# Adv CP

## North Korea

### 1NC—Risk Reduction CP

#### CP Text: The United States ought to

#### -Pursue limited sanctions relief with the DPRK

#### -Create missile launch notifications with the DPRK

#### -Facilitate exchanges on nuclear doctrine with DPRK,

#### -Have open-ended discussions on strategic stability with the DPRK

#### -Scale back regional military exercises in Northeast Asia

#### -Strengthen conventional military forces with the ROK

#### It competes and solves—unilateral measures lead to pocketing but limited relief combined with risk reduction and deterrence solves.

Kwong and Panda '23 [(Jamie, a Fellow with the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Ankit, a Stanton Senior Fellow in the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the author of Kim Jong Un and the Bomb: Survival and Deterrence in North Korea.) "What Russia’s Embrace of North Korea Means for America," Foreign Affairs, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/north-korea/what-russias-embrace-north-korea-means-america, 11-15-2023] TDI

NEW SOLUTIONS FOR NEW REALITIES

To effectively reduce this threat, Washington can no longer proceed with its status quo approach to North Korea. The United States should start by prioritizing risk reduction over denuclearization as a more practical means to averting nuclear war—the United States and its allies’ single most important security objective on the peninsula. It is important to remember that North Korea also has a fundamental interest in avoiding unwanted nuclear war. A U.S. policy focused on risk reduction would center this mutual interest, providing a starting point for dialogue and progress toward averting nuclear war unlike, from Pyongyang’s perspective, the nonstarter of denuclearization. Risk reduction efforts aimed specifically at addressing misperceptions and avoiding inadvertent or accidental escalation would go a long way in advancing that mutual interest.

As Pyongyang seeks advantage amid great-power rifts, policymakers in Washington should not complacently assume that North Korea’s past behavior—seeking capability through weapons development before turning to diplomacy—will repeat itself. With North Korea’s more favorable ties to Russia (and perhaps China), Kim may see no urgency in reengaging the United States. Amid these circumstances, Washington will need to proactively make proposals that lower nuclear risks without compromising general deterrence. Sanctions relief alone may no longer be sufficient for Washington to lure Pyongyang to the negotiating table in practical terms, as a lack of sanctions implementation by Russia and China lessens the perceived benefit of such concessions for North Korea. Nevertheless, Washington should consider limited forms of sanctions relief if it could help induce North Korean compliance with risk reduction initiatives.

Proactive risk reduction proposals could involve transparency measures such as missile launch notifications; exchanges on nuclear doctrines between U.S. and North Korean officials; and open-ended discussions on strategic stability between North Korea and the United States and its regional allies. For such risk reduction proposals to work, Washington would have to enter talks with North Korea premised on interim outcomes far short of denuclearization. U.S. policymakers would also likely need to reduce perceived threats to Pyongyang, for instance, by scaling back the types or scale of regional military exercises; adjusting its own characterizations of the threat posed by North Korea’s nuclear arsenal; or being more attuned to how the alliance’s narratives about its military readiness and exercises can unintentionally escalate tensions. It will be critical to strike a balance between adopting measures that maintain deterrence while avoiding measures that could unnecessarily stoke instability in relations with Pyongyang.

A policy prioritizing risk reduction would not condone Pyongyang’s nuclear program nor preclude denuclearization as a long-term aspiration. Indeed, measures to reduce more immediate nuclear risks could enable long-term progress toward denuclearization. But prioritizing denuclearization in the short term inhibits efforts to reduce the most acute risks to the United States and its allies in the years ahead. Above all, it is time for U.S. and allied policy to acknowledge that it is not North Korea’s possession of nuclear weapons that poses the greatest threat to their interests but the possibility that those weapons might be used in a conflict.

REFOCUSING DETERRENCE

To complement proactive risk reduction efforts, the United States should also put greater emphasis on the conventional—rather than nuclear—aspects of its extended deterrence relationship with Seoul. Over the past year, Washington’s attention has largely focused on nuclear deterrence in response to growing South Korean debate about acquiring an independent nuclear arsenal, as exemplified by the Washington Declaration, a statement issued during South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol’s visit to the White House in April 2023 that stresses the salience of nuclear weapons in deterring North Korea. While emphasis on the alliance’s nuclear dimensions is intended to assuage South Korean concerns about the credibility of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, such a focus risks hindering future negotiations with Pyongyang. It also risks undermining the deterrent value of the alliance’s conventional capabilities and heightening escalation risks by implying that only nuclear weapons can effectively deter nuclear weapons.

Focusing on conventional deterrence instead of nuclear deterrence could help to reduce escalation risks and preserve the full scope of the alliance’s deterrence capacity. Conventional military capabilities, such as the precision-strike assets Seoul has and continues to invest in significantly, can go a much longer way in deterring North Korea, as they can credibly hold North Korean assets at risk without increasing the nuclear temperature on the peninsula. Conventional military forces are also much more flexible in managing limited crisis contingencies such as limited North Korean attempts at territorial revisionism, with the U.S. nuclear arsenal remaining the ultimate backstop and a potential option to respond to North Korean nuclear use against allied cities or U.S. territory. Greater coordination and integration of the alliance’s command structure will be key to ensuring the combat capability required for a credible conventional deterrent. The Washington Declaration’s call to connect South Korea’s new Strategic Command with the U.S.–South Korean Combined Forces Command, while vague, is an important starting point—as is the recently finalized alliance tailored deterrence strategy for North Korea.

Historical analogies have limited utility to Northeast Asia’s current security environment—and could even lead policymakers to dangerous conclusions. Unlike the early Cold War dynamic, in which NATO was conventionally inferior to the Soviet Union, North Korea is conventionally inferior to the U.S.–South Korean alliance and is seeking to offset that inferiority with nuclear weapons. Accordingly, adding more nuclear capabilities, whether in the form of U.S. nuclear deployments to the Korean Peninsula or South Korean nuclear weapons, would do little to augment deterrence but could drastically increase Pyongyang’s incentives to use nuclear weapons first and early in a conflict.

### 1NC—Deter China CP

#### The United States should:

#### Invest in military technology

#### Decrease use of Chinese supply chains

#### Increase cooperation with allies

#### Increase sanctions on Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and secondary sanctions on People’s Republic of China

#### Solves advantage 2

Alperovitch 24 [(Dmitri Alperovitch, ) "How the U.S. Can Win the New Cold War," TIME, https://time.com/6971329/us-china-new-cold-war/, 05-01-2024] TDI

Both President Joe Biden and Xi Jinping strongly reject the current U.S.-China competition as a new Cold War. As recently as September, Biden said that he doesn’t “want to contain China” and that “we’re all better off if China does well.” Xi, in turn, [proclaimed](https://www.aljazeera.com/program/newsfeed/2023/11/16/china-doesnt-want-a-cold-war-or-a-hot-war-with-anyone-says-xi) that “China doesn’t want a cold war or a hot war with anyone,” following a meeting between the two in San Francisco in November. Yet these pronouncements aren’t all that sincere.

Today there are striking and [troubling similarities](https://time.com/6251419/us-china-general-war-2025/) between our current moment and the original Cold War between the U.S. and Soviet Union that defined the second half of the 20th century. Once again, the world is witnessing two major powers engaged in a global competition for supremacy, trying to lock in an economic, technological, diplomatic, and military advantage anywhere and everywhere an opportunity presents itself. Virtually every region of the planet is a battlefield for this confrontation: from the scramble to secure mining rights for [critical minerals](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-11-20/critical-minerals-china-s-dominance-as-supplier-is-a-problem-for-the-west) and advantageous trade deals in [Africa](https://time.com/5381467/china-africa-debt-us-security/) and [Latin America](https://time.com/5936037/us-china-latin-america-influence/), to the establishment of economic and military partnerships [across Asia](https://time.com/6252750/philippines-us-military-agreement-china/), to backing opposite warring sides in [Europe](https://time.com/6264512/insiders-perspective-on-chinas-strategy-in-ukraine/) and the [Middle East](https://time.com/6337564/china-talks-gaza-war/).

And just as in the 20th century, the last two decades have witnessed a dangerous conventional and [nuclear arms race](https://time.com/6334258/putin-nuclear-arms-control/), with China engaging in [rapid build up](https://www.economist.com/china/2023/05/08/china-v-america-how-xi-jinping-plans-to-narrow-the-military-gap) and modernization of their nuclear, naval, air, ground, and rocket forces. In an [unmistakable nod](https://time.com/6208992/china-us-space/) to the Space Race of the 1960s, this contest is also playing out beyond Earth, with [both countries racing](https://time.com/6962362/china-space-program-moon/) to once again place a human on the moon and later Mars in the coming decade. Finally, the coldness of the Cold War was defined most of all on a daily basis by the secret [espionage war](https://time.com/6261094/china-russia-tiktok-top-threats-to-us/). And, indeed, today once again America is confronted with an espionage threat against its government and industry on a scale hereto not seen.

The current era is not identical to the prior Cold War. That is most clear in the deep [economic interdependence](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/14/business/us-china-economy-trade.html) between China and the U.S. But, when looking at the facts, it’s impossible to call it anything but Cold War II.

In Cold War II, both China and the U.S. believe that the two countries are here to stay. There are some in America who believe that the CCP [may eventually collapse](https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/13/china_communist_party_collapse_downfall/), but few are counting on that outcome or can do anything to make it happen. Their current goals are not destruction of each other’s systems but a competition for influence around the world, especially the [Indo-Pacific](https://time.com/6965720/us-japan-philippines-trilateral-summit-china-alliances-strategy/). Neither believes that this struggle is existential like it was in Cold War I. Rather, it is a [fight](https://time.com/3028202/in-the-latest-issue/) over who controls the economic levers and has more influence in global institutions of the 21st century.

Like the prior Cold War, there are [considerable risks](https://time.com/6696552/u-s-hawks-china-threat-essay/) of a hot conflict breaking out. That is especially the case over [Taiwan](https://time.com/6317388/taiwan-presidential-election/). China is already closing in on attaining the capability to conquer Taiwan by force—the U.S. intelligence community has determined that Xi had issued a deadline to his military [to be ready](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/21/taiwan-foreign-minister-warns-of-conflict-with-china-in-2027) for this war by 2027. Biden, on the other hand, has publicly stated on at least [four separate occasions](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/biden-us-defend-taiwan-chinese-invasion/story?id=90184808) that he would order American troops to defend Taiwan against an invasion. The world faces an abyss if this were to happen.

Every passing month makes clear that confronting the reality of China’s threat to the U.S.-led global order requires a deep, hard strategic look. That’s something, unfortunately, that the U.S. hasn’t done well since the end of Cold War I, when the county properly aligned its politics and military and economic strengths decade after decade to counter the Soviet threat. Just as it was in Cold War I, time is on America’s side in Cold War II. But it must be used wisely.

In practical terms, that means strengthening America’s critical advantages and the Western alliance while deterring a calamitous war with China. This requires [staying ahead](https://time.com/6696552/u-s-hawks-china-threat-essay/) in the military domain as well as [semiconductors](https://time.com/6234566/how-us-win-the-tech-war-with-china/) and other key technologies. On top of that, the U.S. must invest in [talent-based immigration](https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/07/16/immigration-us-technology-companies-work-visas-china-talent-competition-universities/) that will help offset China’s numerical advantages. Left to their own devices, China’s systemic challenges—from a [slumping economy](https://time.com/6835935/china-debt-housing-bubble/) to a [shrinking population](https://time.com/6556324/china-population-decline-births-deaths/)—will make its bid to become the world’s most powerful nation much less realizable.

The U.S. must also pursue a strategy of unidirectional entanglement. That means bringing China tighter into its orbit by increasing its dependence on U.S. [supply chains](https://time.com/6295902/china-tech-war-u-s/) while doing the opposite with theirs. Meanwhile, beating China requires Washington to reframe its engagement with other lesser adversaries like Russia, North Korea, and Iran and to view our [work with allies](https://time.com/6257857/us-china-tech-war-semiconductor/), and partners like India and Vietnam, through that same lens.

There would be a substantial reduction in tension and a much smaller risk of outright war if China was ultimately convinced that it is better off working within the current U.S.-led international order. But Washington mustn’t count on that happening.

Over 2,000 years ago, amid the Third Punic War, Cato the Elder used to finish his speeches before the Roman Senate with his rallying cry, “Carthage must be destroyed.” Today, the U.S. rallying cry—the central organizing principle of American foreign, trade, defense, and industrial policy this century—must be Sinae deterrendae sunt. China must be deterred.

## Venezuela

### 1NC—Maduro Off Ramp CP

#### CP Text: The United States ought to:

#### -Tell Nicolás Maduro it will not prosecute him or his circle if they recognize an electoral defeat and leave office.

