

# MASTER'S THESIS

Master's Program in International Development and  
Education

May 2023

The Norwegian mission in Afghanistan  
2001-2014; an intention for peace or a  
puppet for the allies?

Eir Lærum

Candidate number 501



OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University

Faculty of Education and International Studies

Department of International Studies and Interpreting

## Aknowledgement

I owe a special thanks to the people that have supported and helped me through this project. I would like to thank Kristen Nordhaug, professor and my supervisor at Oslo MET. Thank you so much Kristen for your patience, encouragement and inspiration which have been very helpful. This thesis would not have been the same without your support. Also, thank you Kristin Bjerke, my friend and fellow master student for discussions, feedback and hugs. You know how grateful I am.

I am also very lucky to have the close friends and family that have been invaluable for the last year. It has been a challenging process, with lots of ups and downs. Thank you Sebastian Løvli, for your support and always making me smile. And thanks mom for eternal backing! I am very grateful for all my friends and family, and I could not have done this without you.

Thank you.

## Abstract

This thesis aims to identify how and what the Norwegian government prioritised their resources on during the mission in Afghanistan during the presence between 2001-2014, and to discuss how successful it was. I will also identify why they participated in the mission in Afghanistan. To be able to find the reason for their participation I have analysed the narrative which the Norwegian government produced during the chosen timeframe. The Norwegian government have prioritised both the military mission with NATO and the mission for human rights and building a nation. This thesis will focus on the humanitarian mission through education, democratic institutions, institutions for law and order, and other missions for human rights. The Norwegian governments relationship with the allies, and the United States in particular have been important in the Norwegian decision-making process. A comparative analysis between Norway's mission in Afghanistan and four other Norwegian peace building initiatives will be finishing the thesis to be able to analyse whether Norway is a successful peace nation and whether the Norwegian governments narrative of being a peace nation is valid.

## Keywords

Peace Building, Human Rights, Afghanistan, Norway, The Norwegian Model, small state foreign policy

## Table of contents

<i>Acknowledgement</i> .....	<i>i</i>
<i>Abstract</i> .....	<i>ii</i>
<i>Keywords</i> .....	<i>ii</i>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Objective .....	2
1.2 Thesis Outline .....	4
<b>2. Background</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 Peace building as a concept .....	6
2.2 The history of Norway's initiative of peacebuilding .....	9
2.3 The American Great Power .....	13
<b>3. Methodology</b> .....	<b>14</b>
3.1 Research perspectives and methodology .....	14
3.2 Research questions .....	15
3.3 Case study .....	16
3.3.1 Comparative analysis .....	18
3.3.2 Narrative studies .....	19
3.4 Data collection .....	20
3.4.1. Document analysis .....	20
3.4.1.1 Official reports .....	20
3.4.1.2 Public documents .....	21
3.4.1.3 White Paper .....	22
3.4.1.4 Advantages and limitations of document analysis .....	22
3.5 Ethical considerations .....	23
<b>4. Theoretical framework</b> .....	<b>24</b>
4.1 Impotent Superpower – Potent Small Power .....	24
4.2 “The Regime of Kindness” .....	28
<b>5. Analysis</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>5.1 The prioritising</b> .....	<b>32</b>
5.1.1 Education .....	34
5.1.2. Building a democracy .....	36
5.1.3 Law and order .....	40
5.1.4 Human rights .....	42
5.1.4.1 Women .....	46
<b>5.2 The allies and Norwegian diplomacy for peace</b> .....	<b>47</b>
5.2.1 Egeland: Bilateral VS multilateral approach .....	48
5.2.2 The diplomacy for peace .....	51
5.2.3 The Norwegian intentions .....	54
5.2.4 The relation to the US .....	57
5.2.5 Small Power VS large Power .....	61
<b>5.3 The narrative of Norway as a peaceful country - good or bad?</b> .....	<b>63</b>
5.3.1 The political speeches .....	63
5.3.2 The Norwegian self image .....	68
<b>5.4 Comparison</b> .....	<b>71</b>

5.4.1 Oslo Accords.....	72
5.4.2 Sudan, “The Comprehensive Peace Agreement”.....	74
5.4.3 Sri Lanka.....	77
5.4.4 Colombia.....	80
5.4.5 Summary.....	82
<b>6. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>7. References: .....</b>	<b>90</b>

# 1.Introduction

In September 2001, the United States of America experienced a terror attack that took the lives of nearly 3000 police officers, firefighters, civilians etc (9/11 memorial and museum, n.d.). The attack led to an increased mobilisation in many parts of the world, where the feeling of sympathy for the Americans was inevitable. Through the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the member countries quickly agreed upon the activation of article five. Article five enhances the NATO principle of collective defence as it binds the members together, committing them to protect each other if needed (NATO, 2022). Norway was a part of the founding countries of NATO in 1949, and was quick to respond when George W. Bush, the then President of the United States of America at the time, requested support after the terror attack. The terrorist organisation Al-Qaeda took on the blame for the terror attack (FN, 2023), and was thereby named the main enemy of the United States and thereby also the member countries of NATO. Al-Qaeda had in 1996 declared Fatwa of war, a religious judgement, against America and its allies. There were earlier minor terror attacks against the United States, but the breakthrough came with the attack in 2001. The consequence for Al-Qaeda was going to be fatal, as the goal of the United States was to eliminate Al-Qaeda. The revenge started by a military invasion in Afghanistan, which was said to be the headquarters of Al-Qaeda. The war had begun.

In Afghanistan, which was said to be the home of Al-Qaeda, the Taliban was ruling. Taliban is an Islamic fundamentalistic organization who controlled Afghanistan between 1996 until 2001(Strand, Stenersen & Johannessen, 2022). After the terror attack in 2001 on the World Trade Centre in New York, United States, Norway felt the obligation to participate in what the American President George W. Bush referred to as the War on Terror (Bush, 2001). The close bonds with the United States, as well as the UN resolution 1368 (United Nations Security Council, 2001, Sept. 12) were being reasons for the Norwegian military, economic and humanitarian participation in the war in Afghanistan between 2001 until 2014.

There are many possible explanations for why Norway chooses to involve itself with such a powerful and brutal organisation as the Taliban. However, this is not the first time Norway has been participating in peace negotiations. Several Foreign Ministers of Norway, such as Halvdan Koht in 1902, Halvard Lange in 1949 and Jonas Gahr Støre in 2006, have claimed that Norway

first, and foremost contributes to international negotiations with the intention of peace (Leira, 2007).

After the Cold War (1945-1991), peace negotiations have become more usual. During the 1990s, there were more attempts on mediation than during the whole Cold War (Fixdal, 2016, p. 10). Before the Cold War, conflicts used to end with one winner of a direct conflict. During the Cold War UN and great powers such as the United States were the main actors to provide peaceful negotiations and solutions. Some small countries such as Norway, that did not have much influence and limited freedom of action during the Cold War now became central actors in peace negotiations (Fixdal, 2016, p. 10). The period after the Cold War is also recognised with comprehensive international cooperation between international actors, where actors from different countries and parties of the world were involved in the same peace process (Fixdal, 2016, p. 11). To be able to tell what a successful peace negotiation is, we must define, or at least clarify, what is meant by “successful”. A goal for international peace negotiations is the absence of war, also called "negative peace" which refers to the absence of war (Fixdal, 2016, p. 15). In civil wars, it is more common to look for a peace agreement or a compromise. A negotiated peace may often be a vulnerable peace. Many negotiated deals can be incomplete, which may lead to uncertainties and different interpretations. The parties may have agreed on some issues, while some questions are still unanswered (Fixdal, 2016, p. 18). The risk of relapse is high when there are many, or even some unanswered or disputed questions. In some cases, the negotiators may even work in their own favours of pushing a peaceful deal onto the parties in the conflict, just to end the war quickly and to express a better international self-image. The most successful results are still said to have come from a third party, contributing with peacekeeping forces (Fixdal, 2016, p. 18).

## 1.1 Objective

The objective of this thesis is to understand the intentions behind the Norwegian investment and participation in the war in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2014, and to further discuss the embedded narrative of Norway as a well suited state for negotiating peace.

This objective opens up to these research questions:

1. What motives did the Norwegian government have for taking part in the war in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014?
2. The Norwegian Government is promoting peace as the main motive in foreign policy. How is this being narrated by representatives of the Norwegian peace initiative?

These two research questions will identify how the Norwegian government considers the different diplomatic, humanitarian and military aspects that are more valuable to prolong the narrative of the Norwegian nation. The actions of the government will be connected upon two theories. Jan Egeland's theory from 1988 "Impotent Superpower, Potent Small State" will be used to understand the strategies small states aiming to gain influence in a global landscape of strong superpowers. The second theory was written by Terje Tvedt in 2003 where he refers to "the Norwegian model" of peace building and international aid. The theory will be applied to be able to locate the various layers in the Norwegian foreign policy and to point to the different actors trying to influence the scene.

As I seek to understand the intentions of the Norwegian government, I also need to understand the narratives that are being told about the Norwegian actions. Benjaminsen and Svarstad (2021, p. 14) explains how social constructions are connected to discourse or narratives. While discourses are ways of viewing specific topics, narratives refer to stories about some topics. I will use this definition of narratives when analysing the stories told by the Norwegian government about their efforts for global peace.

The two research questions may be overlapping to some extent. While I at the first question need to locate and analyse the motives by the Norwegian Government, I will need the findings from the first question to be able to locate the narrative behind the Norwegian motives, as this will open for other questions such as what Norway gains from the peace negotiations, if there are any additional factors for Norway other than peace itself.

This research paper will explain how Norway participated in the war of terror towards Taliban in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014. Through the thesis, I will highlight the Norwegian intentions in Afghanistan and the priorities made to proceed towards peace with Taliban, how the relationship with the Norwegian allies, especially the United States in particular, have



affected the values and actions of Norway, and lastly investigate how the Norwegian narrative about being a peace promoter and successful negotiator may not be as first imagined.

## 1.2 Thesis Outline

The next chapter, chapter 2, will present the background. This will give an overview of peace building as a concept and the history of how peacebuilding has evolved. This will build a foundation in order to gain a better understanding of the global picture and how Norway is a part of a larger picture. It will also give an overview of the previous Norwegian initiatives to see how the foreign policy might or might not have changed.

Chapter 3 presents the methodological choices made for this thesis. The chapter starts by focusing on the research questions before it further explains how the Norwegian motives can be qualified as a case study. It will then be followed up with the different methods of how the data is collected in this thesis. Moreover, reliability and validity of the data that are collected and used to answer the research questions.

Chapter 4 will present the theoretical framework. The thesis will use two theories and the chapter will therefore be divided into two subchapters. First the “Impotent Superpower- Potent small state” theory by Jan Egeland will be explained. It will start by clarifying the different motives nations may have before distinguishing between the interests of small nations versus Great Powers in international peace negotiations. Second, the chapter will look carefully into the theory about “the Norwegian model” from Terje Tvedt. He explains how embedded systemic features, like elite circulation and “national corporatism” have become stronger within Norwegian foreign policy and development aid.

Chapter 5 is separated into four subchapters. This will provide the analysis for the thesis. Subchapter 5.1 and 5.2 both will be analysing the first research question. It will explain the findings that can point to the intentions Norway had in the war in Afghanistan. Subchapter 5.1 will approach the diplomatic, humanitarian and military priorities made in the process for defeating Taliban and Al-Qaeda, to make a long lasting infrastructure, and to make human rights matter for the civilians. Further, subchapter 5.2 will explain how Norwegian foreign and national politics is connected to American or other allied politics. It will look at the motives portrayed

by the Norwegian government in the light of its cooperation with the allies. The analysis will be framed by the relevant elements from the theoretic framework.

Subchapter 5.3 will answer the second research question. It will present an analysis of the Norwegian narrative portrayed by the Government from 2001-2014. I will use the report from the Afghanistan commission that was released in 2016 and various parliamentary notices from relevant politicians to be able to analyse the narrative embedded in the Norwegian foreign policy. The subchapter is divided based on the main findings related to different aspects of the research question.

Lastly, subchapter 5.4 will provide a comparative analysis of the Norwegian efforts for peace outside of Afghanistan. First the Oslo Accords, then the mission in Sudan, followed by Sri Lanka, and ending the subchapter with the newest peace negotiation for Norway, Colombia. This subchapter will compare the chosen Norwegian peace efforts with the mission in Afghanistan to be able to analyse whether the Norwegian self-impression continues and to be able to locate the various changes Norway has done in their peace work. The subchapter will be finished by concluding with three elements that seems to be inevitable for a successful Norwegian peace negotiation.

Chapter 6 will conclude with the findings and summarise the thesis.

## 2. Background

Through this chapter I will present the relevant background to be able to answer the research questions. The first subchapter will provide a concept definition of peace building provided by the UN as well as a brief introduction to how the international community is working towards peace building and conflict solving. The second subchapter will elaborate the previous Norwegian initiatives for peacebuilding and conflict solutions. The last, but short subchapter will give a brief history lesson of the American initiative for peace as well as their role as a longlasting Great Power.

## 2.1 Peace building as a concept

As a starting point of the thesis, it is crucial to clarify the concept of peace building. Peacebuilding is generally defined as a prevention of an eruption or return of conflict, helped realised by an external actor in most cases. There are several different definitions of the concept. Peace first arose through the work of Johan Galtung, The Norwegian Peace Researcher more than 50 years ago (Galtung, 1976). He addressed the root of conflict being flawed structures of peacebuilding for the aim to maintain sustainable peace. In the UN the concept became a well-known concept after the report by then Secretary-General of the United Nations Boutros Boutros-Ghali's, "An Agenda for Peace" in 1992 (Boutros-Ghali 1992). The definition of peacebuilding was discussed as an action to solidify peace and avoid relapse into conflict. As the world structures and the conflicts evolve, so does the concept of peace building. In 2007 the Secretary-General's Policy committee described peace building as to "involve a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership understood as the active engagement of local stakeholders to find a solution to the conflict. It should comprise a carefully prioritised, sequences, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives." (Decision of the Secretary-General's Policy Committee, 2007 as mentioned in UN, 2010, p. 5). The report made by the Secretary-general's committee is quite broad and does not specify the actions that need to be activated to be able to do peace building. There are several factors that should be explained to look more thoroughly into this concept. The first being "national ownership". First and foremost, peacebuilding is a national challenge and responsibility (UN, 2010, p. 5). The citizens of the country are responsible for keeping peace in a synergy with the government. A major concern in this text, is that national ownership is crucial to success with making the foundations of peace that will last. National capacity is also a fact that needs to be addressed for preventing conflict as well as being central to all international peacebuilding efforts from the very start. According to the UN (2010) the aim is to minimize reliance of external assistance, by ensuring that all initiatives support the development of national peacebuilding capacities. In many cases, this is a difficult step. The peace may be fragile due to the national will and capacity, often being displaced and severely

limited. One of the main goals of the peacebuilding process, is to build or rebuild the national capacity enabling the nation itself to create and keep a sustainable peace (UN, 2010, p. 6). The third element which is needed to build peace, is to have a common strategy amongst all parties of the peace building process. An inclusive peace process may involve many actors, therefore, the key to an effective peacebuilding lies in an agreed common strategy which is nationally owned (UN, 2010, p. 6).

It is hard to distinguish peace building from other similar concepts such as peacekeeping, peace-making, peace negotiation, humanitarian, and development assistance for instance (UN, 2010, p. 8). The concepts overlap and explain each other to a certain extent. The UN is the most powerful tool for peace talks and negotiations. But in some cases the UN may not be the preferred negotiator in peace building or function as a peace keeping force. This can be due to the fact that the UN consists of diplomates and politicians from 193 states, with differing intentions and opinions. The UN security council has fifteen member countries, of which five have permanent seats and the right to Veto: the US, China, Russian, Great Britain and France (UN, n.d.-a). These five states have the possibility to veto decisions, to promote their own interests and to take care of allies. Some are also threatening to using veto as this is powerful tool in the UN. When one of these five states use their veto power, proposals for resolutions have to be set aside or remade to be able to fit all countries' intentions and needs. This complicates peace building initiatives within the UN Security Council system during many conflicts and in the aftermaths of conflicts. Meanwhile, other states and other actors, such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) may intervene, establish, and take part in peace building.

Peacebuilding is not only about what is being done. How it is done is as important (UN, 2010, p. 14). During and after a conflict or a war, a community can be damaged both physically and mentally. Therefore, one has to be cautious when proceeding with the work of rebuilding and strengthening the foundations of a people and of a society that has been torn apart by conflict. In the aftermath of a conflict people does not only suffer from physical destruction and institutional disarray, but the social connections will also be weakened or lost by mistrust, apprehension and difficulties in imagining the possibility of working together towards a common goal (UN, 2010, p. 14). In order to take this into account and handle the situation with a conflict-sensitive approach, the situation requires a conflict analysis to best identify the structural causes of conflict, and the triggers and accelerators that may be causing a renewal of

the conflict. The staff involved in mapping the conflict is crucial. It should not be hired from a single ethnic group or a particular region. One also has to put emphasis not only on training and reconciliation work among previous combatants but look at the population as a whole (UN, 2010, p. 16). While this is not always realistic in real life, it should always be strongly emphasised.

The challenges of peacebuilding are in fact many. The peacebuilding happens in an environment which is politically fragile, hostile, and insecure. Moreover, being an outside negotiator that may not understand the local norms, will most certainly lead to challenges. Challenges as funding needs, the number of actors involved that also may be competing, priorities and objectives, and people's expectations are all challenges that a peacebuilder will have to face (UN, 2010, p. 16). The financial challenge may create a gap when the humanitarian response to a crisis decreases, while the system that is to succeed the development assistance is not yet in place. Donors may also not be willing to fund high-risk political and security activities. To be able to identify these needs, at the same time as continuing with a coherent peacebuilding strategy and providing sufficient fundings are also challenges faced by a post-conflict country. Coordinating the different national actors can be a challenge. To conduct a successful and sustainable peacebuilding, national ownership is a crucial factor. But national ownership also requires ownership among various national actors. "Complicating factors can include the roles played by traditional leaders, a politicised civil society and /or media, weak communication systems, and a lack of management and coordination capability in the civil service" (UN, 2010, p. 16-17).

As outlined above, the process of peacebuilding is challenging. There are many different factors that have to be in place and succeed to end with a successful process. In every part of the process, there are different values and factors that have to be emphasised to get the wanted ending. A peacebuilding process is not similar, for instance working between the government in Colombia and the FARC guerrilla warriors or between the Government in Sri Lanka and an ethnic guerrilla groups. Norway has been a part of both processes with various results. In the next chapter, the challenges and successes for Norwegian peacebuilding will be discussed.

## 2.2 The history of Norway's initiative of peacebuilding

During the Cold War, the peacekeeping and peacebuilding actions were reserved to the UN and the great powers, such as the US, France, United Kingdom, Russia, and China. Actions for peace were based on military interventions, rather than diplomatic correspondence. After the Cold War, other countries have acquired a space in the processes of peacekeeping and with the work of conflict resolutions. Norway has become one of the more prominent states within the work of peacekeeping and negotiations. In most cases, Norway works as a facilitating agent, providing economic assistance, privacy, as well as unbiased opinions and guidance.

Norway's role as a peace promoter comes from a long history of the political stance of being a friendly and peaceful actor in the international sphere. Norway has succeeded in creating a narrative of it being one of the most reliable and peaceful countries in the world. There are many reasons why this narrative has been successful. Norway has always been a strong contributor to the rise and promotion of liberalism and international cooperation based on values of liberalism. Norway was for instance one of the first member countries of the UN as well as of NATO and GATT (which now is called World Trade Organisation (WTO)) (WTO, n.d.). These are key institutions of the liberal world order. Jonas Gahr Støre, being the foreign minister between 2005 to 2012, referred to many traditional factors of Norway being a good candidate for promoting peace and peace negotiations. Already from the 1890s, Norway has been in the unique position of being a small country with a strong democracy, a strong civil society, as well as a modern history without any imperialism and wars of conquest. Norway is not a member state of EU, therefore Norway is not constrained to the policies from the organization (Leira, 2007). On the other hand, Norway is a member of NATO and does have to follow the policies from this organization. On the other side, Norway is promoting a narrative where the only intention in foreign policy is peace. The stories being told about Norway are about the effort and will for peace, rather than military operations and arbitrariness.

Norway was the forefront in Europe in introducing parliamentary rule and democratic elections with full and equal freedom of choice. Waves of popular mobilisation by farmers and workers interacted with the development of strong civil society associations. As a small and trade-reliant country Norway favoured international free trade and international cooperation (Leira, 2007). The liberal tradition of Norway was in the later years further developed into what now may be

seen as the dominant current political ideology, social democracy. It was built on international solidarity which evolved from international working-class politics and was established as a strong tradition in Norway. Along with the Christian tradition of compassion, this has been an important combination in making Norway an internationally recognized peace promoter (Leira, 2007).

The Nobel peace prize has further strengthened Norway's reputation as a reliable peace builder amongst conflicting states and actors. The Nobel prize was founded when the Swedish businessman Alfred Nobel passed away in 1896 leaving behind one of the world's largest fortunes. In his will he specified that the prizes would be awarded within the categories of physics, chemistry, medicine or physiology, literature, and peace. He also specified the criteria for the various prizes, stating that the Nobel Peace Prize would be awarded "to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between the nations and the abolition or reduction of standing armies and the formation and spreading of peace congresses." It was Alfred Nobel himself who delegated the nominations of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Norwegian Parliament. The Norwegian Nobel Committee consists of five persons each representing the political parties of the parliament (Nobel Peace Prize, n.d.). With the Nobel prize being arguably one of the most prestigious prizes in the world, Norway is being seen as the home base for peace and promoting peace worldwide.

Norway has also fostered one of the world's most known and important researcher within peace research who has paved way for other peace researches as well as the theories we know as peace theories today. Johan Galtung is mostly known for his work as a sociologist, consisting mainly of peace research and conflict resolutions. In 1959 he was one of the founding intellectuals behind the establishment of PRIO, Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO, n.d.). His theories about peace research, such as his triangle of conflict resolution (Galtung, 1969) have been important in international peace work.

Norway has for many years been interested in and largely involved with peacebuilding processes in most of parts of the world. Most of its peace initiatives have been related to some kind of civil wars. Many of the conflicts have been complicated and have not only involved the immediate local actors, but have also concerned neighbouring states and important and less important allies of the actors directly involved in conflict. Some of the peacebuilding processes Norway have been involved in have been successful, some of the processes have not yet come

to an end, and while in some it is even claimed that the situations worsened after the Norwegian involvement. There are many factors that need to coincide to gain a successful result.

Norway played an important role as a facilitator between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), which led to the Oslo Accords being signed in 1993. This is one of Norway's largest contributions to peacebuilding. On the surface the agreement looked successful, the two parties shook hands and looked pleased. The agreement was instigated by a few Norwegian diplomats to address the enduring stalemate in Israel and Palestine (Egeland, 2018). The two parties had gained new allies and enemies and the scale of the conflict had become larger than only concerning the two parties. The peace initiative undertaken by a few diplomats was highly needed and quite overdue. The fact that someone was able to get the two conflicting parties in conversation was a breakthrough for the conflict and for the future in the region. However, the aftermath of the agreement showed a different picture. The agreement seemed to be rushed, not taking every factor and complexity of the conflict into consideration. It did not take long until one could see how the effects of the agreement took a different turn than spelt out in the agreement. The aim was to give PLO and the Palestinians self-rule of the entire West Bank, and by time withdraw all official Israeli security forces and settlements from the West Bank and Gaza (U.S. Department of state, n.d.). Even though the two parties recognized each other as legitimate representatives, the differences in ideology and point of view led to the Oslo accords not working out as planned, and some even say that the accords were a major step back for the Palestinians. The map that was drawn in the accords has been completely re-drawn several times for the benefit of Israel, and the trust of Norway as a peace negotiator and facilitator decreased.

Another very important peace initiative for Norway is the diplomacy for peace between Sudan and South-Sudan (FN, 2021b). Norway has contributed to the peace process together with the United States and United Kingdom. The three countries have been the central actors working towards the peace negotiations between the conflicting parties in South Sudan. The peace process has been instigated by The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which is supported by Norway. Norway also has the advantage of being able to provide financial support to humanitarian work. This provides the UN, the Red Cross and other NGOs with crucial support to the neighbouring countries that receive refugees from South Sudan. Norway has contributed with 135 million Norwegian kroners (NOK) for emergency response in South Sudan (FN, 2021b).



Norway has been a party in several big and important peace negotiations. The Tamil Tigers versus the Sinhalese Sri Lankan government, in Colombia negotiation between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the government, as well as negotiation between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), are just some of the negotiations Norway has been a part of or has instigated. Not all of Norway's interferences have been successful. The attempt at peacebuilding in Sri Lanka began in 1999 with an invitation by the government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2011). The work was fragile already from the start and the Norwegian strategy had several weaknesses. They The Norwegian team was met with resilience by both the media and several politicians in Colombo, and the scepticism towards western involvement grew (Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2011).

In the peace negotiations between the Colombian government and FARC between 2010 and 2016, Norway and Cuba served as facilitators. They managed to facilitate an agreement, but the aftermath does show that the agreement had not worked to the full extent. Colombian civil society organisations are facing bigger challenges and difficulties than before the agreement. Work regarding human rights have been proven to endanger participants with an increased risk of being murdered (Norwegian Human Rights Fund, n.d.). On one side, the negotiators from Norway and Cuba managed to work out an agreement between the Colombian government and FARC, but on the other hand, they did not manage to rule out that other militant revolutionary groups would take the oppositional role that used to belong to FARC.

