

**To what extent does security play a role in governing
the relations between states?**

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In modern times the effects of globalization are prevalent in almost all aspects of life. In the study of international relations, the contributions of globalization in modern times have played a critical role in understanding twenty-first-century global affairs (Baylis et al., 2020). *This assignment will argue that security plays a pivotal role in governing the relations between states because global security issues require multilateral cooperation between states to solve them.* The concept of security has been subject to much debate through the years amongst international relations scholars. During the cold war, the prevailing conception focused primarily on the idea of national security. Therefore, much of the writing during this period, focused on state development of military capabilities to deal with security threats (Baylis et al., 2020). However, this concept of security in the globalized world of today seems far too narrow to accurately explain state behaviour and relations. Instead, this assignment will rely on Barry Buzan's expanded conception of security that includes military, political, economic, societal, and environmental aspects (Fox & Buzan, 1985). Buzan's security concept also appears to be the one that most accurately depicts how states themselves currently view security threats. A comprehensive report from the EU mapped different states own security perception where each state at least identified 7 potential security threats and many states identified even more. These threats included migration, climate change, economic crisis, and terrorism to name a few (Cobaleda et al., 2020).

This assignment is informed by neoliberalism, an international relations theory that emerged during the and 1980s and is associated with the work of scholars such as Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye, and Francis Fukuyama. Neoliberalism has its roots in classical liberalism but there are some key differences between the two. Neoliberal scholars believe that although the international system is anarchic in nature peace and security is achievable through interdependence and cooperation between states (Baylis et al., 2020). Neoliberalism also borrows a lot of ideas from game theory when explaining state action and relations. Neoliberal scholars argue that states are indeed rational self-centred actors but that the anarchic international system can be shaped in a way that forces rational acting states to cooperate (Amadae, 2016). International institutions play a key role in this process as they provide access to information, reduce transaction costs, make state behavior more predictable and in general promote the operation of reciprocity (Baylis et al., 2020,). Furthermore, neoliberalism focuses on absolute gains rather than relative gains essentially meaning that there are greater gains to be obtained through state cooperation than not. Neoliberalism,

therefore, provides a strong theoretical basis for this assignment's line of argument, which argues that global security issues play a pivotal role in governing state relations because they require state cooperation to solve them.

Since the cold war's ending in 1989 liberal democracy has spread across the globe resulting in 75 liberal democracies in the world, which makes it the most common regime-type. Liberal democratic states have through economic interdependence and cooperation via supranational unions and organizations such as The European Union and NATO managed to create peace between democracies since World War II (Baylis et al., 2020). This state of peace between democracies has commonly been referred to as the democratic peace hypothesis and so far holds true when looking at data from The Correlates of War Project (Vara, 2010). It is widely accepted that the decline of armed conflicts between sovereign nations since the cold-war has been achieved by the practice of states pooling military power in organizations such as NATO to deter individual state aggression (Oneal & Russett, 1999). The decline of military power's importance was also identified by Nye and Keohane. In *Power and Interdependence* (1977) Nye and Keohane were among the first to describe the rise of more "soft" issues such as economic goals in global politics (Keohane & Nye, 1998). The decline in military security being the only thing states pursue as well as the rise of the liberal international order characterized by cooperation between states is what has given states the ability to focus on other security issues apart from compiling military capabilities.

Rational acting states increasingly have an incentive to partake in supranational unions and organizations to solve security issues that transcend borders such as climate change, migration, and global health. Wolfgang Reinecke argues that globalization has rendered states' ability to implement national policy within territorial borders porous (Slaughter, 2005). In efforts to combat this loss of sovereignty and be able to face the abovementioned security threats, states should partake in global policymaking and even delegate responsibilities to supranational institutions, NGO's and other non-state actors (Slaughter, 2005). The European migration crisis illustrates how states cooperate and delegate responsibilities between each other and other non-state actors. Scholars noted how The European Union have dealt with the migration crisis recently with measures that include the UNHCR¹ operating rescue camps in Greece, NATO providing monitoring and surveillance of

¹ The UN Refugee Agency

illegal crossings, as well as Turkey upping maritime interception (Müller & Slominski, 2021). Furthermore, the EU started building close bilateral ties to Libya after the fall of Ghaddafi in 2011 to find a reliable and international recognized partner to resume border control. This was done by the EU in an effort to offload Italy from dealing with mass migration single-handedly (Müller & Slominski, 2021). It is important to note that these cooperation efforts between states, NGO's and non-state actors often present a host of challenges and don't always operate smoothly. However global security issues such as the migration crisis showcase the rational need for states to partake in such efforts via supranational institutions.