#### -Tell Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to mediate the negotiations and publicly announce the results

#### -Tell Maduro they will not recognize his government if unfairly recognized

#### -Create an unfair elections sanctions package and tell Maduro they will unleash it if there is any fraud

#### The United States ought to covertly:

#### -Fund and Support the Venezuelan Opposition election witnesses network with any means they want

#### Gonzalez wins now absent fraud—solves Advantage 2.

**Pozzebon 7-14** [(Stefano, an award-winning CNN contributor based in Bogota, Colombia. He has been instrumental to CNN’s coverage across Latin America, spanning from Venezuela’s struggle for democracy to the war on drugs in Colombia and the impact of climate change across the region.) "Why a fair election in Venezuela could influence the fate of millions of migrants – and Joe Biden," CNN, https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/14/americas/venezuela-migrants-maduro-biden-intl-latam/index.html, 7-14-2024] TDI

A small corner of Venezuela is spreading slowly along 77th Street in Bogota, the capital of Colombia. Municipal maps formally refer to that neighborhood as Unir II (“unite”), but to many of its inhabitants it is known as Barrio Hugo Chavez, after the late Venezuelan president. Many of the more than **seven million Venezuelans** who **fled their country** over the past decade or more now call Bogota home. The city is brimming with informal communities where migrants come together to help each other integrate and combat the ever-present melancholy and homesickness. Maria Alvarez is one such migrant. A 27-year-old single mother from Valencia, Alvarez left Venezuela in 2017 when her son Gabriel was only one. They haven’t returned since. Gabriel knows his grandparents only from the photos on his mother’s phone and the occasional video call. “Everyone left… I’ve got family in Brazil, the US, here in Colombia, in Ecuador, in Chile too. We are all abroad: uncles, aunts, cousins… only my mom and my dad, and one of my brothers remain in Venezuela,” Alvarez told CNN. Most of those **seven million migrants left Venezuela** after 2014, according to the United Nations, amid an economic and political crisis brought about by a crash in the price of oil – a key export for Venezuela – combined with **chronic corruption** and **mismanagement** at the hands of government officials. Almost two million of them have been granted work permits to work in Colombia, where life is working out well for Alvarez and many others like her. After the Covid pandemic, she helped create a foundation in Unir II to provide Venezuelans and Colombians with professional classes and psychological counseling. She now makes a living as a manicurist and has met a new partner. Even so, she still feels the draw of Venezuela. “I just dream of going home and building a life there. Colombia has been good, I feel welcome here, but well, I long to go back,” she told CNN, tearfully. Migrants from Venezuela sit by a makeshift fire as they wait to enter and seek asylum in El Paso, Texas, from Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, on April 2, 2024. Migrants from Venezuela sit by a makeshift fire as they wait to enter and seek asylum in El Paso, Texas, from Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, on April 2, 2024. Christian Monterrosa/AFP/Getty Images An election and a credible opposition But with the authoritarian government of **Nicolas Maduro firmly ensconced** in power, for many years those **dreams of returning have remained just that**. Until now. This month, for the first time in a decade, Venezuela will hold an election in which Maduro’s government is being challenged by an opposition candidate, **Edmundo Gonzalez**, who **has a credible chance of winning**. In October last year, Maduro formally pledged to grant free and fair elections in 2024 at the end of a long and secretive negotiation process with the US State Department. That pledge was at least partially compromised amid a new spat between Washington and Caracas: the leading opposition candidate, Maria Corina Machado, was barred from running earlier this year, as was her immediate replacement Corina Yoris. The Venezuelan government has accused the White House of not lifting all economic sanctions against government officials, and in recent weeks opposition supporters and members of Machado’s team have been detained. Even so, many experts believe that come the July 28 election the opposition has a real chance of pushing Maduro out of power. Recent polls put Gonzalez more than twenty percentage points ahead of Maduro and, for the first time in years, **electoral observers** from **the Carter Center** and **the UN have been invited** to monitor the election. Venezuelan opposition presidential candidate for the Plataforma Unitaria Democratica party, Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia, attends an event with the Primero Justicia opposition party in Caracas on May 31, 2024. (Photo by Gabriela Oraa / AFP) RELATED ARTICLE A quiet, bird-loving grandfather takes on Venezuela’s strongman Maduro this summer Such a lead would make **Gonzalez the heavy favorite if** this were almost **any other democratic country.** Yet in Venezuela, **the government has a habit of clinging to power**. Critics have long accused it of rigging votes and silencing the opposition. Opposition protests were repeatedly repressed in 2014, 2017 and 2019, and hundreds of opposition leaders have been arrested, or exiled. Still, to many, this year feels different. “I personally find it **difficult to believe Maduro will just give up power**,” said Laura Dib, a Venezuela expert at the Washington Office for Latin America. “However, you know, if there’s massive participation with international observation and, of course, with pressure from inside the government itself and international pressure… that could create some avenues,” she told CNN. Alvarez and many other migrants in Bogota, think similarly: “**Maduro can only win the election if he steals it**. But **if** there’s a new government, I’d go back the same day. Not just me, hundreds, thousands… there won’t be enough planes for everyone to return home,” said Endel Gonzalez, a 54-year-old from Maracaibo who has worked as a food courier in Bogota for the past five years. Venezuelan opposition presidential candidate Edmundo Gonzalez and opposition leader Maria Corina Machado hold hands at a presidential election campaign rally in Valencia, Carabobo State, Venezuela, on July 13, 2024. Venezuelan opposition presidential candidate Edmundo Gonzalez and opposition leader Maria Corina Machado hold hands at a presidential election campaign rally in Valencia, Carabobo State, Venezuela, on July 13, 2024. Gaby Oraa/Reuters

#### Planks 1 and 2 give maduro an Off-Ramp

**Patiño 7-19** [(Roberto, Patiño is the founder of Alimenta la Solidaridad and Mi Convive, organizations that work in vulnerable communities in Venezuela, and a co-founder of Institute 2100, dedicated to researching migration patterns and geopolitical issues.) " This Is Venezuela’s Moment. It Needs the World’s Help," New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/19/opinion/venezuela-elections-maduro.html, 7-19-2024] TDI

Venezuela could be on the cusp of a historic return to democracy, a shift that would reshape Latin America and pave the way for millions of Venezuelans who have fled repression and economic collapse to return home. But it can’t get there alone. With less than two weeks to go before the July 28 national election, the country’s fractured opposition has united behind a single presidential candidate, Edmundo González, who has been leading the polls by over 20 points. Abandoning its longtime boycott of the vote, the opposition has instead conducted an energetic and organized campaign that, despite increased attempts by the government to instill fear among the electorate, has succeeded in capturing Venezuelans’ imaginations. Two-thirds of registered voters are planning to cast their ballots this month, according to a recent poll, compared with the 46 percent of voters who turned out in the last presidential elections, in 2018. But **the same roadblock stands in the way** of a free and fair election that has been there for the past decade: **President Nicolás Maduro**. The nation’s democracy has withered on his watch, along with its economy. There is a very real possibility that **if faced with** electoral **defeat**, **he and his cronies will rig the results** — not just to cling to power but also to avoid jail. The president, members of his administration and the military elite and other allies face criminal charges by the U.S. Justice Department, U.S. State Department bounties, individual sanctions and an International Criminal Court investigation into crimes against humanity allegedly committed by the regime. Something can be done. The United States can support the Venezuelan people in their fight for democracy by creating **a legal off-ramp** for Mr. Maduro and his allies so that if the president loses, he will agree to give up power. It is an opportunity that won’t come around again anytime soon, and the window to seize it is rapidly closing. **Without it, the likely outcome** of this month’s **vote will be more repression**, more forced migration and more suffering. What would a negotiated exit for Mr. Maduro look like? Washington could make a strong and credible offer that it will not prosecute him or his circle if they recognize an electoral defeat and leave office. The recent revival of talks between the United States and Venezuela is the perfect opportunity to present such an offer. To make it credible, it should also be communicated directly to other Latin American governments and announced publicly. If Mr. Maduro accepted the offer, the transition to democracy could happen swiftly. **If he rejected** it, the offer could still exert significant pressure on him, as **members of his coalition might push him to accept** it, recognizing the benefits they would gain from the proposed terms. Why should Washington consider such a move? A return to democracy in Venezuela would be a major foreign policy victory for the Biden administration at a time when the embattled American president could use a win. It could help limit the surge of migration to the U.S. southern border — some 40 percent of polled Venezuelans said they were thinking about leaving the country if Mr. Maduro stayed in power — and potentially reduce the influence of Russia and China in a country that possesses the largest oil reserves in the world. And nothing else has worked. Last year the Biden administration lifted some sanctions to encourage Mr. Maduro to conduct a free and fair vote. But after María Corina Machado, the leading opposition candidate coming out of the opposition’s primary, was barred from running in the national polls, the United States reimposed them. Creating an off-ramp is not about absolving Mr. Maduro or rewarding bad behavior. It’s about dismantling a destructive regime without plunging the country into further chaos. Venezuelan **opposition leaders**, including Mr. González and Ms. Machado, **have said** **they would support negotiations** that could include guarantees of no legal retribution for all parties after the vote — a recognition that the path to democracy is fraught with complexity and compromises. For this strategy to work, other international leaders must join in. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil, with his historical ties to Chavismo (Hugo Chávez once called him the “big brother” of the Latin American left), is uniquely positioned to mediate this delicate process. When he was elected in 2022, the United States, along with other Latin American countries and Europe, played a pivotal role in swiftly and decisively recognizing his victory as Jair Bolsonaro’s party questioned the legitimacy of the vote. It is time for Mr. Lula to pay it forward. Supporting this transition would not only align with his values but also serve his self-interest in resolving a crisis that has destabilized the region for over a decade. It has been done before. Negotiated political transitions in South Africa and Chile, for example, show that **offering a face-saving exit** to entrenched leaders can facilitate peaceful and lasting change. South Africa, after the dismantling of apartheid and its first democratic elections, created a form of transitional justice with its Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which could grant amnesty for perpetrators who admitted their crimes. The framework allowed for accountability and reconciliation to coexist and helped South Africa to heal and move forward. The International Criminal Court’s chief prosecutor could also consider suspending the court’s investigation as part of an agreement between a successful opposition and the departing administration that would create a domestic procedure — including truth commissions, reparations and institutional reforms — to ensure justice would be served within a national context. Persuading Venezuelans to accept a face-saving exit for Mr. Maduro won’t be easy. Many are scarred by the human rights abuses and widespread corruption that have taken place during his tenure. In my work supporting communities that have been brutalized by the government’s security apparatus, I’ve witnessed the profound destruction inflicted on the lives of the regime’s victims. I’ve also seen the deep scars left on political prisoners who were tortured and their families, including in the case of a friend of mine who was killed in custody. For many of us, the natural inclination may be to seek immediate accountability — and even revenge. But we stand at a crossroads. Focusing on the immediate and practical benefits of Mr. Maduro’s exit from power — like the restoration of democratic institutions and the rule of law, national stability and economic recovery — would ultimately serve all Venezuelans. This is the time to prioritize the greater good and for the interests of the people to take precedence over the politics of vengeance. Venezuelans are ready to mobilize for peaceful change on July 28. Their courage deserves **unwavering support from the international community**. The governments of President Biden and Mr. Lula must live up to their promises of defending democracy by ensuring that the will of the Venezuelan people is respected. Their success would be a resounding victory at a fragile global moment. The world is watching, and history will remember those who stood by the Venezuelan people in their fight.

#### Planks 3, 4, and 5 force Maduro to the table—prevents fraud and key to deterrence.

**Berg and Winkler 7-10** [(Ryan C., director of the Americas Program and head of the Future of Venezuela Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He is also an adjunct professor at the Catholic University of America and visiting research fellow at the University of Oxford’s Changing Character of War Programme, and Alexandra, Senior Associate (Non-resident), Americas Program, and former deputy mayor of El Hatillo, one of the five municipalities of the capital city of Caracas, Venezuela. Within that role, she was recognized for her social policy innovations and promotion of public-private partnerships to help alleviate the impact of the worst humanitarian crisis in the Western Hemisphere ) "A Second Independence Day? Scenarios for Venezuela’s July 28 Election,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, https://www.csis.org/analysis/second-independence-day-scenarios-venezuelas-july-28-election, 7-10-2024] TDI

Scenario 3: Rigged Election and Mega Fraud

Beyond sowing confusion or clearing the field, Maduro may proceed to an election and, leveraging his close relationship with Elvis Amoroso and control over the CNE, announce an election result in his favor, with no documentation or proof whatsoever. This scenario has the benefit of allowing people to vote—a cathartic exercise that may release the opposition’s pressure valve—while not relinquishing power.

Regardless of whether or not the regime releases numbers and a paper trail, it is inevitable that their usual bag of tricks for impeding voting will be employed. This playbook has been honed over many elections, harkening back to the days of Hugo Chávez.

The playbook begins with a slew of procedural moves to commit electoral fraud at polling centers. Not only has the Maduro regime moved many polling centers without notification, but there are more than 2,000 remote polling centers in isolated places where oversight is difficult, as well as 228,000 voters registered abroad. All of these present the Maduro regime opportunities to alter the vote count. Further, the regime has a fine-tuned sense of where its supporters reside. In those regions and neighborhoods, polling places are known in advance and are well staffed. Regime mobilization schemes ensure that supporters will be rewarded with free food and other handouts at polling places, while national identification cards replete with Chinese technology from state-owned ZTE allows the regime to track citizens.

The regime also has a sense of where the opposition’s voter base resides. In the past, the regime has run “Operation Turtle” in these areas, intentionally slowing down voting centers where the CNE refuses to expedite the process or sometimes obstructs operations entirely. Furthermore, before voters can even arrive at the correct polling place, they often must brave regime-aligned thugs, or colectivos, intimidating and harassing them from motorbikes. And there is a further asymmetry—while the Maduro regime’s supporters are often located in more remote or peripheral areas where access is difficult, opposition areas tend to be urban and more accessible to disruptors. On top of everything, the CNE may choose to postpone the announcement of results, claiming that remote polling places have not transmitted results due to power outages—likely to be blamed on opposition sabotage and U.S. sanctions, given the regime’s accusations mentioned above—as happened famously in Bolivia in 2019 and in Barinas state in 2021.

To prevent the many iterations of procedural fraud possible on election day itself, the Venezuelan **opposition has amassed a significant cadre of monitors** and election witnesses. Victory on election day hinges on the competence of these witnesses and the range of polling places they can cover effectively. Registering the likely millions of protest votes in favor of the opposition that reside in traditional pro-regime areas—a phenomenon on display during the opposition’s October 2023 primaries—is a function of how well this network of monitors can be mobilized to defend the vote. The opposition recently declared that its network would be able to cover more than 90 percent of known voting centers on election day. In response, the regime-controlled CNE published a rule altering the eligibility to monitor voting stations: witnesses can only register to monitor stations where they are themselves assigned to vote. According to Venezuelan election expert Eugenio Martinez, this could impact up to 40 percent of the witnesses the opposition had in its network. The CNE’s new rule is intended to limit the number of polling stations with opposition presence and increase regime control.

