

Crisis Diplomacy

Threats of Force

January 20, 2015

Today's Agenda

- 1. Bargaining: an overview.**
- 2. Demands and threats.**
- 3. Coercive diplomacy.**

Bargaining: an overview

Definition

***Bargaining* is the process of finding mutually acceptable divisions of a valuable good.**

Elements of Bargaining

- Two or more actors
- Valuable object at stake
- Settlement outcome
 - Division of the object
 - All must agree
- Disagreement outcome
 - If a settlement isn't reached
 - Each actor gets their *reservation value*

Example: The Ultimatum Game

I propose how to divide a dollar between you and me.

If you accept, we each get our share.

If you reject, we each get nothing.

Bargaining Power

Your bargaining power depends on how little you have to lose from disagreeing.

Higher reservation value → more bargaining power.

Demands and

Threats

Making a Demand

- Settlement outcome: you accept my demand
- Disagreement outcome:
 - Status quo
 - ... or I carry out a threat
- Reservation value: depends on the credibility of the threat

Requirements for a Successful Demand

- 1. For me: carrying out threat > status quo**
 - The threat must be *credible***
- 2. For you: the demand > the threat**

"Give me your wallet or I'll
take it myself."

Coercive **Diplomacy**

Force and Diplomacy

(a friendly reminder)

Force: Directly taking what you want.

Diplomacy: Convincing others to give you what you want.

Bargaining and Anarchy

Another reminder: *States may always resort to force.*

What does this mean for international bargaining?

Demands Backed by Force

- 1. The challenger must expect at least as much from war as it is demanding.**
- 2. The challenger's cost of war must not be too high.**



Obama, August 2012:

"We have been very clear to the Assad regime but also to other players on the ground that a red line for us is, we start seeing a whole bunch of weapons moving around or being utilized.

"That would change my calculus. That would change my equation."

For Next Time

- Finish reading Fearon 1995, "Rationalist Explanations for War"

Image Sources

- Obama with koala: The White House, via [Flickr](#)
- Bashar al-Assad: [Wikimedia Commons](#)