As we can see through these four examples of Norwegian attempts at peace negotiation, Norway has not been as successful as one should expect or rightly hope for. There can be many reasons for Norway not reaching the goals. It is important that countries are using their voice in human rights matters, but as a small country with limited influence compared to the Great Powers and the UN veto states, one can question what Norway's main intentions is and where does the urge for peace negotiations come from. One important tool for Norway can be to make Norway's voice heard, to interact and cooperate with some of the Great Powers, as they have more influence in the global sphere. Norway has for many years been a close ally with the Great Power United States, both military, economically as well as having many of the same values regarding human rights. The last, but short subchapter will discuss some potential consequences

of the close relation with the United States for Norway's foreign policy, which will later be applied to Norway's peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan.

## 2.3 The American Great Power

Norway has a very close bond to the United States. The two countries were co-signatories NATO and have, as previously mentioned, worked closely together in Afghanistan. The petroleum and gas sector also contributes to tightening the relationship. Norway is the second largest exporter of natural gas and the eleventh-largest exporter of oil and therefore plays an important part in securing the energy markets, which is a key concern of US foreign policy. Many companies from the United States are participating in Norway's petroleum sector and vice versa (US Department of State, 2020).

The two countries also have common interests in many other organisations and agreements. The close relationship between the two countries is worth investigating when looking into Norway's role in peace negotiations. Norway's close security relationship with the US, can play a role in Norway's choice of foreign policy and foreign humanitarian actions. Norway is strategically important for the United States to cover the Northern areas and also accessible since both states have been cooperation through NATO for almost 75 years. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that Norway, as a small country, is dependent of the United States and NATO. To be able to have sufficient security towards possible foreign threats, Norway needs military backup, preferably from the allies in NATO. Also, NATO is important to United States security issues. In 2021, President Joe Biden expressed through at the G7 summit in the UK that NATO is vital to maintain American Security. The United States is the one member state in NATO that, for the most of the time, contributed with the most economic support in terms of the proportion of its GDP (BBC News, 2021). To get the support from NATO and the United States which may be said to have the strongest voice in NATO, Norway urge to return the favour or at least not work against the foreign policy of their powerful helpers. This narrative is very interesting when investigating the intentions of Norway and why the country chooses to involve itself in complicated peace negotiations.

## 3. Methodology

This chapter seeks to present and explain the methodological choices used in this thesis. First, I will explain how qualitative methodology is best suited for this research, before I go in depth on the different research questions that will be applied. The thesis is based on a case study. In the third subchapter I will discuss the limitations and strengths of a case study, as well as explaining how a narrative analysis will benefit the research and to answer the chosen research questions. I will also present John Stuart Mill's comparative study. In the fourth subchapter I will go in depth on the various methods of data collection and why I have chosen to focus more on some than other methods. The chapter of methodology will lastly discuss the ethical considerations that may have occurred in the research project and how I have tried to avoid any ethical issues.

### 3.1 Research perspectives and methodology

There are two main methods of how to collect data for a project like this, either qualitative or quantitative. The methodology of this thesis will be based on qualitative research. Quantitative research is based on and derive from the natural science. The main tool is to conduct the results from large-scale surveys that is being analysed through statistic techniques, typically with many units and relatively few variable values. The indicators of the research is constructed to be relevant to a predeterminate hypotheses (Desai & Potter, 2006, p 116). Compared to qualitative research, the concrete goal, hypothesis or result can be easier to assess in quantitative research. Qualitative research on the other hand, has its origin in the humanities such as sociology, anthropology, geography and history (Desai & Potter, 2006, p. 116). As qualitative research does not aim to find the result of a hypothesis by statistical methods, it is rather based upon holistic understating, the way to look at various systems as a whole rather than a collection of several parts, where the hypothesis are developed through the process (Desai & Potter, 2006, p. 118). Qualitative research is more difficult to verify or falsify as it easily can result in findings that reflect the subjective of the researcher, and therefore different criteria are needed to ensure the quality of the empirical findings. Selective plausibilisation can often be a problem in qualitative research. One criticism of quality research is that the reader often can observe that the research findings are shaped through what the researcher have chosen to highlight (Flick, 2019, p. 540). This can be seen through the interweaving of leading interviews, chosen

statements or selective documentation. I have been conscious when choosing what documents to analyse to get a wide spectre of politicians and theories to be able to receive the most nuanced result as possible.

## 3.2 Research questions

Within this chapter I will focus on explaining the methodological choices made for the research questions. The research questions should investigate both why the Norwegian narrative on peace is so strong but also why Norway has chosen to participate in the western action towards peace and democracy for Afghanistan.

The research questions are typically the main tool of the thesis. Establishing the research question is normally the first thing one will do after choosing a topic and this is a part of narrowing down the topic. It can also be changed during the process of writing as one see how the thesis evolves. This also happened during this process, to bring more clarity to the research. According to Benjaminsen and Svarstad (2021), there are several different categories to divide the research questions into. The most common being the descriptive-, explanatory- as well as the normative research questions (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021, p. 23). The descriptive research questions seek to identify what aspect to focus on in characterising a topic or a case. The research question often starts with “who”, “what”, “where”, “when”, or “how”. Explanatory research questions are most often an extension of the descriptive research question. The research question is formulated to explain some of the findings made through the research on the descriptive research question (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021, p. 23). It commonly starts with “why” or “how” to focus on the findings from the descriptive question. Benjaminsen and Svarstad also explain a third category of research questions which is called normative research questions. This type of research questions are being discussed whether it is necessary or not, or if the two first mentioned types of questions is adequate enough. The questions open for a subjective thinking as there are no correct answers to them, instead they require the researcher to make an ethical judgement (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021, p. 24). As some scholars do not agree with the use of personal opinions and subjective critical thinking, this can also be argued upon to be some of the most important research questions in a thesis such as this one and the normative questions can play a key role in the research. The normative research questions can be distinguished into two categories according to Benjaminsen and Svarstad (2021, p. 24). The

first is to assess a situation compared to specific standards. The second type investigates what could be done to improve a problematic situation (Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2021, p. 24).

The first research question applied in this thesis, which is “What motives did the Norwegian government have for taking part in the war in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014? can be categorised as the first type of research question: a descriptive research question. It can be better to start a thesis with a descriptive question, or what Benjaminsen and Svarstad (2021, p. 21) refers to as tentative questions, as these types of questions will provide a clear direction for the research paper. Through this research question I will investigate and set the tone for the rest of the paper. It will open up for the next question by providing enough background for the investigation of the next research question.

The second research question applied in the thesis falls into the category of explanatory research questions. “The Norwegian Government is promoting peace as the main motive in foreign policy. How is this being narrated by representatives of the Norwegian peace initiative?”. The research question is used to further explain some of the findings made in the first question and elaborate it from a different angle, locating the narratives from the many intentions found through the first question.

The two questions applied in the thesis are, as previously mentioned, closely connected. I will have to use the findings from the first research question to be able to investigate the second research question. The first question focuses on describing and locating the Norwegian intentions behind the invention in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014, while the second research question locates and explains the narratives made by the Norwegian government about the effort for peace. Therefore, I focused on both questions correspondingly when searching for findings that could answer my questions.

### 3.3 Case study

A case study can be used in many different contexts, especially when you want to locate a perspective of an actor. A case study gives a detailed description of what is studied in this context (Postholm, 2010, p. 50). In this case, and in the context of the research paper, the case will be the intention of the Norwegian government in a peace building project. When working

with a case study it is crucial to narrow down and plan the content in advance. It can easily become a broader project than planned. This project will be narrowed down to entirely focus on the Norwegian government's project for peace in Afghanistan. The timeframe will be narrowed down to the period from 2001 to 2014. These are the years when Norway had a direct presence in Afghanistan. Norway was still present in Afghanistan after 2014, but with limited military forces and limited presence. The period between 2001 and 2014 was chosen to be able to get the most data and material for the case study. I knew I would be looking at Norway as a peace building nation and chose Afghanistan to better understand the western presence in the Global South. Afghanistan has a long history with western interference and therefore the effects of western interference is already embedded in the society in some parts. I also wanted to focus on the relationship between the United States and Norway in Afghanistan, and chose Afghanistan due to the close cooperation the two nations have had during the conflict.

The use of case study can be criticised, but Bent Flyvbjerg (2006) explains and invalidates several misunderstandings about case studies. He starts with the misconception of a case study not being as valuable as theoretical knowledge. Some may argue that it is impossible and not valuable to generalise based on only an individual case, and that a case study is incompetent for the contribution of scientific development (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 221). This point of view of the case study is most common among the proponents of natural science within social science. Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 224) explains how it is incorrect to assert that generalisation is the best way to get valuable data, as some scientists claim, but that single cases can be as valuable. Flyvbjergs (2006) argumentation does justify the use of single cases to be able to conclude with an answer in research. By analysing various government testimonials and notes I will hopefully be able to understand and learn about the individual opinions that have shaped the Norwegian foreign policies in Afghanistan and have contributed to preserve the narrative of the Norwegian state as a valuable peace builder. Even if I mainly analyse the Norwegian peace mission in Afghanistan, I will also analyse other Norwegian missions for peace. During these discussions I will focus on similarities and differences in the Norwegian strategies in foreign policy. This will also provide broader understanding for the Norwegian motives as a peace builder, and better analyse the Norwegian self-image as a self-proclaimed peace nation.

### 3.3.1 Comparative analysis

The main case in this thesis is the Norwegian mission for peace in Afghanistan and what issues this mission and the Norwegian diplomats have faced. I will thereby supply the thesis with comparatives to be able to see similarities and differences between the Norwegian mission in Afghanistan to four other Norwegian missions for peace, in order to explain how successful the initiatives for peace have been. This will strengthen the analysis of the mission in Afghanistan, and better highlight the elements that have made Norway successful with negotiations and what are repeated mistakes or flawed tactics. A comparative analysis can contribute to emphasis factors with Norwegian peace building that may be taken for granted or overlooked in a single case analysis.

John Stuart Mill did in his book “A System of Logic” from 1843, identify four methods for establishing connections between types of events, where the two first methods are more relevant to this thesis. The Method of Agreement will contribute to show that a certain factor or the factors needed for bringing about a certain effect (University of Nevada, n.d.).

“If two or more instances of the phenomenon under investigation have only one circumstance in common, the circumstance in which alone all the instance agree is the cause of the given phenomenon” (Mill as cited in Mackie, 1967)

The other being the Method of Difference. This helps to establish that a certain factor is sufficient for bringing about certain effects (University of Nevada, n.d.).

“If an instance in which the phenomenon under investigation occurs, and an instance in which it does not occur, have every circumstance in common save one, that one occurring in the former; the circumstance in which alone the two instances differ, is the effect, or the cause, or an indispensable part of the cause, of the phenomenon.” (Mill as cited in Mackie, 1967).

Philosopher John Leslie Mackie (1967) explained that an important caveat is that these two methods do not provide decisive proof of the causal mechanisms a relevant (Mackie, 1967). In this thesis, the method from Mill will contribute to highlight the various causes that is affecting the Norwegian missions in peacebuilding in several cases.

### 3.3.2 Narrative studies

There are many different approaches to qualitative research (Flick, 2018, p. 58). A case study can use various methods to collect data, which in this study will be mainly narrative studies and document analysis. There are two different approaches to narrative studies, either where existing narratives are collected and analysed, or where narratives are being produced for the purpose of research in specific forms of interviews (Flick, 2018, p. 58).

As mentioned, a “narrative is a way of knowing and remembering events and processes (in our own personal history) as well as a way of communicating about issues (telling stories about events and processes).” (Flick, 2018, p. 58).

Flick (2018) presents two ways to locate narratives. First, when conditions are created to enable respondents to present certain narratives, for instance through interviews without any form of influencing or inhibiting the story. The other way is what this thesis will benefit from: Narratives from other sources than the researchers’ own interviews, including interviews concluded by other researchers as well as other written accounts. This thesis will use already existing interviews, reports and public documents to analyse the narrative of the Norwegian intentions in Afghanistan.

There are also limitations and critiques about the use of narrative analysis. As this thesis mostly will be based on already made reports and interviews, also called secondary sources, I will have to take into consideration that both the interviewee and the interviewer may have shaped the finished text I have analysed in the thesis. One problem linked to the use of narrative analysis, is that it questions the assumption that the researcher will gain access to factual experiences and events (Flick, 2018, p. 286). Moreover, this follows the idea that the experiences as well as the narrative is homologous, that what is being told is the whole truth. One person's perceptions can always be contaminated by the process of the interview, and memories of other events may be influenced in the way they are told (Flick, 2018, p. 286). There are some important valid elements to the critique. Narrative analysis is in risk of being misinterpreting the materials. It is up to the scientist to handle the analysed material and individuals with respect, and not contaminate the expressed words and meanings.



## 3.4 Data collection

As previously mentioned in the introduction, this master thesis will need a vast collection of data to highlight some of the issues addressed in the thesis. There are various ways to collect information for a research project such as this. Document analysis, field work, or interviews being some to mention. During this project I will not be doing any fieldwork, for various reasons. I will further explain why in a later subchapter. In this thesis the use of document analysis will be the main method.

### 3.4.1. Document analysis

This master thesis will apply document analysis as the main method. As Bowen (2009) describes it, document analysis is “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents” (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). The various kinds of documents will be handled differently, which I will present thoroughly in the next subchapters.

#### 3.4.1.1 Official reports

To be able to conduct the information about the situation in Afghanistan on various levels, the official report from the previous Godal commission “En god alliert- Norge i Afghanistan 2001-2014” will be analysed as well as used for background information. The commission that authored the report was appointed by Royal Decree by the Norwegian Government to evaluate and draw lessons from Norway’s military and civil involvement in Afghanistan (NOU, 2016, p. 8). The committee got the task of considering the results of the Norwegian effort towards the three main objectives; to maintain the relationship between the United States and Norway, to contribute to the international defeat of terror and to contribute to humanitarian and structural development. Several of Norway’s experts on Afghanistan and the field were involved with writing it.

The report has been crucial for the work with this thesis. Through this report, I have acquired a good overview of the Norwegian intentions in Afghanistan in the chosen time period. The paper has evaluated different measures undertaken and announced by Norwegian government officials and reported the positive and negative effects of these measures. I have mostly used the sections from the paper which concerns the humanitarian measures the government has

attempted to undertake. My focus, first and foremost, in this thesis has been to analyse the diplomatic correspondence and humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan. I have therefore not used much of the written report about Norway's military contribution in Afghanistan in the chosen period.

This report has also been crucial when locating the Norwegian narrative or self-image. It has provided an overview of the Norwegian humanitarian effort and of how the government have concluded with the various efforts used in the mission in Afghanistan. The report has also been an important tool when locating the various speeches, government official papers and other statements, that has provided me with information to be able to analyse the Norwegian self-image. It has given me an overview of understanding the conflict as well as locating the correct and useful documents needed.

The report has been read several times. The first time I read through the report in this research project I was able to better understand the different expressed intentions by the Norwegian Government. It gave me a better overview of the Norwegian efforts in Afghanistan, and it analysed whether the efforts worked or not. By the third time I read through the report, I also had a good understanding of the theoretical background that has been chosen for this research paper.

#### 3.4.1.2 Public documents

The second type of data used, is the official notes that have been made by government officials and politicians. The speeches I have analysed have been collected from the Norwegian government's historical archives and are written reports from official speeches from meetings at the Parliament in Oslo. The speeches have been an essential part of answering the research question of how the Norwegian narrative of being a successful peacebuilding nation is portrayed by the government officials. Through the speeches I am able to differentiate and analyse how the various Norwegian ministers have portrayed Norway's intention for peace, or where else the intention is being placed. The official notes are bringing a valuable perspective to the research project, and I therefore believe it is a crucial part of the project together with the other types of documents.

To be able to collect the right speeches, I have used various methods. Many of the speeches were used in the official report mentioned above as primary sources. I was thereby routed directly to the speech that I needed to get a narrower perspective of the specific topic wanted. I

also used the webpage “virksommeord.no” which is an online source with most of the Norwegian political speeches. One of the speeches which has been very relevant has been from June. 5th 2014 from then Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende and Minister of defence Ine M. Eriksen Søreide. They presented an explanation in front of the parliament about the development of Afghanistan and the Norwegian engagement in Afghanistan.

#### 3.4.1.3 White Paper

The last type of documents used to conduct data for this research paper is white paper. I have analysed several different white papers from the Norwegian government. Meld. St. 27 (Utenriksdepartementet, 2018) “Norway’s role and Interest in Multilateral Cooperation”. Second, Meld. St. 10 (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014) “Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway’s Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation” is the two most useful. The first white paper mentioned is relevant in order to answer the first research question about how the Norwegian narrative in international peace missions has been presented. It will contribute to better understanding of how Norway cooperates and interacts with other states in international operations. To analyse first-hand documents from the government, it will help me to connect better with the direct statements from the government. This is being used in the later analysis chapter, where I analyse what kind of narrative the Norwegian government would like to promote in peacebuilding processes. When analysing this white paper, I need to have in mind the time stamp on the white paper. This was published four years after my original timeframe, but the text is still helpful in locating the narrative and ideology of the Norwegian government. It will provide an explanation of the Norwegian foreign policy and strategy which have stayed quite consistent. The second whitepaper mentioned, Meld. St. 10 (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014) “Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway’s Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation” is relevant within the chosen timeframe and can therefore be more relevant for locating the actual point of view for the Norwegian government. As one of the main aims for the Norwegian government in Afghanistan was to promote human rights and development, this paper will be very helpful when analysing the intentions behind the presence in Afghanistan and how the Norwegian government would like to pursue the goal.

#### 3.4.1.4 Advantages and limitations of document analysis

There are both advantages and limitations associated with the use of document analysis as the main method. Bowen (2009) highlights several points about both. With regard to advantages, document analysis is an efficient method, and in most cases, it is more time-effective than other

research methods, as for instance interviews which can be quite extensive (Bowen, 2009, p. 31). Bowen also mentions the lack of obtrusiveness as an advantage by the use of document analysis. By this he refers to the documents being unaffected by the research process. By the use of observation as one type of method the event may proceed differently because it is being observed and thereby at risk of being contaminated (Bowen, 2009, p. 31). Another advantage that Bowen highlights, is that the investigator's presence does not alter what is being studied, and that by choosing the correct documents, it can provide a broad coverage of information.

Bowen also presents some of the limitations with the application of document analysis. His first limitation is that document analysis lacks insufficient orientation detail. The documents that are chosen in a document analysis are produced for another purpose than for this research paper and not to answer this exact research question (Bowen, 2009, p. 31-32). This is something I have taken into consideration when choosing document analysis as the main method. Another limitation mentioned by Bowen (2009) is that documentation may be difficult to retrieve. In some cases documents may be blocked. In this paper I have retrieved papers as they mostly are official papers with open access on the Government Official pages. There are also classified documents about the Norwegian mission in Afghanistan, which are not accessible for the public. By having interviews with government officials, I could have received access to the content of these documents. Interviews are time consuming, and I believe I got sufficient information from the chosen documents.

### 3.5 Ethical considerations

The initial thought when planning the research project was to conduct more interviews. I planned to get in contact with NGO employees working on relevant projects in Afghanistan that would give a better understanding to how the Norwegian and western involvement in the country had contributed to development. I was also planning to conduct interviews with civilians living in Afghanistan. I quickly moved away from the initial idea due to the difficulties it would provide for both the interviewees as well as myself. I needed to think of the current situation in Afghanistan, where the Taliban is again ruling and the country's condition is worsening. With the Taliban rule in 2021 women's rights have decreased, the space for free media coverage has decreased drastically and the consequence for what is defined a crime can be death penalty, torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment (Amnesty International,

n.d.). The ethical issue is often challenged by political polarisation, armed actors, increased armed security of the residents as well as traumatization for the civilians that will always come with an armed conflict (Wood, 2006, p. 374). The current government's relations with western countries are also really bad. The current situation in Afghanistan made me second guess my decision of questioning the situation in Afghanistan from people with close relations in the country.

## 4. Theoretical framework

In order to provide a thorough and relevant understanding of the intentions of the Norwegian action for peacebuilding in Afghanistan, I will apply the theories of Jan Egeland and Terje Tvedt. The two theories will contribute to an explanation of both research questions. Egeland and Tvedt are both prominent and well known for their theories on Norwegian Foreign policy. However, the two scientists provide a very different point of view on how Norwegian foreign policy is with all its values, intentions and how the foreign policy is being systemised. In this theory chapter, I will begin with an introduction of Jan Egeland and his take on Norwegian foreign policy and his explanation of why Norway is a suitable peacebuilding country. This will be followed by the perspective of Terje Tvedt. His argument is based on the assumption that Norway's humanitarian aid does not reach the chosen target due to institutionalised embedded flaws.

### 4.1 Impotent Superpower – Potent Small Power

To better understand the issues addressed in this paper, I will use the theory of the Norwegian peace researcher and present chair of the Norwegian refugee council, Jan Egeland. His book "Impotent Superpower – Potent Small Power" was published in 1988, but is still highly relevant. Jan Egeland is a Norwegian diplomat, political scientist, humanitarian leader and former Labour Party politician. He is best known for his humanitarian work through the Red Cross, Amnesty International and as well for his present position as a general secretary of the Norwegian Refugee Council (Lauritsen, 2023). At the time when Egeland published the book, Norway devoted the highest percentage of its GDP to development out of any country in the world. Through his book, Egeland concludes that small countries such as Norway and the

Netherlands are more suited to have the role as negotiators in bilateral or multilateral negotiations on human rights. He compares the role of small countries versus superpower states, using Norway and the United States as examples (Egeland, 1988). The word superpower ties to the Cold War where both the United States and the Soviet Union were referred to as superpowers. Egeland wrote his book during the Cold War and is referring to the United States as a superpower, but for the rest of the thesis, I will refer to the powerful nations as Great Powers. I will further use Egeland's theories to better understand the important ideas that have motivated Norway's involvement in peace and human rights projects world-wide and to be able to locate the various actors that are important in the process. Lastly, I will use Egeland's theory to understand what motivates Norway and other states to choose a bilateral approach versus a multilateral approach in international cooperation.

Through his research in the book he puts emphasis on the fact that Norway is fitted to be a state which is neutral with the only motive being peace. Egeland first explains the motives and interest behind foreign policy which is crucial for our understanding of the actions being done by the states. There are three different structural perspectives highlighted by Egeland as the main motives of human rights for states. First, national self interest. This includes optimization of such goals as political and diplomatic influence, economic and trade profits, and perceptions of national security (Egeland, 1988, p. 13). Second, international, national and even group norms and principles. This is the perception of what is right and wrong within the foreign policy from an ethical, rather than a self-interested perspective. And lastly, knowledge and tradition. This being the ability to learn from past experiences, build a national "institutional memory", and draw upon accumulated expertise in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. Egeland draws the connection between the different factors for when countries are making decisions for human rights in foreign policy. Different countries are putting emphasis on various factors which make them more or less suitable for a peaceful solution. The emphasis on human rights in foreign policy is mostly determined by the tension which is perceived to exist between a nation's egoistic self-interest and of the human rights perspective, following principles such as the UN Bill of Human Rights (Egeland, 1988, p. 13). Often, the small state is more likely to follow and pursue international humanitarian policies. According to Egeland, a small nation's human rights initiatives are less likely to clash with other external political, economic or strategic interests. The human rights oriented foreign policy is often important for a small state, therefore the "price tag" is less of a problem than for a superpower (Egeland, 1988, p. 14). Egeland explains that there are the two factors, self-interest and generally

recognized norms and principles, that are colliding. A small state is not more willing to sacrifice national interest for ideals. One can understand it as it is easier to combine the ideals with interest for a small country rather than for a Great Power. Norway has been a pioneer within international aid, sacrificing or implementing human rights into the foreign policy as the call and need from the third world has grown stronger according to Egeland (1988). But Norway was not perfect and double standards have been observed. In cases where the Norwegian intentions have been critiqued, Norway has argued that the domestic cost will affect the human rights negatively in the target country. This is an argument as America often uses when the critique is made about human rights. The conflict between self-interest and norms are in some cases setting the human rights in the foreign policy ambitions aside.

The factor that differentiates the Norwegian small state versus the American superpower is called the national security interests, which is categorised under the term national self-interest (Egeland, 1988, p. 15). Commonly, this means the ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external threats. National security is highly embedded and a natural aspect of American foreign policy, but for Norway and many other small states in Europe the emphasis on national security is not as large in the foreign policy making as within the Great Powers. The Great Powers will also most likely overrule the human rights aspect in the foreign policy for the national-security aspect, as we will see examples of through the research paper.

The third motive in the foreign policy decision making process is knowledge and tradition. The traditions and knowledge will be highly different from nation to nation. In Europe the political traditions are most influential in making the human rights policies (Egeland, 1988, p. 17). The ability to learn from the history of others and the ability to learn from its own experiences will affect the foreign policy making. This third motive is not the most important motive when analysing a nation's decision-making process in foreign policy, but traditions and knowledge plays a role which regulates the relationship between the egoistic self-interest and the altruistic norms and principles.

Egeland further explains how the US does not have an institutional memory in the same way as the European system has. He then mentions two key factors which are inherent in American political culture. First, it is problematic that every elected executive leadership is accompanied by a total change in the administrative structure (Egeland, 1988, p. 19). Important positions abroad and at home are treated as political posts and will be changed together with the elected

leader. Second follows the principle that loyalty is more important than the brain. This principle has a tradition in the Cold War where the loyalty to the elected leader was crucial. The aftermath has become rooted in a tradition of persons in key positions which do not necessarily have the most knowledge, but instead have the most loyalty. Egeland refers to it as an anti-intellectual tradition. Egeland was arguing that the American electoral system in fact prevents the knowledge of Americans, which is large, to influence the foreign policies. Norway on the other hand, has not given the priority to academic research and foreign-policy bureaucracies, which could in fact expand the institutional memory (Egeland, 1988, p. 19).

