

Collective Security as Public Good

POSC 1020 – Introduction to International Relations

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Puzzle(s) for Today

War creates costs and negative externalities, so why doesn't the international community stop it?



Figure 1: Ethiopian Soldiers, part of the Kagnew Battalion, 7th Inf. Div., Korea, 1953

Collective Security Organizations

Alliance strengthen commitments to allies and signal resolve to potential rivals.

- By contrast, collective security organizations like the UN form around a common interest that all states are presumed to share.

The challenge is to achieve collective action to deter, end, and prevent recurrence of interstate and civil wars.

Collective Security

Collective security is a public good.

- Members pledge to aid any state that is victim of aggression.
- An attack on one is an attack against all.

Credible commitments increase the cost of belligerency.

The United Nations

The UN is the most prominent collective security organization.

- Founded as post-war concert, akin to Congress of Vienna.
- Chartered at the UNCIO conference in San Francisco.

Charter VII (Articles 39-51) are the money passages.

- Outline scope of UN Security Council interventions.
- Invoked only twice: Korea (1950), Iraq (1991)

Regional Security Organizations

Organization of American States (OAS)

- A “new” post-WWII organization from an old idea (see: Simón Bolívar, ICAS).
- No armed interventions, but several disciplinary measures:
 - Suspension of Cuba, 1962-2009
 - Suspension of Honduras, 2009-2011
 - Sanctions against Dominican Republic, 1960

Arab League

- Politically difficult to coordinate a military force
- Recent peace-keeping operations to South Lebanon, Darfur, Iraq, Somalia

African Union

The AU is an important IGO that doesn't get enough praise.

- Major mission: "promote peace, security, and stability on the continent"
- Important interventions for constitutionality in Mali, Mauritania, and Togo.
- Military interventions in Comoros, Somalia, and Sudan

The Problem of Collective Security

Public goods often are undersupplied because of the free-rider problem.

- More likely to target weak states than strong states.
- Members seek to avoid costliest conflicts.

It's often hard to identify aggressor in conflict.

- Most powerful allies may seek to defend belligerent allies instead of protecting world order

The UN in Focus

- Institutional structure
- Power on the Security Council
- Types of enforcement
- Peacekeeping
- Success stories
- Complications

The UN's Structure

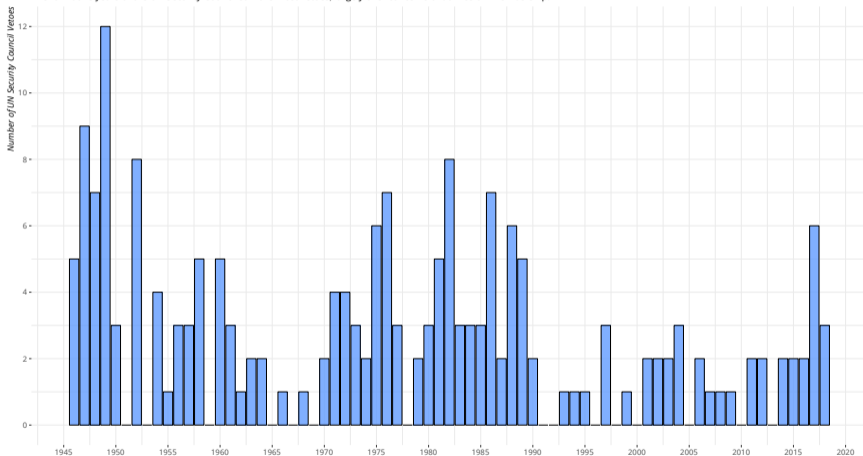
- General Assembly
 - All members represented.
- Vote on budgets for specialized agencies
- Security Council: 15 states
 - Powerful states have more sway.
 - Permanent five (P5) have veto power.
 - Ten rotating members, two-year terms.
 - Council decides if aggression has occurred and how to respond.
 - Decisions are binding on all members of the UN.

The P5 and the Security Council

- Powers granted to Security Council to try to have most powerful states agree.
- Each permanent member (China, France, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States) has a veto.
 - There's a reason the P5 is the P5 given UN's history.
- The P5 have more power, so this biases decisions in a way that is consistent with their interests.
- The extraordinary influence of the P5 increases credibility of Security Council action by communicating that powerful states agree and will back such action.
 - It's what makes UN sanctions more credible.

The Number of UN Security Council Vetoes by Year, 1946-Present

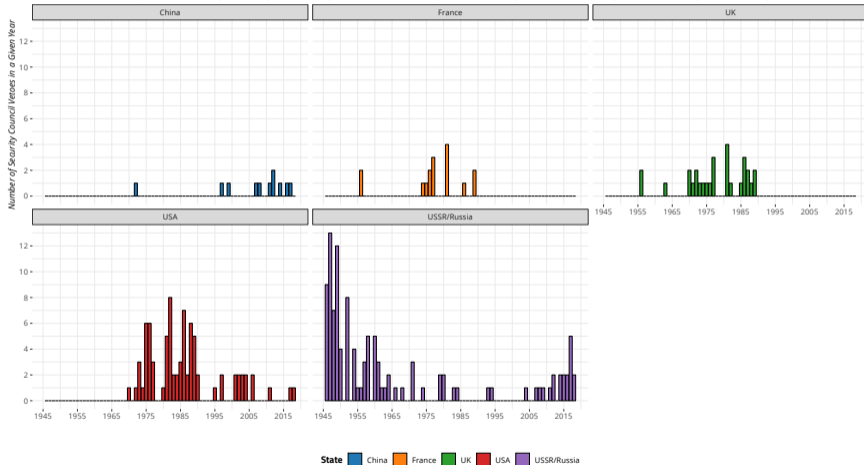
The formative years of the UN Security Council saw the most vetoes, largely over concerns of admission/membership.



