

# 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.

# 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.

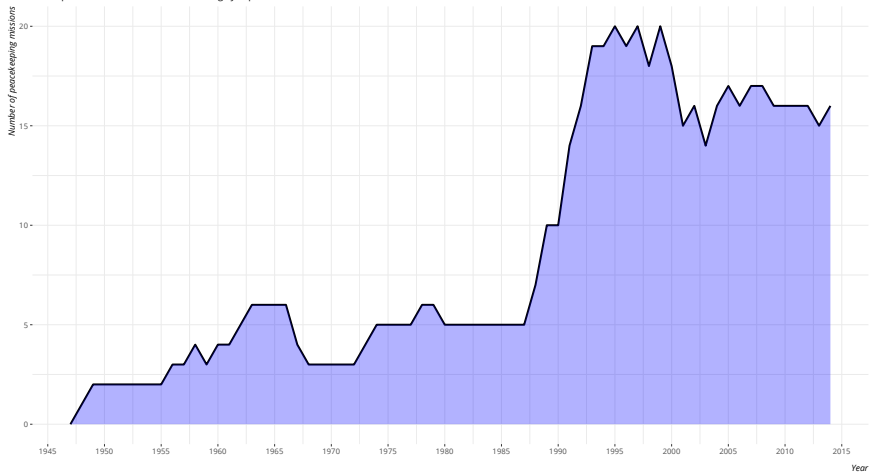
Sometimes there's no government in which to negotiate entry.

- See: Somalia, 1992



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

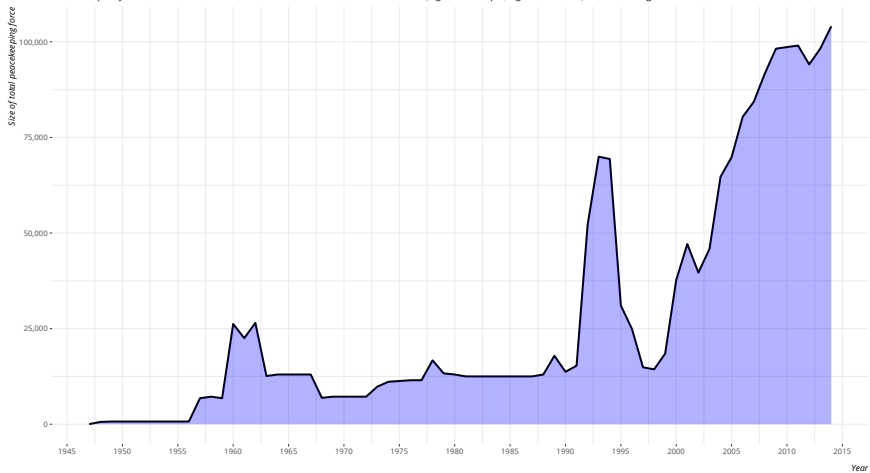
The explosion of civil wars in the 1990s largely explains the rise in UN PKOs.



Source: United Nations Peacekeeping via [OurWorldInData.org/peacekeeping/](http://OurWorldInData.org/peacekeeping/)

## Total Size of United Nations Peacekeeping Forces, 1947-2014

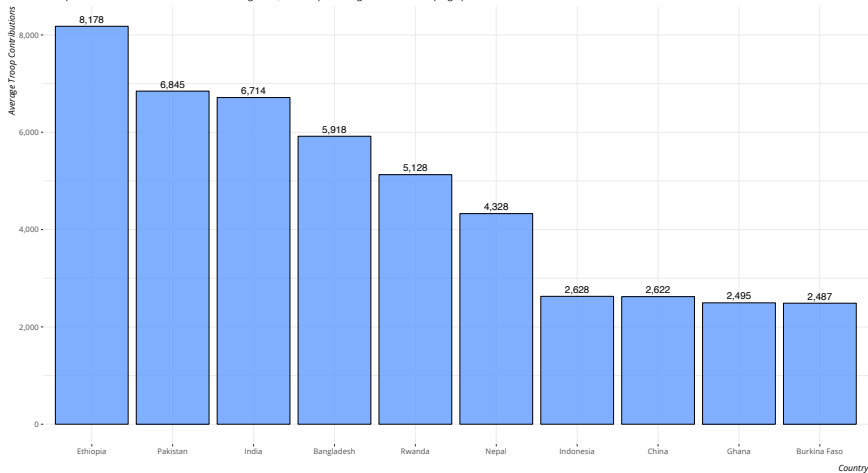
The discrepancy between 1994-1997 follows the end of several African PKOs in 1994 (e.g. Mozambique, Uganda-Rwanda) and the emergence of new ones in the Balkans.



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

## Top Ten Country Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Forces, 2016

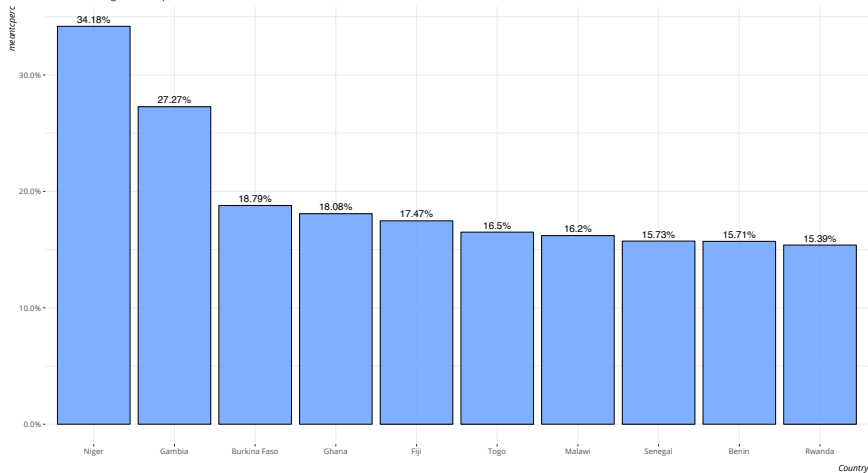
Ethiopia led all countries in 2016 with an average of 8,177 troops serving in UN Peacekeeping operations.



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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