Egeland (1988) concludes with three main differences between the American and the Norwegian approach to human rights foreign policy. First, “strategic status as a small state or major power” (Egeland, 1988, p. 175). A superpower does most likely have more at stake than a small state when interfering in international human rights issues. Complex and more security-oriented foreign policy is often perceived as conflicting with the human rights effort a superpower is involved in. Second, to the United States the idea of conflicts in the east-west was of greatest importance, while Norway thought of all conflicts as equally important, there was no strategy as an ulterior motive (Egeland, 1988, p. 175). Third, one of the most important differences between the two countries in foreign policy is the different internal political systems. The American political system has a “more short-term result-oriented perspective, intensive media exposure of policy controversies” (Egeland, 1988, p. 175). The Norwegian political system on the other hand is more stable. Støre (2006, April 24) uses an example from the peace building process in Sri Lanka to demonstrate the success. The initiative started with Erik Solheim, former leader from Socialist Left (SV), continued with the labour party, then a centre/right government, and ended with a centre/left government without the Norwegian estimate and involvement in the peace process itself having been changed (Støre, 2006, April 24). Belonging to the tradition of Nordic foreign policy strategy, the focus is on long-term results through diplomatic-bureaucratic establishments. Jens Stoltenberg argued in 2000 that one of the most important factors for Norwegian human rights foreign policy and democracy for peace was the will and ability to work for long-term goals (Stoltenberg, 2000). Norway has had as its goal to build peace and advance democratic values after a peace deal has succeeded. This includes building a democracy with all its institutions and infrastructures. He stated that if peace should continue in the aftermath of a conflict, the lives of the civilians needed to be stabilised with better healthcare, education, and basic improvement of living. The mission will succeed by extension of the international work (Stoltenberg, 2000).



It is important to keep in mind the time when Egeland wrote this theory and the political and historical context behind his writing. The book was written in 1988, more than thirty years ago. Gro Harlem Brundtland from the Labour Party was the Prime Minister for Norway in 1988. She had one of the leading roles in the modernisation of the Labour Party and the marketisation of the social democratic management model (Bonde, 2023). In the rest of the world, the Cold War was about to come to an end. The tension between the two Superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States was in one of the most critical eras in 1988 with military rearmament through Ronald Reagan as the American President (Petersen, 2022). It is therefore important to read the theory of Jan Egeland in his book “Impotent Superpower - Potent Small State” through the lens of these political events. Even if the theory is not of the newest, it is still highly relevant for the analysis of Norwegian foreign policy. It was the beginning of the Norwegian foreign policy of peace initiatives, which evolved after the end of the Cold War in 1989/91 with Egeland as an important architect. The impression of Norway as a relevant resource in human rights foreign politics is as present in the chosen time frame in this research.

## 4.2 “The Regime of Kindness”

I will also use the theories and arguments by Terje Tvedt, who in many respects is an academic adversary to Egeland's (1988) viewpoints. Tvedt is a Norwegian historian, author, movie maker and public debater (Hetland, 2021). He did his PhD about Norwegian perception towards the non-European world in the 1970-1980s. I will use his criticism towards the Norwegian “peace regime” of governmental and non-governmental aid organisations, powered by politicians, scientists, and the media. Tvedt argues that these actors make clear guidelines for how to portray Norway, and therefore close the opportunity for a critical debate about whether the aid reaches its goal for a more peaceful world society.

Terje Tvedt does have another approach than Jan Egeland to Norway as a promoter of peace and a primary choice for becoming a negotiator. In 2003 Tvedt published the book in Norwegian, “utviklingshjelp, utenrikspolitikk og makt – den Norske modellen» which can be translated to “development aid, foreign policy and power – the Norwegian model”. Throughout the thesis I will use the second edition which was published in 2009. He starts by stating that he has an ambivalent feeling when writing the book, just because it is an unpopular opinion.

The narrative about Norway being one of the most peaceful states, and Norway's "good project" is only an illusion (Tvedt, 2009, p. 11). He further states that the project is putting Norway on a pedestal as a prominent global humanitarian aid power and peace maker. He therefore explains how the narrative of how Norway is a suitable peace maker is a flawed narrative.

Tvedt is referring to the "the south-political system" when explaining the Norwegian contribution to peace around the world. It denotes the interweaving of the Norwegian aid together with the foreign policy towards what can be called "the Global South", as well as organisations in and outside the state who are involved in the south. The system was evolving during the 1980s, especially after the end of the Cold War (Tvedt, 2009, p. 22-33). According to Tvedt, Norway does not conduct a concise and clear policy towards the South. The system consisting of governmental, such as the Department of foreign affairs and NORAD, and non-governmental organisations, as communities of research and NGOs to mention some, are all relying on governmental financial support (Tvedt, 2009, p. 35-36). When explaining the Norwegian project of peace, Tvedt uses the concept of "the national regime of kindness". He explains how Norwegian aid and peace negotiation is surrounded of an aura of kindness which makes it hard to place critique towards the nation and the initiatives. The Norwegian initiatives appears without any vested interests, therefore the critique being made is interpreted as critique of the will of doing well. The national regime of kindness is based on the use of ethics of attitudes, rather than an ethics based on consequences. The focus is being made on the good intention rather than whether the intention is having good consequences or not (Tvedt, 2009, p. 35). Through these ideas, Norway is using various forms of power to convince the international community that they are using a technique of influencing ideology rather than using direct force to influence or convince other countries. The ideology of Norway is contributing to the impression of Norway as a successful peace negotiator and is also strengthening the Norwegian self-image being a "Global humanitarian Great Power" (Jagland as cited in Tvedt, 2009, p. 28).

The word national corporatism is also being used to explain the relationship between the government and the large organisations of interest (Tvedt, 2009, p. 33-34). In this context, it is important to differentiate between what is referred to as advocacy groups, such as the Norwegian organisations NHO and LO versus voluntary organisations which have an interest in the era of conflict. The advocacy groups play an important role in the development of political and social systems. The advocacy groups can also be called lobbying groups or pressure groups (Berg & Garvik, 2022). Tvedt is not referring to these types of organisations,

but rather the non-profit organisations or NGOs. Organisations such as The Norwegian Red Cross, Norwegian Refugee council or Norwegian Church Aid are among other organisations that Tvedt refers to. He also refers to larger research institutions, such as PRIO or Chr. Michelsens institute, which both are Norwegian institutes researching peace and politics. Neither the non-profit organisations nor the research institutions promote the economic interest of the inhabitants. Both types of organisations do have an interest, but the last type is what Tvedt refers to. The National Corporation can be both democratic and autocratic, but Norway is recognised as a democratic national cooperative country where trade unions, employers' associations and agricultural associations are recognised as large contributors in the Norwegian corporation. The classic Norwegian corporatism is weakened, but Tvedt argues that Norwegian politics towards the south and the national corporatism is based on the cooperation between state, NGOs, academic institutions where the cooperation has become even stronger. The national corporatism has become stronger based on demands from below, where organisations are demanding governmental support. The corporatism has also been strengthened through invitations from above, where the state is demanding cooperation from the NGOs (Tvedt, 2009, p. 33-34). The problem with national corporatism is that it was based on organisations who represented the interests of their members and the politics implemented by the government. But as the lines between the organisations and the states have become more fluid, the organisations which were meant to represent the members, have now stepped in to represent the state more and more and are becoming a substitute power. Tvedt further explains (Tvedt, 2009, p. 220) that the separation between the civil society and the state gets more fluid and unclear. The administration of the state is "colonising" the NGOs and the NGOs are invading the arenas of foreign policy.

Tvedt does support a Norwegian peace and development project, but critiques the design of the policies and their content, he claims that they lack well thought-out policies for the Global South as well as for Norway (Tvedt, 2009, p. 230). The critique that Tvedt directs against the Norwegian "south-political system" and the "national regime of kindness" is overall based on the claim that it hinders rather than promotes public debate about limitations and possibilities in Norwegian policy making, so that one can openly discuss whether the resources and expectations have led to good results. He argues that Norway has a lot to offer to both the international arena and the Global South, but that the ideology that is promoted about the national regime of kindness is overshadowing the possibility to develop the policies and

challenge the ideology (Tvedt, 2009, p. 231). What Egeland (1988) promotes as good policies for Norwegian human rights policies, is what Tvedt critiques.

In 2017, Tvedt wrote the book *The International Breakthrough* (originally called *Det internasjonale gjennombruddet*) (Hetland, 2021). In the book he explains the debut of Norway as an international guidance councillor, at a time when Norway also got many refugees from Asia, Latin America and Africa (Dreyers Forlag, n.d.). Tvedt argues that the Norwegian “ideology” of being a humanitarian-policy-elite has been the reason for Norway moving from a homogeneous nation state to a multicultural and multi-religious country that aims to be a humanitarian Great Power (Hetland, 2021). In this book, he also argues that the United States made Norway a “nation of aid” and that aid became a national project for Norway (Tvedt, 2017, p. 27). The international system of aid has to be understood in the light of his view- that development aid is hiding the larger national interests states might have. The United States was one of the pioneers of development aid in the Global South, but it was important to not be perceived as colonising with western values, institutions and solutions. The initiatives for development in the Global South was therefore covered up by milder words such as western modernisation and development (Tvedt, 2017, p. 31). Norway was among the first countries that followed up on the American initiatives. As Norway was a close ally to the United States, it felt the need to support and back the American initiative.

Jan Egeland and Terje Tvedt does see the Norwegian peace initiative quite differently. As argued, Egeland (1988) highlights the Norwegian ability to be a successful peace builder as a small state. Norway will have a better potential to negotiate for peace compared to the Great Powers, both in bilateral relations and through multilateral organisations. Terje Tvedt (2009) on the other hand highlights how Norway’s position to negotiate for peace weakens through the lack of realisation of the national and international structures of power and ideological notions.

## 5. Analysis

There were many factors that had to be in place for Norway being a successful peace negotiator in Afghanistan. Through this chapter I will analyse the Norwegian government’s plans and

efforts in Afghanistan during the years 2001-2014. I will in particular investigate priorities and where the focus was being placed. Through this chapter, I will discuss how and why the Norwegian government decided on its priorities. Why is Norway being trusted as a negotiator without any other mission than peace? I will use the report on the Norwegian engagement in Afghanistan that was commissioned on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2014 and published 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 to further explore this question. The report was made to evaluate and learn from the Norwegian humanitarian and military efforts in Afghanistan in the period from 2001 until 2014. The selection for the report was made by independent experts on the request from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence.

This chapter of analysis will be divided into four subchapters. First, I will seek to investigate the decision-making process within the Norwegian government in order to find out about the prioritising made by the decision-makers. Second, I will explain the relation that Norway has with its allies, especially the connections with the United States. This will be seen through the lenses of both of the chosen theories for this research. The third subchapter will analyse the narrative of the Norwegian Government when adopting a peace process and foreign intervention. Lastly, I will do a comparison between the Norwegian efforts in Afghanistan with other peace-making efforts Norway has completed. The four chapters will answer the research questions from different angles.

## 5.1 The prioritising

To be able to build a better understanding of the Norwegian mission in Afghanistan, this subchapter will start to look into what Norway did prioritise during the mission in Afghanistan. Norway has been present in Afghanistan since 2002, during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) until 2006, and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was established (NATO, 2021). Norway's role was to maintain security in order to help defeating the terrorists that attacked the World Trade Centre in New York in 2001 and to contribute with economic support to stabilise the country after the military operations and to make it possible for soldiers and community workers to rebuild the country. The presence was mostly based around the northern provinces of Faryab and Meymaneh. At the beginning of the war, it was Norwegian soldiers job to locate terror cells and close down the financial sources for Taliban (Bondevik, 2001a).

According to the UN, Norway did not contribute in the south where the battles were the bloodiest (FN, 2021a). Their work was mainly about training the national army and police force of Afghanistan. As the report done after the Norwegian withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014 states, the Afghan government and others had mentioned that the Norwegian aid was based on good principles and with the intentions of being helpful towards the Afghan people. Still, there are no actual proofs of Norwegian aid being as successful as it was intended to be (NOU, 2016:8, p. 89). The Norwegian effort can be questioned. One needs to take into consideration that Afghanistan was a country in the middle of a continuous armed conflict with a government that was ruined and weak. Norway had quite an ambitious goal of what could be done by Norwegian help, and the priorities and the effort to follow up projects already started were too extensive compared to the available resources. The Norwegian government wanted to strengthen the humanitarian effort in Afghanistan and to create possibilities for a better life for civilians (Bondevik, 2001a). Another problem was that the aid was distributed by too many countries, on too many projects and on too many partners. This made it hard to ensure that the resources reached the chosen targets and that the aid actually was helpful. Rather than Norway being able to finish one project and accomplishing its stated objectives, the effort was being presented by the Afghanistan report as unsuccessful (NOU, 2016:8, p. 89). Norway was trying to hold on to the narrative of being a trustworthy and stable helper, and this promise has in many cases been kept.

Norway has since the beginning of the human rights actions in Afghanistan prioritised three main areas. Education, promoting democratic rule and development in the rural village areas. This has been combined with other factors such as women rights, peace and security, fight against corruption and human rights (NOU, 2016:8, p. 89). I will in the following subchapters explain the successes and failures of the Norwegian efforts in the target areas. The Norwegian reasoning for intervening can be explained with Norway's previous efforts in Afghanistan through aid. Already before 2001, Norway had promoted and contributed to education and development in the rural village areas. The general foreign policy strategy of Norway was to promote respect for human rights and democracy (NOU, 2016:8, p. 89). The three strategies were as well highly influenced by the international efforts, and it was all being led by the then Afghan Minister of Finance, Ashraf Ghani. Ghani was the key person for the economic work for development in Afghanistan (NOU, 2016:8, p. 91). From 2001 until 2009, Norway continued to raise the level of aid, but the capacity for management for the new projects were not sufficient or not present. A Norwegian official note reported that "Norway continues to

actively participate in the wide international engagement in Afghanistan to contribute to stabilisation, reconstruction, development for democracy and growth” (Utenriksdepartementet, 2008). After 2009, the Norwegian government started to review whether to reduce the amounts of priorities and sectors. The idea was that this would make it easier to assess the projects and follow up properly. However, there was also criticism towards changing the strategy. Some representatives from the Norwegian Foreign Ministry meant that the change of strategy could lead to unfortunate political signals. Regardless of whether the strategy was portrayed as positive or negative, the priorities within the Norwegian foreign policy, the gap between the rhetoric and results, has for periods been large in the politics of security as well as the politics of development. Norway’s intention seems to have been to contribute in many areas with very few limitations. This caught them standing in a split between missions. From that position, it was difficult to be proactive and produce satisfactory results. This follows the theory of Tvedt, Norway may have cared more about looking like a human rights promoter, than the results they received. I will look further into the five main areas of Norway’s participation.

### 5.1.1 Education

As mentioned in the White Paper “Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway’s Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation” from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Education is vital to an individual’s personal development, and is an important factor for realising and strengthening other human rights” (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014, p. 26). The sector of education was one of the highest prioritised sectors of Norwegian humanitarian aid in Afghanistan (Johnson, 2001). Education was seen as key to promote both equality and equal opportunities, especially in conflict areas and for vulnerable groups. It was considered being a very powerful tool, enabled to enhance human rights in many aspects such as reducing child marriages, enhancing social status, increasing awareness of own rights, especially for girls, and improving overall health (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014, p. 26). According to the Norwegian Minister of Development in 2001, Hilde Frafjord Johnson, education was the first priority due to its basic effects for combating poverty and promoting economic and social development, as well as building a democratic community. Her assumption was that education would be the foundation of basic and needed development in Afghanistan after the war. Even if education was one of the prioritised sectors, the sector did not get as much attention as it ought to. Norway’s close ally, the United States, oversaw almost half of the total contributions to aid for

human rights in Afghanistan which made it more difficult for small countries such as Norway to gain traction for their ways and priorities. Still the Norwegian government managed to make some room for action and their main target areas were, as mentioned by Johnson (2001), mainly education and human rights. Despite its importance, the economic contributions to education were being sparse in comparison to the other important areas that Norway had focused on. Between 2004 and 2009, only 8-10 percent of the total Norwegian economic contributions was earmarked for the sector of education (NOU, 2016:8, p. 92). The investment in education can be seen especially in the northern Afghan province, Faryab. In this province, Norway was the largest economic supporter of primary school education, both regarding building schools and the education of teachers (Regjeringen, 2007). NGOs supported by Norway and the World Bank programme of education EQUIP (Education Quality Improvement Programme) built 117 schools and supported follow-up studies for approximately 2000 teachers (NOU, 2016:8, p. 92). In 2007, Norway supported EQUIP with 30 million Norwegian kroner (Regjeringen, 2007). After 2010 the earmarking stopped, which made the traceability of money targeted for education difficult. Between 2010 and 2014, the Norwegian Embassy did have a counsellor dedicated to the field of education. This facilitated following up to a greater extent. The counsellor made it possible to run diplomacy within the sector of aid, contributing within groups of donors and being in close communication with the Ministry of Education. The commitment to education made the Afghan Government trust the Norwegian efforts for better education for all in Afghanistan (NOU, 2016:8, p. 92). On the other hand, many opposition groups to the Afghan Government were not supporting the Norwegian and international focus area of education. Afghan teachers, students and the school buildings became targets for many terror attacks. The attacks were not only criminal offences according to Afghan law, but it also violated the fundamental right to education for all (Human Rights Watch, 2006).

Even though the statistics of the number of schools built, number of teachers educated, and numbers of pupils registered looked great, there were questions raised about the quality of education. The Afghan government concluded in a report published in 2015, that the quality of education was questionable. The report was looking into what kind of curriculum being taught, if the teachers were good enough educated and how much knowledge the pupils were left with after ended schooling. The assumed lack of quality in the educational system may have various reasons. First and foremost, even if education was a huge task, there was not much foreign support until the US decided to provide substantial economic support in 2011 (NOU, 2016:8, p. 92-93). Together with the Norwegian dedication towards education, while also working



purposefully with diplomacy in aid, one did see changes of strategies within the educational system. As it is difficult to trace the concrete results, it is also difficult to assess how this effort actually helped improve the quality of education.

Even though the Norwegian effort for education did not reach its overall targets, the Norwegian government wanted to retain its project for being a peaceful and invaluable helper for education. After the general election in Norway in 2005, the government changed from a non-socialist Conservative-Christian-Democratic government with Kjell Magne Bondevik as Prime Minister to a Labour Party government with Jens Stoltenberg as Prime Minister. This led to a change of the arguments for the mission in Afghanistan. Although Norway withdrew from Operation Enduring Freedom, the military operation against terror led by the United States, the Norwegian government wanted to continue the humanitarian contributions in Afghanistan through ISAF (Strøm-Erichsen, 2005). The arguments for the continuation in Afghanistan changed from eliminating terrorist cells to helping the Afghan people with development for human rights. Norway did now focus on providing and helping Afghanistan with developing a sustainable Afghan society (Strøm-Erichsen, 2005), and the incumbent Minister of defence Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen argued that security could be achieved through education (Strøm-Erichsen, 2008). The arguments that were promoted for the withdrawal from OEF and the change of government of Norway, were based on human rights, such as Norway having built more schools, more girls having access to education, more equality etc. Previously, the arguments were based on defeating the terrorists and ending the war on terror together with their allies through NATO and the UN.

### 5.1.2. Building a democracy

Another very important priority for Norway's mission for peace in Afghanistan was to help build a more democratic form of government with all its institutions, and to focus on creating awareness around human rights at the same time. Norway did also receive criticism about how the democratisation mission worked, similarly to the focus on building a better educational system with great focus on quality. There was lack of a sustainable strategy behind the provided aid, and the documented results were few (NOU, 2016:8, p. 93). While Norway has been successful with some projects, others have failed to produce good results. In the sector of human rights and freedom of speech Norway succeeded in promoting some changes and was able to

present good results, however the Norwegian efforts to develop the Afghan police force and court system were not very successful.

One of Norway's largest and most important projects related to the building of a stronger and more stable state was the implementation of president- and government elections from 2001 until the withdrawal in 2014. Conducting fair elections was important for most of those western countries that involved themselves in the development of Afghanistan. The elections became an indicator of how democratic Afghanistan had become. Many of the local elections were, however, characterised by rigging and fraud (NOU, 2016:8, p. 93). This only led to mistrust among the Afghan population towards modern democracy and the chosen institutions of elections. Norway's contribution to making the Afghan democracy stronger was mostly through the UN programme of development (UNDP), the ELECT-program. The programme was supposed to organise the day of election and contribute to fair count of votes. Norway supported the programme with a total sum of 197 million Norwegian kroners (approximately 18.5 million dollar) distributed over three years. This time, the critique was not directed directly against the Norwegian government but instead towards UNDP ELECT. The programme received a comprehensive critique for bad leadership, poor coordination with the international donors, as well as poor ability to budget correctly (NOU, 2016:8, p. 93). However, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued with these donations. They did defend the decision with the argument that there were not any other alternative options for financing the election. The political significance of supporting the elections and the political change was also an argument for the continuation of support to the UNDP ELECT programme. For other projects, the Norwegian embassy used different approaches to reach their preferred targets (NOU, 2016:8, p. 93). Together with other western countries, Norway supported various programmes which were meant to educate female parliamentarians. They did also take actions towards other projects of enlightenment to enhance the development of the Afghan civil society. Here, as in many of the other Norwegian development projects, it is difficult to measure the results of these types of work. Still, the Norwegian mission was acknowledged within both the Afghan and the international society (NOU, 2016:8, p. 94).

Terje Tvedt (2009) presents a theory of why the Norwegian measures did not reach their targets in Afghanistan. His theory is investigating and explaining how the cooperation between state and NGOs is working. This is what he has named "the Norwegian model", an explanation of how the Norwegian government and the NGOs and organisations are working closely together.

Tvedt refers to how some social scientists explain that the position and importance of the NGOs and volunteer organisations are marginalised and their level of activity declines (Tvedt, 2009, p. 57). Other scientists see the symbiosis between state and volunteer organisations or NGOs somewhat different. They see the volunteer organisations as the carriers of democracy, as a revolutionary movement from the bottom up, made by civil society (Tvedt, 2009, p. 57). Tvedt does not agree with any of these arguments, as he argues that the Norwegian NGOs have a strong position, but that international NGO networks have a limited role in promoting democracy. Norway has for many years been focusing on the NGOs and the voluntary organisations when distributing funds in the Global South, such as Afghanistan. In the 1960s, Norway used on average 5% of international aid to the organisations. 40 years later approximately 50% of Norway's bilateral budget for aid is distributed through the organisations (Tvedt, 2009, p. 57). Some of the biggest NGOs have become worldwide, with thousands of employees in more than hundred countries. Many organisations are getting economic support from Norwegian UD and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) to support the expansion to the Global South.

Tvedt (2009) further explains how the dynamics between the Norwegian state and the organisations quietly has changed. One can argue that the relationship between the two sectors is paradoxical. On the one hand, government officials and representatives of the organisations are arguing that civil society has a large influential role on strategies of development through large NGOs and other private actors who are working in the Global South. On the other hand, many of the NGOs and private actors are closely linked with the government, and rely on it for their financial resources. Previous Norwegian Colonel deployed in Meymaneh Rune Solberg did see for himself how the Norwegian aid transferred through Afghan and Norwegian NGOs in Afghanistan could make things more difficult. He agrees with the Norwegian government that aid and development work are important for building democracy, but he also saw how the attack on civilians increased in tandem with increasing aid channelled through NGOs (Solberg, 2010). Solberg explained how he felt helpless as a Norwegian official not being able to contribute to increasing living conditions for the Afghan civilians with approximately 20 million dollar that was given from the Norwegian government to NGOs working in the area. He argues that the Norwegian model is the reason for the increasing rebellion actions, corruption and other negative effects. He explains how the NGOs are supporting the Afghan government in what is classified as secure areas, and thereby creating a distance to the opponents which they should instead create a closer bond to (Solberg, 2010). Moreover, it also

creates a distance to the local governments in the districts and provinces. The NGOs were being perceived as the only delivery of development, thereby the local government got undermined and lost trust among the civilians. Solberg claimed that the “Norwegian aid is being used in a way that increases the distance between those who shall lead and those who shall be led” (Solberg, 2010).

Compared to Tvedt (2009), Egeland has a different approach to how the actors in foreign policy cooperate, and how decisions are being made. To better understand the actions in foreign policy Egeland provides an explanation of the various institutional variables, where the decision-makers are being considered. He discusses the roles of Governmental actors, non-governmental actors and Inter-governmental actors, before he compares the various positions. All of the mentioned actors are contributing to influence and frame the human rights aspect of a nation's foreign policy (Egeland, 1988, p. 19).

In addition to governmental actors, Egeland also describes the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the decision-making process. They can be categorised into three groups: private organisations, news media and academic institutions (Egeland, 1988, p. 20). It must be clarified that Egeland's definition of NGO is unusual. Most definitions are only referring NGOs as private organisations, excluding the news media and academic institutions. Both the United States and Norway's political systems include a variety of non-governmental organisations. However, American human rights NGOs are working differently than Norwegian human rights NGOs. The American NGOs have emphasised the priority to political professional lobbying. Norwegian human rights NGOs on the other hand, have placed their resources onto general human rights education and public information programmes (Egeland, 1988, p. 20). Decision-making is also affected by the news media. News media uses their platforms to give human rights issues the attention that is needed to influence the highest levels of decision-making.