Data: United Nations. Note: instances where more than one state vetoed a vote in the UN Security Council (e.g. a joint UK-USA veto on a resolution concerning South Rhodesia in 1973) are treated as just one veto.

The Number of UN Security Council Vetoes in a Given Year, by Country

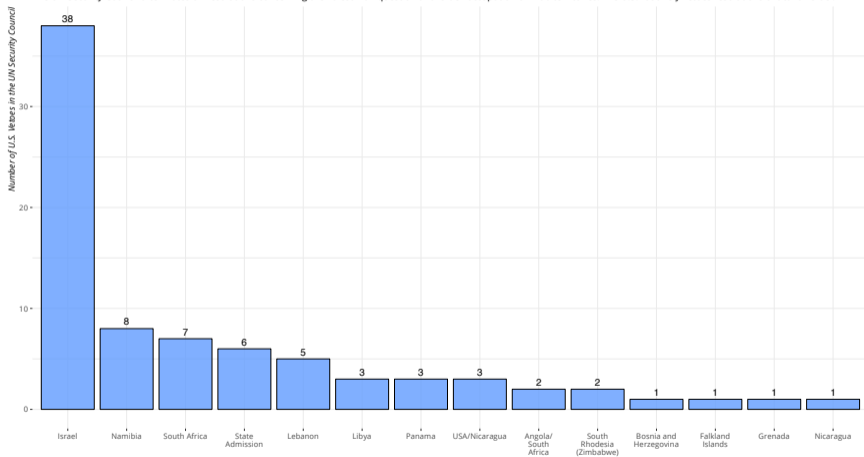
The Soviet Union, initially led in the Security Council by "Mr. Veto" Vyacheslav Molotov, is responsible for nearly half of all UN Security Council vetoes in just the first 10 years.



Data: United Nations

The U.S. Most Often Uses its UN Security Council Veto to Protect Israel

The UN Security Council often votes on resolutions concerning the Palestinian question and Israeli occupation of Arab territories. The U.S. routinely vetoes resolutions critical of Israel.



Issue

Data: United Nations

Types of Enforcement

- Authorize use of force against aggressor.
- Send peacekeepers to act as a buffer between belligerents (for example, the Korean and Gulf wars).
- Sanctions

Peacekeeping

- Requires consent of combatants.
- Seeks to resolve commitment problems by providing impartial monitors.
- Can help with tasks such as elections

The UN Success Stories

UN peacekeeping missions have successfully resolved conflicts in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique, and Cambodia. Tasks include:

- Disarming rebel groups
- Integrating rebels into armed forces
- Organizing and holding elections
- Building civil society

Complications

The UN has been less effective in cases in which the P5 do not agree and in which the host government does not welcome them.

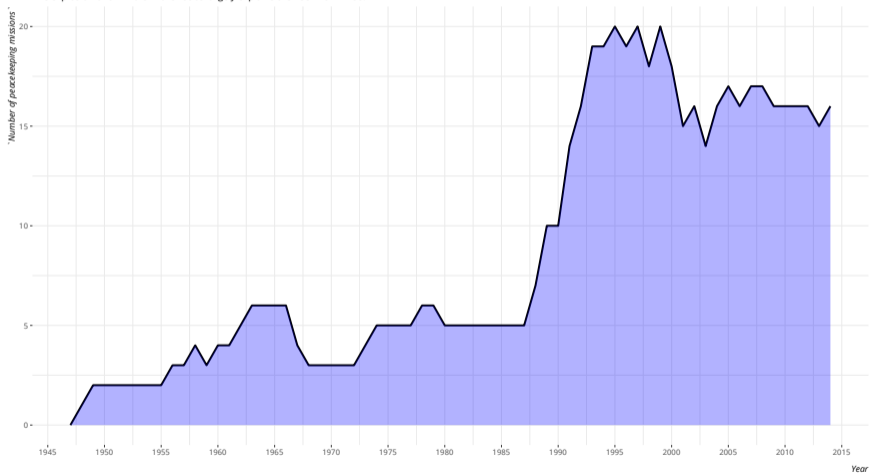
- See: Syria, now.

Sometimes there's no government in which to negotiate entry.