The rigged election and mega fraud scenarios imply that the regime would severely repress protest and hunker down against opposition denouncements and pressure from the international community, hoping to ride out the storm and receive diplomatic cover from its authoritarian allies in Russia, China, and Iran. The reaction of the international community is also critical in this scenario, as **without** any **substantial consequences for Maduro**, **he will not think twice** about pursuing this path. For instance, it will be insufficient for the United States not to recognize Maduro’s legitimacy. There should also be a new individual sanctions package readied before the election for all of those involved in electoral fraud and the violation of human rights during the campaign and on election day.

If Maduro commits massive fraud, he is betting that the level of unrest will be survivable, short-lived, and not unbearably expensive in terms of the resources required to put it down. After all, the Venezuelan people are exhausted, remain focused on quotidian survival, and a desire for political change can only take one so far. Maduro’s **nightmare scenario**, of course, is to end up like **Bolivia’s Evo Morales,** who blatantly stole the election in 2019 but **was forced to stand down** by the armed forces.

### 2NR—AT: Lula Says No

#### Lula says yes and the CP works.

**Vanessa, Schmidt, and DeYoung'7-15** [(Ana, Washington Post reporter for South America Samantha, Washington Post's Bogotá bureau chief, covering all of Spanish-speaking South America, and Karen, associate editor and senior national security correspondent for The Washington Post, served as bureau chief in Latin America and London and as correspondent covering the White House, U.S. foreign policy and the intelligence community.) "Biden made a bold deal with Venezuela’s strongman. Will it pay off?," Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/07/15/venezuela-election-maduro-biden-deal/, 7-15-2024] TDI

Hope for a peaceful transition

What will happen if Maduro loses the vote? Leaders across the hemisphere, including some with friendly relations with Maduro, are urging the sides to prepare for a peaceful transfer of power. Gustavo Petro, the first leftist president of Colombia, has reached out to Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a fellow leftist, to lead talks.

Petro spoke with Maduro and some members of the opposition this year about granting the losing side some type of immunity from prosecution, according to a senior Brazilian foreign affairs official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private talks. The proposal could be put to voters in a referendum on the day of the election.

**If both sides supported the approach, Lula** told Petro, he **would too**, according to the official. But both rejected it. Colombian Foreign Minister Luis Gilberto Murillo said he’s **keeping diplomatic channels open.**

The economist Victor Álvarez, a former Chávez supporter, has circulated a proposal in which Maduro could be made a lifetime member of the National Assembly, which would give him parliamentary immunity.

Tamara Taraciuk Broner, who directs a rule-of-law program at the Washington-based Inter-American Dialogue, is researching possible legal incentives — such as reduced sentences — that U.S. officials could offer Maduro allies implicated in drug trafficking, money laundering and corruption.

“It’s a dirty conversation,” she said. “But there’s not going to be a clean way out of this mess.”

Opposition leader Henrique Capriles, who narrowly lost the 2013 presidential election to Maduro, sees a role for Washington.

To give up power, Capriles said, Maduro will need to feel confident that his exit from the presidency won’t lead to prison. “The United States will have to step in.”

Andrés Izarra, a former minister under Chávez, said a transition will be possible only if Maduro’s hand is forced, or if military leaders are persuaded to negotiate an exit.

“The price to leave Miraflores” — the presidential palace in Caracas — “is way too high,” Izarra said.

González says he is willing to negotiate a transfer of power with Maduro. If he wins the vote, he says, he won’t persecute adversaries. He would give Maduro’s party a place in the National Assembly.

“We hope the government has the political maturity to accept that it lost the election and that a new government will take power,” González said. “If the magnitude of the defeat is as convincing as we aspire it to be, he will have no other choice.”

### 1AR—Maduro Off Ramp CP

#### Maduro has the election down to a science—numerous barriers mean he won’t lose, and even if he does he won’t negotiate or give up power.

Turkewitz and Kurmanaev '24 [(Julie, the Andes Bureau Chief for The Times, based in Bogotá, Colombia, covering Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, and Anatoly, reporter.) "How Venezuela’s Leader Could Stay in Power, No Matter What Voters Want," New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/25/world/americas/venezuela-election-maduro-power.html, 6-25-2024] TDI

Venezuela’s authoritarian president, Nicolás Maduro, faces a watershed moment that will determine the fate of his rule and the course of his troubled country.

On July 28, the leader of the nation that holds the world’s largest oil reserves — and yet has seen millions of residents flee amid a crushing economic crisis — will confront his toughest electoral challenge since taking office in 2013.

Polls show that his main opponent, a low-key former diplomat named Edmundo González, is far ahead.

Mr. González is backed by a fiery opposition leader, María Corina Machado, who has captivated voters as she crisscrosses the country, campaigning for him on a promise to re-establish democracy and reunite families separated by migration.

ImageEdmundo González, wearing a white guayabera shirt, stands on a stage during a campaign event.

Leaders of the opposition, Edmundo González and María Corina Machado, both in white, speaking at a campaign rally last month in La Victoria, Venezuela.Credit...Lexi Parra for The New York Times

On the other side is Mr. Maduro, a skilled political operator who for years has overcome his unpopularity by tilting the ballot box in his favor. He could use the same tactics to eke out another victory.

Yet, there is a wild card: He could also lose, negotiate a peaceful exit and hand over power.

**Few Venezuelans expect him to do that**. Instead, political analysts, election experts, opposition figures and four former senior officials in Mr. Maduro’s government interviewed by The New York Times believe, based on his past record, that **he is probably mulling multiple options to retain power.**

Mr. Maduro’s government could disqualify Mr. González, or the parties he represents, they say, removing his only serious challenger from the race.

Mr. Maduro could allow the vote to go forward, but draw on years of experience of manipulating elections in his favor to suppress participation, confuse voters and ultimately win.

But he could also cancel or postpone the vote, inventing a crisis — a simmering border dispute with neighboring Guyana is one option — as an excuse.

Finally, Mr. Maduro could simply fix the vote tally, analysts and political figures say.

That happened in 2017, when the country held a vote to select a new political body to rewrite the Constitution. The company that provided voting technology, Smartmatic, concluded that the **result had “without any doubt” been manipulated** — and that Mr. Maduro’s government reported at least a million more votes than had actually been cast. (Smartmatic cut ties with the country.)

Image

People walking outside a gate where a sign says it is a voting center.

Voters outside a polling station in Caracas in 2017.Credit...Meridith Kohut for The New York Times

Zair Mundaray, a former prosecutor in the Maduro government who defected in 2017, said the country had arrived at a critical moment. Even Mr. Maduro’s followers, he added, “are clear that he is in the minority.”

Whatever Mr. Maduro does, the election will be closely watched by the U.S. government, which has long sought to push him from power, saying it wants to promote democracy in the region, but also looking for a friendly partner in the oil business.

In recent months, the Biden administration’s desire to improve economic conditions inside Venezuela has intensified, as hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans have headed north, creating an enormous political challenge for President Biden ahead of his own re-election bid.

Mr. **Maduro has made it clear he has no intention of losing the election**, accusing his opponents of plotting a “coup” against him and telling a crowd of followers at a campaign event that “we are going to win by a knockout!” When that happens, he said, his opponents will surely call it fraud.

Representatives of the country’s communications ministry and election council did not respond to requests for comment.

Mr. Maduro, 61, rose to power following the death of Hugo Chávez, the charismatic founder of Venezuela’s socialist project.

A former vice president, he was handpicked by Mr. Chávez in 2013 as his successor. But many Venezuelans predicted that he would fail, saying he lacked his predecessor’s oratorical skills, political savvy, military ties and public loyalty.

They were wrong.

Mr. Maduro has survived a prolonged economic crisis in which year-over-year inflation soared as high as 65,000 percent; several rounds of nationwide protests; a number of coup and assassination attempts; and an effort in 2019 by a young legislator named Juan Guaidó to install a parallel government inside the country.

Image

Juan Guaidó, a former Venezuelan legislator, wearing a blue shirt and jeans atop a stage while addressing a large crowd.

Juan Guaidó speaking at a rally in Caracas in 2019. A former legislator, he tried to install a parallel government in the country.Credit...Meridith Kohut for The New York Times

He has managed to prevent challenges from within the ranks of his own inner circle. And he has navigated punishing U.S. sanctions by strengthening commercial ties with Iran, Russia and China, and, according to International Crisis Group, by allowing generals and other allies to enrich themselves through drug trafficking and illegal mining.

Despite his dire poll numbers, “he has never been stronger,” Michael Shifter, a longtime Latin America expert, wrote in Foreign Affairs magazine last year.

But the election, held every six years, has emerged as perhaps his biggest challenge.

Already, the government is trying to massage the vote in the president’s favor.

The millions of Venezuelans who have fled to other countries — many of whom would probably cast ballots against him — have faced **enormous barriers to register to vote**. Venezuelan officials abroad, for example, have refused to accept certain common visas as proof of the emigrants’ residency, according to a coalition of watchdog groups.

Election experts and opposition activists say that 3.5 million to 5.5 million Venezuelans eligible to vote now live outside the country — up to a quarter of the total electorate of 21 million people. But just 69,000 Venezuelans abroad have been able to register to vote.

The watchdog groups say denying such a large number of citizens the right to cast a ballot constitutes extensive electoral fraud.

Efforts to undermine the vote are also unfolding inside the country.

The education ministry said in April that it was **changing the names of more than 6,000 schools**, which are common voting sites, possibly complicating efforts by voters to find their assigned polling places.

Among the lesser known parties on an already complicated ballot — **voters will choose among 38 boxes** featuring candidates’ faces — is **one that uses an almost identical name, and similar colors, to** the larger **opposition coalition** backing Mr. González, potentially diluting his vote.

Image

A copy of the ballot for Venezuela’s election shows rows of candidates.

An electoral ballot being displayed during a campaign event for Mr. González in Caracas this month.Credit...Miguel Gutierrez/EPA, via Shutterstock

Perhaps Mr. Maduro’s biggest electoral machination was to use his control of the courts to bar the country’s most popular opposition figure, Ms. Machado, from running in the first place. But she has still mobilized her popularity to take to the campaign trail with Mr. González.

Mr. Maduro’s government, according to the opposition, has targeted the campaign — 37 opposition activists have been detained or gone into hiding to avoid detention since January, according to Mr. González.

**Independent electoral monitoring will be minimal.** After the government rescinded an offer from the European Union to observe the election, just one major independent organization will monitor the vote, the Carter Center, based in Atlanta.

Luis Lander, director of the Venezuelan Electoral Observatory, an independent group, said in an interview that the election already qualified as among the most flawed in the country in the last 25 years.

Mr. Maduro has raised salaries for public workers, announced new infrastructure projects and ramped up his social media presence. The economy has improved slightly. The president has also been on the campaign trail, dancing with voters across the country, portraying himself as the goofy grandfather of socialism and mocking those who doubted him.

Image

Mr. Maduro, standing on a stage and holding up his right hand, talks to his supporters.

Mr. Maduro at a campaign rally in Caracas in March.Credit...Adriana Loureiro Fernandez for The New York Times

His persistent argument is that U.S. sanctions are at the heart of Venezuela’s economic problems. The country’s socialist movement, despite the economic travails, still runs deep.

During its best years, it lifted millions out of poverty, and it has a powerful messaging arm, with many who will vote for the socialist cause, even if they find fault with Mr. Maduro.

“This is not about a man, but about a project,” Giovanny Erazo, 42, said at a recent get-out-the-vote event.

Others may cast their ballot for Mr. Maduro believing it will bring aid to their families. Loyalists have long been awarded with boxes of food.

Even if Mr. Maduro sabotaged the vote, it is unclear that it would lead to the kind of unrest that could push him from office.

At least 270 people have been killed in protests since 2013, according to the human rights organization Provea, leaving many fearful of taking to the streets. Many frustrated with Mr. Maduro have already voted with their feet by fleeing the country.

Image

Protesters wearing helmets and covering their faces during a demonstration. One waves the red and yellow flag of Táchira State.

Anti-government protesters in 2017, after seizing control of the main highway through Caracas.Credit...Meridith Kohut for The New York Times

Should Mr. Maduro fall short on July 28, he could work with Mr. González to negotiate a favorable departure, some analysts said. The president is wanted in the United States on drug trafficking charges and is under investigation by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity. He would want to go to a country where he would be shielded from prosecution.

But Manuel Christopher Figuera, a former director of Venezuela’s national intelligence service, said **this scenario was unlikely**. **“Maduro knows that if he hands over power, although he could negotiate his exit, the rest of this criminal band could not.”**

Mr. Figuera fled to the United States in 2019, after joining a failed coup launched by a faction of the party of Mr. Guaidó, the legislator who led a parallel government.

Luisa Ortega, who served as the country’s attorney general under both Mr. Chávez and Mr. Maduro — but fled in 2017 after criticizing the government — warned against a “fatal triumphalism” among people in the opposition.

“An avalanche of votes against Maduro” could defeat him at the polls, she said. “And that **won’t necessarily translate into a victory for us.”**

#### Lula Says No

Mccoy '23 [(Terrence, The Washington Post's Rio de Janeiro Bureau Chief. He has twice won the George Polk Award and was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2023. He served in the Peace Corps in Cambodia. He joined The Washington Post in 2014, and has been a staff writer on the local, national and foreign desks.) "Brazil’s Lula promised to save democracy. Why is he embracing Maduro?," Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/05/30/lula-maduro/, 5-30-2023] TDI

RIO DE JANEIRO — Four years ago, virtually all of Latin America lined up against Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

When he claimed victory in a 2018 election widely viewed as fraudulent, most of the region’s nations, goaded by Washington, called for his removal.

