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## **Do Principles Become Agents? Security Assistance between cooptation and orchestration**

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Under which circumstances is security assistance effective? This article aims to build a theoretical framework to help scholars and practitioners evaluate the effectiveness of security assistance (SA). Security Assistance consists in outsourcing the conduct of stability operations to local partners, increasing their military capacity and professionalism. While existing literature has highlighted SA's diverse and adaptive nature, it lacks an empirically grounded definition of success. By integrating the governor's dilemma theory with SA literature, this article introduces the concepts of agent control and competence as benchmarks for successful SA. Thus, instead of measuring the extent to which providers achieve their foreign policy goals, this framework assesses SA effectiveness based on the role recipients play as policy intermediaries. This approach facilitates case-specific observations, also allowing for broader generalizations across cases. It constitutes an attempt to provide the practice of SA with a coherent set of concepts concerning the aim, the scope, and the limitations inherent to the relationship between providers and recipients. Therefore, first, the article reviews existing SA and policy evaluation literature. Second, it introduces the competence-control framework and suggests operational measures for control and competence. Third, it discusses preliminary findings along with current limitations and challenges.

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

IR, Strategic Studies

### **If you are submitting an Open Panel proposal, have you included all four abstracts in attachment?**

No, I am submitting a Closed Panel abstract

### **Are you a PhD student or early-career researcher?**

Yes

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