Multilateral trade unions and institutions provide states with the opportunity to partake in the collective benefits of global trade and cooperate to achieve absolute gains and establish economic stability and predictability (Baylis et al., 2020). As mentioned in the introduction states view economic instability and crisis as a major threat to economic security which encourages states to create institutions that foster collective economic security. The Euro project launched in 1999 involved 11 European states that gave up their national currency as well as sovereignty on monetary policy to achieve price stability and abolish currency transaction costs in international trade. The Euro project has since expanded to include 19 countries and has succeeded in delivering a stable currency (Gerba, 2019). Furthermore, the Euro has managed to gain status as an international currency being the second most used in international trade behind the US dollar, thus further increasing the Euro-states absolute trading gains (Gerba, 2019). The Euro project is a clear example of how rational acting states cooperate via supranational institutions such as the EU to achieve a collective security goal such as economic stability. Furthermore, the creation of these unions such as the Euro Project has promoted economic interdependence between states through trade which also has increased global military security by minimizing the risk of armed conflict between member states (Baylis et al., 2020).

Rational acting states have a growing incentive to join and form supranational unions and cooperate on developing international health law to mitigate the growing concern for global health security. As a result of urbanization and globalization diseases that once took months to spread now can circumnavigate the world in a matter of hours (Davies, 2015). There are plenty of examples of how states in the face of global health security issues have engaged in cooperation to build a global system geared towards rapid response and detection of

dangerous pathogens. Following the SARS outbreak in 2003 the International Health Regulations were extensively broadened in scope and was agreed upon by nearly all member states of WHO (Heymann et al., 2015). Furthermore, states through cooperation in WHO agreed on establishing a global framework for collective health security. This framework included investment into poorer nations to strengthen public health and increase individual states' ability to detect dangerous diseases (Heymann et al., 2015). This example clearly illustrates the neoliberal theory of absolute gains with wealthy states investing in poorer states' public health through cooperation in WHO. The richer states achieve increased health security, and the poorer states achieve increased public health.

Rational acting states have a strong incentive to cooperate in supranational institutions to establish a global framework on climate policy in efforts to mitigate the rising issue of climate change. Greenhouse gases mix globally in the atmosphere effectively making climate change a security issue that can only be solved through multilateralism (Change, 2015). The United Nations Framework on Climate Change and the Paris agreement contract signed by nearly every state in the world back in 2015 clearly illustrates the willingness to cooperate in order to make climate security a common global goal (Mousavi et al., 2020). The urgency of global climate security was highlighted when Chinese and US delegates sat down in Shanghai in April to discuss how China and The US together could help strengthen the global framework that was agreed upon at COP-21 (US Department of State, 2021). Climate change is also linked to a host of other security issues in different states. In China, the world bank has estimated that almost 480 million people live in regions that will face severe water scarcity as a result of more frequent droughts (Lai, 2009). Furthermore, if global temperature increases continue at current rates scientists predict that global economic growth rates may slow as much as 0.28% per year (Carleton & Hsiang, 2016) In underdeveloped states, global warming also increases the risk of armed conflicts. Global warming since the 1980s is estimated to have increased the risk of armed conflict in Africa by 11% (Carleton & Hsiang, 2016).

The post-cold-war era has been described as the golden era for humanitarian activism. The post-cold war era introduced a new collective security issue amongst liberal states coined human security that changed international state relations. Human security is based on a liberal norm of armed humanitarian intervention (Baylis et al., 2020). Today most states accept that the United Nations Security Council is entitled to authorize armed humanitarian

intervention in the face of threats to peace and security as well as human suffering and ethnic cleansings (Baylis et al., 2020). Today 120 countries contribute more than 97.000 troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions showcasing how human security has become an integral part of global state relations (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2021). The goal of human security also aligns itself with the neoliberal idea of states being self-centred rational actors. Humanitarian intervention is nearly always initiated by a mixture of states pursuing self-interest and humanitarian concern. An example of this is NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999. The NATO intervention was driven partly by humanitarian concern but also a fear that the situation would escalate and end up causing the same carnage as Bosnia a few years earlier had caused. Furthermore, a prolonged conflict would create a massive refugee crisis that would hit all of Europe (Baylis et al., 2020). The conclusion is that NATO acted not only in the interest of human security, but also other security concerns the member states shared.

Rational acting states have an incentive to cooperate in efforts to deal with the rising threat of global terrorism. The best way to deal with global terrorism is for states to pool resources together in a coalition where the global North helps improve the capabilities of the global South. This would result in an anti-terrorist network between states and allow them to detect, track and eliminate terrorist threats, thus collectively increasing global terrorism security (Baylis et al., 2020). Almost immediately after the modern era of transnational terrorism began with the Hijacking of a Boeing plane by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in 1968 states took cooperative measures to raise terrorism security (Sandler, 2005). Early examples of these measures were the improvement of information sharing between states and strengthened channels for legal cooperation. This included the Hauge Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircrafts in 1970 (Baylis et al., 2020). In 1985 another collective response came with the creation of the Public Safety and Terrorism Sub-Directorate in Interpol (Baylis et al., 2020). Globalization over the past decades has furthermore given the Western states strong incentives for cooperation with lesser developed states to restrict terrorist groups' ability to act freely outside targeted states national borders. Cooperative efforts to target terrorist groups outside national borders have proven effective in the prevention of attacks on both home and foreign soil (Baylis et al., 2020).