The authoritarian ruler, whose government has stifled dissent and tortured political opponents, prepared to flee into political exile. Opposition leader Juan Guaidó, recognized by the United States and more than 50 other governments as Venezuela’s rightful leader, was set to take over as president.

But Maduro hung on. The opposition coalition that coalesced behind Guaidó collapsed. And now the socialist strongman is celebrating a stunning diplomatic comeback. In recent months, he’s met with French President Emmanuel Macron, shaken hands with U.S. climate envoy John F. Kerry and reestablished relations with most of the South American nations that just four years ago spurned him.

On Monday, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, leader of Latin America’s largest country, not only welcomed Maduro to a regional summit in Brasília but took his side against Washington. Lula dismissed charges against Maduro of human and civil rights abuses as a political “narrative” and condemned U.S. sanctions on his government as “worse than war.”

The meeting brought attention to the **U.S. failure to depose Maduro** and signaled the political recalibration of Latin America. Many of the conservative leaders who called for Maduro’s ouster are now themselves out of office, defeated by leftists who, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, have either embraced Maduro or at least recognized that he isn’t going anywhere anytime soon.

“This is practically the formalization and the officialization of the return of the authoritarian regime of Nicolás Maduro to the region,” said Daniel Zovatto, Latin America director of the International Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Maduro waves to reporters on arriving at Itamaraty Palace. (Evaristo Sa/AFP/Getty Images)

In Brazil, **many expected Lula to restore relations with Maduro’s government**. The two countries share a nearly 1,400-mile border, the Amazon rainforest and a long history of trade, migration and cultural exchange. Lula was close with Hugo Chávez, the founder of Venezuela’s socialist state and Maduro’s predecessor. Other neighbors, including Colombia, Argentina, Chile and Bolivia, have already strengthened ties with Caracas.

But the **zeal with which Lula embraced** a leader accused of the same authoritarian practices that Lula vowed to fight in Brazil took critics and many allies by surprise.

“A whitewashing of the regime,” said Venezuelan political analyst Gilberto Carrasquero.

Lula’s presidential office declined to comment pending public statements he planned to make Tuesday evening.

Campaigning last year for a return to the presidency, Lula pitched his candidacy as the restoration of Brazilian democracy. He warned that the reelection of former president Jair Bolsonaro, who mourned the collapse of Brazil’s military dictatorship, would plunge the country back into autocratic rule. But in power, and as a leader of the global left, he has defined democracy and authoritarianism a bit more loosely.

[ How Bolsonaro’s rhetoric — then his silence — stoked Brazil assault ]

In his worldview, Taiwan belongs to China. Ukraine shares blame for the Russian invasion. And now Maduro, who is under indictment in the United States for alleged narcoterrorism, has been unfairly maligned.

“The United Nations has accused Maduro of crimes against humanity, but in Brazil he is received as Lula’s great partner with all of the pomp and honor,” tweeted Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, the former president’s son. “By greeting Maduro, Lula has alerted the entire world: **BRAZIL SUPPORTS THE VENEZUELAN DICTACTORSHIP!”**

Even some of Lula’s advisers were taken by surprise by what, in his gusto, he described as a “historic moment.” Some in the presidential palace were left wondering whether Lula’s friendship with Chavez had clouded his view of his protégé and successor.

### 1NC—Soft Power CP

#### The United States should:

#### Using social media campaigns

#### Encouraging protest

#### Soft power solves the aff

Peters ‘18 [(Mark T. Peters ) "Remedying Venezuela: Soft Power Cures for Political Strife," No Publication, https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife, 3-15-2018] TDI

Suffering from triple digit inflation, rampaging price increases, severe medicine and food shortages, a 50% drop in national petroleum revenues as well as an authoritarian, corrupt government focused on regime survival guiding the ship, Venezuela requires significant course corrections (Renwick and Lee 2017).  Two periods of massive, repeated protests attempting change since 2014 resulted in harsh, police crackdowns.  Analyzing the events shows potential vulnerabilities where righting Venezuela’s course may be possible for policy makers through soft power strategies during future protests.  Those seeking direction creating a more stable Southern Hemisphere could use soft power influences including techniques social media and financial options to create desired changes.  Protests challenged President Maduro’s government’s policies but lacked sufficient local or international support to successfully alter government behaviors or change the overall environment.  More Venezuelan protests will follow as Maduro’s regime repeats failures in economic areas while tightening governmental controls on expression.  This paper examines Venezuela’s most recent protests and where soft power actions policies may improve future outcomes.  Regional influence objectives should incorporate current U.S. policy to improve Venezuelan economic outcomes, increase basic goods availability, and stabilize relationships between the government’s agencies and its people. The 2017 protest cycle led to President Maduro’s ballot manipulation during the July 2017 constituent referendum and aims to eliminate future opposition through a constitutional redraft.  Venezuela is a key, Western Hemisphere oil-producer so economic failure and popular unrest leading to national failure creates an unacceptable locus for increased terrorist and criminal influences in addition to humanitarian crises.  Employing a soft power strategy rooted in social media and cyber-focused information operations early and often during future protest activity could change behaviors and partially remedy Venezuela’s systemic problems, mitigating regional oil market impacts, minimizing humanitarian impacts like refugee flow, and reducing the localized terrorist and criminal threats.

U.S. direct military intervention in Venezuela offers an unsustainable choice based on local constraints and strenuous U.S. overseas military commitments.   Coercive hard power techniques without military force through economic sanctions or embargo could influence Maduro’s regime.  However, restricting the Venezuelan people’s food and medicine access through reducing international trade will accentuate existing problems. Soft power techniques, defined by Joseph Nye as, “the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes”, offers alternative options (2007, 20-21).   Methods to frame, persuade, and elicit attractive actions can be implemented through identified touch-points using techniques like social media influences to bolster protest events, reduce Maduro’s support, or pursue actions changing Venezuelan government agencies.  Soft power attractive techniques include targeted foreign aid, meme deliveries to change attitudes, and other subsequent actions improving policy maker’s regional objective accomplishment.  Choosing continued regional non-interference will accentuate resource shortfalls, decrease legitimate opportunities, and increase refugee flows, collectively resulting in spreading illegal activities.  U.S. global competitors like Russia and China as well as terrorist organizations like Al Qaida, Hezbollah, and others will seize the opportunity generated by local failures to influences.  The Venezuelan government, since Chavez’s 2013 death, has failed to address root economic causes that lead to a 30% contraction (Fiallo 2017).  The two protest periods, in 2014 for four months and 2017 for five, show the population’s desire for change contrasted against President Maduro’s inability to manage his government.  In future protests, U.S. policy makers could apply soft power techniques to accelerate targeted change to; improve the opposition’s success, advocate organizational paths past Maduro’s influences, or encourage external market development.

Venezuelan protests occur largely through street assemblies communicating contentious issues while opposing police and military forces.  These messages are supplemented through social media channels.  Improving future choices requires changing how the government interacts with their people.  New standards require new normative behaviors, potentially sparked through foreign aid incentives, international assistance to identified programs, and targeted social media, all which benefit U.S. regional objectives.  Manipulating external messaging can be accomplished to achieve these objectives without risking collateral impacts that may worsen the average citizen’s quality of life.  Examining protest patterns illustrates where soft power techniques may guide normative change and enhance the observed, democratic protests.  For example, the 2017 Venezuelan opposition party held fifty percent of pre-Constituent Assembly seats so increasing opposition numbers to change government actions may work.  Desired objectives should seek successes beyond the immediate through encouraging fundamental changes and eliminating non-democratic practices.  Soft power techniques can help steer changes.

Why Do Protests Change Outcomes?

Populations protest to draw attention to perceived injustices.  Individuals initiate protests with localized responses to produce increased effect through collective actions.  Implementing soft power techniques through persuasive or attractive means like trade incentives, social media campaigns, or regional engagement could convert street protests into sustained Venezuelan changes and accomplish U.S. regional objectives.  Broad brush soft power techniques influence individuals to adopt long-term changes that contribute to soft-power successes and result in behavioral shifts beneficial to Maduro’s opposition.

A Social Theory for Protest

Analyzing political systems with social conflict theory considers the local environment, internal factors, and actor relationships as a supporting framework (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff 2001, 107; Kriesberg and Dayton 2017, 27).  This framework originates from social constructivism to explain shared understanding, expectations, and the knowledge underlying protest motivations (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff 2001, 166).  Institutions shape social understanding through modeling processes interactions.  Further, shaping social understanding through predetermined models identifies additional useful research perspectives.  The interactions shaping change are best categorized as norm emergence, cascade, and internalization.  One analysis difficulty lies in contrasting the competing norms between opposition elements and Maduro’s government.  Norm emergence emanates from common principles like whether a defined action such as freedom of speech or peaceful nuclear energy usage will be permitted or restrained by authorities.  Here, the opposition party supports increased expressive freedoms and economic opportunity while the government desires restrictions, media control, and centrally planned economics as a return to Chavez’s guidance. These competing norms demonstrate opposed viewpoints.

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) uses eight pillars in their positive peace theory.  The pillar tops represent an economically balanced and peaceful society characterized by: a well-functioning government, sound business environments, equitable resource distribution, accepting other’s rights, good neighbor relations, free information flows, high capital levels, and low corruption.  The pillars offer markers to contrast opposition party desires with Maduro’s government.  When the associated markers are more positive, nations tend to be more peaceful.  These IEP factors measure national resilience and may predict future actions (2017, 7).  In every area, Venezuela scores poorly but soft power influence success could elevate their potential and improve outcomes.

Normative behavioral development theory categorizes emergence as when ideas appear, cascade as wide-spread influences, and internalization as when ideas attach to values (Mazanec 2015).  These changes describe population behavior driving international outcomes. Further, normative change may appear through population-driven, bottom-up drives or as an elite-driven, top-down emphasis (Lantis 2016).  Venezuelan protests see bi-directional drives influencing standards through government institutions and public elements.  Policy makers should aim to create long-term results through soft power usages to spark normative cascades and then, internalization.

Three areas influence normative actions during social conflicts; actors, motives, and mechanisms, sometimes called factors (Mazanec 2015).  Influencing all three can occur through strategies using persuasive memes to influence social interactions through distributed idea-based media or material-driven foreign assistance.[[1]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn1" \o ")  In Venezuela today, one possible meme would advocate improved expressive freedoms to increase support to Maduro’s political opposition.  Smaller memes, contained inside the larger, could advocate medical care options, oil export improvements, effective minimum wage increases, inflation controls, or increased rights to protest. Messages should convince the public that government solutions may be possible but not through Maduro’s authoritarian actions.  Each meme transmits a central message constructed to create emergence with subsequent behaviors reaching cascade.  Effects should be narrowly planned with messages ranging widely since behavioral influences lack easily predictable outcomes.  Attempts need to reach key actors through social media and other channels.  Policy makers should focus on various Venezuelan group’s internal messaging to initiate desired changes.

Actors are change agents whose motives link to certain, critical factors.  These factors are more identifiable from third party perspectives.  For example, at emergence, Venezuela’s 2017 protests are driven by protests leaders (actors) out of ideological beliefs (motivation) about government roles and persuading others to join subsequent protests (factors) to change the overall societal norms with subsequent effects on the local quality of life.  As protest activities reached critical mass, leaders tried to maximize protest breadth to increase persuasive effects legitimatizing anti-Maduro actions.  Socializing economic and expressive freedom standards could create opportunities for popular and government interaction with the potential to include external agencies.  When norm changes are internalized, new social standards will motivate actors to improve democratic processes by displaying norms.  Another example, most U.S. citizens have internalized freedom of speech ideas while other global nations are sometimes less tolerant of individual rights.  Venezuela’s current authoritarian government prefers behavioral practices restricting individual freedoms for a collective good.  This argument appears in President Maduro blocking external media, Columbian TV stations and CNN, to prevent alternate views from reaching the people (Martin 2017; Mioli 2017).

Soft Power Impacts on Social Media

Soft power uses attractive techniques influencing social media channels and users.  Social media availability, especially internet-based options, expands one’s opportunity to persuade social factors to change norms.  Most developing nations lack sufficient access to experience an internet-based, social media developed, soft power barrage, however, a 2015 Pew study scores Venezuela with 96% of the population having internet access and 67%, using the internet daily (Pushter and Stewart 2016, 10,14).  Additionally, 74% possess either a cell or smart phone with 88% of smart phone users using the phone for social media access (Pushter and Stewart 2016, 16,21).  Two behaviors associated with internet access are window opening and mirror holding.  Window opening is seeing other nation’s behavior through internet accesses and creating longer, more expansive views into other cultures (Bailard 2014, 40). Mirror holding shows societies’ an outside reflection of internal media practices (Bailard 2014, 26).  These factors demonstrate how structured influence techniques affect populations to generate new behaviors.

Mirror holding and window opening theories explain how technology-savvy populations counter repressive government’s information filters.  During the 2014 and 2017 protests, the Venezuelan government controlled most media access (Lugo-Ocando, Hernadez, Marchesi 2015, 3790).  In 2014, print and video media were government controlled through approved, official sources with previously coordinated information using no broadcast news other than regime inputs.  2014 protesters did use some Twitter influences to popularize detainee names and unfavorable government action such as local property damage, but these remained outside of any video or print proliferation by official sources (Lugo-Ocando, Hernadez, Marchesi 2015, 3792). The 2017 protest started when the judicial branch dissolved the legislative one, removing the people’s voice to the government. These later protests demonstrate how cell phone video delivered through social media can contradict government news sources.  During the first four months of the 2017 protest, Maduro’s government closed 24 radio stations, blocked three digital channels broadcasting protest supporting information, and a university TV channel which reported demonstration events.[[2]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn2" \o ")  Forensically examining 2017 social media trends will have to wait until more data becomes available.[[3]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn3" \o ")  In each case, protestor actions show vulnerabilities where soft power influences may change long term behaviors.