The importance of a strong local government as well as functioning NGOs is vital to be able to follow up human rights measures, for the building of democracies and making decisions locally. Norway did contribute to one of the most comprehensive projects for this purpose, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) which was created in 2007. Many people within the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs were sceptical to the project, arguing that this would be another political platform for personal interests. Even though IDLG was

ambiguous, and consisted of non-specific measures without sufficient leadership, Norway did continue to financially support the directorate until 2011. However, the UNDP Afghanistan Sub-National Governance Programme (ASGP) was unsuccessful. It started as a pilot project in Faryab, but the project did not go as planned due to the lack of firm leadership, undefined functions and unclear differentiation between the two UNDP programmes, the IDLG and the ASGP. Norway withdrew the support of ASGP due to lack of results. It clearly showed how difficult it was to try to change the system from the outside (NOU, 2016:8, p. 95).

The initiative for democratic institutions in Afghanistan got criticism from various sources, however, the Norwegian mission was not just a waste. In 2014, at the end of the Norwegian initiative in Afghanistan with ISAF, more than 7 million Afghans travelled to vote to elect a new president and to vote in the provincial councils (Søreide & Brende, 2014). With votes from more than half of the Afghan population, this was an electoral participation equal to a modern western democracy. The election was not perfect, electoral fraud did happen, but not to the same extent as during previous elections. Even though some lives got lost, the Afghan security forces were in charge of security, and did an overall good job (Søreide & Brende, 2014).

### 5.1.3 Law and order

Norway also had a mission to prevent corruption within the judiciary system and the police force in order to make the overall legal system more effective and based on human rights (NOU, 2016:8, p. 95). Norwegian police officers and lawyers were being sent to Afghanistan without having any knowledge of the conditions in Afghanistan. At all times there were 20 highly qualified personnel from the Norwegian sector of judiciary, serving as advisors in Afghanistan (Strøm-Erichsen, 2007). They were often met with difficult tasks within a setting where the police force and lawyers were parts of a bigger system with complicated power alliances and embedded corruption. The Norwegian lawyers and judges were presented with the task of building the foundation for a competent legal system and rule of law without any corruption. Norway was also requested to contribute with police tasks in Afghanistan by Germany and England, and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs wished to support their close allies (NOU, 2016:8, p. 96). The request from Germany and England was important for the Norwegian initiative to develop a special court to handle drug-related crime. Norway had been a part of the building of a similar court system in Georgia and did therefore take the challenge

head on. However, they were not met with the same local will for change in Afghanistan as they had in Georgia. Questions were raised about whether they should continue to provide the court with advice due to the heavy corruption of the system. In one way, this shows how the international community could be involved with criminal systems, and how difficult it could be to withdraw from them. Norway withdrew from the project of advising the court in 2008 due to these difficulties (NOU, 2016:8, p. 96), only one year after the Minister of Defence and Minister of Justice claimed the project to be successful (Strøm-Erichsen, 2007).

Some of the Norwegian projects were not very successful, some even led to a worsening in the quality of life for the local Afghan people. Afghanistan is a country with strict religious traditions, therefore, the women working in a field of authority with foreign support were seen as a direct threat to the cultural and religious values. A story from a young Afghan boy shows how the role of women was seen in Afghanistan. In 2011, the former Norwegian diplomat Rolf Vestvik (2015) was having a conversation with a traditionally dressed Afghan boy on the street. The boy said he felt sorry for Vestvik as he was going to hell. Vestvik had female colleagues and the boy meant he was not able to “control his women” as the Norwegian women were working and did not wear the traditional burka (Vestvik, 2015). The young boy was not persuaded when Vestvik was trying to argue with him. When a young boy had this point of view, one can easily imagine how lawmakers and rulers of Afghanistan, as well as the commoners on the street, were thinking about women's role in society. The difficulty of women getting new roles of authority were seen in the case of the education of female police. Many of the female police officers received threats, and some even chose to flee the country (NOU, 2016:8, p. 96). Without the presence of international protection, the newly educated policewomen had less protection against their own community. The problem did continue throughout the whole country, and the education of the female police force did seem to illustrate a basic dilemma with the international community's emphasis on equal rights between men and women in Afghanistan. The issue was two-sided. On the one side, female police officers and females working in the sector of justice were important to secure female rights. On the other hand, female police officers were at risk of discrimination and sexual harassment. Their security was not implemented within the police force before the women were employed. The only measures taken was that the female officers were offered a self defence- and security course to be able to take care of themselves. In this case, Norway and other international donors were focused on getting as many women as possible into the police force, rather than looking at the alignment of efforts and the consequences for each individual (NOU, 2016:8, p. 97). The

incumbent Norwegian minister of defence of 2007, Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen, and the incumbent Norwegian minister of justice, Knut Storberget did have a rather optimistic point of view on the Norwegian action for equality in Afghanistan. They bragged about the success of Norwegian policewomen in Afghanistan, teaching Afghan women the police profession as one of the measures made to assist the Afghans to rebuild their country (Strøm-Erichsen, 2007). “It is a formidable task” they said in 2007, knowing little about how the effort for the Afghan policewomen really worked.

#### 5.1.4 Human rights

Human rights work was an important priority for the government of Norway. It was mainly non-governmental organisations, supported by the Norwegian government that were working with human rights. Yet again, critique was directed at Norway and the NGOs. Especially the work with building a civil society from the outside in. Some argue that Afghan NGOs based in Kabul backed by foreign aid, lacked any roots in the traditional Afghan society, and only served short-term political interests (NOU, 2016:8, p. 97). Norway has also supported local NGOs working from within the Afghan society, trying to reach Afghan society through local council assemblies called Shuras and Jirgas. The Norwegian economic support of human rights measures was relatively modest. Norway did prioritise measures to promote freedom of speech and later women’s rights (NOU, 2016:8, p. 97). According to the Norwegian government, mentioned in the White Paper (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014), freedom of speech is a key component to an open, democratic society. Therefore, efforts to protect and expand democratic space have been given priority in the Norwegian mission for human rights in international foreign policy (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014, p. 18). To be able to have a functioning democracy, every inhabitant needs to have the opportunity to influence decisions through the freedom of expression. Freedom of speech in many regimes is restricted. For the Norwegian government, the work towards freedom of speech was seen as crucial to the realisation of other human rights (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014, p. 20). Afghanistan has struggled with threats against journalists and the overall freedom of speech was restricted. During the election in 2009, many Afghans were too scared to vote due to the many rebel groups that tried to stop the election. Also, in the election in 2014, there were attempts to use violence and threats to scare the voters from going to the voting polls, but the voters were less afraid than previously. As mentioned before, this election was more successful than earlier elections. What was different

this time, was the enthusiasm and interest around the election, both in the media and among voters (Kjølseth & Sigurgrimsdottir, 2014). The enthusiasm in the media and the approaches towards freedom of speech may have led to the change in holding the election. The media coverage was larger than ever before, also focusing more on positive cases that highlighted the successes of the presidential candidates. For the first time, the voters were able to watch live debates of the candidates on television, and people were less scared to discuss politics in public or through social media (Kjølseth & Sigurgrimsdottir, 2014). Even though both international and Afghan journalists received threats, they continued to cover the election. People as well seemed to defy the bloody history from previous elections and went to the polling stations. The international effort towards more democratic values did actually work to some extent. Even if it was not due to Norway's efforts alone, the most important fact is that the participation in elections and democratic values within the population increased. The Norwegian diplomats contributed to dialogue between Afghan human rights organisations and political actors to be able to promote more human rights and communication. The Afghan human rights organisations were having difficulties reaching and communicating with the government, therefore the Norwegian work with communication was important.

Even though the Norwegian work for human rights worked well in some sectors, the critique has been addressed that Norway only prioritised political important areas at the expense of human rights (NOU, 2016:8, p. 99), especially within the areas of peace diplomacy and transitional justice. From 2004-2005 Norway participated in the making of the Afghan plan of action for transitional justice. One major problem with the new ruling leaders after the ousting of the Taliban from the government in 2001, was that many of them were former warlords in the drug business who contributed to the comprehensive problem of corruption in Afghanistan. Norway did question the ruling leaders, thinking they should leave their position, but some of Norway's allies preferred not to disturb the Afghan government structure that had come a long way. A significant reason for this unwillingness to interfere with the structure of power in Afghanistan, especially in the rural areas, was the fear of creating a political destabilisation, a battle of power, and in the worst case, giving an opening for the Taliban to take ground. When Norway and the other international forces came to Afghanistan, there was a new class of political leaders who were eager to claim political power. These were first and foremost Mujahedin-leaders who had gained power during the war against the Soviets, either because of their skills with weapons, their charismatic personality or their political abilities as negotiators of power. They often lacked any type of democratic knowledge (Suhrke, 2011, p. 188).



Simultaneously, the production of opium in Afghanistan flourished. This was a large economic contributor to political entrepreneurs. The opium business was extremely large in the beginning of 2000s. According to a statistic published in 2005 by the UN office on Drugs and Crime, 87 percent of world opium production and 63 percent of world opium cultivation took place in Afghanistan (Mikhos, 2006). In 2005, Jan Petersen confirmed that almost all of the heroin in Norway came from Afghanistan, contributing to financing warlords and terrorism (Petersen, 2005). NATO through ISAF was trying to destroy the opium business as one learned and discovered that drug trafficking and insurgency was interwoven. ISAF's role was to destroy any opium farmers and labs, identifying drug lords and dismantling heroin labs and storage places (Kamminga & Hussain, 2012, p. 102). By removing the drug lords and the local politicians who were involved in the opium business it also changed the structure of power in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, this could often lead to more violence than with a drug lord as governor.

Moreover, the work with diplomacy for peace was difficult as many of the interlocutors both in the Afghan government and in Taliban had committed serious crimes. The Norwegian embassy did argue that some of them could be important in a future reconciliation process (NOU, 2016:8, p. 99). The Afghan law of amnesty is one example of how human rights were neglected in the political processes in Afghanistan. The law was giving amnesty to persons who had committed war crimes but who were willing to support the reconciliation process of the government. It gave the warlords significant political power both inside the democratic institutions and outside. When it became public, the Norwegian government was quick to condemn it, similar to other western countries. By allowing the previous warlords to continue the political work, one can argue that it did undermine the work with human rights in Afghanistan and contributed to create a weak democracy. Several reports have pointed to human rights violations committed by government officials while they were assigned to government positions, without being prosecuted in the aftermath. This also applies to systematically torture of prisoners in government prisons (NOU, 2016:8, p. 99-100).

Moreover, politicians, journalists, and civil society activists on the ground in Afghanistan were being exposed to threats, violence and intimidation whenever they tried to speak up on unjust and human rights violations such as impunity, war crimes, for government officials or other powerful locals (Human Rights Watch, 2011). One stated that Norwegian priority was to protect human rights defenders, as they were seen as crucial for the realisation of human rights and the

development of democracy (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014, p. 22). The Human Rights Watch reported threats of human rights defenders and journalists working in Afghanistan in 2011 (Human Rights Watch, 2011). The violators used arson, kidnapping, and any other type of intimidation to stop the reporting. Also, government officials and local strongmen were taking part in the threatening behaviour. The Human Rights Watch criticised international actors, including the Norwegian supported UN, for not having put in place sufficient measures to protect the human rights defenders. Most of the international actors did emphasise the need to protect women's rights and the implementation of protections for those working hands on with human rights. To sum up, the international community had not been successful in making positive changes to systemic issues, such as police violence, judicial weakness and the increase of power to strongmen and former warlords (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

Instead of punishing and removing the former warlords, they were given amnesty if they chose to follow and support the new democratically elected government (NOU, 2016:8, p. 99). We could see the same trends in the Norwegian mission for human rights in Afghanistan yet again; the will to bring positive change to Afghanistan was present, but execution was poor and in some cases worsening the problems. The Norwegian mission had mostly been pursued through international organisations, in most cases the UN, which has been the main strategy to follow for the Norwegian Government in human rights measures. In 2018-2019, a report from the Norwegian government stated that Norway can contribute to the global community through participating in multilateral organisations (Utenriksdepartementet, 2018, p. 35). It stated that it is in Norway's best interest to ensure that human rights are respected in all countries through participation in multilateral organisations. This is the same perspective as Jan Egeland proposed in 1988. Egeland claimed that the role of a small country in the UN could lead to more success in international human rights efforts than superpower engagement in the UN (Egeland, 1988, p. 141). Even if this and other theories are in favour of Norwegian participation in intergovernmental organisations, these organisations do not always have the required tools to succeed. Still, Norway wanted to continue to work on strengthening the political partnership between Afghanistan, the UN and other participating countries (Støre, 2008, June 11). Norwegian politicians spoke highly of Norwegian aid to Afghanistan, but the ongoing projects for human rights were not followed up and showed only limited results as we have seen above.

#### 5.1.4.1 Women

The political work for women and equal rights in Afghanistan have to varying degrees been prioritised by the international community (NOU, 2016:8, p. 103). For the new government in Afghanistan, the positive stories about women having a better political and humanitarian situation was highlighted to show its differences from the Taliban government. In the white paper “Opportunities for all: Human Rights in Norway’s foreign Policy and Development Cooperation For Norway”, the work for gender equality and women’s empowerment was highlighted as one of the most important sectors for Norwegian human rights work (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014, p. 35-36). In Afghanistan, the work towards improving women’s rights followed two paths. First, the political work by the embassy and Norwegian political leadership during conferences and meetings. Second, the equal-rights work done by Norwegian supported NGOs (NOU, 2016:8, p. 103). Norway did yet again come across difficulties when trying to change cultural and religious based values. Political rhetoric and affiliation to international conventions did not have the same impacts as the NGOs working on ground on projects that strengthened women's access to resources and services.

As one can read out of the theory of Jan Egeland from 1988, the different methods of influencing human rights does clarify how Great Powers and small states interact within international foreign policy. The Great Powers do gain the most influence out of bilateral dialogue, while smaller states such as Norway will have the greatest opportunity of influence through IGOs and international organisations in a multilateral dialogue. The theory explains how and why Norway had difficulties in Afghanistan. Norway did not manage to accomplish significant change in the rise of democracy in Afghanistan without the help of larger international organisations. One example is the work with women rights in Afghanistan. This was mostly led by the Norwegian government, and mostly aimed at the Afghan government, female representation, the civil society and the multi-donor society of the World Bank (NOU, 2016:8, p. 103). The Norwegian embassy created a network of female representatives from civil society organisations and parliaments who frequently met with the embassy. The initiative led to a conference about Afghan female rights in Oslo in 2014. The conference did get a lot of attention in Afghanistan as well as from Norway's allies. The initiative was criticised in Afghanistan as it was seen as a symbolic conference without any concrete results (NOU, 2016:8, p. 103). The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has explained how the work not only served a purpose for the Afghan community, but could also provide results in other contexts. In some political circles in Washington D.C Afghan female rights was highly

prioritised, therefore the conference for Afghan female rights in Norway was an entrance for diplomatic correspondence between the US and Norway (NOU, 2016:8, p. 103). This is a good example of how bilateral actions towards human rights can be linked to other interventions in foreign policy, even for smaller countries such as Norway. As smaller countries do not have significant influence in international foreign policy, one will use any possible arena to gain any type of power. Norway's initiative towards human rights and female rights was, however, through international organisations. The most important channel for Norwegian support for human rights and female rights in Afghanistan was through the UN development fund for women, called UNIFEM (NOU, 2016:8, p. 104). UNIFEM changed its name to UN Women in 2010. The fund did mostly work towards a strengthening of the Afghan Ministry of women's affairs, and to assist the government with development of national plans for equal rights and to attain women's rights. Even UN Women have had difficulties in getting the results wanted, and the financial support provided by Norway did not reach its target. In 2009, the organisation was weakened by an attack on a UN location. The organisation decided to move the location to Dubai to be less vulnerable but this made the work in Afghanistan even more difficult. Even though UN Women was lacking results, Norway continued to provide the organisation with financial support. Through the Human Rights Watch report from 2014 one can read about the result from these efforts to strengthen women's position in Afghanistan. As the international interest in Afghanistan declined and many participating nations withdrew from Afghanistan or reduced their forces, opponents of women's rights saw the opportunity to fight against the progress that was being made during 2001-2014 (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Some of the proposed laws for women's rights, such as the Law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, still passed though in the parliament in 2009, but the protests against it were extreme and led to the enforcement of the law being weak. Still, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised the possibilities for improvement and follow-up rather than performance requirements and possibilities of sanctions (NOU, 2016:8, p. 105). Even though the organisation was lacking results, it represented an important combination of Norwegian foreign policy; equal rights and the UN.

## 5.2 The allies and Norwegian diplomacy for peace

Even though the Norwegian embassy has worked, at times, consistently towards improving human rights in Afghanistan, Norway's influence and effort has not been enough to change the

international premises for human rights. The US and some parts of the UN were perceived as the most influential actors for human rights. Norway, as a small state did have the most influence when cooperating with bigger actors. As Norway is a small country with limited power in foreign policy, one has to see Norway as a part of a larger picture. Through this subchapter I will further explain the Norwegian connection with its allies, and how this relationship is shaping Norwegian priorities in foreign policy.

### 5.2.1 Egeland: Bilateral VS multilateral approach

The bilateral human rights politics does come with advantages and disadvantages. Peace researcher Jan Egeland may be right in his theory, impotent superpower - potent small power, about the potentials and limitations of human rights objectives in the Foreign Policies of the United States and Norway. There are similarities between multilateral and bilateral human rights politics. The two approaches need a wide range of techniques in what Egeland refers to as “quiet diplomacy” (Egeland, 1988, p. 60) to be able to execute material and public sanctions. Often during a bilateral human rights conversation, which by nature is meant to be a conversation between two actors where both parts should be heard equally, the conversation is often leaning in a unilateral direction with little potential for dialogue. When this is happening the mutual understanding or equal participation is hard to reach as one part is more dominant (Egeland, 1988, p. 50). When this is the case, a NGO can be hired as diplomatic intermediaries. For the US this was a valuable method to escape the criticism of leading unilateral politics. The approach was backed up with the argument for it being favourable for the US government to continue to have the support of the public opinion, both within the borders and among allies (Egeland, 1988, p. 50).

Egeland continues to point to the advantages of using the diplomatic strategy of a bilateral approach, rather than a multilateral. First, he argues in favour of the advantage of the independent and flexible choice of action when having a bilateral approach. It is easier to have a speedy and precise process for the national political institutions, with less costs than if a multilateral organisation was involved. Often, intergovernmental organisations such as the UN require consensus from the member states, which can require a great deal of time, and the efficiency will then be less due to the complicated process (Egeland, 1988, p. 54). Second, Egeland explains how a state has an independent choice of nation to engage with in a bilateral relationship. Every nation, whether it is a superpower or a small power, needs to make a different plan for the human rights bilateral approach. Every country has its own history and

one needs to evaluate the effectiveness of previous human rights actions. When having a bilateral approach the nation is free to evaluate what country to choose for a human rights action (Egeland, 1988, p. 54). Egeland's third argument for a bilateral approach is that a nation can use the advantage of a special relationship that already exists. It is quite common that one country is relying on another country, either financially, politically or militarily. The more influence a country has in international relations, the greater is its potential for bilateral impact. The United States does for instance have a great potential for bilateral impact, while Norway as a smaller state, the potential is restricted to nations receiving Norwegian development aid (Egeland, 1988, p. 54). There can also be more immaterial ties of political identification of a target country. The approach from the interfering country will be larger if the target country respects or even admire the interfering country. Many large and successful western countries are examples of such influential countries. Norway as a successful social democracy is being a role model for many new and growing nations. The Scandinavian foreign policy tradition has produced a good reputation in Africa for instance. Writer Cervenka wrote in 1974 that the Scandinavian countries do not have a colonial past, and have also taken upon the United Nations goal of one percent of GNP for development, which has served as a good example for industrialised countries (Egeland, 1988, p. 54-55).

There are also weaknesses by using a bilateral approach, both for a Superpower, such as the US, and for a small state, such as Norway. For smaller states there can be limitations on the bilateral action. The small state might have a smaller economy, military or other resources to properly have an effect on the targeted country. Egeland (1988) refers to a report from the National Policy Panel of the United States UN association (United States UN association as cited in Egeland, 1988, p. 55) which concludes with bilateral human rights approaches being the best controlled approach, but emphasises that other national interests, such as political, economic, and security interests, may restrain a focus on human rights. The United States can also be accused of practicing double standards by mixing politics with human rights, which reduces the effectiveness of the process (Egeland, 1988, p. 55). The bilateral human rights act can easily be misunderstood, be inconsistent and become politicised. Egeland argues that some of these issues do not apply for a small state, such as Norway. A smaller nation does not have the same intentions and its internal politics does not have the same effect on bilateral human rights. The small nation does not seem as threatening and is having fewer strategic and economic side concerns (Egeland, 1988, p. 56).

Norway does have a history of relying on the Superpower's strength in foreign politics. Until the 1980's, Norway was mostly following the lead of the United States in their multilateral approaches to human rights and foreign aid (Egeland, 1988, p. 48). The United States did follow what Egeland refers to as "American big-state political culture", and was therefore leading unilateral politics which gave priority to civil and political over and above socio-economic rights. Egeland conducted a series of interviews during the 1980's, where he recognized the drastic difference in the approaches to unilateral, bilateral and multilateral relations in the foreign policy strategies. Both the US Jimmy Carter administration (1977-1981) and the Norwegian government of Odvar Nordli (1976-1981) and Gro Harlem Brundtland (1981, 1986-1989) had a strong commitment to human rights but with very different approaches. President Carter did promise to support the United Nations and the multilateral programmes the organisation provided, but later it has been revealed that the administration had a more positive attitude towards intergovernmental organisations than multilateral organisations such as the UN (Egeland, 1988, p. 48). The American political system did have a more positive attitude to the quick results provided by uni-and bilateral politics. They did not see the same quick results through the "slow-machinery" they referred to as the UN and other multilateral organisations. In contrast, the Norwegian government had a different approach to foreign policy (Egeland, 1988, p. 48-49). During the same time as the Carter administration was ruling in the US, the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs reflected on how Norway's foreign policy functioned. Norway did not focus on bilateral action, but should in fact take more initiatives in multilateral intergovernmental organisations to interact and cooperate with like-minded small countries. The government had the philosophy that the international human rights system would be even more effective than the individual states acting as "self-proclaimed representatives". The strong initiative from the super-powers, such as the United States had placed small states in the shade, making it difficult to proceed with their points of view. Their philosophy of how to make international changes for human rights is not sufficiently strong to overpower the strong will of a unilateral approach, such as the US foreign policy (Egeland, 1988, p. 50).

One strategy which is often utilised when trying to make an impact on the human rights in foreign policy is to use Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) as a tool in multilateral action (Egeland, 1988, p. 138). The multilateral dialogue consists of more than two parties, and it may therefore remove some of the scepticism towards a superpower or remove the perception of the superpower or any other country having egoistic intentions outside human rights. While realists often advocate a bilateral dialogue in communications for human rights, interdependence

advocates can argue similarly for multilateralism. Multilateral actions are often supported by the Third World voting majority through organisations such as the UN, etc. To the contrary, bilateral dialogue can be criticised of being “paternalistic”, “culturally arrogant” or “neo-imperialistic” (Egeland, p. 1988, 138). Also, when a country is acting through an IGO, it may be able to help separate human rights elements from other conflicting foreign policy elements. As previously mentioned, other foreign policy aspects such as economy or security, can often interfere in a bilateral relation. One can also argue that a sanction produced by a multilateral action is more powerful than a bilateral one. In a bilateral action, other countries can have a say or interfere through diplomatic, commercial or military actions (Egeland, 1988, p. 138). The advantage of a multilateral action is that all participating countries do have to agree on any decision. This will eliminate any political trends in individual countries that might intervene with human rights aspects and the goal will be more stable. For smaller countries, a multilateral dialogue might be the only possible approach to be able to influence another nation regarding human rights. For these countries a bilateral channel is challenging to maintain, and they are therefore relying on IGOs and multilateral dialogue to have a say in promoting human rights in international foreign policy. The rise of multilateral human rights organisations is not merely an advantage for all nations. For the larger western countries who can qualify as Great Powers the rise of member countries in the UN has been difficult as they have lost a severe part of their influence. At the founding of the United Nations in 1945, there were only 51 member states, while it today consists of 193 member states (UN, n.d.). The UN was founded in the US and the first human rights missions were also formulated by American diplomats and politicians. As the number of member countries have increased the UN has also implemented other countries' rhetoric and the UN no longer serves American interests as it did in the beginning (Egeland, 1988, p. 139).

### 5.2.2 The diplomacy for peace

The Norwegian diplomacy for peace in Afghanistan were based on two main arguments. First as previously explained, to contribute to building the Afghan state with all its institutions, and second, for Norway to strengthen the diplomatic relationship with the US (NOU, 2016:8, p. 138). Diplomacy for peace has been one of Norway's largest focus areas in the dialogue between Norway and the US, and has been an area where Norway has tried to influence the American thought process as much as possible. During a meeting between the President of the United



States, Barack Obama and the Prime Minister of Norway, Jens Stoltenberg in 2011 the close relationship between the two countries in Afghanistan was discussed. Norway was a key contributor to ISAF, the NATO-led organisations, it provided 500 troops and police trainers, it led reconstruction teams and provided economic aid for development assistance (The White House, 2011). In addition to the mentioned measures Norway contributed with in Afghanistan, Norway was also one of the leading countries in the dialogue between the Afghan government and the opposition in Afghanistan, sometimes without the United States government knowing. The United States was not always informed in the beginning, but that changed eventually, since the bond between the two states was too strong to leave the United States out of the process.

