

Appendix for Red Lines That Bind:  
International Law and Domestic Political Audiences  
in U.S. Counterproliferation Policy

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## **Survey Questionnaire**

[\*Note: a horizontal line is used to indicate when the page should shift. The text in brackets was not included in the final survey respondents viewed. The presentation of the control and different treatment options is mutually exclusive.]

[Introduction for the Qualtrics survey distributed through Lucid titled “Hypothetical Foreign Policy Scenario”]

This survey is being conducted by Ethan Lee with the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University, Stanford, California, USA. This survey on a hypothetical scenario is a research study designed to understand attitudes about foreign policy issues in the United States (U.S.). After answering the first set of questions and reading the short hypothetical scenario, please answer the second set of questions based on what you believe to be right and how you feel. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes.

Your participation is voluntary. Participation involves the completion of a short survey. You may choose to not answer any or all questions and may withdraw from the survey at any time. All the collected information from this survey will be maintained anonymously. Names and other identifying information will not be connected to your answers. For more detailed information about privacy, you may review Cint’s privacy policy.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the research design, risks, privacy or confidentiality of participants, or your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Stanford Institutional Review Board at (650) 723-2480 or send an email to [irb2-manager@lists.stanford.edu](mailto:irb2-manager@lists.stanford.edu).

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The following questions are about the foreign policy of the U.S. toward other nations in the world. You will answer some questions about your views/beliefs and then read about a situation similar to previous situations our country has faced in the past and will likely face going forward. Different political leaders have handled the situation in different ways. We will describe one approach a political leader might take, asking if you approve or disapprove.

Only citizens of the United States (U.S.) over 18 years old are eligible to take this survey.

This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Respondents must complete the entire survey in one sitting without interruptions. If you cannot take the entire survey right now, please close the survey window and click on the link to this survey at a time when you can do so.

Do you consent to the conditions of the survey? Are you eligible to take the survey and follow the instructions?

- Yes, I consent. I am eligible for this survey and can finish it in one sitting without

interruptions.

- I do not consent. I am not eligible for this survey or cannot finish it in one sitting without interruptions. [BUMP IF NO]
- 

Next, we would like you to read the fictional scenario about a foreign policy dilemma between the U.S. and Iran. Read this information carefully, as you will be asked questions about it later. **You must answer the reading check questions about the scenario correctly to be eligible to complete this survey.**

Although the events and decisions being made are not real, please do your best to imagine how you would feel about these events if they were happening in the real world today. **The President in this scenario is not meant to represent the current President or any former Presidential administration.**

The scenario will begin on the following page.

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[Control (No Threat)]

- Multiple independent sources have confirmed that Iran has enough nuclear material to construct a nuclear weapon. The U.S. has been closely monitoring Iran's nuclear weapons program, with Democrats and Republicans expressing universal concern.
  - The President publicly stated that the U.S. would stay out and not intervene against Iran's nuclear program if the country conducted a nuclear weapon test.
- 

[Treatments 1-3 (Legal)]

- Multiple independent sources have confirmed that Iran has enough nuclear material to construct a nuclear weapon. The U.S. has been closely monitoring Iran's nuclear weapons program, with Democrats and Republicans expressing universal concern.
  - The President publicly stated that if Iran conducted a nuclear weapons test, the U.S. military would use conventional (non-nuclear) weapons specifically to destroy all of Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
  - This attack would not break international law.
- 

[Treatments 4-6 (Illegal)]

- Multiple independent sources have confirmed that Iran has enough nuclear material to construct a nuclear weapon. The U.S. has been closely monitoring Iran's nuclear weapons program, with Democrats and Republicans expressing universal concern.

- The President publicly stated that if Iran conducted a nuclear weapons test, the U.S. military would use conventional (non-nuclear) weapons specifically to destroy all of Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
  - This attack would break international law.
- 

The scenario you read involved...

- The U.S. and North Korea.
  - The U.S. and Iraq.
  - The U.S., NATO, and Russia.
  - The U.S. and Iran.
  - The U.K. and Afghanistan.
- 

[If the Respondent Selects the Incorrect Answer, Display the Text Below]

That answer is not correct. Please re-read the news article carefully. You will have one more chance to answer the question about the article after re-reading...

[Display Scenario Introduction and Prior Control/Treatment Option Again; Button to Return to the Reading Check, i.e., "The Scenario You Read Involved..."; If the Respondent fails the Reading Check a Second Time, Bump From the Survey]

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[Control (No Threat)]

- One month later, Iran announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. Multiple independent sources confirmed that the test occurred; however, Iran would not have enough nuclear materials to construct a second weapon for another month.
  - In the end, the President did not order airstrikes against Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
- 

[Treatment 1 (Legal, Follow Through, Success)]

- One month later, Iran announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. Multiple independent sources confirmed that the test occurred; however, Iran would not have enough nuclear materials to construct a second weapon for another month.
- In the end, the President ordered airstrikes that successfully destroyed all of Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
- The airstrikes were legal under international law.