Creating Venezuelan Change

Two paths emerge as options for Venezuelan change, hard power or soft power.  Hard power advocates typically plan kinetic action like military efforts to create outcomes.  The U.S population, let alone other Central and South American populations, likely has little appetite today for military adventurism in Venezuela.  Even a Venezuelan peace-keeping force, with armed, third-party guards keeping Maduro’s military separated from protestors may be too negative for regional allies.  With military approaches unlikely, other coercive actions such as economic sanctions, trade embargos and diplomatic demarches create other challenges.  Economic sanctions and trade embargos could crush Venezuela’s already fragile economy, making food and medicine delivery more difficult and delaying their market growth away from oil exports.  Diplomatically, demarches have also shown little effect on Maduro.

Venezuela’s economic fragility means any further monetary downturn might reduce their own recovery potential.  Past protests were supported through internal and external funding so financially isolating the country to coerce government officials may also adversely impact protest funding.[[4]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn4" \o ")  Venezuela’s Brazilian relationship suffered from increased refugee traffic and Maduro’s government walked away from a June OAS meeting after counter-protest policies were criticized.[[5]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn5" \o ")  International tensions have not restrained Maduro’s actions to date and may well further loosen internal South American ties.  The loosening of these ties could drive Maduro to seek stronger relationships in China or Russia, both not conducive to long-term U.S. strategies.  In addition, Venezuela’s once positive Columbian relationship, based on their negotiating peace talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC), and previous Cuban economic ties are also deteriorating under Maduro.[[6]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn6" \o ") Weakening links may not bear the increased stress required for transmitting hard power’s coercive efforts and snapping links could create unpredictable results.

Soft power’s attractive techniques could be supported through cyber means to generate beneficial behaviors in Venezuela.  Several authors propose attractive power means.[[7]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn7" \o ")   Each demonstrates how desired effects can be matched to possible means to change outcomes.  For this case, three options appear, the first funding protests through outside agencies by harvesting sanctioned accounts to source monetary transfers.[[8]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn8" \o ")  Second, implementing oil contract price supports with external parties to generate secondary and tertiary effects improving the local economy and benefiting protests objectives.  Third, external sources engaging the government to negotiate protest objectives by privately paying to reduce counter-protest actions as a foreign aid objective.  Each approach could be strengthened through meme targeted messaging including social media options and cyber tools.  Social media based cyber operations could spread influence by extending protest messages reach or amplifying camera presence through drones to highlight actual protests past media controls to prevent police and military forces from taking aggressive action.  Broadcasting government actions will increase regional pressures through changing the actor’s factor perceptions and protest motivations.  Disseminated media communications are highly effective at creating normative change.  The Maduro government clearly believes this to be true as evidenced by the effort they expend to control media through censoring protest reports.[[9]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn9" \o ")  Dedicated cyber operations, like those available to U.S. military forces, could create guaranteed cyber channels, for example, utilizing a reverse ransomware application to secure encrypted paths allowing protest messaging to travel past Maduro’s media crackdowns.

The best U.S. option for mitigating Venezuelan circumstances without risking a government collapse will likely be blending soft power influences while threatening punitive economic, military, or diplomatic actions as a coercive element.  One must remember a military invasion threat will likely lack credibility while some punitive monetary changes may be short-term and subject to other market influences, like changing global oil prices.  The most effective solution targets would alter norms to increase opposition support to Maduro by integrating desired effects through social media, economic supports, and external encouragement.  Behavioral changes appearing throughout society will be measurable through conducting social media surveys or polling across influenced and secondary sources.

Understanding the Venezuelan Protests

Protests constitutes one social movement factor to motivate actors through options including delivering a message, communicating a meme, or inspiring behavioral change.[[10]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn10" \o ")  Social movements contain similarly motivated actor groups who attempt to change societal norms.  In studying Venezuela’s protests, the associated social movement actions attempt to influence external factors to solve demonstrated government inefficiencies as Maduro’s government did not negotiate with protest forces. This paper suggests U.S. policy makers can strengthen the Venezuelan population’s motivation through affecting normative factors through suggestive influences including using cyber-type tools to create desired ends.

Analysis Method

Most protests are active with multiple demonstrations, assemblies and speeches so reconstructing protest events to uncover specific motivations and factors tied to various lines of effort can be difficult.  Analysis methods typically include interviews, surveys, and other interactive techniques mixed with historical reports including witness reports and first-person accounts.  The sheer numbers involved, the sometimes-illegal nature of protest activities, and language constraints make reconstructing events in a timely manner difficult.  A recent United Nations report on Venezuelan protests demonstrated extensive government human rights violations and abuses during these protests as the primary means to suppress dissent.[[11]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn11" \o ") Further chronological distance from actual protest events will create more historical and case study efforts in addition to archived reporting.  Protests appear in many societies and demonstrate behavioral turning points that remain important objects of study.

In one protest analysis, Clemens and Hughes in, “Recovering Past Protest” discuss several approaches to uncovering protest inspired motivation.[[12]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn12" \o ")  They suggest each study should identify a unit of analysis, movement data, and selected correlates.  The unit of analysis describes events assessed, in this case, the two Venezuelan actions are the analysis units.  Movement data describes the factors causing normative change associated with the protests.  Selected correlates are more consistent for quantitative studies when one uses census data fields to compare movement data against broader population trends.  One of the most useful census reports examined was the Pew Center’s reporting digital penetration into Venezuelan society by social media and cell phone technology.[[13]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn13" \o ")  The investigated normative changes are more qualitatively based although further studies could compare analyze protest actions against Opposition party presence in governmental assemblies’ presence as a secondary impact.[[14]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn14" \o ") The qualitative approach that analyzes factors and motivations across protests through narrative is likely best supported through a limited case study approach.  Creswell defines case studies as, “the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system”[[15]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn15" \o ")  A short case study for each the 2014 and 2017 protest was conducted here based on news sources and scholarly articles.

Each of the two protest periods was examined in four, roughly bounded areas; events, external actors, internal actors, and factors.  This analysis’ assessments were primarily subjective and comparative.  The first, events, describes protest actions through secondary sources including protest length, deaths and injuries, police involvement, and economic impacts such as lost business, local damage, or property destruction.  The second area, external actors, relates how those outside­ Venezuela perceived and influenced actions.  External actors include nations or international organizations taking protest-based actions and their perceived impacts.  For example, an economic sanction against Venezuelan leaders or a U.S. Senate resolution supporting protesters both demonstrate external actions.

The third category, internal actors, shows local individuals creating localized effects.  Examples include protest actions, changing food and medicine’s availability, or government policy changes. One major internal action was Maduro’s Constituent Assembly use to derail protests through beginning a constitutional redraft. Internal and external actor categories identified protests that changed behaviors.  The final category, factors, suggests where applied influences could effect change. Factors examines susceptibility to coercive action including blockade or military forces, economic hard power, and suggestive soft power techniques such as social media persuasion, financial aid or cooperative engagement.  Identified factors were paired to suggested cyber operations techniques potentially available to U.S. policy makers.

Objectives

All protest analysis methods tried to identify where factors created motivations.  Motivations were assessed against an actor’s declared objectives.  One useful analysis emerged by comparing the Venezuelan populace’s objectives to government goals.  Further comparisons used external actor objectives like the Organization of American States. U.S. foreign policy, or the IEP’s positive peace theory.

Venezuelan popular objectives looked to improve freedom of expression and overall quality of the average individual’s life.  The Venezuelan people want to ensure channels guaranteeing a government voice, conditional improvements to food and medicine availability, and internalize cultural ideas only previously glimpsed in regional window opening.  Studies show the three, top material benefits sought by Venezuelans are access to health care, education benefits, and infrastructure improvements while the most important democratic characteristic sought remains citizen participation.[[16]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn16" \o ")  Food and medical availability remains an issue, for example, from Jan. 2016 to June 2016, Venezuelans eating three meals daily dropped from 70% to 40%.[[17]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn17" \o ")  A 75% increase in 2017’s malaria infection rate has resulted in prices jumping to an ounce and half of gold per pill, roughly $1800 U.S. or anywhere from 6-60 times normal pricing depending on the medication.[[18]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn18" \o ")  High inflation rates impact currency exchange and price controls as key barriers to government provided services.

The OAS is a regional organization addressing Western hemisphere issues.  U.S. State Department representatives have often espoused the OAS fills critical and constructive roles to help guide Venezuela during crisis.[[19]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn19" \o ")  The OAS charter includes six pillars; promoting democracy, defending human rights, ensuring a multidimensional security approach, fostering development and prosperity, and supporting inter-American legal cooperation.[[20]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn20" \o ")  The two Venezuelan protests impact almost all OAS pillars.  First, the OAS promotes democracy.  Extended protests indicate a democratic process failure when problems remain unsolved through constitutional means.  While individual protests show dissatisfaction and seek increased public awareness, extended protests increase government and civilian clashes demonstrating more severe challenges.  Increased protest duration shows motivation where frustrated government forces may abuse human rights through direct suppression including mass arrests.  In OAS’s prosperity pillar, if human rights are abused, improved economic opportunity may also disappear.  Lengthy market disruptions caused by protests will accentuate Venezuela’s food and medical shortages while international trade, including oil, also suffers.

OAS’s multi-dimensional security approach focuses on counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics concerns.  Over the past few years, Venezuelan problems drove 77,000 refugees into Brazil.  Brazil does not digitally track immigrants and admits to poor official records leaving even those numbers are estimates.[[21]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn21" \o ") Refugee flows could hide terrorist and criminal threats beneath confused border registration processes and inadequate personnel tracking.  Finally, OAS sponsored security improvements tie directly to their last pillar, fostering inter-American legal cooperation.  The OAS prefers cooperative relations though mutual agreements may lag when leaders disagree.

Since 2013, U.S. leaders identify continuing Venezuelan challenges as; human rights, energy, counter-narcotics and terrorism.  Each topic is a foreign policy factor.  As a democratic country, the U.S. advocates speech and expression freedoms at home and abroad.  In energy, the U.S. imports oil, and while overall imports declined since 2010 from 4.3 billion barrels to 3.4 billion barrels, 10% of those originate in Venezuelan.[[22]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn22" \o ")  Venezuela has the world’s largest, proven oil reserve at 300 billion barrels.  Oil exports dropped in half between 2014 and 2015, sliding from $29 billion to $14.5 billion, coincidentally tied directly to Maduro’s rise.  In both years, 95% of exported oil totals went to the U.S.[[23]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn23" \o ")  Venezuela’s oil export dependence means a 1$ drop in oil costs per barrel equates to a $700 million/year Gross Domestic Product (GDP) loss nationally.[[24]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn24" \o ")

In addition to petroleum profits, Venezuela next export option is the several preferred drug-smuggling routes emerging from South America through their country from various supply sources.  In 2015, several Venezuelans were sanctioned by the U.S for narcotics involvement.[[25]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn25" \o ")  The last U.S. regional factor for Venezuela is terrorism.  In June 2016, the U.S. State department stated Venezuela maintained a permissive environment enabling several terrorist groups to operate including FARC, ELN, and Hezbollah.[[26]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn26" \o ")  The Chavez administration had maintained close ties with Iranian President Ahmadinejad.  Since the former’s death and the latter’s departure from office, terrorist connections have weakened although changes have not trickled down to all groups operating the area.[[27]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn27" \o ")

Venezuelan Protests

The two examined Venezuelan protest periods highlighted complaints about government treatment of the population.  The 2014 period occurred over living conditions, and the 2017 protests against the Supreme Court’s March decision to dissolve the National Assembly and return power to the executive branch, meaning Maduro, removing several basic freedoms.  Each event shows numerous factors from local citizenry, outside nations and international organizations to accomplish various objectives during protests.  These factors demonstrate actors that soft power attraction, including items supported by cyber techniques, can create effects and support positive outcomes nationally and regionally.   Directing soft power against factors adjusts motivations to create new and persistent societal behaviors.

2014 - Protests Against Regional Insecurity

On 4 February 2014, students from Los Andes University initiated protests against President Maduro’s inability to provide regional security after a reported campus rape.[[28]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn28" \o ")  The protests lasted approximately 100 days, with 43 killed and 3,351 arrested from over 800,000 protesting.[[29]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn29" \o ")  A key contributor to the early protest cascade was the first death, student Bassil De Costa’s assassination by government forces and subsequent YouTube transmissions, also showing social media impact.[[30]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn30" \o ")  The 2014 protests showed the first widespread Venezuelan social media protest usage through Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to broadcast information denied by the national government through other channels.  The protest took two paths, one group advocating street protests to remove Maduro and the other group bolstering opposition party support (Mesa de Unidad Democratica, Democratic Unity Coalition (MUD)) for December 2014 elections.[[31]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn31" \o ")  The Maduro government launched an authoritarian and physical counter protest response.

Externally, very few international organizations officially recognized or supported protests which probably accelerated the harsh, government responses.  While individual OAS, UN members, and even Pope Francis condemned the violence, official support was limited.  The organizations who did speak, advocated dialogues between Maduro’s government and opposition without suggesting any means to accomplish objectives.  Two, March 2014, OAS meetings decided not to support any Venezuelan response.  The first suggested issuing condolences to protestors, and the U.S., with twenty-two other nations, voted against.  The second session was closed with no published results.  In April and May, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) took over discussions, hosting talks between parties.  UNASUR also stated increased economic sanctions against Venezuela would be harmful and those maintaining nonintervention principles should limit their actions to improving dialogue.[[32]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn32" \o ")

Possible influences do appear for actors, motivation, and factors during the 2014 protests.  Several actors appear; student protest leads, the MUD political party, Maduro’s government, OAS, U.S., the Papacy, and UNASUR.  Motivations begin with campus security issues and transition into expressive freedoms without government protest suppression.  External actors support Venezuela’s freedom of expression but no consensus appears for any intervention.  The only external change factor emerging was the secure dialogue generated by UNASUR meetings.  Secure dialogue, between sides, and from internal to external actors, will likely be critical in future, effective social media interactions.