Norway did have three main roles in diplomacy for peace. First, a facilitating negotiator. Norway played a role in the work to establish communication between the Karzai-government and Taliban first between 2001 and 2002, and another initiative in 2007 between the US and Taliban (NOU, 2016:8, p. 138 & 140). Second, Norway did take on the role as a negotiator. Norway was important in the dialogue between the US and Taliban for the creation of a Taliban head office in Doha, Qatar in 2013. Third, Norway took on the role as instigator. This was a role they had towards the Taliban and also in the creation of a regional dialogue (NOU, 2016:8, p. 138). The Norwegian diplomacy for peace in Afghanistan was closely connected with its diplomatic relationship with the US, but also with other allies such as Great Britain, Germany, Turkey, as well as the Afghan Government. The American administration under President Bush (2001-2009) was showing resistance towards dialogue with the Taliban, but still, Norway continued to work towards the establishment of dialogue. When President Bush said in his speech on September 20. 2001 that “either you are with us, or with the terrorists” (Bush, 2001), it set the tone for the further international status of the Taliban, it was hard to want dialogue with the labelled terrorist organisation. When Obama gained power in the US in 2009, diplomacy for peace in Afghanistan became important in the relationship between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the American State Department (NOU, 2016:8, p. 138). In 2012, President Obama delivered a speech in front of the nation claiming that his administrations had been in direct contact with the Taliban, and promising them that they could “be a part of the future for Afghanistan if they break with Al-Qaeda, renounce violence and abide by Afghan laws.” (Obama, 2012). Many of the Afghan foot soldiers had already indicated interest for reconciliation.

The Norwegian initiative and diplomacy for peace has to be understood in the right context. There were several factors that were crucial for the effect and ability of execution of diplomacy for peace in Afghanistan. Various parties wanted to take part in the initiative. The Afghan government, NGOs and IGOs as well as other states wanted to create a dialogue with Taliban, and in some cases Taliban took the initiative themselves (NOU, 2016, p. 138). In most cases the international actors, rather than Taliban or any Afghan Governmental institutions, were those who participated and took the most initiative to dialogues. Many of the Norwegian initiatives for dialogue were restricted due to its obligations towards the United States and NATO. At one point, the Bondevik 2-government (2001-2005) felt the obligation to support NATO and the United States. The government connected Norway's basic security to NATO's principle of "one for all-all for one" (Græger, 2005, p. 218) The American administration led by Bush, did not show too much enthusiasm for NATO participation in the war in Afghanistan (Græger, 2005, p. 227). Therefore, it was important for Norway to prove to the American government that it was not only supportive through NATO, but also through the bilateral relationship with the United States in order to convince the Americans that they needed NATO, and that NATO could do much good work in the war in Afghanistan (Devold cited in Græger, 2005, p. 227). It could be difficult for the Norwegian diplomats to rely on the partners in dialogue. Sometimes, the parties in the conflict had inconsistent interests in the conflict which led to limitations in the possibilities for dialogue. The Norwegian diplomats faced an unclear, complicated and risky scenery (NOU, 2016:8, p. 140). Not only could the dialogue partners challenge the negotiations but also the fact that Norway a role in the conflict as well as being a facilitator of dialogue, led to challenges for the Norwegian diplomats (NOU, 2016:8, p. 140). On one hand, some of the partners in the dialogue did see Norway's participation in the war and its somewhat close relationship with the United States as a strength. On the other hand, it was hard for the Norwegian diplomats to gain trust in a situation where Norway should be a neutral facilitator, while also being a part of the international forces (NOU, 2016:8, p. 140). The Norwegian mission was also met by trouble with former Taliban soldiers. Their aim was solely to get individuals and smaller groups to lay down their arms, return to the society and become law-abiding civilians. The Norwegian government did not put enough emphasis on the reintegration of Taliban soldiers into society.

The many parties in the conflict made the work towards peace more difficult in some ways. Especially during the early period of the military operation in Afghanistan. Many of the participating nations, led by the United States did see Al-Qaida and Taliban as two names on

the same organisations and quickly established that negotiation with Taliban was politically unacceptable. Therefore, neither the Bonn-conference in December 2001 nor the Loya Jirga-assembly in June 2002 included any representatives from the Taliban or any political representatives from their community. This has later been characterised as a grave mistake. Instead of including Taliban in the negotiations, they were defeated and the Taliban-leaders were compelled to flee to Pakistan, where they gained support from fractions within the Pakistani government to rebuild ideological and military strength. The Norwegian mission often came too short when the government did not get insight in important documents or had to follow conferences from the sideline (NOU, 2016:8, p. 140-143). Devold argues that Norway regarded the solidarity towards the alliance as one of the strongest measures of Norwegian security, and going in another direction could be seen as a betrayal against the allies and could further lead to an impairment of Norwegian security politics (Devold, 2005).

### 5.2.3 The Norwegian intentions

Through the report (NOU, 2016:8) it is designated three objects by the end of the Cold War that has left an impression on the Norwegian engagement in Afghanistan. These are the Norwegian interests, the Norwegian approach and the roles they seek. The Norwegian engagement is motivated by an intention of creating peace, dialogue, and international order. This is often referred to as “The Norwegian peace traditions” and does have a long history in Norwegian foreign policy (NOU, 2016:8, p. 145).

After the Taliban was declared defeated already at the end of 2001 (Johnson, 2001), the focus was changed towards building peace and rebuilding the nation, as well as making the engagement in Afghanistan more relevant for Norway. Norway got more opportunities to promote and run a foreign policy based on Norwegian values after they acquired more international influence through the wealth of oil that was discovered in the late 1960s (Regjeringen, 2021). After the Cold War, Norway thereby got more space on the international arena to be involved in peace negotiations. Through the report from NOU (2016:8) one can read that the Norwegian engagement in peace processes has been motivated by promoting peace based on an old tradition of solidarity, but that Norway’s own interest and realpolitik took more space in Norwegian foreign politics after the Cold War (NOU, 2016:8, p.145). Norwegian Minister of Defence, Kristin Krohn Devold (2002) argued that our contribution to the war on

terror in Afghanistan was professional, demanded capacities that was relevant and important in both the military operations as well as commit to the work with establishing security and contributing to build a safe and positive community in Afghanistan (Devold, 2002). She continued her speech by stating that Norway has to take care of our alliance with NATO, as NATO also is our security if anything should happen to us in Norway. In 2008, the then Foreign Policy Minister of Norway, Jonas Gahr Støre, did refer to three interests behind any Norwegian engagement policy. Norwegian security, values, and the fact that international engagement can provide meaningful access to international arenas which will always be valuable (Støre, 2008, May 20.). When Norway was involved in any of the peace engagements, such as in the Middle East, Guatemala, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Colombia or the Balkans to mention some, the Norwegian government did experience more interest from the US and other countries. But apart from national interests, Norway has also experienced more personal motives by the involved diplomats in negotiations where politicians or other government officials have had an effect on the peace engagement in Afghanistan (NOU, 2016:8, p. 145). It was also argued that Norway was obliged to continue to participate in the war in Afghanistan, also after the defeat of Taliban. Norway needed to continue to support their allies in the war on terror. Previously the approach for peace building and diplomacy was based on a close cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norwegian NGOs and research institutes. In previous engagements, the Norwegian approach included actors from the civil society who played an important role. This was not the case in Afghanistan. The diplomacy for peace had been institutionalised and gradually professionalised by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this was the reasoning behind why the NGOs and other organisations were left out in the startup of the diplomacy for peace (NOU, 2016:8, p. 145). From 2003, two years after the large engagement in Afghanistan began, an own section for peace and reconciliation was created within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Here the employees got the opportunity to work strategically, targeted and with focus on long-term peace processes. The goal was to change the important work towards peace from enthusiastic individuals to strategic and ulterior motives by experts. One important element in the work of professionalising has been the increasing emphasis on the need for secrecy. This came from a wish to keep the employees protected, to not gain any unprofessional attention towards Norway, and to secure the confidentiality that was needed to continue a professional and trusted dialogue. The emphasis on secrecy also became more important after the intelligence service was involved in Norwegian engagement for peace. For many other countries, the dialogue towards peace has been directed by the respective countries' intelligence service. This was a new phenomenon for the Norwegian diplomats. It was important for the

Norwegian government to clarify that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was having the lead role in the dialogues, and that the intelligence service could provide analytical support. This was also important for the intention of keeping the relationship between Norway and Taliban in this case, trustworthy (NOU, 2016:8, p. 146).

The motives may have changed somewhat, but the Norwegian diplomats have had three roles in the diplomacy for peace; the facilitating negotiator, negotiator and instigator. The preferred roles have been facilitating negotiator and negotiator, while the role of the instigator often has been taken over by the Great Powers. This has also been the case in Afghanistan. Only by a few incidents, Norway has been chosen to have the role as an instigator to speed up the peace process. Human rights, religious tolerance and equal rights have been the most important positions for the Norwegian engagement. Norway's fundamental positions and opinions have been promoted and raised questions about by the Taliban amongst others. These viewpoints were also meant to challenge the strategic and political thinking in Taliban. The Norwegian diplomats in Afghanistan sent a clear message to the Taliban that if they wanted a peaceful ending to the conflict, the politics that was promoted from 1996-2001 had to be discarded (NOU, 2016:8, p. 146).

The first actual initiative for peace in Afghanistan was in 2007. At this time, Norway's close ally, the United States, was not interested in having any type of dialogue with the Taliban. The dialogue was based on an initiative from the Taliban themselves, and lasted for two periods, from 2007-2010 and from 2011-2014. After 2014, Norwegian military forces were withdrawn from Afghanistan together with American and other international military forces. The diplomatic correspondence between Norway and Afghanistan was affected by uncertainty and risk (NOU, 2016:8, p. 148). The Norwegian approach to the diplomacy of peace has often been motivated by enthusiastic individuals, where the approach has been ad-hoc rather than strategic. In the engagement in Afghanistan, coincidence and individuals had a crucial role in the establishment of the peace engagement. The initial contact with the Taliban was based on a close relationship with an engaged individual within the Taliban, therefore the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was questioning the initiative taken by the Taliban to be in dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Taliban did trust Norway, by taking into consideration Norway's humanitarian engagement in Afghanistan extensively. Also, Norway did not have any own interests in Afghanistan contrary to other involved states in Afghanistan, and was therefore a preferred choice for Taliban when choosing a partner in dialogue. Norway's role was also

recognised based on its engagement in peace initiatives in the Middle East through the Oslo Accords between Israel and PLO in 1993 (Leraand, 2019). The Norwegian peace diplomacy between Palestine and Israel was well known by the Taliban. The Norwegian approach towards the Taliban also contributed to establishing trust. The Norwegian diplomats were praised for taking the Taliban representatives seriously (NOU, 2016:8, p. 148).

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs established that the dialogue with the Taliban was a new and challenging task. Not only was the Taliban listed by the UN security council as an illegal armed group. The Taliban was also in direct conflict with the NATO forces that Norway was highly involved in. Therefore, the initiative towards a diplomatic correspondence had to be handled with care and sensitivity, both towards the Norwegian allies and regional actors such as Pakistan, India and Iran (NOU, 2016:8, p. 148). This was a challenge that Norwegian diplomats had not executed before, and it led to new challenges both nationally and internationally. During the dialogue with Taliban, Norway had to make clear to the Taliban that Norway also was a direct party in the conflict in Afghanistan, but that they only served as a facilitation negotiator. On several occasions, the Norwegian diplomats were challenged both by representatives from Taliban as well as by neutral actors. Many wanted the Norwegian military forces to withdraw from the country and rather focus fully on the engagement for peace and being a negotiating actor. This was quickly rejected by the Norwegian minister of Foreign Affairs in 2008, Jonas Gahr Støre. He argued that the military efforts were the primary reason for the Norwegian contribution in the first place (NOU, 2016:8, p. 148).

#### 5.2.4 The relation to the US

The Norwegian relationship with the US has been close for more than a century with mutual tradition of respect and similar democratic values (US Department of State, 2023). The relationship on security and politics did get even stronger after the founding of NATO in 1949, where both countries were participating from the very beginning (Norway in the United States, 2017). Former Norwegian Prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland said in 1981 that Norway had its back towards Europe with its face pointing towards the United States. This was a statement that stood strong in Norwegian foreign policy, and validated the Atlantic orientation in Norwegian security policy (Leira, 2007a, p. 32). The Jens Stoltenberg government initiated

an investigation in 2000 to evaluate the relationship between the United States and Norway in response to the political imbalance that occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War. The investigation quickly stopped after the terror attack on the Twin Towers in New York simultaneously as a new Norwegian government with Bondevik as Prime Minister was elected. Then, Norway gave its full support to the United States (Leira, 2007a, p. 33). The Norwegian initiative in Afghanistan started with the U.S. president George W. Bush in 2001 declaring war on terror after the attack on the World Trade Center in New York. On September 12th, 2001 the UN security council (United Nations Security Council, 2001, 12 sept.) declared that the terror attack on the World Trade centre constituted a threat against international peace and security. The NATO article 5 was then implemented, "an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all" (NATO, 1949). This was not only a war between the U.S. and Al-Qaeda, but a war all NATO member countries were obligated to fight. The Norwegian government did repeatedly confirm the Norwegian support in the war against terror and joined the military Operation Enduring Freedom during the autumn of 2002.

The transatlantic relationship was important. The retiring Norwegian Minister of Defence Jan Petersen argued in his speech in 2005 that the cooperation through NATO and the relationship with the United States was a part of the core in Norwegian foreign policy (Petersen, 2001). He criticised one of the other parties in the new coalition government which was supporting the NATO-led operation ISAF but was opposed to the American led Enduring Freedom. Petersen further argued that there was no other alternative to the transatlantic cooperation with NATO and to the United States as one of the closest allies (Petersen, 2001). The following years, Norway and the U.S. continued to have a close contact when in conflict in Afghanistan, not only through military cooperation, but also through diplomatic action. As Norway wished to preserve the image of being a peace nation and friend of the UN, it did not participate in some of the military interventions led by the United States in Afghanistan or Iraq, but did instead compensate with taking actively part in the reconstruction in the aftermath (Leira, 2007a, p. 34). This can be interpreted as an attempt to retain the impression and self-image of a peace nation. But Norway always had to take their bilateral relationship with the United States into consideration whenever a decision was made. Norway did in the beginning of 2007 get into direct dialogue with four Taliban leaders and the engagement was highly affected by uncertainty and insecurity. The Afghan president at the time, Karzai, was informed at the end of 2007 by the Norwegian foreign minister Støre. He supported the continuation of the

conversations (NOU, 2016:8, p. 148-149). On several occasions, President Karzai felt he was left out from the negotiations with the Taliban, which actually was true for many of the negotiations. The Taliban was often an eager participant. In 2011, the Taliban said they wanted to take part in negotiations, but they did not want to negotiate with the Afghan government. To be able to continue the dialogue with the Taliban, the channel of dialogue was kept a secret for outsiders, but the Norwegian diplomats acknowledged that the U.S. had to be involved at some point. Norway's power was limited without any assistance from the U.S. The Norwegian government was also worried about the bilateral relationship with the U.S. if the Americans were left outside. If the Norwegian diplomacy for peace was coordinated with the U.S., it could contribute to strengthening the diplomatic relationship between Norway and the United States. This was in line with experiences from previous peace negotiations (NOU, 2016:8, p. 151). But the challenge for Norway was to continue to be a trusted negotiator and an independent actor in diplomacy for peace even if the U.S. knew of the correspondence with the Taliban. Two years after the correspondence with the Taliban was initiated, the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Støre, informed the U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton about the dialogue. Støre left details aside, which led to frustration on the American side. Norway was afraid that the Americans would use some of the information to their own benefit, at the cost of peace in Afghanistan. American diplomats were very eager to retrieve information about the Norwegian correspondence with the Taliban. This can be a sign of how the Norwegian diplomacy for peace had significance for the American intentions and the possibilities for a negotiated solution to the conflict (NOU, 2016:8, p. 152). The ruling narrative about the relationship with the United States can be understood as Norway has an obligation to support its allies to be able to protect national security. One can argue that there is an understanding of Norway being in debt to the United States. The relationship can be described as mutual, but also as Norway owing the United States many favours after the early phase of the Cold War. As well as getting help and support through American security, some of Norway's prosperity was due to the American Marshall aid (Devold, 2003; NRK, 2005).

Seen from the Norwegian perspective, it is preferable to have a good relationship with the United States as well as keeping focus on realpolitik, given the United States Great Power status (Leira, 2009a, p. 35). The support from the United States and the long-lasting good relationship may have had a large impact on Norway as a successful peacebuilder with its facilitating role. The relationship does come with advantages as well as disabilities for Norway, one being that the United States is a prerequisite for territorial security for Norway.



The domestic politics of the United States has also affected the Norwegian mission and interests. When the United States labelled Taliban as a terrorist organisation, it also affected Norway's relations with the Taliban. The dominant perception of the Taliban after September 11, 2001 was that it was a terrorist organisation. During President Bush's speech in September 2001, he referred to both Al-Qaeda and Taliban as terrorist organisations (Bush, 2001). Al-Qaeda have been on the United States official list of terrorist organisations since 1999 (US Department of State, n.d.-a). To be recognised and declared a foreign terrorist organisation by the US State Department, a group must engage in terrorism and threaten the security of US nationals or the security of the United States. Taliban did meet both criteria, but it has been a concern that labelling the organisation a terrorist organisation could hinder peace talk as well as diplomatic contacts with it (Farivar, 2017). The explanation of why the Afghan Taliban was not to be found on the terrorist list of the United States is unclear, but can be explained in various ways. The difficulties for the American diplomats to get through to the Taliban when labelled a terrorist organisation were challenging. This already set the tone for the dialogue between the diplomats from the Taliban and the diplomats from the United States. These political considerations may have counted, even though the organization meets the criteria of being a terrorist organisation with regular conducts of suicide bombings, killing of civilians and from a westerner point of view, behaving like a terrorist organisation. A dialogue for peace and human rights was more likely to succeed if the label was removed. To conduct dialogue with the perception of having the best intention the diplomats from the United States had to gain credibility from the Taliban. I believe that this has been important in creating mutual trust and a channel for dialogue between the United States and the Taliban.

A crucial factor for Norwegian trustworthiness has been its ability and wish to have an open dialogue with all parties, and not being limited to some. Norway has not been committed to or constrained to either the EU or American sanction- or terror lists. The UN has a list of sanctions that Norway was committed to accept, but Norway was willing to engage in dialogue with any of the involved parties. Norwegian diplomats were therefore able to develop contacts with the Taliban early. Their American colleagues were hesitant with having contact with the Taliban even if it was not on the list of terror organisations. The fact that Norwegian diplomats were untied to any of the large institutions, preserved the opportunity for freer dialogues (NOU, 2016:8, p. 146).

### 5.2.5 Small Power VS large Power

The regional dynamic in South and Central Asia needed to be taken into consideration for the Norwegian diplomatic team for the purpose of gaining stability in Afghanistan. First, Pakistan was of great importance. In the timeframe when the war on terror began, Taliban was primarily based in the border area between Pakistan and Afghanistan (Akhtar, 2008, p. 49). In a historical perspective, Pakistan was harbouring enemies of the soviet-supported Afghan government in the ongoing Afghan civil war and the war against Soviet military forces between 1979 and 1989. When the Soviet engagement in Afghanistan collapsed, Afghanistan was left fragile and divided with space for the intrusive military and political force of Taliban in 1996. Pakistan, as many of the other regional states surrounding, had national interests in Afghanistan and used the vulnerabilities of the weak state to its advantage (Akhtar, 2008, p. 49-50). Although the Pakistani government in theory and to some extent also in actual practice was supporting the American war against the Taliban, some parts of the Pakistani government were supporting the Taliban and therefore shared with Taliban an enemy in the United States. Taliban was utilising the anger within various ethnic groups within Afghanistan and Pakistan to unite and grow bigger and more powerful. In 2006, the United States proposed that to be able to solve the situation in Afghanistan, one had to acknowledge that Pakistan, and other nearby countries, were parts of the problem, as well as the solution (NOU, 2016:8, p. 154). Norway established a common head office for Afghanistan and Pakistan, as the purpose was to coordinate the policy and strategy and collect more knowledge about what was going on in the region. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs should support the chosen representative in the section for special representatives led by the United States. In 2009, the United States launched a strategy to solve the regional issue. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was closely behind the Americans. They started their intensive work with a systematic mapping of the region in 2009-2010 (NOU, 2016:8, p. 154). The initiative was both justified with the need for looking at the larger area surrounding Afghanistan, but also because Norway saw the possibility of a closer relationship with their close allies, where Norway was portraying themselves as an attractive partner of collaboration. The underlying idea of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also to be perceived as a reliant partner without any other interests in the countries in the region around Afghanistan than to work for peace. By this, Norway was both portraying a distance from the United States towards the countries in the region around Afghanistan, at the same time

as they worked together with the United States with peace in the region. The Norwegian government saw the distance to the United States as an advantage for contacts with some countries in the region, such as Iran, who had an ambivalent relationship to the United States. The Norwegian ministry regarded this as an opportunity to grow as a facilitator in the region (NOU, 2016:8, p. 154). As argued by Jan Egeland, in many of the initiatives for peace, the different perception of the United States and the small state Norway might have affected the negotiations and the relation the negotiating parties had to the intervening countries. For a superpower such as the United States the work towards bilateral human rights initiatives can be seen as less of a bilateral dialogue, but rather be of an unilateral nature. When the dialogue gets past the bilateral understanding, there can be little potential for dialogue (Egeland, 1988, p. 50). It will then be difficult to reach mutual understanding or equal participation. As a superpower it can therefore be in their best interest to proceed through an intergovernmental multilateral organisation. A small nation like Norway may be able to proceed with peace negotiations and dialogues in bilateral communication, but they will have more success within an intergovernmental organisation, such as the UN (Egeland, 1988, p. 50). In a bilateral approach there can be more room for independent and flexible choice of action (Egeland, 1988, p. 53). Norway used this to their advantage in the conversations with the Taliban. In a bilateral relationship, one state can also take advantage of an already existing relationship, Norway already had connections in Afghanistan before 2001. The United States should have a great advantage, since many nations see the country as a superpower worth cooperating with. Norway has a good reputation in the global world, and can therefore use the same tactic as the United States to some degree (Egeland, 1988, p. 54).

In 2010, the Norwegian government was an important instigator for the UN to promote dialogue in the region about the regional issues. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) took on the role. But the dialogue led by UNAMA was mistrusted by several states in the region. UNAMA was perceived as being led by the United States, and it was assumed that the negotiations were driven by the national interests of the United States. Several states showed animosity were to the thought of committing to multilateral processes. Norway worked continuously to involve, reassuring both the United States and the regional actors, to be able to achieve results. Between 2009-2011 Norway was facilitating and financing several political dialogues. Even if Norway was only facilitating the dialogue between the actors in the region, they contributed to the conversation by preparing project plans for regional co-operation, within sectors such as education, infrastructure and crisis management (NOU, 2016:8, p. 155). The

meetings through UNAMA even became an arena to discuss rather sensitive questions, such as the intention behind the United States involvement in Afghanistan. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has stated that these meetings was important to raise the will for peace negotiation in Afghanistan, and the United States viewed the Norwegian initiative favourably.

## 5.3 The narrative of Norway as a peaceful country - good or bad?

This subchapter will analyse the Norwegian government's narrative concerning the effort for human rights in Afghanistan. I will use speeches and white papers in addition to the report (NOU, 2016:8) commissioned by the Norwegian government to be able to locate the narrative of the government. This subchapter is applied to possibly answer the second research question for this research project. “The Norwegian Government is promoting peace as the main motive in foreign policy. How is this being narrated by representatives of the Norwegian peace initiative?”

### 5.3.1 The political speeches

The very first speeches after the terror attack in New York are important to analyse to find the narrative that the Norwegian Government wanted to hold on to and produce for Norway as a participating nation in the war on terror. On the 8th of November 2001, only a couple of months after the terror attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the declaration of war on terror, the incumbent prime minister of Norway, Kjell Magne Bondevik held a speech to the Norwegian government. His first words were that Norway condemned the cruel actions and the terrorists that performed and planned it (Bondevik, 2001). He further confirmed Norwegian support towards the efforts of the United States, NATO and the UN. On the 12th of September 2001 the UN security council adopted resolution 1368 which stated that the attack on the World Trade Center was not only an attack on the United States, but also a threat towards international security and peace (United Nations Security Council. 2001, 12 sept.). In Bondevik’s speech he stated that Norway was obligated to participate in the war on terror and follow the UN mandate (Bondevik, 2001). Bondevik explained and underlined how Norway had to contribute to the military intervention against the Afghan Taliban-regime, who was unwilling to cooperate with the international community to hold those responsible accountable for the 9/11 attacks.

Bondevik, being the leader of the Christian-Democratic Party in Norway in 2001, had always focused on the humanitarian aspects of societies in crisis. He therefore raised questions about the military intervention that was happening in Afghanistan, and in particular the ethical dilemmas that Norway faced. The government with Bondevik as Prime Minister relied on the universal human rights for development in the Global South (Tvedt, 2017, p. 77). This was the foundation on which he built his recommendations. Tvedt argues that the government was mistaken in their perception of the “human rights ideology”. China violates human rights but has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. In Africa Rwanda and Ethiopia top the list of African countries with the fastest growing economy, positive development in the health care sector and more focus on education, yet they are both accused of human rights violation (Tvedt, 2017, p. 77). However, the understanding of a connection between human rights and development persisted as the dominating official Norwegian thinking, while any other counter idea was not even discussed to the extent of being able to challenge the official idea.

