGAG and Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Link</th>
<th>Number of PGAGs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-government PGAG (Type 1)</td>
<td>214 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official/Semi-official PGAG (Type 2)</td>
<td>130 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear whether Type 1 or 2 PGAG</td>
<td>21 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to Government unclear</td>
<td>5 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information</td>
<td>3 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>373 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that just over half of all the pro-government militias coded so far (57%) do not have an official or semi-official status, but are only unofficially linked to the
government. A Type 1 PGAG is identified by the source as being on the side of the national government. The PGAG can be described as pro-government, government militia, affiliated with the government, government-backed or government-allied. With these Type 1 groups, such as the Sunni Awakening militias, there is greater distance between the government and the group. These groups have solved the coordination problem of forming without official state patronage or assistance. In order to form, the interest group and collective action literature suggest that they likely rely on a leader’s “entrepreneurial commitment”, the likelihood of private or selective benefits for members of the group as well as collective benefits, and on kinship, cultural and religious ties. Alternatively, or in addition, they might rely on coercion (Olson 1965). Adding a link to government offers the group material support and legitimacy for their actions. The Type 2 PGAG is institutionalized in the sense that it has legal or official/semiofficial status, but is separate from the police and regular security forces. An official/semi-official PGAG might is separate from the regular security forces in that it has its own identity, members and mission, for example the Basij militia. As such, the link between the PGAG and the government is established and institutionalized in contrast to the looser affiliation of the Type 1 pro-government armed group. But the group is identified as a distinct organisation from the regular security forces.

For governments, there is a mix of economic and political incentives that may influence a government’s decision to use these types of groups. Over one third of the groups that have been coded to date do show an official or semi-official link to the government. Here we expect the “economic advantages” to states to predominate as there is less distance across which to shift responsibility. Overall we expect to explore and further investigate a mix of incentives driving group formation and a government’s choice in setting up and using an armed group.
Table 2 lists the country-years with PGAG activity by the degree of life integrity violations, using the Political Terror Scale. This rough representation supports the argument that PGAG activities are linked to higher levels of human rights abuse. While just over a quarter of the country-years are categorized on PTS Level 1, meaning an almost full respect of life integrity rights, we find active PGAGs in only five cases.\(^1\) As we move up on the Political Terror Scale, i.e. as physical integrity right violations become more severe and widespread, the higher becomes the percentage of cases. While about 4.5% of cases on PTS Level 2 have PGAG activity, this percentage increases to 19.5% for PTS Level 3, and further to 55.4% on PTS Level 4 and reaches a high of 71.1% of cases with PGAG activity for those country-years classified as PTS Level 5, which refers to widespread and indiscriminate killings, torture and political imprisonment.

Table 2. PGAGs and the Political Terror Scale, 1981-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PTS</th>
<th>PGAG Activity</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>893</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>898</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>99.44</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26.51</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>21.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>95.53</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td></td>
<td>37.41</td>
<td>7.82</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>896</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>1,113</td>
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<td>80.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td></td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>28.78</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>256</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>574</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>42.18</td>
<td>13.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>218</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) These are Lithuania in 1995 and 1997, Brunei in 1991 and 1996 and Malaysia in 1993.
Once our PGAG data collection is completed, we will investigate the link between these informal armed groups on the side of the governments and human rights violations more systematically. Yet our very simple and preliminary presentation suggests that we are on the right track with our assumption that these groups increase the risks to civilians.

**Discussion**

On a theoretical level we identified two broad aims in this paper. We aimed to include and link the analysis of actors’ motivations and the choice of agent to earlier findings in the human rights literature. Second, we aimed to couch this analysis of motivations and relationships within a more general theoretical argument developed by economists and scholars of regulation and public policy. In doing so we have identified both economic and political incentives for the formation of these groups and their alliances with governments and we have drawn out the implications for why it is to be expected that these groups will increase the risks of harm to civilian populations in the locations in which they operate.

At this point, without the further analysis there is little more to be said about empirical contributions.
References