2017- Protests against Supreme Court’s Dissolution of the National Assembly

The second protest set started in late March 2017 and lasted through the Constituent Council’s late August appointments.[[33]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn33" \o ")  Hundreds of thousands protested with thousands of injuries, 5,051 detentions and over 147 people killed.[[34]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn34" \o ")  The initial spark was the Venezuelan Supreme Court dissolving the MUD opposition-controlled National Assembly and returning law-making powers to the court.  At the time, the Assembly was the only counter-balance to Maduro’s political desires.   The court also supported an earlier, October 2016, State of Emergency power seizure, also Assembly opposed.[[35]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn35" \o ")  In April 2017, Maduro ordered courts to reverse their October ruling after numerous internal and external objections.  The protest cessation followed the July vote and August installation of Maduro’s Constituent Council to rewrite the Venezuelan constitution, likely in line with Maduro’s own desires.[[36]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn36" \o ")  The protest’s end should be considered mid-August, possibly 18 Aug, as the constituent assembly gave itself legislative powers then as an end-run around an opposition-controlled congress.[[37]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn37" \o ")

The protest’s external actors were the U.S. and OAS. The U.S. will fund $10M of humanitarian actions and regional actor support if U.S. Senate Bill S.1018,” Venezuela Humanitarian Assistance Act” had passed.[[38]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn38" \o ")  S1018 confirmed 2015’s sanctions of Venezuelan officials involved in illegal narcotics under an Obama administration Executive Order.  Additional U.S. sanctions targeted eight Venezuela’s Supreme Court members in EO 13692 based on their undermining the National Assembly’s authority.[[39]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn39" \o ")  Other DoT actions expanded sanctions to thirteen other government members, the state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela, the National Center for Foreign Commerce and even President Maduro.[[40]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn40" \o ")  The OAS debated multiple times on Venezuelan options and their Secretary-General publicly condemned the Maduro government.  An OAS speech described collusion between OAS and the Catholic Church designed to influence Maduro to free political prisoners, open humanitarian aid channels, introduce a new electoral calendar, and respect the National Assembly’s autonomy.[[41]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn41" \o ")  No action accompanied any OAS proposal although the largest combined pressure between the U.S. and the OAS was to cancel the constituent assembly.[[42]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn42" \o ")  Clearly, delaying or denying the constituent proposal failed to stop the Assembly’s investiture.  Since installation, external options may have lost their most important opportunity to create normative change.

Maduro’s success against challenges suggests uncoordinated efforts are likely insufficient to change future outcomes.  Despite deaths and injuries, the government strategy remained largely unchanged, suppress protests, and wait until energy for reform dissipates.  For now, the strategy is working.  One analyst suggests Maduro actively models his behavior after China’s Tiananmen or current Syrian regimes, however, he has neither the economic power for China, nor the outside backing for Syria.[[43]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn43" \o ")  Domestically, Maduro’s wrecked economy caused protests to spread to, and influence, poor neighborhoods which once exclusively voted for Chavez.[[44]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn44" \o ")  Maduro’s planning included snipers and other military force as an option if other controls had slipped.[[45]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn45" \o ")  Economically, the Venezuelan Bolivar was pegged last April (2016) at 10 to the dollar and the official rate varies little.  Since protests began, black market rates, which do demonstrate market fluctuations, vary widely from 3,200 to 7,984 so $1 in Bolivars on 29 Mar is only worth .40 today.[[46]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn46" \o ") These economic difficulties make protester’s ability to sustain actions even more difficult.   Last year, Maduro increased the minimum wage 454% to offset inflation with no apparent effect on the overall crisis.[[47]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn47" \o ")

Several influence factors are possible; supporting protestors, acting directly against Maduro, or actions against government institutions.  Supporting protesters encourages more civilian participation through increasing protest volume, monetary or supply support to increase sustainability, or messaging by meme transfer influencing motivations. Factors featuring Maduro should focus on his removal through revolutionary actions, supporting democratic opposition during elections, or changing his coalition support basis.  All three counter-Maduro areas could use structured social media messaging to improve success rates.  The first category, revolutionary actions, would require the most caution.  The Maduro government’s sudden fall could result in a Latin-American failed state and create still more regional problems.  Chavez’s frequent complaints about U.S. coup attempts during his regime have merely continued during Maduro’s reign and any poorly coordinated efforts to affect the regime’s survivability could affect those outcomes.[[48]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn48" \o ")  Supporting institutions would focus on generating disconnects between Maduro and his government through expanded food and medical aid, organizational support through social media, or preemptive contract sanctions.  Preemptive contract sanctions place restrictions on the current government, declaring any new government established will not be bound by contracts or loans to the previous, and illegitimate government.[[49]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn49" \o ") These preemptive contracts could offer all new oil contracts to Venezuelan oil exports once Maduro was ousted.

Comparing Protest Events

The two protest’s events primary actors are similar with only UNASUR, remaining the same.  Each actor develops differently when responding to factors and motivations requiring careful message construction when creating behavioral change.  Identifying key actors improves motivations when focused on policy-maker desired outcomes.  Effecting norms about freedom of expression would be one area, improving internal economics through food and medical availability another, and broader regional cooperation a third.  Well-scripted messaging could blend multiple items although each effect desired should strive to ensure properly structured messages are distributed.

Useful dialogue between the government and protestors remains essential to resolve conflict.  Without external mediation, and incentives to cooperate, effective conversations about conflict resolution will not occur.  The government perceives no advantages to discussion without an end to protests and the protesters see no advantage to discussion without an end to authoritarian actions. The Constituent council’s appointment and protest dissolution removes any government inclinations to negotiate as their goals are achieved. Dialogue between protestors and external agencies can also create options.  Encouraging communication through financial support to protesters may aid as the main complaint remains pitiful economic standards creating a low quality of life.  Transactions in non-Venezuelan currency would bolster local markets and increase stability.  Ideas suggested earlier to improve protest success included reducing government media suppression, for example, using guaranteed media sources to transmit protest messaging.[[50]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn50" \o ")  Improving quality of life could happen with food and medical delivery improvements including branding as external sources or working through international organizations to stabilize financial systems through combatting inflation and improving employment. Wider access to micro-loans may also be a possible alternative.

The key for changing behaviors through actors and factors lies in modifying underlying motivations.  Both protest cycles began as an initial event and continued long after singular events fade.  The underlying Venezuelan societal vulnerabilities cause protest events to persistently occur, and popular dissatisfaction creates their resilience.  Even as current protests fade, Maduro’s overall inability to lead suggests not much time passes before further protests begin.  The government’s inability to engage the people and create mutually beneficial improvements encourages the cycle.  Even Chavez’s temporary fixes were sufficient to change underlying motivations sufficiently to thwart protest cycles.  Maduro lack’s Chavez’s charisma or historic appeal.  Paradoxically, improved expression to support Maduro will not appear until legal constraints restricting expression disappear.  This suggests increased social media availability and messaging will reduce expressive restrictions without formal changes.   Both protest cycles indicated two areas to improve before the cycle breaks; increased freedom of expression and decreased economic instability.

Way Ahead

Changing a nation’s behaviors through coercive actions like sanctions or military show of force are often first suggestions to U.S. planners or international organizations like OAS.  While not always easy to implement, these common actions show clear effects and are relatively simple to understand.  However, employing traditional sanctions or suggesting kinetic action might derail Western objectives rather than create desired outcomes.  Attractive, soft power paths can be more difficult to plan and describe.  However, in Venezuela, no advanced options appear to have been suggested, considered, or framed for any implementation.  When a population protests for internal change, soft power techniques altering behaviors through social media, foreign aid, or economic relief offer alternative options to increase those movements chances of reaching desired ends. Recent world events demonstrated how Russia aggressively used social media to successfully advance Crimean objectives.[[51]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn51" \o ") Both Venezuela protest events established the population’s desire to reduce an authoritarian government’s controls to install a more democratic society, movements falling just short of creating successful change.  The first question in choosing strategies should establish priorities as; the safety and security of the Venezuelan people, U.S. national interests, and improving Latin American regional harmony.

U.S. Objectives

Soft power techniques advancing U.S. objectives in Venezuela should match corresponding policy goals in human rights, energy, counter-narcotics and terrorism.  The following three lines of effort would advance those goals; increasing diplomatic channels, relieving popular suffering, and alleviating common grievances.  Public conflicts between police and civilians as well as food and medical availability plague Venezuela. The current crisis’ magnitude suggests soft power efforts should be prioritized over hard power’s more damaging means to minimize collateral effects. Efforts like military intervention or sanctions would increase local difficulties, decrease food and medical availability, and further devalue the currency.  Each line of effort requires associated planning to show specific factors susceptible to change.  The two cases showed where government and population factors exist and are vulnerable.  Once a protest ends, factors lose effectiveness as the motivations, and potential cascade, dissipates.  While matching short-term U.S. and regional objectives may prove difficult, changing Venezuelan behaviors can only benefit our long-term efficiencies.  For example, U.S. objectives match closely to OAS standards like promoting democracy, advancing human rights, and improving prosperity.

Maximizing Influence Opportunities

The first question in maximizing factor and actor influences is where effects are desired and what those effects mean.  The identified protest factors show potential effect options. Widening planning options could consider broader social media and engagement factors to leaves manipulation means possibilities wide open.  A suggested method above used social media techniques to influence behavior and create change.  For example, protest engagement opportunities occurred through international money from GoFundMe sites and Generosity as well as publishing Amazon wish-lists of protest gear on Twitter, Instagram and Whatsapp.  The #RegalaUnaMascara, or “Gift a Mask” link allowed expats to gift gas masks to protesters who struggled against better-armed police forces.[[52]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn52" \o ")  Both actions attempted to outfit protestors to alter environmental interactions through delaying government effectiveness in disrupting events and allow more time for protest effects to change behaviors.  Adding other items to wish-lists, increasing available funds, or other associated actions all may advance objectives.  One proposed method could be to provide protest shields with preprinted slogans for camera visibility, or perhaps anti-Maduro shirts with RFID tags, allowing outside sources to track individual movements including government arrest and transportation of protestors, something not publicized outside Venezuela.  The social feedback from unifying protestors to defy government officials provides a factor to change popular motivations and can be initiated by carefully designed social media influences.

Social media availability and foreign aid caps should be viewed as constraining limitations, not the initial starting point for engagement.  Social media’s use does not condone artificial news or propaganda, rather, using existing channels to spread an accurate message containing desired memes. The first and foremost U.S. goal should be maximizing Venezuelan popular influences and stabilizing the economy away from socialism and oil-dependence.[[53]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn53" \o ")  While oil remains valuable, as over 90% of the GDP, small market fluctuations drastically effect national, and hence popular, economic stability.  When oil prices rise, income rises, and inflation drops as the dollar supply increases but those effect are temporary.  For lasting change, the U.S. should attempt advertising or education to grow other Venezuelan economic sectors.  As mentioned before, microloans underwritten by international aid could help spur Venezuelan development in other sectors.  Simultaneously, offering a guaranteed oil price for a pre-determined quantity of U.S. sales could provide stability to a turbulent market.  Demonstrating techniques and providing foreign aid to change exports through emphasizing availability and sustainability on social media outlets could improve mirror holding effects on the population.

After changing oil outcomes, one must improve interactions between the population and the government.  While violent at times, neither protest appears equivalent with Arab Spring events leading to internal revolutions nor should the U.S. support an open revolution in South America.  This limitation means internal improvements through attractive soft power to modifying protest outcomes may be the most viable means to generate changes.  Coordinating OAS and U.S. activities to deliver the Venezuelan population information on regional support will help.  Protecting media outlets from Maduro’s shut downs through cybersecurity techniques to guarantee the protesters message reaches the world is another.  Secured transmission outlets through encryption, or guaranteed channels tunneled through other networks will all reduce government media control and improve freedom of expression, both key protest goals.  Secured message outlets show increasing value in modern society and providing multiple communication paths for a protester’s message allows those images to distribute virally.[[54]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn54" \o ")  Individual actions will not guarantee immediate improvement but will incrementally improve the path to those goals.  As the economy improves, the population’s ability to communicate accurately, and open windows to others, may improve situations without continuing or considerable, U.S. foreign investment.

The final option would be generating a means through which the U.S. and the OAS could help alleviate common grievances through existing institutions. Offering timely assistance to organize more effective aid and food distribution, localized training to create economic opportunity, and anti-corruption training to Venezuelan agencies could be effective.  In the past, elder statesmen have helped create influences where others have failed. Perhaps, sending a U.S. politician who has previously praised Venezuela such as Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-VT) could help put them on the right track.[[55]](https://smallwarsjournal.com/index.php/jrnl/art/remedying-venezuela-soft-power-cures-political-strife" \l "_edn55" \o ")   A team with open goals, and social media support, could create popular changes supporting U.S. objectives.  Another common face to mitigate Venezuelan crises could be the Catholic Pope, or similarly high-ranking church figure who would be well received in the largely Catholic society and possess traditional authority.  Supporting those messages through social media could help facilitate alternative solutions.

Likely Outcomes

The July 2017 constituent referendum succeeded, despite fraud allegations.  The subsequent Constituent Assembly’s installation and power assumption appeared to wrench the spirit from any further protests.  The successful referendum allows Maduro to rewrite the constitution and may possibly render many previously lawful protest actions illegal when the Assembly finishes their constitutional rewrite.  If the constitution no longer delivers a freedom of speech, when or why the people demonstrate will be less relevant since all will all be subject to mass arrest.  Any challenges, even attempting attractive outcomes through social media, would require substantial resource investment and desire from U.S. policy makers in Maduro’s new Venezuela since their acts may be illegal and subject to prosecution.  Even the OAS, as the regional organization, showed only a limited interest in actions to mitigate previous protest root causes.