When trying to understand the political decisions made in the aftermath of the attacks of the September 11th, one needs to have in mind that Norway was not familiar with participating in an all-consuming war such as this, which encompassed the whole international community. The objections from other politicians and the majority of the Norwegian people had to be taken into consideration and the statements by Bondevik had to be thoroughly considered. In the speech, Bondevik also addressed the concern of the Norwegian people, but he still defended the choice of military intervention by saying that without the use of military means, the war could escalate even more and new terror attacks may occur (Bondevik, 2001). The incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan Petersen, supported many of Bondevik’s arguments. Yet, belonging to the Conservative Party of Norway, Petersen’s differed from Bondevik in some ways. Petersen stated different values and opinions from Bondevik in his speech in front of the Norwegian Government the 5th of December 2001. Norway was a member state of the UN Security Council at the time of the terror attacks and did therefore have kind of an obligation to follow the binding resolutions of the UN. Petersen was stating in his speech that Norway should actively participate to defeat international terrorism - both economically, politically, legally and militarily (Petersen, 2001). Compared to the speech of Bondevik a month earlier, Petersen was not holding back. He put more emphasis on the Norwegian commitment to assist the United States in the war against terror in accordance with the collective defence obligations of NATO article 5. He explained the assignments that Norway had to contribute with in Afghanistan. Norway should help defeat the military operations of the terrorists and their allies, facilitate a

new representative government, stabilise the situation of security, escalate the humanitarian aid and eventually contribute in rebuilding the nation (Petersen, 2001). To be able to succeed in the war against terror, Petersen (2001) pointed to the solution being military operations together with a multilateral coalition across political, cultural and religious divides.

To locate the narrative or storyline of the first official speeches by Bondevik (2001) and Petersen (2001), one needs to analyse their choices of words and the overall sound in the speech. According to Flick (2018, p. 58) “a narrative is a way of knowing and remembering events and processes (in our own personal history) as well as a way of communicating about issues (telling stories about events and processes).” Bondevik is using more of his speech to reassure the listeners, both the Norwegian people and the politicians and decision-makers that the decision to participate in the war on terror, with military operations included, is the right choice in this situation. It is understandable that Bondevik felt the need to defend the war on terror. By drawing a line back to the participation in the war in Yugoslavia, one makes a backdrop that helps explain the decisions made. In 1999, the Prime Minister Bondevik decided to send soldiers and six combat planes to support the NATO attack on the President of Jugoslavia Slobodan Milosevic (Vermes, 2019). The NATO intervention was supposed to end the Serbian attack on the Kosovo Albanians, and was therefore claimed to be a humanitarian intervention. The operation did not have a mandate from the UN, but Bondevik argued that the operation was not against the international law on human rights. He defended that Norway intervened on the basis of International law (Bondevik as cited in Vermes, 2019). The NATO operation was criticised by the Human Rights Organization Amnesty International for being guilty of war crimes. The claim was published through a report from Amnesty International in 2000 (Amnesty International, 2010) John Peder Egenæs in Amnesty International claimed that the NATO operations contributed to take more civilian lives than necessary (Egenæs as cited in Amnesty International, 2010). The critique against the NATO operation may have been a factor for Bondeviks' need to defend the choice of participating in the war on terror together with NATO and the United States. A small social democratic state does not have the habit of going to war, but the situation was once again extraordinary. Bondevik's choice of words and formulation are softer compared to the words of Petersen. Bondevik was speaking about the humanitarian crisis that the Afghan people were a victim of, both from the Afghan government of the Taliban, but also from the international fighting against the Taliban. In order to analyse the storyline in the words of Bondevik, one can assume doubt about the situation and that the situation has to be handled with care. One should steer away from any rash decisions and

unnecessary use of military operations. The narrative that can be analysed from the speech of Petersen (2001) does tell a slightly different story. His speech was focused on the possible Norwegian contributions to a full scale war on terror. He argued that Norway has an obligation towards NATO, the UN and the United States to participate in the military operations in Afghanistan. Humanitarian aid and focus on long term aid were also mentioned to make the situation better for the Afghan people (Petersen, 2001). The story being told or the narrative of the words of Petersen is based on a more of an unconditional approach, that military intervention in Afghanistan together with the allies is the right thing to do. Compared to Bondevik (2001) Petersen did not try to tone down or defend the need for participating in the war on terror. “We can not forget that our own security is assured when we are united with our allies”. The importance of supporting our close allies is an essential point in the speech of Petersen (2001). Petersen is of the definite opinion that by supporting the Norwegian allies now will come with benefits later, and this is an important reason of why Norway was participating in Afghanistan.

It is interesting to see how the two different ideals are contradictory, but still leads to almost the same conclusion. Loyalty towards the Norwegian allies as NATO and the United States, versus the Norwegian humanitarian obligations in the Global South, are two important arguments in the Norwegian foreign policy. Until the mid-1990s, this was not an issue, as the operations led by NATO were mostly focused on protecting their own area, the Northern America and Europe. Between 1995 and 1999, NATO intervened in the war in former Yugoslavia, through the operation Joint Endeavor which opened the door for “out-of area”-operations (NATO, 1997). This marked the beginning of Norway to be standing in limbo between the two conflicting ideals, and the Norwegian foreign policy had to take into consideration that military interventions with NATO could occur in regions in areas where Norwegian humanitarian aid and peace building is ongoing. The mission in Afghanistan was one of the first tests on how these ideals worked together. From Petersen’s speeches one can see how he wanted the main priority in foreign policy to be the relation with NATO and the United States. Bondevik, which was invested in the “south political project” was representing the other ideal, that the main focus in the foreign policy should be peace building and humanitarian aid. Through the partition in the “war on terror” and the history of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan Bondevik tried to combine the two conflicting ideals.

From the first speeches by the ruling government one can justify that the intervention in Afghanistan was necessary due to the threat towards “our democratic international community”. This was later stated by Thorbjørn Jagland, a politician from the largest opposition party, the Labour Party in Norway. He referred to the war on terror as a global war for the democratic values, form of society, human values, tolerance and acceptance as we know of today were at stake (Jagland, 2021). This may have been the main argument for how the Norwegian foreign policy was being conducted towards Afghanistan.

The 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2005, Norway got a new coalition government after a general election. Jens Stoltenberg became the new Norwegian Prime Minister for the coalition between the Labour Party, The Center Party and the Socialist Left Party (Regjeringen, n.d.). Already in the first speech to the Parliament, his focus differed from the Bondevik government. Early in the speech he explained the main priorities for foreign policy in the new government. First, he briefly mentioned the effort for human rights and the importance of continuing to strengthen the UN. “The most important factor in international engagement would be the membership in NATO and EEA (European Economic Area).” (Stoltenberg, 2005). All work with making the world a better and safer place should be in line with the policies of these organisations. He also stated that Norway should continue to be a peace nation. After collectively mentioning some humanitarian missions, he further elaborates Norwegian politics on security. “The government will use NATO to further develop the transatlantic partnership” (Stoltenberg, 2005). He wanted to ensure that the participation in the operation ISAF in Afghanistan was strengthened. Therefore the government chose not to renew the mandate in OEF. Stoltenberg (2005) continues to mention the security efforts the new government was planning to focus on. By comparing the rhetorics of Norwegian Prime Ministers Bondevik and Stoltenberg, one can see the different focuses in the foreign policy. Even though Bondevik felt obligated to support the American led Operation Enduring Freedom and the war on terror, he also felt the need to defend the choice of participating in a military intervention, as mentioned previously. Stoltenberg on the other side, was defending the operations through ISAF by explaining how it was important to support the United States, the UN and NATO by showing willingness and being a trusted ally. He also wanted a strong humanitarian foreign policy, but the rhetoric about this was not as strong as that of Bondevik.

Already in December the same year, Stoltenberg travelled to Kabul on an official errand. NATO had just assured the Afghan President Karzai that NATO would increase the support from 9.500



to 15.500 troops and expand the operational area (NTB, 2005). President Karzai was very pleased with the news. Earlier the same day, Prime Minister Stoltenberg visited the Norwegian soldiers in the ISAF force. He assured the soldiers that the decision on increasing the number of soldiers to Afghanistan was made by the Norwegian Government. “Afghanistan has been one of the most brutale, undemocratic and oppressive to women countries in the world, only soldiers are able to change the facts. Norway will continue with their presence for a long time.” (Stoltenberg as cited in NTB, 2005).

### 5.3.2 The Norwegian self image

The Norwegian government's narrative about foreign policy and peace diplomacy is as mentioned based on the intention of peace. As discussed in the previous chapters, Norway has been portrayed as a peace building nation since the beginning of the 20th century. From what Terje Tvedt (2017, p. 39) refers to as the international breakthrough, the political leadership of Norway repeatedly presented solutions for how Norway was supposed to advance development and reduce poverty in the Global South and create a more just world. Almost every Norwegian Government since the mid-1950s when Einar Gerhardsen was Prime Minister, has explained how they would defeat poverty and discussed the various strategies that could be the solution to the world problems (Tvedt, 2017, p. 41). In one way, this has been the recognisable and repeated idea of a “public soul” of Norwegian foreign policy and the policy towards human rights. When Jonas Gahr Støre undertook the position as Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2005 he said, “Norway should be recognisable” (Leira et. al., 2007a, p. 8).

The challenges of foreign policy has changed drastically since the independence from Sweden in the beginning of the 1900s. The main challenge was then to preserve Norwegian neutrality and to support trade deals when needed. However, in the early 2000s, the challenges were bigger and more complex. Norway was dealing with peace processes, international military contributions, participation in large multilateral organisations to mention some of the challenges. Together with the other Nordic countries, Norway has to a certain extent a self-image in international politics as being different and following “the Nordic model”, distancing itself from other countries. In this narrative the Nordic model is presented as an exception from international practice in economics and politics, and as a model that other countries should seek to follow. To an even greater extent than in the other Nordic countries, the Norwegian model

is based on internationalism, solidarity, economic and social equality are values that have been cultivated especially by Norway. In addition, the role as a “peace-loving bridge builder” with the self-image of being a great peace nation, contributing largely to human aid, and serving as one of the greatest contributors to the UN comes with the Norwegian model (Leira et. al., 2007a, p. 10). The Norwegian and the Nordic models do not only have good reviews. Terje Tvedt (2009) does not agree with the picture that the Norwegian government paints of itself. He refers to the Norwegian model as based on the cooperation between national governments and academic and humanitarian communities, while Jan Egeland, Mona Juul and Terje Rød Larsen claim that this cooperation is more developed and successful in Norway compared to other countries. (Corbin, 1994, p. 7 & Tvedt, 2009, p. 41). The Norwegian Department of Foreign Affairs explained that during the 1990s, Norway had changed its philosophy about the “Norwegian profile” in foreign affairs (Regjeringen, 2000). According to various Norwegian government officials, the reason for the success after the change of tactics in foreign policy, was the unique cooperation between the government, academic and voluntary organisations. Tvedt (2009) explains that to be able to analyse the success of the new model one has to understand the double tasks that the Norwegian model carries in the light of the history of the Global South. It is set to both be an optimal tool to realise altruistic targets globally as well as it is being marketed as a brand in the time of internationalisation (Tvedt, 2009, p. 42). To be able to clearly see the intentions that the Norwegian government has for the Norwegian model and the global peace project, Tvedt (2009) asks the question of who the actors are in the Norwegian model and points to the issues of “inside aiding”, “corruption of kindness” and “elite circulation”. There are many examples of well known politicians that have a history from humanitarian aid-, emergency assistance- organisations which can be examples of elite circulation in Norwegian politics. There are several examples from the government in 2005 (Ekhaugen, 2014). Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre came directly from the position as general secretary of the Norwegian Red Cross, State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held the position as general secretary in the Norwegian Refugee Council. A researcher working at NUPI (Norwegian Institute of Foreign Affairs) got the position as Minister of Defence (Ekhaugen, 2014, p. 107). Jan Egeland (who moreover functioned as the General secretary of the Norwegian Red Cross before receiving the role as the UN deputy secretary for humanitarian questions and coordinator of emergency assistance. Later director of NUPI, then secretary-general of the Norwegian Refugee Council, ref. elite circulation (Ekhaugen, 2014, p. 107)), who has been an essential figure in what Tvedt refers to as the “South political project”, wrote in his book from 1988 that Norway had potentials in the international peace project due

to few conflicting foreign policy interests and large capacity of funding foreign assistance. The United States in comparison is a lot more ineffective than a small nation such as Norway. The American efforts for human rights are more likely to be misunderstood, become inconsistent and be interpreted as internationally controversial compared to Norway, which according to Egeland (1988, p. 185), is an important entrepreneur of international human rights. Further, Egeland wrote in 1988 that Norway should build “country-specific and issue-related expertise” by making room for this in the budget. This would be a part of the development of a more organised Norwegian human rights agenda which would lead to better strategies for long-term and country-specific efforts for peace and international human rights.

Tvedt argues how the Norwegian self image is filled with paradoxes and contradictions.

“At the same time as the Norwegians were fighting a bitter war against the Taliban, Norwegian representatives were pushing western political and liberal traditions, Norway supported Pakistani religious schools with approximately 72 million Norwegian kroner without having an significant effect and market fundamentalists and Christian fundamentalists increasing their influence in the American politics of development, the Norwegian south political elite produced a Norwegian public image of the goal and funds of development.” (Tvedt, 2009, p. 322-323)

The impression was that the whole world agreed to a common policy towards humanitarian aid. What is questionable is how the “south-political” leadership could agree upon what could bring the poor out of poverty, and that there was one development solution and one development goal that “everyone” agreed to (Tvedt, 2009, p. 323). What is troubling is the fact that the Norwegian government seems to have the idea that what they are pursuing in the effort for international development is that they are right, and that there is one mutual, or at least similar, solution in every country, in every conflict. Tvedt (2009, p. 327) argues that the common perception of the Norwegian goals are not being achieved and not being sufficient, it is being weakened. However, the narrative of how development should evolve in international policies is close to persistent throughout the periode Norway was present in Afghanistan.

The narrative of the Norwegian model corresponds well with the narrative from the speeches of the politicians in Norway at the time of the intervention in Afghanistan. The 15th of November 2001, Bondevik (2001a) spoke about the progress made in Afghanistan. Together

with the UN and the other participating nations, they had created a diplomatic channel that created a political alliance, working with discovering the terror cells in Afghanistan. The work had made great progress, and the Taliban had lost control in many parts of Afghanistan (Bondevik, 2001a). The Norwegian support towards the multilateral organisations, such as the UN, has had a strengthening effect on the Norwegian image as a peace nation and a supporter of the multilateral corporations (Leira, 2007a, p. 20). Former minister of foreign affairs Støre (2006, Sept. 7) described Norway as the best friends of the UN. Norway has for many years been one of the most economic contributors per capita to the UN with most of the economic support earmarked for peacebuilding operations. It is also in Norway's best interest to have a strong UN. Norway needs the organisation to be able to promote their point of view in foreign policy. Støre (2006, Sept. 7) said that “the UN is not perfect, but it is the best alternative for Norway. In the UN Norway is not solely a small state, here we have a lot more impact than the number of inhabitants would indicate.”

## 5.4 Comparison

Norway has participated in many international projects for Human Rights development, how successful have the Norwegian efforts in Afghanistan been compared to some of the previous initiatives for international peace? Peace is not only the absence of war, but with it follows a responsibility of rebuilding democratic institutions, infrastructure, and civil society. Støre asks if it is worth it to engage in conflict resolution and international human rights efforts. If Norway should say yes to peacebuilding on request, if it is the right use of the Norwegian resource and attention. Can Norway make a difference? (Støre, 2010). He quickly responds to it as it is important to contribute whenever and wherever to be able to stop erupting wars. Støre is continuing to promote the same narrative here as previously mentioned. To intervene in conflict resolution and peace is a central part of Norwegian foreign policy where engagement policy and security policy is meeting, taking into consideration the Norwegian interests. Støre's arguments for participating in conflict resolution and peace efforts were strong in 2010, despite the many examples of less successful Norwegian initiatives for peace. What was different in Afghanistan compared to previous initiatives and what did the Norwegian government learn from it?

#### 5.4.1 Oslo Accords

After the Gulf War (1990-1991) and the end of the Cold War, several attempts of peace negotiations were undertaken in the Middle East. Saddam Hussain had contributed to highlighting the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. The West had for many years ignored the Israeli/Palestinian issues but as the Cold War had ended, the United States also wanted peace in the Middle East (Waage, 2019, p. 132). The United States was the only remaining superpower after the cold war, which gave them the opportunity to negotiate peace on premises that secured their own interests. The Madrid conferences started in 1991, but as the American diplomats were unable to get the two parties in the same room acknowledging each other, the negotiation halted. Instead, Norway was able to create a secret back-channel (Waage, 2019, p. 132). A difference from the Madrid conference was that Yasser Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), had more control during the negotiations in Oslo than he had in the negotiations where the United States was negotiators. He was desperate to sign a favourable peace agreement to gain more power, as he felt the pressure both from Hamas leaders in Gaza and the West Bank and foreign groups such as the Lebanese Hezbollah in favour for the Arabic countries (Waage, 2019, p. 133). The accords started in 1993, and Norway was the main facilitator in the conflict between the two parties. The process is better known as the Oslo accords and was led by Jan Egeland, Mona Juul and Terje Rød-Larsen from Norway (Leerand, 2019). Similar to some of the peace processes in Afghanistan, the diplomacy was led by individuals. It was not until later in the mission in Afghanistan that the diplomatic correspondence for human rights and the dialogue with Taliban was led by the Norwegian Government. The Oslo accords and the Norwegian effort in Afghanistan also must be seen in the light of the surroundings. Norway did not participate in the military conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This was different from the mission in Afghanistan where Norway contributed to the military operation through cooperation with their NATO allies and directly with the United States, following the mandates from the UN. The fact that Norway had many different operations in Afghanistan could make them suspicious to their dialogue partners (NOU, 2016:8, p. 138, 148-149). It happened several times that the Taliban withdrew from meeting with Norwegian diplomats due to a recent meeting between the Norwegian and American diplomats for instance, as well as American diplomats questioning Norway for not being transparent. The American department was early informed about the secret Oslo Accords, but they were not informed about the content and the progress of the Accords (Leraand, 2019). This was different from the diplomatic channel

Norway had with the Taliban in Afghanistan where the Americans were not informed until late in the process (NOU, 2016:8, p. 148-149). Moreover, the Americans had already opened a channel for dialogue between the Israelis and PLO in Washington where both parties were dissatisfied with the lack of progress. To be able to get any progress in the conflict resolution, the negotiators agreed that any previous history had to be ignored (Regjeringen, 1999). Even though the ignoring of the history is very challenging one understands why it had to proceed without the historical backdrop, which was extremely intricate and bitter, with the potential to cause huge delays or halt the negotiations.

The Norwegian role in the Oslo accords was to work as a facilitating negotiator, not a mediator. Their role was to host secret meetings, and to be a messenger between the two parts. They also contributed to getting progress in the agreement, but the negotiations happened between Israel and Palestine only (Leraand, 2019). This was different from the mission for peace in Afghanistan where Norway had several different roles to be able to get a peaceful solution. Norway has often taken the role of a facilitating negotiator, believing this is the correct approach. The Oslo Accords was supported and encouraged by the incumbent Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland (Jordan Media Institute, 2018). When the Oslo Accords was signed in 1993 at the White House in the United States, it marked a historic change. The agreement was sealed with the handshake between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and the leader of PLO Yasser Arafat outside of the White House in Washington D.C. During the agreement Israel accepted the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians, and the PLO renounced terrorism as recognized Israel's right to exist in peace (Department of State, n.d). The agreement was vague in many questions for both the Israelis and the Palestinians. In fear of being marginalised, Arafat agreed to the agreement that may not have been in his favour. Despite that, given the power structure between the two parties, PLO ended up with a good agreement (Waage, 2019, p. 133). In the aftermath, the results of the Oslo Accords have been praised as well as criticised. Brundtland held a lecture at the Jordan Media Institute in 2018 about the fact that the Oslo Accords would have benefitted both the Palestinians and the Israelis but that both sides have abandoned the principles of the agreement (Jordan Media Institute, 2018). After the handshake outside the White House, more agreements had to be negotiated to be able to fill the gaps from the original Oslo Accords. As the years went by and the negotiations continued it was clear that Israel was the winning party in the negotiation. The agreement of a Palestinian state crumbled and the negotiated peace was replaced with violence (Waage, 2019, p. 133). The Palestinian emissaries also agreed with Israel's wish of no international

interference in the aftermath of the Oslo accords. Also, any presence by the UN was prohibited. The issues concerning Jerusalem were not mentioned, and further plans on connecting Gaza and the West Bank were abolished (Waage, 2016, p. 99). The Oslo accords quickly became a failure and humiliation defeat for the Palestinians.

Nevertheless, the overall impression of the negotiation was that the Oslo accords signified the beginning for Norway as successful in facilitating negotiations in secret diplomacy. It was the first serious attempt at any peace negotiation in the Middle East and it therefore set the tone for any other secret peace negotiations (Waage, 2001). This was also the first strategy that the Norwegian diplomats used in the negotiation between Taliban, the new Afghan government, and the United States. As mentioned, the diplomats and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs saw the importance in Afghanistan to organise an own sector within the Foreign Ministry that specialised on the Afghan issues as a whole, instead of several departments working separately.

Even though one can argue about whether the agreement was successful or not, bringing the two conflicting leaders together was seen as a great accomplishment. Oslo earned a brandname as the capital of peace. This served the Norwegian government as an even better export item than oil and fish (Bauck & Omer, 2013). The self image of Norway being a successful negotiator grew. The Norwegian narrative of the mission between Israel and Palestine has been that it was a story of success for Norway, thereby the Norwegian narrative about being a successful peace negotiator is being kept alive.

#### 5.4.2 Sudan, “The Comprehensive Peace Agreement”

On the 9th of January 2005 the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) signed The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that has been lauded around the world as one of the greatest peace agreements and as an excellent example of how to be able to success with an international engagement for peace (Rolandsen, 2016, p. 211). Norway was yet again participating in the peace negotiation by functioning as a facilitating negotiator. This time they worked closely with the United States and the United Kingdom, their close allies. The negotiation ended in an agreement in 2005 and was set to end with a referendum and independence for South Sudan in 2011 (Regjeringen, 2022). In 2010, a

year before the peace agreement ended, Hillary Clinton (U.S. State Secretary), William Hague (U.K. Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Jonas Gahr Støre (Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs), agreed that the year before the planned referendum would be challenging, but that they were positive about a solution (TV2, 2010). The agreement promoted democratic values, engaging a referendum for the destiny of South Sudan and having a democratic rearrangement of the government in Sudan (Rolandsen, 2016, p. 211). The Norwegian Prime Minister Stoltenberg stated after the referendum that this was a historical cross-road for the people of South Sudan, and that this was a result of the peace agreement from 2005. He said that he had registered joy from the political leaders in both Sudan and South Sudan (Stoltenberg as cited in Dagbladet, 2011). However, the agreement did not lead to a persistent peace. A civil war erupted in South Sudan in 2013 which led to a new peace agreement in 2015. Again, the historical contradictions between the different ethnic groups led to a new civil war already in 2016. A revitalised agreement was initiated by the regional organisation Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and a third agreement was signed in 2018. The implementation of the agreement was halting, and the national coalition government was not formed until 2020 (Regjeringen, 2022).

Even if the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was said to be a success, there are various explanations of why the implementation of the peace agreement in Sudan was halting. During the peace agreement in Sudan, Norway had contributed economically through humanitarian aid. According to a report commissioned from NORAD, Norway provided South Sudan (including Sudan between 2000 and 2011) with 10.5 billion NOK from 2000 to 2018 (Bryld, Schomerus, Tjønneland, Toft, d'Silva, Bonnet & Athiei, 2020, p. 26). Norway was one of the largest development partners to South Sudan during the period. Similar to the mission in Afghanistan, Norway also had some non-aid funded interventions, such as direct support to the United Nations Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS) and placements of Norwegian military officers. The involvement in missions outside only humanitarian aid, supposedly contributed to an interference in the work solely meant for peace building. As explained in chapter 5.2.2 the Taliban had difficulties trusting the Norwegian diplomats, after they were involved heavily with the United States and the other allies, both directly and through NATO. The setback with the Taliban was also a setback in the process for humanitarian aid. One of the problems that occurred in South Sudan around 2008 was the high level of corruption and poor prioritisation in the building of a new democratic state system (Bryld et.al, 2020, p. 28). The government became centralised, not taking into consideration the periphery or the different ethnic groups.



At the same time, Norway was one of the first countries that established a consulate in Juba, the capital of South Sudan. The consulate was later upgraded to an embassy as South Sudan gained independence in 2011 (Royal Norwegian Embassy in South Sudan, n.d.). This shows the support and trust the South Sudanese got from the Norwegian government. They did gain trust from the Sudanese government after the CPA was signed. During a meeting in 2011 between the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre, the Norwegian Minister of Environment and Development Erik Solheim and the Sudanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Deng Alor, Alor stated that he wanted to strengthen the strategic partnership with Norway, and that he would like to use Norwegian expertise on various areas such as development. Solheim emphasized how Norway's expertise could contribute to exploiting the large oil resources of Sudan (Rønneberg, 2011).

