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Alliance Cohesion and Military Manoeuvres: A Signal of Deterrence or Assurance?

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Military alliances routinely conduct military drills to practice interoperability, often unnoticed by the public. At times, however, military maneuvers are highly publicized events. This brings up the question whether these maneuvers are primarily intended for enhancing internal readiness and alliance cohesion or whether they are carried out to convey a sense of resolve to the outside world. Based on deterrence theory military exercises can be a mechanism to convey a credible threat and signal resolve to an adversary; and in case of extended deterrence a signal to allies that the protection will hold. Military exercises can also help in preparing prospective members to the alliance and create trust among former belligerents. With the help of quantitative analysis using data on joint military exercises we will assess whether regular military exercises among alliances partners contribute to more cohesion and more serious alliance commitments. We will also investigate whether military exercises with non-allied partners prepare for the accession of new members. Our results will shed light on the broader geo-political implications of this phenomenon.

Are you a PhD student or early-career researcher?

No

What discipline or branch of humanities or social sciences do you identify yourself with?

International Relations

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No, I am submitting a Closed Panel abstract

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