- See: Somalia, 1992

Number of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Around the World, 1948-2014

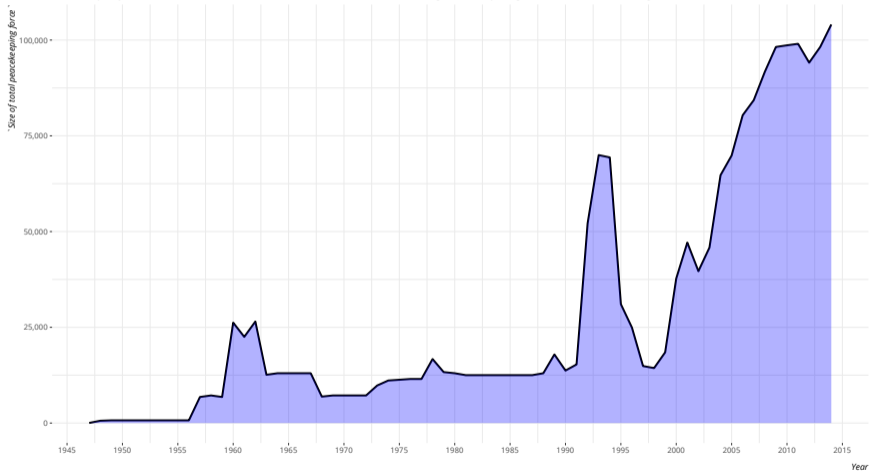
The explosion of civil wars in the 1990s largely explains the rise in UN PKOs.



Source: United Nations Peacekeeping via OurWorldInData.org/peacekeeping/

Total Size of United Nations Peacekeeping Forces, 1947-2014

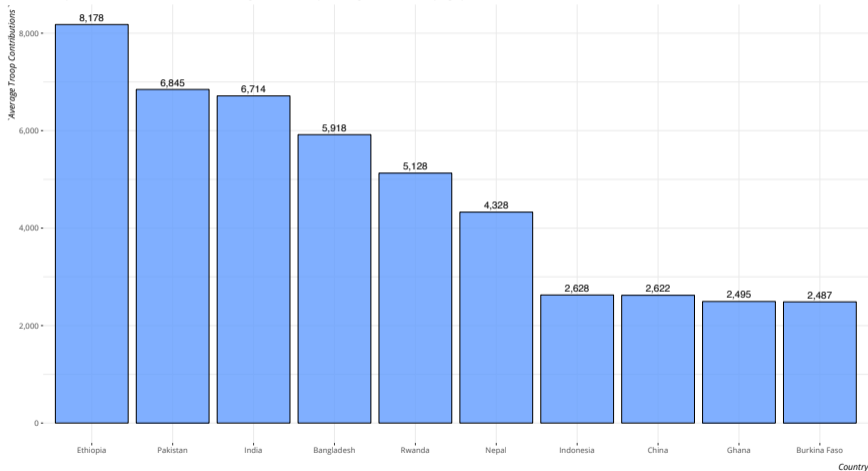
The discrepancy between 1994-1997 follows the end of several African PKOs in 1994 (e.g. Mozambique, Uganda-Rwanda) and the emergence of new ones in the Balkans.



Source: United Nations Peacekeeping via OurWorldInData.org/peacekeeping/

Top Ten Country Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Forces, 2016

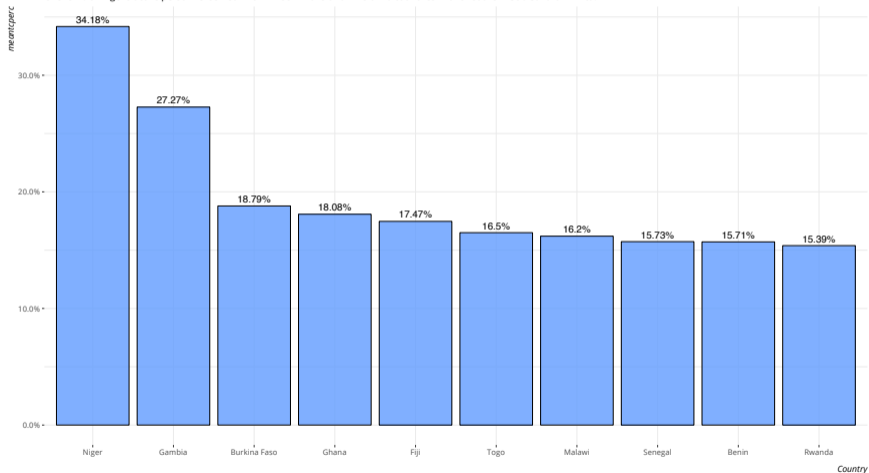
Ethiopia led all countries in 2016 with an average of 8,177 troops serving in UN Peacekeeping operations.



Source: IPI Peacekeeping Database. Means rounded to full integers for convenience.

Top Ten Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Forces as % of Active Personnel, 2015

Over 34% of Niger's active personnel served in UN PKOs in 2015 and nine of 10 countries in this list are in Sub-Saharan Africa.



Source: IPI Peacekeeping Database, Military Balance.

Conclusion

The world is better off for collective security organizations, but problems persist.

- Most successful when you can get strong states to agree (or at least not veto).
- Least successful when targeting interests of strong states (e.g. Israel, Syria).

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