The UN also had an important role in the peacebuilding process in South Sudan. One can see in the Norwegian Governmental report (Meld. St. 19) from 2011-2012 that Norway both supported and criticised the role of the UN in South-Sudan and Sudan (Utanriksdepartementet, 2011). In some areas the UN was able to meet the Norwegian expectations, but the UN was unable to implement political measures to ensure global challenges such as food safety, supply of energy or access to clean water effectively (Utanriksdepartementet, 2011). Between 2005 and 2011 about half of the Norwegian funding to South Sudan was through multilateral organisations (Bryld et.al, 2020, p. 29). The Norwegian support and the work with the CPA was focused on four priorities. To support and fund upcoming elections, to support the oil sector to secure the economic future, to establish the future for long-term support from Norwegian's People Aid and Norwegian Church Aid in particular, and lastly, support humanitarian missions, especially channelled through the UN (Bryld et.al, 2020, p. 29).

A major concern in the report written by Bryld et.al. (2020) was about three dilemmas Norway faced in the peace process in South Sudan between 2005 and 2011. In 2005 over 100 countries ratified the Paris Declaration that was directed by OECD. They agreed to five principles for aid effectiveness (OECD, 2005). As the declaration was new at the same time as the CPA was signed, Norway ended up having to experiment with the Aid Effectiveness Agenda. They supported the agenda, but as performance diminished, Norway moved away from the agreement towards bilateral engagements. At the same time, Norway was struggling with making the peace agreement attractive for the South-Sudanese government which was working against the agreement. To be able to accomplish any type of progress with the government in South Sudan,

Norway decided to shift focus to de facto preparations of an independent South Sudan. Moreover, the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan was quickly accelerating and Norway was struggling with having the focus on implementing the CPA (Bryld et.al, 2020, p. 34-35).

### 5.4.3 Sri Lanka

The civil war in Sri Lanka between The Tamil Tigers and the Sinhalese Government of Sri Lanka started in 1983. During the 80s and 90s there were many initiatives for peace, but neither managed to reconcile the two parties. The war continued without any solution in sight. Around the year 2000, the Government of Sri Lanka took contact with the Norwegian Government to serve as a facilitating negotiator. The UN was discussed as a potential peace negotiator in the conflict, but the Sri Lankan government did not want to involve the UN out of fear of losing control of the peace process. India was against using the UN as well, they were afraid of losing control in the region. The Tamil Tigers on the other hand wanted a strong negotiation which was able to balance out the power between the strong Sri Lankan government and the weaker Tamil Tigers. The Tamil Tigers were weaker politically, economically, and militarily, and were afraid that the negotiator would side with the government. The choice ended with Norway and a Norwegian group of diplomats, led by special peace envoy Erik Solheim, started what was going to be a long peace process (Nissen, 2016, p. 143,147). In the first part of the negotiations, the Norwegian efforts gave positive results. The two parties managed to agree on cease-fire in 2002. But already in 2004, the peace burst. The peace negotiation was formally still happening, but the challenges were large and made the process halt. Internal disagreements within the Government of Sri Lanka as well as use of violence and an internal division in the Tamil Tigers made the negotiation difficult. The war ended in a military offensive in 2009 where the Government of Sri Lanka managed to destroy the Tamil Tigers completely (Nissen, 2016, p. 143).

As time went by, and several initiatives towards a peaceful solution in Sri Lanka failed, more critique was issued against Norway. The left oriented Sinhalese nationalists initiated demonstrations against Norway and what they referred to as a Norwegian favouritism of a federal solution. The Sinhalese media was almost fighting in having the worst manufacture of the Norwegian negotiators (Nissen, 2016, p. 158). The initiative in Sri Lanka was regarded as one of very least favourable for Norway's reputation as a negotiator. Instead of ending with a

peaceful solution, it ended in a Tamil carnage. Some have argued that the Norwegian initiative was solely an expression of Norwegian self-interest (Selmer, 2016).

After the Cold War, diplomacy for peace was seen as an important tool for globalisation and to strengthen the Norwegian position in foreign policy. Norway did not have enough or sufficient knowledge about what the conflict was about. The Norwegian government did have a common policy for peace negotiations. This was the overall idea that was spoken by the Norwegian government in 2003-2004 (St. Meld. nr. 35 as mentioned in Tvedt, 2009, p. 323). Even though the Norwegian effort can be severely criticised, one cannot blame Norway alone. Similar to the engagement in Afghanistan, the multilateral organisations were also to be criticised. The whole international community failed Sri Lanka. Some of the great powers such as India, China and the United States feared intervening in the conflict in fear of pushing the conflict in the wrong direction politically. Erik Solheim from the Norwegian Socialist Left Party was a member of the Norwegian government when the Sri Lankan Government requested an external negotiator. He was hired in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a special advisor with a special responsibility for the peace processes in Sri Lanka (Nissen, 2016, p. 149). He explained that the initiative in Sri Lanka should be the last conflict where Norway worked as a direct negotiator (Selmer, 2016). Norway was supposed to function as a facilitation negotiator, similar to the role they had in Guatemala and the Middle East, but it quickly became too challenging and they took the role as a classic negotiation instead (Nissen, 2016, p. 143). The role of a small state trying to come to a solution in Sri Lanka was too difficult when the great powers had national interests themselves other than peace in Sri Lanka. There are important similarities with the Norwegian involvement in Afghanistan. Norway did not take into consideration the national difficulties in Afghanistan, that they seem to not have had enough knowledge about, such as religion and the local court system. There was also trouble with the multilateral organisations, UN. Many of the projects started by the UN did not get the results expected such as UN ELECT mentioned in subchapter 5.1.3 and UN Women mentioned in 5.1.4.1.

The mission for peace in Sri Lanka is a good example of the challenges Norway had with peace negotiations and are therefore part of questioning the Norwegian self image as a proclaimed negotiator. From late in the 1990s developing countries were increasingly sceptical to western powers intervening in internal conflicts. For instance, India and China, as mentioned, were critical to the new method of conflict resolution based on human rights, good governance and power sharing. In the beginning of the peace process, the perception of Norway as a sole

negotiator between the Tamil Tigers and the government was positive. But after the new government took power in 2005, the positive image of western interference weakened. Gunnar M. Sørnbø explains how the peace process in Sri Lanka became a test case for the two competing models for conflict resolution to be utilised by ending civil wars (Sørnbø, 2018). The liberal peacebuilding model and the idea based on traditional sovereignty, non-interference and the preservation of strong states. Another issue that occurred through the Norwegian mission in Sri Lanka was the problem by basing the negotiation on ownership. This was based on the idea that only the involved parties were able to solve their own issues. The limitations with this approach were many as one also has to take into consideration the rebel groups that are occurring in a conflict, or that some groups may be excluded from the negotiations. This can be ethnic groups, political branches or religious groups, such as the Muslims in Sri Lanka. Different versions of peace by the various groups may occur, where every group is having ownership of their reality of peace. The different versions and tactics for peace may not be taken into consideration. In Sri Lanka, the government that came to power in 2005, prevented the Muslim group from becoming a participant. Instead of continuing the negotiations they adopted a war for peace negotiation with the support from the United States, China and India. It ended the civil war but left behind a massacre (Sørnbø, 2018). Another problem that we can see through the Norwegian initiative for peace is the asymmetry that may occur when approaching a governmental actor versus a non-state rebel group. This can be seen through both the mission in Sri Lanka as well as the mission in Afghanistan. In Sri Lanka, Norway was trying to be even handed with both the government and the Tamil Tigers. The issues occurred when the Tamil Tigers was labelled a terrorist organisation not only by the government in Sri Lanka, but also by many other international actors, including great powers (Nissen, 2016, p. 143). Norway being the only international state that was involved in the conflict and one of the only states that did not label the Tamil Tigers as a terrorist organisation, was accused of being pro-Tiger (Sørnbø, 2018). A similar issue happened in Afghanistan with the Taliban. After the terror attack on the World Trade Centre, the Taliban quickly became a listed illegal armed group by the UN security council (NOU, 2016, p. 148), and the American President George Bush referred to them as a terrorist organisation (Bush, 2001). The Norwegian and the American diplomats had difficulties being trusted by the Taliban in the negotiations. The Taliban did not feel like they were a heard part in the dialogue, and cancelled several conversations due to this. The United States decided to remove the organisation from the list of terror organisations to be more likely to succeed in the negotiations (Farivar, 2017). The similarity between the mission in Afghanistan and in Sri Lanka was that both the Taliban and the Tamil Tigers were excluded from “the international

society” where both groups received adversity from the Great Powers. The difference between the two missions was that Norway also participated with security operations in the military efforts in Afghanistan even though Norwegian diplomats negotiated with the Taliban. In Afghanistan, the Taliban was hesitant to negotiate peace with Norway as they cooperated with the United States and NATO, while in Sri Lanka the Sinhalese government was hesitant towards the Norwegian mission as the Norwegian diplomats did not handle the Tamil Tigers as terrorists together with the rest of the world.

#### 5.4.4 Colombia

The mission towards peace in Colombia started in 2010 (Norad, 2018), being one of the later missions Norway have intervened in. After many attempts of utilising the successful perception of being a nation based on the tradition of promoting peace, one can use the negotiations in Colombia to investigate whether Norway’s tactics in negotiation have changed. Similar to other peace negotiations that Norway has participated in, they functioned as a facilitating intermediary to the negotiations. As we can see through the other mentioned examples of Norwegian peace initiatives, it seems like being a facilitator is a pattern in the Norwegian effort for human rights and peace building. Together with Cuba, Norway was also a “guarantor” for the negotiations of an agreement between Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Colombian government (Bull, 2023). The negotiation between the two parties was, similarly to other negotiations, was kept secret. Norway had for years before the public negotiation began, initiated secret and introductory dialogue between the two parties as well as other guerrilla groups in Colombia, such as Ejercito de Liberación Nacional (ELN) between 2005 and 2007 (Regjeringen, 2012). Activists, NGOs and Colombians living in exile that had been included and participating in the mission for peace for years, were asked to step back to not disturb or ruin the already fragile negotiations. Moreover, the historical backdrop was set aside as the negotiations continued, similarly to the negotiations in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Israel and Palestine (Bull, 2023).

The basic perception is that the Norwegian initiative was successful, and that the Norwegian role led to a historic peace agreement between the Colombian government and FARC in 2016. “Never before in any peace process have the victims been included at the negotiation table

similar to this. “(Regjeringen, 2014), said former Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende after what he refers to as a historical week in the peace negotiations on Colombia. Norway facilitated in order for the Colombian Government and FARC to review the causes and the consequences in order to establish a truce and peace. In 2014, Brende further said that Norway would continue to support the parties to find a peaceful solution to the armed and damaging conflict in Colombia (Regjeringen, 2014). The Norwegian initiative in Colombia has been said to be one of the most successful initiatives for peace. However, the Norwegian mission has again been criticised. The evaluation director of Norad (the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) Per Øyvind Bastøe argues that the Norwegian diplomats had every prerequisite to succeed, even though not everything was successful (Bastøe as cited in Norad, 2018). Bastøe highlights that the Norwegian priorities have been an issue and a hindrance to be able to conduct a successful result in Colombia. Similarly to the mission in Afghanistan, Norway has been criticised for having too many projects ongoing at the same time. The team of Norwegian diplomats working towards peace was small, and was therefore dependent on the support from various sectors within the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies in Bogota, Colombia and Havana, Cuba. The negotiations itself was prioritised, but surrounding tasks, such as measures towards young men to stop recruitment to ELN or other guerrilla groups, were deprioritized due to the lack of resources. He further explains how the negotiations that Norway is a part of will depend on enough capacity from every party of the conflict to be able to produce a successful result (Bastøe as cited in Norad, 2018). As the mission in Afghanistan was affected by the same problems concerning the negotiations, it shows how intricate the peace negotiations are, and how important the priorities are. Norway has failed to deliver good results in the negotiations between the Afghan government or the United States and the Taliban or other militant groups.

One of the successes of the Norwegian mission in Colombia was how they gained the trust from both FARC and the Colombian government. This is one of the most important and the fundamental building blocks of any negotiation work. Norway did have difficulties gaining trust in the mission in Afghanistan due to what the parties in the conflict interpreted as a conflict of interest between the moral obligation Norway had towards the United States and the allies, and the mission to be able to gain trust from Taliban to get to a peaceful solution. One of the main focuses for the Norwegian diplomats in Colombia was to build trust towards both groups, and not be seen as siding with one party (Norad, 2018). Even though the report from NORAD showed that Norway did not always have the right priorities in the negotiation, Norway

contributed with capacity (Bastøe as cited in Norad, 2018). They contributed with time, access to competence and resources by including various experts, organisations, and the civil community. Norway, like to the mission in Afghanistan, focused especially on three questions, women and gender perspectives, transitional justice and demining.

The United States was supporting the peace agreement in Colombia largely. However, the United States did prioritise a bilateral cooperation when approaching the peace negotiations in Colombia. Plan Colombia was an agreement starting in 1999 regarding Colombia's political, economic and security gains (The White House, 2016). The bilateral relationship between the United States and the government of Colombia had been strong since the 1990s when the United States declared war on drugs and the American President Bill Clinton signed Plan Colombia. The plan sought to stabilise the nation and undermine drug production amongst other things. Even though a UN report published in 2022 showed a failed, if not worsening effect from the American initiative, the Americans were positive to the Norwegian mission in Colombia (Thornton, 2022).

The mission in Afghanistan and the mission in Colombia do have some similarities, and the expert group that worked with the facilitating role in Colombia seem to have taken some learnings from the mistakes from Afghanistan. First, the underlying factors were quite similar. The United States supported the Government in both missions, and the rebel group as the Taliban in Afghanistan and FARC in Colombia was not supported by any great power or from other parties in the international community. Second, Norway did not have enough resources to be able to sustain peace agreement in the aftermath and to be able to take care of the cultural factors that also need to be taken care of to be able to make peace. Such as making sure that young men do not get recruited to guerrilla groups or supporting female rights.

#### 5.4.5 Summary

This subchapter will be concluded with a comparative summary of the five described peace negotiation processes that Norway has been involved in. The mission in Afghanistan is compared to the missions in Israel/ Palestine, Sudan/South Sudan, Sri Lanka and Colombia. I will answer three questions and relate them to Mills' two comparative methods to explain the

success or lack thereof of the Norwegian peace missions, where three of the five missions have been more successful.

Are the Norwegian peace negotiators perceived as neutral by the parties?

A main difference between the Norwegian mission in Afghanistan and in the other cases was that Norway in Afghanistan was a party to the conflict against the Taliban. Norway had a military presence, as well as being an ally to the United States, the enemy of Taliban. In result, the Taliban was suspicious about Norwegian negotiation initiatives. In the conflict between Israel and Palestine and in Colombia, Norway was seen a fairly neutral. In South Sudan Norway had some problems with neutrality, although on a smaller scale than in Afghanistan, since Norwegian military officers were part of the UN forces that intervened in the civil conflict. In Sri Lanka the Sinhalese government saw the Norwegians as non-neutral, but this was not due to the Norwegian lack of neutrality, but for reasons noted under the next point.

The Method of Agreement and the Method of Elimination by Mill is relevant to explain the Norwegian success. In the five compared conflicts where Norway was negotiator, three can be qualified as somewhat successful. In Colombia, Israel/Palestine and Sudan/South Sudan, Norway was perceived as neutral and the process led to increasing peace. In Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, Norway was not perceived as neutral, and this may be an important factor of why the negotiations did not bring peace to the nations.

Is the “international community”, especially the United States supportive of Norwegian peace initiative?

In Afghanistan the United States was suspicious about Norway’s contacts with the Taliban at many occasions. In many of the Norwegian initiatives with the Taliban, the American diplomats had an impression of being left out. In Sri Lanka, the United States and most of the international community was strongly biased in favour of the government and against the Tamil Tigers, which sustained the hawkish non-negotiation stance of the Sinhalese government. In Israel/Palestine, the United States had a strong interest in the peace accord in order to improve its position to Arab states. However, the United States shifted to more or less unconditional support of Israel soon after the peace accord was signed. In South Sudan the United States was supportive of the Norwegian peace initiative, and great power UK cooperated with Norway about this initiative. In Colombia Norway worked closely with Cuba to facilitate the process with support from the American administration under Obama. The Americans had for decades



had a mission for a war on drugs and had a bilateral cooperation with Colombia for the purpose of eliminating the cocaine import. Their own mission can be argued as the reason for the American support for the Norwegian initiative.

The support from the allies and the United States is a factor for Norwegian success and can therefore be seen as a factor in the Method of Agreement and Method of Difference. In Colombia, Sudan/South Sudan and Israel/Palestine Norway was supported by the allies, while in the less successful missions in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, the support from the allies have been varying or unstable.

How was the will and capacity of the conflicting parties to undertake peace negotiations?

In Afghanistan, the will was limited. Taliban was fighting a weak government which relied on outside assistance. There were different opinions within Taliban, but the hawks prevailed, as they rightly assumed that time was on their side and that the government would collapse when the United States and its allies pulled out. Afghanistan suffered from fractious politics, limited state building, and many armed groups as an additional complication.

In Palestine the will was strong due to the weak position of the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat who needed peace to strengthen his position against contenders in combination with the willingness of Israeli Prime minister Shimon Perez to reach a settlement, given that Israel had the stronger cards on its hand. This changed as Israeli politics moved to the right soon after the Oslo Accords with a new and less conciliatory leadership.

Also, in Colombia there was a strong will on both sides to undertake peace negotiations, which was quite successful between FARC and the Colombian government. The capacity in Colombia, however, was limited. The Colombian government did not have monopoly of force within its territory. When FARC settled with the agreement, other armed groups took up the mantle left by FARC and armed struggles continued.

In Sudan there was a situation with both lack of will and capacity, although the peace negotiators succeeded in securing South Sudan's independence relatively stable, in a more or less peaceful relations with Sudan. The government in South Sudan was reluctant towards the agreement, and as mentioned, instead of focusing on implementing the elements agreed upon from the CPA, the Norwegian government used a de facto strategy for the purpose of preserving the fragile peace between Sudan and South Sudan.

In Sri Lanka the will for negotiation was strong, and Norway was requested as negotiator from the Sinhalese Government. The will however quickly changed as Norway was seen as partial towards the Tamil Tigers. The Sinhalese government was supported by the growing Great Power in the region as well as the United States. The Tamil Tigers did not have the capacity to negotiate with the Government which was superior in the conflict.

All participating parties in the five missions have had various degree of will and capacity throughout the negotiation process, and one can understand that will and capacity is a factor that will contribute to success in a peace negotiation. Through the Method of Agreement one can compare the missions and understand the importance of the conflicting parties participation for the success ratio.

The five missions have been compared, and the result is the fact that perceived neutrality, international support from allies and will and capacity for peace are some crucial factors for a successful peace process. The most successful Norwegian peace initiative in Colombia benefited from Norway being perceived as neutral by both parties, a wish for peace from both the government and FARC and support from the major ally, the United States. However, the Colombian government did not fully control its territory and the peace initiative failed to find employment for those young men who tend to be employed into violence. Thus, all three conditions were not fulfilled, and new forms of unrest arose. On the other extreme, the Sri Lanka was the most unsuccessful case. Here the peace initiative suffered from Norway not being perceived as neutral by the Sinhalese government, that also was unwilling to engage in peace talks and the international community did not recognise the Tamil side. As a result, the Norwegian peace agreement was an utter failure. Apparently all the three conditions listed above must be present in order to achieve a successful peace agreement. In Afghanistan Norwegian peace initiatives were constrained by US suspicions, the Taliban leadership was clearly not committed to a peace and Norway was not perceived as neutral by Taliban. In result, the peace initiative had a very limited chance to survive.

## 6. Conclusion

Through this thesis I have analysed Norway's presence and mission in Afghanistan in the period between 2001-2014 and further investigated how the Norwegian representatives have portrayed it. The objective of the thesis is to understand the intentions behind the Norwegian investment and participation in the war in Afghanistan from 2001-2014, and discuss the embedded narrative of Norway as a well suited state for negotiating peace. To be able to investigate the objective I asked two research questions in order to understand what the Norwegian government emphasised during the mission in Afghanistan and how successful it was, as well as to understand how the Norwegian government narrated the story of the peacebuilding nation.

The first research question that was applied in the thesis was: What motives did the Norwegian government have for taking part in the war in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014? Through the analysis in subchapter 5.1 and 5.2 the research question was documented and answered. These subchapters provided a presentation of the different motives and goals Norway had in the mission in Afghanistan.

The main finding answering the first research question was how the Norwegian government prioritises when they are tackling a conflict and a crisis situation. The mission in Afghanistan was one of two conflicts where Norway contributed with humanitarian aid and peace building measures as well as a military intervention, which was not before common for Norway. As I first planned this project, my thought was to investigate whether the Norwegian government interventions in international conflicts were motivated solely by intentions of promoting peace and human rights, or if the intentions rather were based on realpolitik and Norwegian gains of influence and international power. Subchapter 5.1 did show that the Norwegian intention is based on both ideas. Norway wanted to continue to support human rights worldwide and to reduce human suffering. This is shown by how the Norwegian government prioritised to build democratic values such as education, focus on women's rights, to build working and fair institutions for law and order as well as other humanitarian actions. As explained one can see from the many examples in the subchapter 5.1 that the Norwegian government pursued many of their intentions successfully and change its tactic if a measure did not work as planned. However, one can also understand how the Norwegian government is using human rights efforts for its own gain. The Norwegian efforts for peace were referred to as export goods,

similar to oil and fish. This can hardly be compared, but it is a useful picture of how important peace negotiation was to Norway's self image globally.

My second finding in relation to the first research question was about what an influence the allies have on the Norwegian governments decision-making. In subchapter 5.2. one could clearly see how important it was for the Norwegian government not only to prioritise the mission according to their own interests, but also how they wished to please their close allies, in particular the United States. In order to differentiate between the bilateral relationship with the United States and the multilateral relationship with organisations, especially with the UN, I used the theory from Egeland as a guide. As I analysed the sources I did find out, that in particular the United States' foreign policy and direct contact with Norway had an influence on the Norwegian foreign policy and the policy towards Afghanistan. The United States as a Great Power and internationally recognised actor, does have a very different approach to conflicts than Norway as a small state. As Great Powers sometimes are hindered from doing various actions, so are small states. Therefore, the states have to collaborate or share the tasks between them to be able to achieve the mission that best suits their politics and ideals. Norway has a close relationship with the United States and see it as an obligation to support the allies, similar to what they have towards the UN.

The priorities have been analysed by using the theories from Jan Egeland and Terje Tvedt. Jan Egeland's theory has been used to uncover some of the strategies of the Norwegian government, and why a small country without significant global power, can show strength when the right tools are being used. Such as Norway's success when creating a channel for dialogue with the Taliban. Terje Tvedt's theory has been applied in order to uncover some of the issues the Norwegian government may have met during the humanitarian work. Through his theory I illuminated how the elite-circulation work in the Norwegian Model.

The second research question I used in this thesis to be able to answer the objective is: The Norwegian Government is promoting peace as the main motive in foreign policy. How is this being narrated by representatives of the Norwegian peace initiative? Through subchapter 5.3 and 5.4 I was able to analyse the Norwegian narrative.

Subchapter 5.3 was used to analyse the Norwegian rhetorics regarding the mission in Afghanistan. Through this subchapter the main finding was supporting what I also found in the previous two subchapters in the analysis. The Norwegian self-image was strongly based on the claim that the nation has a long history as a contributor to humanitarian aid and peace, and every action Norway undertakes through foreign policy is with the intention of contributing to peace. The two opposed governments that were appointed to the Norwegian Parliament did have different phrasing because of the different ideologies and focus areas to promote. It was interesting to see how the Bondevik government was protecting their values stepping carefully. They needed to defend the military intervention and heavily promoted the humanitarian actions in Afghanistan. One can acknowledge that the main mission for this government was peace. The Stoltenberg government on the other hand had a dissimilar approach to the conflict in Afghanistan. They did also promote peace and human rights, but that Norway's participation would mainly be about building a strong NATO and international cooperation. Most Norwegian political leaders had an underlying idea of Norway as a promoter of peace as embedded in their history and values.

The last subchapter of the analysis, subchapter 5.4 is a comparative analysis, comparing the Norwegian mission in Afghanistan with the missions in Israel and Palestine, Sudan, Sri Lanka and Colombia. Throughout the other subchapters in the analysis there are examples of Norway as a negotiator, where the missions have either been considered successful or unsuccessful. The four missions discussed in the chapter all had some successful elements, and some less successful. The missions in Sri Lanka and Israel and Palestine were prior to the mission and the other two were simultaneously or later than the mission in Afghanistan. By comparing them I am able to investigate whether the Norwegian self-image is valid or if Norway's role as a peace nation only is based on an idea. The conclusion is both. Norway is undertaking different tactics to retain its image and to be able to succeed with the negotiations, considered to be among their most important export goods. But the results from the negotiations shows that Norway has some way to go before being referred to as a successful peace negotiator.

I argue that Norway is a nation doing a lot to improve the world and to reach their own targets. I also argue that Norway is a nation that needs their allies to be able to promote peace and value their own intentions. Norway continued to work for better human rights in Afghanistan after 2014 and have been in dialogue with the Taliban, even after they regained power in the nation.

It will be interesting to see how the self-image of Norway persists, whether it gets damaged or strengthened in the years to come.