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[Treatment 2 (Legal, Follow Through, Failure)]

- One month later, Iran announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. Multiple independent sources confirmed that the test occurred; however, Iran would not have enough nuclear materials to construct a second weapon for another month.
  - In the end, the President ordered airstrikes that failed to destroy all of Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
  - The airstrikes were legal under international law.
- 

[Treatment 3 (Legal, Back Down)]

- One month later, Iran announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. Multiple independent sources confirmed that the test occurred; however, Iran would not have enough nuclear materials to construct a second weapon for another month.
  - In the end, the President did not order airstrikes against Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
  - The proposed airstrikes would have been legal under international law.
- 

[Treatment 4 (Illegal, Follow Through, Success)]

- One month later, Iran announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. Multiple independent sources confirmed that the test occurred; however, Iran would not have enough nuclear materials to construct a second weapon for another month.
  - In the end, the President ordered airstrikes that successfully destroyed all of Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
  - The airstrikes were illegal under international law.
- 

[Treatment 5 (Illegal, Follow Through, Failure)]

- One month later, Iran announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. Multiple independent sources confirmed that the test occurred; however, Iran would not have enough nuclear materials to construct a second weapon for another month.
  - In the end, the President ordered airstrikes that failed to destroy all of Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
  - The airstrikes were illegal under international law.
- 

[Treatment 6 (Illegal, Back Down)]

- One month later, Iran announced that it had tested a nuclear weapon. Multiple independent sources confirmed that the test occurred; however, Iran would not have enough nuclear materials to construct a second weapon for another month.
  - In the end, the President did not order airstrikes against Iran's nuclear weapons facilities.
  - The airstrikes would have been illegal under international law.
- 

[Post-Treatment Assessment]

Do you approve or disapprove of the U.S. President's decision?

- Strongly Approve
- Approve
- Somewhat Approve
- Somewhat Disapprove
- Disapprove
- Strongly Disapprove

List the main reasons you approve or disapprove of the U.S. President's decision.

[3 Text Boxes Here]

---

Imagine that the U.S. President ran for reelection the following year. How likely or unlikely would you be to vote for the U.S. President for a second term?

- Extremely Likely
  - Likely
  - Somewhat Likely
  - Somewhat Unlikely
  - Unlikely
  - Extremely Unlikely
- 

How much damage do you think there would be to the President's reputation as a result of their handling of the situation?

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

How much damage do you think there would be to the U.S.' reputation as a result of the President's handling of the situation?

- A great deal
  - A lot
  - A moderate amount
  - A little
  - None at all
- 

[Only for Treatments 4-6]

If the Legal Adviser of the U.S. State Department later argued that the attack was—in fact—legal under international law, would you approve or disapprove of the President's decision regarding the airstrike?

- Strongly Approve
  - Approve
  - Somewhat Approve
  - Somewhat Disapprove
  - Disapprove
  - Strongly Disapprove
- 

[Only for Treatments 1-3] In your judgment, what reasons would make the President's airstrike against Iran's nuclear weapons facilities illegal under international law? (limit 100 words)

[3 Text Boxes Here]

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[Only treatments 4-6] In your judgment, what reasons would make the President's airstrike against Iran's nuclear weapons facilities legal under international law? (limit 100 words)

[3 Text Boxes Here]

---

Did you believe the President intended to follow their statement if Iran conducted a nuclear weapons test?

- Yes
- Probably
- Maybe

- Probably Not
- No

How confident were you that a U.S. military strike could successfully destroy all of Iran's nuclear weapons facilities?

- Very Confident
- Somewhat Confident
- Neither Confident nor Unconfident
- Somewhat Unconfident
- Very Unconfident

How important was it to you that Iran did not develop nuclear weapons?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Slightly important
- Not important

---

How familiar are you with the rules of international law governing when and how force can be used (e.g., the UN Charter, Geneva Conventions)?

- Know a lot about these rules
- Know a little about these rules
- Am not aware of such rules

---

Under international law, when can countries engage in armed conflict? (select all that apply)

- After an official declaration of war or authorization to use military force by a legislative body (e.g., Congress).
- In self-defense.
- After receiving authorization from the United Nations Security Council.
- After multilateral diplomatic consultations with a state's allies and partners (e.g., NATO).
- International law does not allow countries to engage in armed conflict under any circumstances.
- International law allows countries to engage in armed conflict without restrictions.
- Unsure.

Is it against international law to intentionally destroy civilian targets?

- Yes

- No
- 

The best way to ensure world peace is through American military strength.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

The use of military force only makes problems worse.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Going to war is unfortunate, but sometimes the only solution to international problems.

- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Generally speaking, would you say that the U.S. can trust other nations, or that the United States can't be too careful in dealing with other nations?

- The U.S. can trust other nations
- The U.S. can't be too careful

How important is international law?

- Extremely Important
  - Very important
  - Moderately important
  - Slightly important
  - Not at all important
- 

How superior is the United States compared to other nations?