The Constituent assembly is composed almost entirely of Madruo allies, rendering it difficult to create change.  Those who once protested now wait, watching to see if anything will remain for them to influence in the new Venezuela.  The fall season will likely see increases in world oil prices as temperatures fall with some associated mild economic relief.  Hurricanes during 2017 in the Caribbean Gulf including Harvey, Irma and Maria caused some oil price fluctuations to Venezuela’s benefit.  If the constituent assembly advances overly controversial topics, increasing government authority or reducing speech freedom, protest cycles may begin again. Subsequently, U.S. chances to influence Venezuela will also increase.  The real question will become, how much change will be necessary to generate protest?  Here too, carefully modulated social messaging could better align Assembly outcomes towards U.S. objectives.  Overall, any immediate national change is unlikely without external intervention.

If the U.S. desires Venezuela to become more democratic and open in the long run, we should employ soft power, attractive techniques through social media manipulation and other referenced techniques to create behavioral change for Venezuelans.  As intermediate objectives, we should aim to reduce their oil dependence, support regional speech freedoms through enabling secure regional communications, and moderate negotiations between Maduro and his opposition to alleviate common grievances.  Above all, we must engage Maduro’s national leadership to expand popular opportunities without perceived internal risks, slowing the Constituent Assembly from writing the Venezuelan people out of their own constitution.  Leadership decisions advocating social media usages to transmit desired memes can help foster norm emergence and behavioral change, enabling a popular opinions cascade, and allowing the overall Venezuelan culture to internalize a transition away from Maduro and communism.

#### Maduro will lose democratic elections

Meakem ’24 [Allison; Associate Editor, Foreign Policy. “Venezuela’s Strongman Wonders Whether to Risk Free Elections for Sanctions Relief.” https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/01/02/venezuela-elections-maduro-machado-economy-sanctions-migration/] TDI

Now, Maduro is in a bind: If he wants enduring sanctions relief from the United States, he will have to allow Machado to run. Her chances of ousting him in a free and fair election are good. Machado is considered popular and won the opposition primary with more than 90 percent of the vote.

So far, Machado is the only declared candidate in the yet-to-be-confirmed presidential race. Maduro is widely expected to run again as the PSUV’s candidate; Venezuelan presidents serve six-year terms and face no limits on reelection. Only a plurality is required to win.

Maduro appears to be worried about his prospects. He recently called a referendum on whether Venezuela should incorporate the disputed (and oil-rich) Essequibo region, which falls within Guyana’s international boundaries but which most Venezuelans claim as their own. The move — approved by 95 percent of voters but with disputed turnout — was widely perceived as an attempt to curry nationalist fervor ahead of the expected elections. Now, there are genuine fears of a land war in Latin America. The things autocrats will do to stay in power.

### 1AR—Protests Fail

#### Discontent is non-unique and protest fail against nationalist frenzy

**Goodman '24** [(Joshua Goodman, ) "Maduro seeks to shore up Venezuela military's support ahead of vote threatening his hold on power," AP News, https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-election-military-loyalty-dff452ac53858ee36f1fe099fb4b1c4d, 7-5-2024] TDI

AGUA CALIENTE, Venezuela (AP) — At a crossroads not far from a gas station overgrown with weeds, young men and women in faded green fatigues stop vehicles returning from a rally for opponents of **Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, ask passengers for their identifications, and inspect their cars, trucks and motorcycles.**

Such checkpoints have proliferated across the country’s vast tropical plains, forested highlands and beachfronts in the run-up to Sunday’s presidential election, aiming to intimidate and occasionally detain government critics. They often involve a request for a ride, bananas or “collaboration” — Venezuela’s euphemism for a small bribe.

**But the power play frequently falls flat. When their superiors slip away from the scorching sun, the grunts betray their displeasure with Maduro and openness to a new commander in chief.**

“Did the lady arrive? Were there a lot people?” one giddy soldier asks about opposition leader Maria Corina Machado.

**“We wanted to watch, but there is no Wi-Fi here,” whispers another.**

**Since taking power in 2013, Maduro hasn’t hesitated to deploy troops to crush protests while rewarding senior officers with lucrative government jobs and control of key industries. But days away from a hotly disputed vote that threatens Maduro’s hold on power, the self-proclaimed socialist is working harder than ever to shore up the loyalty of the armed forces — the traditional arbiter of political disputes in Venezuela — and keep top commanders in line.**

**In recent days, the president has appeared on state TV attending a graduation ceremony for 25,000 police officers, praising them as the first line of defense against what he called attempts by rightwing hardliners to provoke a tragedy. He also promoted dozens of officers and bestowed a new title on his longtime defense minister, Vladimir Padrino López: ”General of the Sovereign People.”**

**“The destiny of Venezuela depends on our victory,” Maduro said at a rally this month. “If we want to avoid a bloodbath, or a fratricidal civil war triggered by the fascists, then we must guarantee the biggest electoral victory ever.”**

### 1NC—Sanction Refrom CP

#### The United States should:

#### Increase cooperation with Rio Treaty members, Canada, and the EU on sanctions

#### Increase secondary sanctions on members of Venezuela’s illicit gold trading market

#### aid Venezuela’s democratic transition

Chang '20 [(Joshua Chang, Ryan C. Berg) "Checkmating Chavismo: An Evaluation of US Sanctions Against Venezuela," Georgetown Security Studies Review, https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2020/08/18/checkmating-chavismo-an-evaluation-of-us-sanctions-against-venezuela/, 8-18-2020] TDI

Even though sanctions remain Washington’s preferred policy tool against the regime to compel it to negotiate an exit from power, the Maduro regime continues to circumvent US sanctions and accumulate wealth at the expense of the Venezuelan people. By engaging in illicit operations that allow it to offset, to an extent, revenues lost from its precipitous decline in crude oil exports, the Maduro regime has effectively evaded sanctions primarily through illicit gold mining and trade-based money laundering.

In 2016, Maduro announced the opening of the so-called “Arco Minero,” or “Orinoco Mining Arc,” completing a vision first laid out by then-President Hugo Chávez in 2011. This expansive territory in the southern part of Venezuela comprises about 12% of the country and is one of the world’s richest in minerals, including bauxite, coltan, diamonds, and gold.[v] Since its opening, the “Arco Minero”has become a hotspot for illegal gold mining, where horrendous conditions and a resurgence of communicable disease prevail, and marauding gangs run rampant while imposing their own social order.[vi] Venezuela’s state-owned mining companies, Minerven and Compañía Anónima Militar para las Industrias Mineras, Petrolíferas y de Gas (CAMIMPEG), purchase volumes of gold from local wildcat miners, which are then melted into gold bars and transferred to the Central Bank of Venezuela.[vii] Further, civilian airliners’ cargo holds transport even larger amounts of gold from Venezuela, which is difficult to detect, and this gold is eventually formalized into the international gold market.[viii] Turkey, Russia, and the United Arab Emirates are some of the top destinations for Venezuelan gold.

Despite broad-based US sanctions against Venezuela’s illicit gold sector, [ix] the very nature of the international gold market defies regulation. The ease with which gold can be “laundered”—namely by concealing its origins by melting it down and refining it to the quality required by buyers—makes detection and enforcement of existing measures difficult.[x] In theory, gold exported from Latin America requires both certificates of origin and purchase receipts, usually furnished by those who buy directly from miners. But unscrupulous intermediaries occasionally provide fraudulent purchase receipts for illegal wildcat miners or exaggerate the production of legal mines, topping up their exports with illicitly mined gold. These schemes permit the Maduro regime to market Venezuelan gold as originating in nearby countries, such as Colombia or Ecuador, thereby bringing it within the legal framework of the international gold market while also filling up the coffers of criminal groups such as the National Liberation Army.[xi] The hard currency generated by illicit gold has contributed greatly to the resilience of Venezuela’s authoritarian regime.

To handle the regime’s complex international finances, Maduro relies on a coterie of bagmen such as Alex Saab Morán—a global expert in money laundering and illicit finance. Although the US sanctions architecture does not appear capable of deterring illicit gold exports at this time, it does affect Maduro’s ability to bank the proceeds, an activity dependent on shadowy financiers with knowledge and connections in countries plagued by loose financial oversight. The work of these financiers directly impacts the regime’s stability, since access to hard currency is critical to buying off Maduro’s political supporters and cronies. Saab’s recent arrest in Cape Verde and his pending extradition to the United States promises to unravel part of Maduro’s illicit schemes.[xii]  The wealth of information on Maduro’s illicit operations to which this circle of financiers is privy makes them attractive targets for a multi-country dragnet.

At the moment, the European Union, Canada, and several Latin American states have all levied various sanctions against Venezuela, ranging from entry bans on regime officials to asset freezes.[xiii] To tighten the impact of sanctions, the U.S. should calibrate them to encompass more of the regime’s illicit revenue sources, coordinate better with international partners’ sanctions, and enhance secondary sanctions against entities that carry out business with the regime, especially given that the international sanctions net against Venezuela is more akin to a messy patchwork of uncoordinated policies rather than a cohesive, solid network.

Washington should address this sieve-like architecture using several tools. In Latin America, Washington should continue to rely on the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, otherwise known as the Rio Treaty, to coordinate a unified regional response to Venezuela’s dictatorship. The Rio Treaty is a mutual defense pact between the United States and varying countries in the Western Hemisphere, which member-states invoked to increase pressure on the Maduro regime, including imposing sanctions on Venezuela by those countries capable of designating and enforcing them.[xiv] In September 2019, Rio Treaty members agreed to coordinate intelligence on regime activities and sanctions on individual regime officials, meet periodically to evaluate their sanctions, and mend any breaks in the regional sanctions fabric in response to Maduro’s actions.[xv] Furthermore, US diplomats should meet bilaterally with their EU and Canadian counterparts in working groups to discuss these topics in a similar manner as their Rio Treaty partners. In this way, the United States could informally integrate these partners into a more cohesive sanctions network, even if the European Union and Canada are not party to the Rio Treaty.

To have any chance of precipitating a political transition in Venezuela, US sanctions must expand the perimeter around the country and plug gaps in the sanctions architecture considering that the requirements of survival have widened Maduro’s web of allies willing to circumvent US sanctions. Cuba, Iran, Russia, China, and Turkey form the rogues’ gallery now supporting Maduro. The use of secondary sanctions should be ramped up to target entities that deliberately flout US sanctions to offer the Maduro regime a lifeline. The recent US confiscation of Venezuela-bound Iranian oil shows that such sanctions could deprive Maduro of key resources used to sustain his regime and dissuade countries from trying to defy US sanctions at the risk of their own assets and reputations. [xvi]

The breakdown of order at the hands of the Maduro regime has led to the entrenchment of violent transnational guerrilla groups and narcotraffickers within the country, generating spillover effects and regional instability. [xvii] Sanctions are one of the most effective policy tools for Washington to confront Venezuela’s dictatorship and its adverse effects on regional security and should be combined with other means, such as diplomatic support for the democratic opposition and humanitarian assistance to Venezuelan refugees. While US policymakers may not be able to induce a political transition in the short-term, the logic behind US and regional actions is that these various instruments would empower the opposition and provide a pathway for the regime to step down from power. Until then, the United States should continue to monitor the effects of its sanctions, tweak them accordingly to fill gaps, and stand ready to facilitate a democratic transition in Venezuela.

## Iran

### 1NC—Sanction Reform CP

#### The United States should reform sanctions by

#### Creating systems to assess the success of sanctions

#### Codifying carveouts

#### Provide assurances to private sector actors

International Crisis Group '18 [(International Crisis Group, ) "Sanctions, Peacemaking and Reform: Recommendations for U.S. Policymakers," No Publication, https://www.crisisgroup.org/united-states/8-sanctions-peacemaking-and-reform-recommendations-us-policymakers, 3-2-2018] TDI

What’s new? Sanctions have become an increasingly prominent tool of U.S. statecraft. As the use of sanctions has increased, so, too, has awareness of their collateral effects. The U.S. government has adopted new policies to mitigate the problems sanctions can cause. While important, these reforms are incomplete.

Why does it matter? While the U.S. looks to sanctions to further its goals in numerous conflicts, sanctions also sometimes obstruct peacemaking – that is, activities in the service of violence prevention and conflict resolution. The more Washington uses sanctions, the more far-reaching the downsides are and the more pressing it is to address them.

What should be done? The U.S. government should better align sanctions policy with peacemaking efforts. It could do so by setting clear objectives for sanctions programs, subjecting them to rigorous periodic review, expanding and making permanent carveouts for peace activities, and addressing private-sector concerns about investment in previously sanctioned jurisdictions.

Executive Summary

The U.S. is using sanctions with greater frequency than ever before. Sanctions are an increasingly prominent tool of U.S. policy in matters of war and peace – whether used to constrain conflict actors’ resources, address their abuses, change their cost-benefit calculations or advance negotiations. Yet sanctions sometimes hinder conflict resolution efforts. They can inhibit peace processes and post-conflict recovery, constrain peace organisations, undercut negotiations and entrench divisions between conflict parties. These downsides are a function of U.S. sanctions’ intractability and increasing complexity, as well as the lack of protocols for assessing their impact. The U.S. has taken steps in recent years toward reforming sanctions practices, but gaps remain when it comes to addressing the negative effects of sanctions on peace efforts. To address these shortfalls, Washington should set clear objectives when imposing sanctions; conduct regular, meaningful reviews of their effects; expand sanctions carveouts for peacemaking; and bolster private-sector confidence in investing in previously or partially sanctioned jurisdictions.