## 7. References:

- 9/11 Memorial and Museum. (n.d.). *Names on the 9/11 Memorial*. Read 23.02.2023  
<https://www.911memorial.org/visit/memorial/names-911-memorial>
- Akhtar, N. (2008). Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Taliban. *International Journal on World Peace*, 25(4), 49–73. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20752859>
- Amnesty International. (2010, June 7.). *NATO skyldig i krigsforbrytelser under bombingene av Jugoslavia*. Retrieved from: <https://amnesty.no/nato-skyldig-i-krigsforbrytelser-under-bombingen-av-jugoslavia>
- Amnesty International. (n.d.). *Afghanistan 2022*. Read 12.01.2023  
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/asia-and-the-pacific/south-asia/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>
- Bauck, P. & Omer, M. (2013). *The Oslo Accords fell well short of their goals*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2013/9/14/the-oslo-accords-fell-well-short-of-their-goals>
- BBC News. (2021, June 14.). *NATO summit: What does the US contribute?* Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-44717074>
- Benjaminsen, T. A., Svarstad, H. (2021). *Political Ecology: A critical engagement with Global Environmental Issues*. Cham: Springer International Publishing AG.
- Berg, O. T. & Garvik, O. (2022, August 29.) *Interesseorganisasjoner*. Retrieved from: <https://snl.no/interesseorganisasjoner>
- Bondevik, K. M. (2001, November 8.). *Redegjørelse av statsministeren om situasjonen etter terrorangrepene mot USA*. Stortinget. Read 10.10.2022  
<https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Publikasjoner/Referater/Stortinget/2001-2002/011108/1>
- Bondevik, K. M. (2001a, November 15.). *Fremgang i kampen mot terror*. Regjeringen. Read 08.10.2022. [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/smk/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2001/framgang\\_i\\_kampen\\_mot\\_terror\\_artikkel/id265253/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/smk/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2001/framgang_i_kampen_mot_terror_artikkel/id265253/)
- NRK (2005, January 1.) *Statsministerens nyttårstale* [Statsministerens tale til folket]. NRK.no Retrieved from: <https://tv.nrk.no/serie/statsministerens-nyttaarstale/2005/NNFA80800104>

- Bonde, A. (2023, March 8.). *Gro Harlem Brundtland*. Retrieved from:  
[https://snl.no/Gro\\_Harlem\\_Brundtland](https://snl.no/Gro_Harlem_Brundtland)
- Bowen, G. (2009, August). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*. 9(2):27-40 DOI :[10.3316/QRJ0902027](https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027)
- Bryld, E., Schoumerus, M., Tjønneland, E., Toft, E., D’Silva, B. C., Bonnet, C., Athiei, A. (2020, February). *Blind Sides and Soft Spots – An Evaluation of Norway’s Aid Engagement in South Sudan*. Norad. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.norad.no/contentassets/3f7226702e64445ba816323dd56ff4bc/3.20-blind-sides-and-soft-spots-an-evaluation-of-norways-aid-engagement-in-south-sudan-main-report.pdf>
- Bull, B. (2023, March 30). *Et viktig innblikk i norsk fredsdiplomati*. Panorama Nyheter. Retrieved from: <https://www.panoramanyheter.no/anmeldelser-colombia-latin-amerika/et-viktig-innblikk-i-norsk-fredsdiplomati/332997>
- Boutros-Ghali, B. (1992). *An agenda for peace*. United Nations. Retrieved from:  
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/145749g>
- Bush, G. W., (2001, September 20). *Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People*. The White House. Read 3.12.2022. <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>
- Chr. Michelsen institute. (2011). *Mission Impossible: the arduous road to peace in Sri Lanka*. Retrieved from <https://www.cmi.no/news/932-mission-impossible>
- Corbin, J. (1994) *Den norske kanalen – De hemmelige Midtøsten-forhandlingene*. Tiden Norsk Forlag
- Dagbladet. (2011, January 9). *Historisk tidsskille for Sudan*. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.dagbladet.no/nyheter/historisk-tidsskille-for-sudan/64391301>
- Desai, V. & Potter, R. B. (2006). *Doing Development Research*. London: Sage
- Devold, K. K. (2002, September 11). *Den langvarige krigen*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from:  
[https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/fd/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2002/den\\_langvarige\\_krigen/id265715/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/fd/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2002/den_langvarige_krigen/id265715/)
- Devold, K. K. (2003, January 6). *Hva vi vil og hvor vi skal: Mål og prioriteringer for forsvarspolitikken i 2003*. Oslo Militære Samfund. Retrieved from:  
<https://oslomilsamfund.no/2003/01/06/foredag-hva-vi-vil-og-hvor-vi-skal-mal-og-prioriteringer-for-forsvarspolitikken-i-2003/>
- Devold, K. K. (2005, January 10). *Vilje til å endre – Evne til å forsvare 1905-2005*. Oslo Militære Samfund. Retrieved from: <http://www.virksommeord.no/tale/7042/>



- Department of state. (n.d.). *The Oslo Accords and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process*. Office of the Historian. Retrieved from: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1993-2000/oslo#:~:text=Israel%20accepted%20the%20PLO%20as,over%20a%20five%2DYear%20period.>
- Dreyers forlag. (n.d.). *Det internasjonale gjennombruddet*. Retrieved from <https://www.dreyersforlag.no/det-internasjonale-gjennombruddet.6026531-332339.html>
- Egeland, J. (1989). *Impotent Superpower – Potent Small State; Potentials and limitations of Human Rights Objectives in the Foreign Politics of the United States and Norway*. Oslo: Norwegian University Press
- Egeland, J. (2018, September 13). *25 years since the Oslo Accords: Israeli Security Depends on Palestinian Rights*. Norwegian Refugee Council. Retrieved from: <https://www.nrc.no/opinions-all/israeli-security-depends-on-palestinian-rights/>
- Ekhaugen, L. (2014). Samordning av virkemidler: «den norske modellen» in Heier, T., Kjølberg, A., Rønnfeldt, C. F. (Ed.), *Norge i internasjonale operasjoner: miltærmakt mellom idealer og realpolitikk* (p. 101-109) Universitetsforlaget Oslo
- Farivar, M. (2017). *Why Isn't Afghan Taliban on US List of Foreign Terror Groups?*. Voice of America. Read 30.12.2022. Retrieved from <https://www.voanews.com/a/afghan-taliban-us-list-foreign-terror-groups/3732453.html>
- Fixdal, M. (2016). *Fredsmegling i Teori og Praksis*. (1st ed). Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk
- Flick, U. (2019). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219-245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405284363>
- FN. (2021a). *Afghanistan*. United Nations Association of Norway. Read 31.08.2022. Retrieved from <https://www.fn.no/Konflikter/Asia/afghanistan>
- FN. (2021b). *Sør-Sudan*. United Nations Association of Norway. Read 28.11.2022. Retrieved from <https://www.fn.no/konflikter/Afrika/soer-sudan>
- FN. (2023). *Al-Qaida*. United Nations Associations of Norway. Read 26.01.2023. Retrieved from <https://www.fn.no/konflikter/al-qaida>
- Galtung, J. (1969). *Violence, Peace and Peace Research*. Sage. Retrieved from: <http://www2.kobe->

- [u.ac.jp/~alexroni/IPD%202015%20readings/IPD%202015\\_7/Galtung\\_Violence,%20Peace,%20and%20Peace%20Research.pdf](http://u.ac.jp/~alexroni/IPD%202015%20readings/IPD%202015_7/Galtung_Violence,%20Peace,%20and%20Peace%20Research.pdf)
- Galtung, J. (1976). *Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding*. Impact of Science on Society. Retrieved from: [https://www.galtung-institut.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/galtung\\_1976\\_three\\_approaches\\_to\\_peace.pdf](https://www.galtung-institut.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/galtung_1976_three_approaches_to_peace.pdf)
- Græger, N. (2005). *Norsk NATO-debatt etter den kalde krigen*. Idunn. Retrieved from: <https://www.idunn.no/doi/pdf/10.18261/ISSN1891-1757-2005-02-03-05>
- Hetland, T. (2021). *Terje Tvedt*. Retrieved from [https://snl.no/Terje\\_Tvedt](https://snl.no/Terje_Tvedt)
- Human Rights Watch. (2006, July 10). Lessons in Terror – Attacks on Education in Afghanistan. *Human Rights Watch*. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2006/07/11/lessons-terror/attacks-education-afghanistan>
- Human Rights Watch. (2011). World Report 2011: Afghanistan. *Human Rights Watch* Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2011/country-chapters/afghanistan#47e40c>
- Human Rights Watch. (2014). World Report 2014: Afghanistan. *Human Rights Watch* Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/afghanistan>
- Jagland, T. (2001, September 26). *Vi må stå sammen i kampen mot internasjonal terrorisme*. Regjeringen. Read 30.10.2022. Retrieved from [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Stoltenberg-I/ud/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2001/vi\\_ma\\_sta\\_sammen\\_i\\_kampen\\_mot\\_internasjo/id265047/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Stoltenberg-I/ud/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2001/vi_ma_sta_sammen_i_kampen_mot_internasjo/id265047/)
- Johnson, H. F. (2001, December 5). *Innlegg i Stortinget, Afghanistan og Budsjett-innstilling S. nr. 3*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/ud/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2001/innlegg\\_i\\_stortinget\\_om\\_afghanistan/id265176/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Bondevik-II/ud/Taler-og-artikler-arkivert-individuelt/2001/innlegg_i_stortinget_om_afghanistan/id265176/)
- Jordan Media Institute. (2018, April 22). Former Norwegian Prime Minister at JMI: «Palestinians, Israelis Abandoned Principles of Oslo Accord» *Jordan Media Institute*. Retrieved from: <https://jmi.edu.jo/en/%E2%80%8Bformer-norwegian-prime-minister-jmi-palestinians-israelis-abandoned-principles-oslo-accord>
- Kjølseth, L. & Sigurgrimsdottir, H. (2014, April 4). *Ikke bare vold og valgfusk*. NRK. Retrieved from: <https://www.nrk.no/ytring/ikke-bare-vold-og-valgfusk-1.11644854>
- Kammaing, J. & Hussain, N. (2012). From Disengagement to Regional Opium War? Towards a Counter-Narcotics Surge in Afghanistan and Pakistan. *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, No29. ISSN 1696-2206. DOI: [10.5209/rev\\_UNIS.2012.n29.40662](https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_UNIS.2012.n29.40662)

- Lauritsen, V. (2023, March 8). *Jan Egeland*. Store Norske Leksikon. Retrieved from:  
[https://snl.no/Jan\\_Egeland](https://snl.no/Jan_Egeland)
- Leerand, D. (2019, January 16). *Oslo-kanalen*. Store Norske Leksikon. Read 22.02.2023.  
Retrieved from <https://snl.no/Oslo-kanalen>
- Leira, H. (2007). Norge – en fredsnasjon? *NUPI*. Retrieved  
from: <https://www.nupi.no/Skole/HHD-Artikler/20082/Norge-en-fredsnasjon>
- Leira, H. (Ed.). (2007a). *Norske selvbilder og norsk utenrikspolitikk*. Norwegian Institute of  
International Affairs. Read 12.12.2022.
- Mackie, J. L. (1967). *Mill's Methods Of Induction*. Encyclopedia. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/mills-methods-induction>
- Mikhos, A. (2006, March 1). *Afghanistan's drugs challenge*. NATO. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2006/03/01/afghanistan-s-drugs-challenge/index.html>
- NATO. (1949). *The North Atlantic Treaty*. Read 11.10.2022. Retrieved from  
[https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm)
- NATO. (1997). *NATO's Role in Bringing Peace to the Former Yugoslavia*. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/1997/970708/infopres/e-bpfy.htm>
- NATO. (2021). *ISAF's mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014)*. Retrieved from:  
[https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_69366.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_69366.htm)
- NATO. (2022). *Collective defence and Article 5*. Read 04.02.2023. Retrieved from  
[https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_110496.htm#:~:text=Article%20%20provides%20that%20if,to%20assist%20the%20Ally%20attacked.](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_110496.htm#:~:text=Article%20%20provides%20that%20if,to%20assist%20the%20Ally%20attacked.)
- Nissen, A. (2016). Sri Lanka: Fredsmegling og innenrikspolitiske spill. In Fixdal, M. (Ed.)  
*Fredsmegling i teori og praksis*. (p. 141-169) Cappelen Damm Akademisk.
- Nobel Peace Prize. (n.d.). *The Norwegian Nobel Committee*. The Nobel Peace Prize.  
Retrieved from: <https://www.nobelpeaceprize.org/nobel-committee/>
- Norad. (2018). *Derfor lyktes Norge som tilrettelegger i Colombia*. Norad. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.norad.no/evaluering/aktuelt/2018/derfor-lyktes-norge-som-tilrettelegger-i-colombia/>
- Norway in the United States. (2017). *Norge og USA*. Read 14.04.2023. Retrieved from  
<https://www.norway.no/en/usa/for-nordmenn/norge-og-usa/>

- Norwegian human rights fund. (n.d.). *Five years since the signing of “hope” in Colombia*. Retrieved from <https://nhrf.no/article/2021/five-years-since-the-signing-of-the-hope-in-colombia>
- NOU 2016:8. (2016). *En god alliert – Norge i Afghanistan 2001-2014*. <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/09faceca099c4b8bac85ca8495e12d2d/no/pdfs/nou201620160008000dddpdfs.pdf>
- NTB. (2005, December 9). *Stoltenberg: - Norge blir lenge i Afghanistan*. Bergens Tidende. Retrieved from: <https://www.bt.no/utenriks/i/0Bk2G/stoltenberg-norge-blir-lenge-i-afghanistan>
- Obama, B. (2012, May 1). *Remarks by President Obama in Address to the Nation from Afghanistan*. The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. Retrieved from: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2012/05/01/remarks-president-obama-address-nation-afghanistan>
- OECD. (2005). *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Five Principles for Smart Aid*. OECD. Retrieved from: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/45827300.pdf>
- Petersen, J. (2001). *Mulige norske styrkebidrag til Afghanistan*. Virksomme ord. Read 20.09.2022. Retrieved from <http://virksommeord.no/tale/1165/>
- Petersen, J. (2005, October 3). *Vi kan ikke overlate kampen mot terrorisme til andre*. Virksomme ord. Retrieved from: <http://www.virksommeord.no/tale/1170/>
- Petersen, T. (2022). *Den Kalde Krigen*. Store Norske Leksikon. Retrieved from: [https://snl.no/den\\_kalde\\_krigen](https://snl.no/den_kalde_krigen)
- Postholm, M. B. (2010). *Kvalitativ metode – En innføring med fokus på fenomenologi, etnografi og kasusstudier* (2.utgave). Universitetsforlaget
- PRIO. (n.d.). *Johan Galtung*. PRIO. Retrieved from: <https://www.prio.org/people/5704>
- Regjeringen. (n.d.). *Jens Stoltenbergs andre regjering*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/om-regjeringa/tidligere-regjeringer-og-historie/sok-i-regjeringer-siden-1814/historiske-regjeringer/regjeringer/jens-stoltenbergs-andre-regjering/id449424/>
- Regjeringen. (1999, October 31). *Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Norway’s involvement in the peace process in the Middle East*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/involvement/id420034/>
- Regjeringen. (2000, July 7). *Norge i fredens tjeneste*. Government.no Read 12.08.2022. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Stoltenberg-I/ud/Veiledninger-og-brosjyrer/2000/fredenstjeneste/id467585/>

- Regjeringen. (2007, October 11). *Tusenvis av jenter på norskbygde skoler i Afghanistan*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/Nyheter-og-pressemeldinger/nyheter/2007/skoler/id485429/>
- Regjeringen. (2012, November 20). *Fredsprosess: Colombia*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/tema-og-redaksjonelt-innhold/redaksjonelle-artikler/2010/colombia\\_fredsprosess/id446915/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/tema-og-redaksjonelt-innhold/redaksjonelle-artikler/2010/colombia_fredsprosess/id446915/)
- Regjeringen. (2014, August 23). *Historiske fredsforhandlinger om Colombia*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/regjeringen-solberg/aktuelt-regjeringen-solberg/ud/nyheter/2014/historiske\\_forhandlinger/id766173/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/regjeringen-solberg/aktuelt-regjeringen-solberg/ud/nyheter/2014/historiske_forhandlinger/id766173/)
- Regjeringen. (2021, October 12). *Norway's oil history in 5 minutes*. Government.no. Read 3.01.2023. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/energy/oil-and-gas/norways-oil-history-in-5-minutes/id440538/>
- Regjeringen. (2022, March 9). *Norges engasjement for fred, stabilitet og utvikling i Sør-Sudan*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/utenrikssaker/fred-og-forsoning/land\\_for\\_land2/engasjement\\_soersudan/id2522247/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/utenrikssaker/fred-og-forsoning/land_for_land2/engasjement_soersudan/id2522247/)
- Rolandsen, Ø. H. (2016). Sudan: Fredens pris. In Fixdal, M. (Ed.), *Fredsmegling i Teori og Praksis* (p. 209-234) Cappelen Damm Akademisk
- Royal Norwegian Embassy in South Sudan. (n.d.). *About the Embassy*. Norway in South Sudan. Retrieved from: <https://www.norway.no/en/south-sudan/norway/about-embassy/>
- Rønneberg, K. (2011, October 20). *Sudans utenriksminister: - Vi trenger norsk ekspertise*. Aftenposten. Retrieved from: <https://www.aftenposten.no/verden/i/jzqv0/sudans-utenriksminister-vi-trenger-norsk-ekspertise>
- Selmer, E. R. (2016, February 23). *Sri Lanka: Norsk fredsmekling slo feil*. Panorama Nyheter. Retrieved from: <https://www.panoramanyheter.no/asia-og-oseania-humanitaere-kriser-menneskerettigheter/sri-lanka-norsk-fredsmekling-slo-feil/207203>
- Solberg, R. (2010, December 6). *Bistand på ville veier*. Aftenposten. Retrieved from: <https://www.aftenposten.no/meninger/kronikk/i/R9xBJ/bistand-paa-ville-veier>
- Stoltenberg, J. (2000, July 7). *Norge i fredens tjeneste*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/Regjeringen-Stoltenberg-I/ud/Veiledninger-og-brosjyrer/2000/fredenstjeneste/id467585/#modell>

- Stoltenberg, J. (2005, October 19). *Et Norge med mer fellesskap og rettferdighet*. Virksomme ord. Retrieved from: <http://www.virksommeord.no/tale/7184/>
- Strand, A., Stenersen, A., Johannessen, B. (2022, September 30). *Taliban*. Store Norske Leksikon. Retrieved from: <https://snl.no/Taliban>
- Strøm-Erichsen, A. (2005, November 9). *Militære bidrag til operasjoner i Afghanistan og Irak*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/fd/Nyheter-og-pressemedlinger/Nyheter/2005/militare-bidrag-til-operasjoner-i-afghan/id99631/>
- Strøm-Erichsen, A. (2007, June 18). *Å afghanisere Afghanistan*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/fd/taler-og-artikler/2007/a-afghanisere-afghanistan/id473181/>
- Strøm-Erichsen, A. (2008, February 25). *Vårt engasjement i Afghanistan*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/fd/taler-og-artikler/2008/afghanistan/id501638/>
- Støre, J. G. (2006, September 7.). *Hva vil Norge med FN?*. Government.no. Read 12.09.2022. Retrieved from <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/taler-og-artikler/2006/hva-vil-norge-med-fn/id273550/>
- Støre, J. G. (2006, April 24). *Norge som fredsnasjon – myte eller virkelighet?*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/taler-og-artikler/2006/norge-som-fredsnasjon--myte-eller-virkel/id273461/>
- Støre, J. G. (2008, May 20). *Utenrikspolitisk redegjørelse av utenriksministeren*. Stortinget. Read 17.03.2023. Retrieved from <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Publikasjoner/Referater/Stortinget/2007-2008/080520/1>
- Støre, J. G. (2008, June 11). *Afghanistans fremtid*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/taler-og-artikler/2008/afghanistan\\_framtid/id516435/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/taler-og-artikler/2008/afghanistan_framtid/id516435/)
- Støre, J. G. (2010, June 11). *Norsk innsats for konfliktløsning – hjelper det?*. Regjeringen. Retrieved from: [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/taler-og-artikler/2010/konflikt\\_hjelper/id608187/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumentarkiv/stoltenberg-ii/ud/taler-og-artikler/2010/konflikt_hjelper/id608187/)
- Suhrke, A. (2011). *Eksperimentet Afghanistan*. Spartacus
- Sørbø, G. M. (2018). *The Norwegian peace engagement: New challenges in a new world order*. Norad. Retrieved from: <https://www.norad.no/en/front/evaluation/news/2018/evaluation-views-the-norwegian-peace-engagement---new-challenges-in-a-new-world-order/>

- Søreide, I. M. E. & Brende, B (2014). *Sak nr. 1 Redegjørelse av utenriksministeren og forsvarsministeren om utviklingen i Afghanistan og Norges engasjement i landet*. Stortinget. Retrieved from: <https://www.stortinget.no/no/Saker-og-publikasjoner/Publikasjoner/Referater/Stortinget/2013-2014/140605/1>
- The White House. (2011, October 20). *Fact Sheet: The United States and Norway – NATO Allies and Global Partners*. The White House. Retrieved from: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/10/20/fact-sheet-united-states-and-norway-nato-allies-and-global-partners>
- The White House. (2016, February 4). *Fact Sheet: Peace Colombia – A New Era of Partnership between the United States and Colombia*. The White House. Retrieved from: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/02/04/fact-sheet-peace-colombia-new-era-partnership-between-united-states-and>
- Thornton, C. (2022). *The U.S. Has Led the War on Drugs Abroad for Decades, and It's Been a Staggering Failure*. The New York Times. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/07/opinion/colombia-drug-war-us.html>
- Tvedt, T. (2009). *Utviklingshjelp, Utenrikspolitikk og Makt*. Gyldendal Akademisk.
- Tvedt, T. (2017). *Det internasjonale gjennom bruddet – fra ettpartistat til flerkulturell stat*. Dreyers Forlag Oslo.
- TV2. (2010, July 9). *Avgjørende år for Sudan*. TV2 Utenriks. Retrieved from: <https://www.tv2.no/nyheter/utenriks/avgjorende-ar-for-sudan/12748721/>
- University of Nevada. (n.d.). *Mill's Method*. University of Nevada. Retrieved from: [http://beisecker.faculty.unlv.edu//Courses/Phi-102/Mills\\_Methods.htm](http://beisecker.faculty.unlv.edu//Courses/Phi-102/Mills_Methods.htm)
- UN. (2010). *UN Peacebuilding: an Orientation*. United Nations. Read 25.10.2022. Retrieved from [https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/peacebuilding\\_orientation.pdf](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/peacebuilding_orientation.pdf)
- UN. (n.d.). *About Us*. United Nations. Read 04.03.2023. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/about-us>
- UN. (n.d.-a). *Voting system*. United Nations. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/voting-system>
- United Nations Security Council. (2001, September 12). Res 1368. UN Doc S/RES/1368(2001)
- US Department of State. (2023). *U.S. Relations with Norway*. Retrieved from: <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-norway/>

- US Department of State. (n.d.). *The Oslo Accords, 1993*. Retrieved from <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/pcw/97181.htm>
- US Department of State. (n.d.-a). *Foreign Terrorist Organizations*. U.S. Department of State. Retrieved from: <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/>
- Utenriksdepartementet. (2003). *Felles kamp mot fattigdom: en helhetlig utviklingspolitikk*. (St. Meld. Nr. 35. 2003-2004). Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/7401c9d6b1c741d39f3d50dc282c6ba8/no/pdfs/stm200320040035000dddpdfs.pdf>
- Utenriksdepartementet. (2008). *Interesser, ansvar og muligheter – Hovedlinjer i norsk utenrikspolitikk*. (St.meld. nr. 15. 2008-2009). Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/stmeld-nr-15-2008-2009-/id548673/?ch=1>
- Utenriksdepartementet. (2011). *Noregs deltaking i den 66. ordinære generalforsamlinga i Dei sameinte nasjonane (FN) og vidareførte sesjonar av den 65. generalforsamlinga i FN*. (Meld. St. 19. 2011-2012). Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/meld-st-19-20112012/id679769/?q=s%C3%B8r%20sudan>
- Utenriksdepartementet. (2014). *Menneskerettigheter for alle – menneskerettighetene som mål og middel i utenriks- og utviklingspolitikken*. (Meld. St. 10. 2014-2015) Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/meld.-st.-10-2014-2015/id2345623/>
- Utenriksdepartementet. (2018). *Norges rolle og interesser i multilateralt samarbeid*. Meld. St. 27. 2018-2019). Retrieved from: <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/meld.-st.-27-20182019/id2654250/>
- Vestvik, R. A. (2015). *Norges engasjement i Afghanistan*. Idunn. Read 18.12.2022. Retrieved from <https://www.idunn.no/doi/10.18261/ISSN1891-1757-2015-01-07>
- Vermes, T. (2019). *20 år siden Bondevik sendte fly til NATO-bombingen av Jugoslavia*. ABC Nyheter. Retrieved from: <https://www.abcnyheter.no/nyheter/norge/2019/03/24/195563279/20-ar-siden-bondevik-sendte-fly-til-nato-bombing-av-jugoslavia>
- Waage, H. H. (2001). *Behind the Oslo Back Channel: Norway's Political Past in the Middle East*. PRIO. Retrieved from: <https://www.prio.org/projects/1180>
- Waage, H. H. (2016). Israel og palestinerne: Freden som uteble. In Fixdal, M. (Ed.), *Fredsmegling i Teori og Praksis* (p. 85-104) Cappelen Damm Akademisk
- Waage, H. H. (2019). *Krig og fred i det lange 20. århundre*. Cappelen Damm Akademisk.



Wood, E. J. (2006). The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones. *Qualitative sociology*. 29(3). 373-386. DOI: 10.1007/s11133-006-9027-8

WTO. (n.d.). *Norway and the WTO*. World Trade Organization. Retrieved from:

[https://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/countries\\_e/norway\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/countries_e/norway_e.htm)