

Referee report on Jens Christopher Andvig

“Corruption and Armed Conflicts: Some Stirring Around in the Governance Soup “

The paper aims to discuss the impact of corruption on the probability of armed conflict. It is not an attempt to analyse the issue empirically, but the paper instead seeks to investigate what can be said on the issue on the basis of existing empirical research on corruption on the one hand and civil war on the other. The ambition is to show that there are some contradictions between these two strands of the literature.

The paper certainly covers a lot of the research within the two chosen fields and it does so in a very extensive way (too extensive) and presents the various contributions in great detail. However, the problem with the discussion is that it does not have a clear structure, so as a reader you go from one description to another without adding sufficient structure to the discussion. The reviewer comments on various aspects, but for the review to really give some value added it would have needed to have a better organising framework for the discussion. It is not sufficient for an enlightening evaluation of this literature just to contrast stories from the corruption side with stories from the conflict side of the literature. The fact that there are what might seem as contradictions between quite separate analyses in the two traditions is not sufficient. And the reviewer is not able to draw very interesting conclusions from these contrasts or to point for ways of integrating the approaches so as to solve the contradictions.

In the end you feel that you have had many different analyses in the literature summarized, but you don't feel that you have got a better overall understanding of the literature or understand which way one should move to improve on the analysis. So the main problem with the paper in my view is that paper after paper is presented in detail, while you would have liked to see the reviewer draw together the results from the literature and give a more synthetic view of the state of the debate.