A counterargument against the neoliberal approach used in this assignment would be one of neorealism also known as structural realism. Structural realist scholar Kenneth Waltz argued that the anarchic self-help nature of the international system always led states to compete for relative gains rather than absolute ones. States should therefore avoid cooperative efforts to limit other states gains that could be turned into military capabilities (Frankel & Waltz, 1980). The construction of supranational institutions to achieve collective security would therefore never succeed as states would only partake in such institutions in efforts to dominate and minimize the gains of other states. However, as Joseph Nye argued the post-cold war international system has moved away from only being about securing military capabilities to ensure survival (Nye, 2008). Robert Keohane further argued that when states no longer only concerned themselves with survival, they could focus on achieving other goals through cooperative efforts (Keohane, 2001). An obvious example of this is how the European Coal and Steel Community helped end centuries of European state hostility and evolve into the EU we know today with member states cooperating on numerous different issues and security threats (Baylis et al., 2020). One of these issues this assignment highlighted was the Euro Project that was conceived to achieve economic stability and predictability (Gerba, 2019).

Structural realists would refute the neoliberal idea that global peace can be sustained by establishing international law and supranational institutions that govern international relations. Kenneth Waltz argued that a bipolar world order with two major powers balancing each other is the international system that would be the least prone to war between major powers (Frankel & Waltz, 1980). Structural realists would argue that the bipolar world order succeeded in preventing direct armed war between the US and the USSR during the cold war. However, this is only the case when strictly looking at military security. As Barry Buzan argued security is a concept characterized by aspects including economic, political, environmental, and social goals rather than just military capabilities (Fox & Buzan, 1985). Many of these security aspects emerged in the post-cold war era with issues such as climate change, terrorism, and global health arising. As this assignment has argued these security threats are outside the control of individual states and require global cooperation to face (Baylis et al., 2020). Structural realists would have a hard time explaining the rapid increase in post-cold-war cooperation between states. Increases in liberal free trade agreements, the proliferation of arms control agreements, the rise of international humanitarianism and the renewed role of the UN are all examples of this (Weber, 2013). Neoliberal scholars would on

the other hand explain this development as a natural progression as the abovementioned global security issues become the common goal of cooperating states.

A critique of this assignment's line of argument that security plays a pivotal role in governing the relations between states can be found in Marxist theories of international relations. Marxist international relations scholars would argue that wars, treaties, supranational institutions, humanitarian aid all occur within the structures of a global capitalist system (Baylis et al., 2020). World-systems theory associated with the work of Immanuel Wallerstein expanded on the idea of a global capitalist system. Wallerstein argued that the world economy was divided into three zones with the core being the wealthy western democracies and the periphery being underdeveloped non-democratic states. The relationship between the core and the periphery is one of exploitation where the wealth is drained from the periphery to the core resulting in entrenched global economic inequality (Baylis et al., 2020). World-systems theory scholars would argue that examples such as the US invasion of Iraq were driven by the economic incentive to secure oil more than that of pursuing global security (Baylis et al., 2020). However, reducing state actions down to purely economic driving factors would be a vast oversimplification of a complex international system. The post-cold-war emergence of humanitarian activism with increasing cooperative efforts to fight for human security as seen with numerous UN peacekeeping operations is just one example highlighted in this assignment. Furthermore, economic factors would have a hard time explaining the United States' uncritical support of Israel as it may well work against US economic interests (Baylis et al., 2020).

In conclusion, this assignment addressed the question of to what extent security plays a role in governing state relations by adopting a neoliberal theoretical approach. This assignment argued that global security issues forced rational acting states to cooperate in efforts to solve these issues. Firstly, this assignment argued that the emergence of state cooperation in the post-cold-war era has allowed states to pursue other goals besides military capabilities. Secondly, this assignment argued that rational acting states had an increasing incentive to cooperate via supranational unions and institutions to collectively face global security issues caused by globalization. This was done by highlighting some of the emerging borderless security issues states identified themselves such as mass migration, climate change and global health. Additionally, it was argued that cooperative efforts would maximize states' abilities to mitigate them. Thirdly, this assignment addressed some critiques offered by structural realism

and Marxist theories by highlighting some of the shortcomings in their ability to explain the processes of increased state cooperation and the rise of international humanitarianism. Lastly, it is important to acknowledge some of the limitations of adopting a single theoretical approach, which cannot fully capture the complexity of global politics. Thus, this assignment applied a neoliberalist approach in an effort to simplify and explain the endlessly complicated world of state relations.

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