- Vastly superior
- Very superior
- Slightly superior
- Not so superior
- Not at all superior

How many things about America make you ashamed?

- Very many
  - Many
  - Some
  - Not many
  - None
- 

How would you describe your general political stance?

- Strongly Conservative
  - Somewhat Conservative
  - Neither Conservative Nor Progressive
  - Somewhat Progressive
  - Strongly Progressive
- 

Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

- Strongly favor
  - Favor
  - Neither favor nor oppose
  - Oppose
  - Strongly oppose
- 

In your judgment, do U.S. politicians care about public preferences regarding foreign policy and national security?

- Politicians significantly care
- Politicians care somewhat
- Politicians neither care nor don't care
- Politicians somewhat don't care
- Politicians significantly don't care

In your judgment, do U.S. politicians care about public preferences regarding foreign policy

toward Iran?

- Politicians care significantly
- Politicians care somewhat
- Politicians neither care nor don't care
- Politicians somewhat don't care
- Politicians significantly don't care

How much do you trust the U.S. and its various institutions (e.g., the State Department) to take responsible actions in foreign policy?

- A great deal
  - A lot
  - A moderate amount
  - A little
  - None at all
- 

How do you feel about the people of Iran?

- Very Favorably
- Somewhat Favorably
- Neither Favorably Nor Unfavorably
- Somewhat Unfavorably
- Very Unfavorably

How do you feel about the government of Iran?

- Very Favorably
  - Somewhat Favorably
  - Neither Favorably Nor Unfavorably
  - Somewhat Unfavorably
  - Very Unfavorably
- 

- I would significantly trust Iran
  - I would somewhat trust Iran
  - I would neither trust nor distrust Iran
  - I would somewhat distrust Iran
  - I would significantly distrust Iran
- 

In your opinion, what political actors are the biggest international threats to the U.S.? (select all that apply)

- China
- Russia
- Iran
- North Korea
- Venezuela
- Cuba
- Syria
- The Taliban
- Al-Qaeda
- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
- Pakistan
- Saudi Arabia
- Libya
- None

In your judgment, what are some reasons why political leaders make threats against foreign countries? (limit 100 words)

[3 Text Boxes Here]

---

Please rate your level of interest in news about national and international security.

- Strongly Interested
- Somewhat Interested
- Neither Interested Nor Disinterested
- Somewhat Disinterested
- Strongly Disinterested

---

Are you a military veteran?

- Yes
- No

---

What is your religion?

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Unaffiliated
- Agnostic
- Atheist

- Mormon
  - Jewish
  - Muslim
  - Hindu
  - Buddhist
  - Other
- 

What are your voting habits with federal elections that you are eligible for (for example, Presidents and Senators/Congressional Representatives)?

- I vote in all federal elections that I am eligible for.
  - I vote in most federal elections that I am eligible for.
  - I vote in some federal elections that I am eligible for.
  - I rarely vote in federal elections that I am eligible for.
  - I have never voted in a federal election.
- 

Whether or not you voted in the 2020 election for President, which candidate, if any, did you support?

- Donald Trump
  - Joe Biden
  - I supported someone else
  - I did not support any candidate
  - No opinion/unsure
- 

Thank you for your participation in this survey. It is important to remember that the scenario you read was entirely fictional and does not represent events in the real world today.

This study aimed to improve our understanding of attitudes toward coercion and U.S. foreign policy. Participants were randomly assigned to read a hypothetical scenario about Iran. By analyzing how people responded to these scenarios, we can more accurately assess U.S. citizens' views on war and peace.

Your response has been recorded. Click the button to be redirected back to the main site.

## Characteristics of the Survey Sample

	Survey Sample (%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	49.2
Female	50.8
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
Non-Hispanic White	67.2
Black	11.8
Hispanic	5.0
Other (American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander)	16.0
<b>Political Party Identification</b>	
Democrats	44.9
Republicans	34.8
Independents	20.3
<b>Education Level</b>	
Some high school or less	2.1
High school graduate	25.7
Other post-high school vocational training	1.5
Completed some college, no degree	17.7
Associate's degree	4.7
Bachelor's degree	28.9
Master's or professional degree	10.3
Doctorate degree	8.5
None of the above	0.6
<b>Annual Household Income (Pre-Tax)</b>	
Less than \$14,999	14.0
\$15,000–29,999	18.0
\$30,000–39,999	10.6
\$40,000–49,999	8.8
\$50,000–59,999	10.0
\$60,000–69,999	6.8
\$70,000–79,999	5.8
\$80,000–89,999	3.8
\$90,000–99,999	4.0
\$100,000–149,999	9.7
\$150,000–199,999	3.6
\$200,000 and above	2.8
Prefer not to answer	2.1
<b>Geographic Region</b>	
Northeast	20.5
Midwest	18.7
South	37.1
West	23.6

Note: Percentages calculated from  $N = 2,521$  respondents. Values are rounded to one decimal place.