Washington’s use of economic sanctions expanded greatly following the Cold War, intensifying again in the early and mid-2000s following the attacks of 11 September 2001. While the U.S. generally preferred to impose sanctions multilaterally (ideally within a framework created by the UN Security Council), it sometimes proceeded unilaterally. The centrality of the U.S. financial system and the U.S. dollar in global finance and trade gave Washington’s sanctions unique reach and leverage. Innovations in sanctions practice allowed policymakers more precision in applying them.

U.S. policymakers tended to view sanctions as a low-risk tool, especially compared with military options.

Against this backdrop, the use of sanctions ballooned. Washington looked to sanctions to pursue its struggles with foes such as North Korea, Iran and antagonists in the war on terror, as well as to press other agendas in the peace and security realm. It relied on sanctions to restrict conflict parties’ ability to acquire and use weapons and resources, hold them accountable for corruption and human rights abuses, raise the cost of destabilising behaviour, and encourage negotiations. U.S. policymakers tended to view sanctions as a low-risk tool – especially compared with military options – and some saw it as a release valve that helped reduce the pressure to resort to force.

As U.S. sanctions proliferated, however, so did concerns about their collateral effects. In the realm of conflict resolution, practitioners – including scholars, members of civil society and U.S. officials – saw evidence of sanctions compromising peace efforts. They sometimes undercut peace negotiations, particularly when conflict parties came to doubt that the U.S. would ever reverse them. They could prove stubbornly intractable, even after conflicts came to an end, and cast a shadow over political transitions, humanitarian operations and stabilisation efforts. They complicated the work of organisations trying to reconcile populations divided by conflict and help former belligerents find their footing in the post-conflict order. The U.S. Treasury authorised the activities of these organisations in certain cases, but these permissions did not fully set things right, in part because its licensing powers did not reach the full range of U.S. sanctions. Also, even when legal constraints were addressed, private companies and NGOs worried about reputational risks and compliance costs.

The reasons why sanctions pose obstacles to peace efforts are multi-faceted, but three main problems stand out. First, U.S. sanctions are sticky: they are hard to change, ease or lift because of domestic politics and bureaucratic inertia. In particular, the political pressures surrounding decisions to ease or rescind sanctions mean that presidents may be loath to incur the costs that such decisions may entail, including fear of alienating members of Congress whose support they need to advance other priorities. Secondly, Washington has no system for comprehensively assessing sanctions’ harms or effectiveness – and thus the U.S. cannot gauge whether they are helping or hurting efforts to achieve the peace and security goals in whose name they have been launched. Thirdly, as sanctions have proliferated, they have become increasingly complex, making them hard to disentangle or reform. Sanctions have become less likely to sway conflict parties, who have no faith that the penalties will be lifted – or the effects alleviated – if they make concessions.

The Biden administration has taken landmark steps to address some of these problems. It commissioned a review of U.S. sanctions policy; co-sponsored a resolution at the UN Security Council to create a carveout for humanitarian activities in some Council sanctions; and through the Treasury Department issued general licences that implemented and expanded on these carveouts – broadening them to cover peacebuilding, conflict resolution and conflict prevention activities in a raft of sanctions programs. But despite these positive steps, the reforms remain incomplete. Meanwhile, the Biden administration shows no sign of taking its foot off the gas when it comes to imposing new sanctions. It has designated far more targets than its predecessors, and massive sanctions form a major part of its response to Russia’s all-out invasion of Ukraine.

Economic sanctions remain an important tool of U.S. foreign policy – one that Crisis Group has supported in many instances (including the Ukraine crisis) – but they are also a highly imperfect instrument that requires further adaptation. More work should be done to understand and mitigate the negative effects that sanctions can have on peacemaking. In particular, the U.S. government should:

Make it a practice to more precisely clarify which foreign policy objectives sanctions are intended to achieve, what behaviour prompted the sanctions and what targets can do to be considered for removal from the sanctions list. Doing so would bolster Washington’s ability to use sanctions as leverage over conflict parties, including during negotiations, in turn allowing officials to use them more effectively as part of conflict resolution and mitigation strategies.

Institute systems for meaningfully reviewing sanctions’ performance, including their impact on peacemaking, and recalibrating them as needed. Reviews, informed by clearly defined objectives, would afford policymakers an opportunity to gauge whether sanctions are achieving their goals, so that they have a better sense of when to adjust or wind them down.

Expand sanctions carveouts and codify them in legislation so that peacemaking activities are comprehensively and permanently permitted. Doing so will facilitate the work of peace organisations in conflict-affected countries.

Better address private sector reluctance to pursue licensed or otherwise permitted transactions in sanctioned or previously sanctioned countries. This may require the U.S. to conduct deeper outreach and provide stronger assurances to private sector actors so that they are comfortable pursuing authorised activities, and to offer greater support for economic regeneration in previously sanctioned countries.

After decades of relying on sanctions, U.S. policymakers have shown an important interest in the reforms that will make them more effective while managing their downsides. But much more needs to be done. Serious measures to modify the way sanctions are assessed, calibrated and removed – and their after-effects addressed – will be needed in order to put this powerful tool to best use in the service of peace and security.

### 1NC—Regime Change CP Updates

#### Successfully Changes the Regime.

Shannon '24 [(Kelly, a 2023–2024 W. Glenn Campbell and Rita Ricardo-Campbell national fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and associate professor of history at Florida Atlantic University.) "The United States needs a new Iran policy—and it involves regime change, but not the traditional kind," Atlantic Council, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/iransource/regime-change-iran-women-life-freedom/, 2-22-2024] TDI  
Instead of traditional regime change, the United States should adopt a **two-pronged approach** to assist the Iranian people in their pursuit of democratic change. In the short term, US policymakers should continue to **engage in difficult diplomacy and deterrence** with the Islamic Republic to try to reduce Iran’s bad behavior as much as possible, while keeping in mind that **genuine détente** with the regime is **not possible given its ideology**, in which anti-Americanism is a core element.

In the long term, the United States should implement a policy of **overtly and covertly helping** the Iranian people create the conditions to build and sustain a **successful mass movement to democratize Iran** and align its behavior with global norms and the rule of law, especially regarding human rights. To achieve this long-term goal, US policymakers must resist the urge to take the lead; they must instead listen to anti-regime Iranians in the country, especially experienced women’s rights activists, and dissidents in exile, and help the Iranian people empower themselves to lead the change in their country.

Such a policy approach is rare in US history. Yet there are precedents when Americans supported positive change abroad by adopting a supportive role and genuine commitment to democracy and human rights that successfully secured US objectives and international security. Rather than direct intervention, **subtle forms of US support** for anti-communist movements in Eastern Europe during the late Cold War, especially the Solidarity Movement in Poland, helped those movements ultimately overthrow their communist governments on their own, build nascent democratic systems, and end the Cold War in 1989–1991. While the US government hesitated for decades to condemn the South African apartheid regime, the US public’s vocal support for the anti-apartheid movement and active participation in divestment helped the South African people end racial apartheid and build an inclusive democratic government led by Nelson Mandela in 1994. Updating these approaches for the twenty-first century could go a long way toward helping Iranians build an Iran that is no longer a threat to its own people or regional stability.

US policymakers could deploy various tools on multiple fronts to accomplish this objective, and the United States would need to do this in partnership with its democratic allies. Countries with no problematic history of dominating Iran—such as Ireland, South Africa, Mauritius, New Zealand, or Japan—would be best suited to this work. In essence, dissident Iranians need space, resources, meaningful international support, and a measure of protection to organize a powerful opposition movement. US policy would serve to support these suppressed voices in Iran.

To implement this policy, the United States would work covertly with Iranians and overtly to marshal international support for the Iranian people. In Iran, US policymakers should **identify** as many key in-country individuals with whom to work as possible. Ideally, these should be people with local or national influence who can get things done, show leadership potential, bring diverse perspectives to the table, and have clear ideas for what a post-Islamic Republic Iran should look like. Iran’s **prisons are full of** such **leaders**; many more are emerging across the country. The United States would work with this cohort to help **create and run workshops** for Iranians on democratic capacity building, **strategic planning,** **governance best practices**, and **help with ideas for economic support** for movement participants, as well as **connect these Iranians with activists abroad** with relevant experience. The United States should also find a way to **provide reliable, safe internet access** that is not easy for the regime to hack or trace, which will be essential for movement organizing and education efforts.

Along the way, US policymakers must resist the urge to anoint a particular opposition leader, avoiding another Ahmed Chalabi situation. The **Iranian people will choose** their leaders in a post-Islamic Republic future, which is as it should be.

The United States could, however, attempt to **unify the Iranian diaspora**. The unprecedented coming together of the diaspora in support of the Woman, Life, Freedom movement provided protesters on the ground with much-needed moral support and international amplification of their voices. When the coalition of diasporic leaders collapsed by late spring 2023, it was a major blow to the movement on the ground in Iran. Building solidarity and unity within the long-factionalized diaspora will be difficult. Still, a unified diasporic voice—and funding—supporting the opposition movement in Iran will be a key component in such a movement’s ultimate success.

At the international level, the United States and its allies must keep the world’s attention on Iran. There is already significant support for Iranians among the global public, as evidenced by the many worldwide solidarity protests during the Woman, Life, Freedom movement. Governments must align with this global public opinion. Just as the United States and its allies did with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the international community must consistently and loudly condemn all human rights violations and political repression by the Islamic Republic. International condemnation of Iran’s behavior through unified statements by a coalition of anti-regime—preferably, democratic—governments, as well as unified rejection of Iran holding influential human rights-related positions in the United Nations or its representation at legitimizing international forums like the World Economic Forum in Davos, would help maintain international pressure on the Islamic Republic.

The regime is not immune to global pressure to moderate its behavior. US policymakers could also do much to encourage enhanced US public support for the people of Iran. International media, **US policymakers**, and democratic allies **can use knowledge and truth as weapons**; the Islamic Republic relies on lies and deception. Shining a harsh light on those lies and countering them with truth will be a valuable approach to combatting autocracy and oppression. **Propaganda efforts** to **drive a wedge between Russia and Iran**, as well as undermine its support by the rank-and-file within the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and military, would also help weaken the regime.

If, as President Joe Biden has insisted, the greatest global challenge today is the war between autocracy and democracy, then Iran is a major front in that war. The Woman, Life, Freedom uprising is the most consequential mass democratic movement in the world today. Supporting the growth, maturation, and ultimate success of this movement is not only morally right, but a strategically logical position for the United States to take. This policy will require years of commitment and a redefinition of what regime change policy looks like, but helping the Iranian people end the Islamic Republic’s bad behavior would be a major victory for democracy, human rights, and, ultimately, global stability. Iranians have the will and capacity to create a brighter future. Will US policymakers choose to help?

### 1AR—Regime Change Fails

#### Regime Change Fails—The state is too entrenched.

De Bellaigue '22 [(Christopher, a journalist and author who has covered the Middle East and South Asia since 1994.) "Iran’s moment of truth: what will it take for the people to topple the regime?," The Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/06/irans-moment-of-truth-what-will-it-take-for-the-people-to-topple-the-regime, 12-6-2022] TDI

The protesters’ avowed aim is regime change, but in the Islamic Republic of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei they face **a formidable foe**. Khamenei’s Iran is a state built on an idea – of a Shia cleric enacting God’s will on earth – that has seen off communism and senses that capitalism is in terminal decline. This idea is on the march even now.

The **regime has been emboldened** by recent successes in its many-pronged struggle against the United States. In the past decade, Iranian arms, men and advice helped save Syria’s president Bashar al-Assad, a key ally of the Islamic Republic, from an array of domestic and foreign enemies, including the US. By providing similar help to anti-US militias in Iraq, Iran contributed to President Joe Biden’s decision to end the American combat mission in that country in 2021. It also makes the long-range missiles and supplies military drones that Vladimir Putin is using to bomb Ukraine. All the while – and again in defiance of the US and its allies – the Islamic Republic has enriched enough weapons-grade uranium to be able to build a nuclear bomb, according to UN assessments of the country’s stockpile.

After repeatedly outfoxing their vastly better-resourced rival, the US, the hardliners of the Islamic Republic **exhibit a swaggering self-belief**. In Ekbatan, a complex of residential towers in south Tehran, on the night of 31 October, that self-belief was chillingly evident. State security forces launched a punitive assault on protesters, driving them into their homes and then terrorising them with advanced gadgetry. Sound bombs produced tremendous booms that bounced off the buildings, rockets shot into the sky and laser pinpricks danced across the faces of the tall towers and into living rooms. High in one of the towers, a woman filming on her phone murmured: “They’ve turned the place we live in into a war zone.”

While residents listened from their flats, an officer in one of Iran’s security forces called into the night: “We give our blood for the nation, **we give our lives for the nation**, if need be, I swear to God, **we’d cut the throats of our own women, our wives and children**, but **we’ll not let our country come to harm**.” Footage that residents posted showed the lobby of one of the towers, its floors smeared with blood.

On the same night, in another Tehran housing complex that had witnessed protests, a group of men brandished truncheons and fired guns into the air while residents filmed them from their windows. “Unfortunately you’re part of the 85 million,” the officer in charge of this group called into his megaphone, by which he meant the 85 million people who live, for better or for worse, in Iran. And he warned his audience that if they continued to protest, they would be dealt with more harshly than they had been to date. “You’re not fighters,” he said. “For us this is recreation.”

As a state that aims never to lose its revolutionary momentum, the Islamic Republic has always used **crises to galvanise the faithful** and **eliminate the faithless**. In 1980, a year after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini toppled the pro-western monarchy of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, replacing it with clerical rule, Iran was invaded by Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, which was backed by the US and its western European allies. The eight-year war that followed cost hundreds of thousands of Iranian lives, but the Islamic Republic survived the onslaught with its borders intact. Khomeini used the war to **purge opponents and build a self-sufficient economy** capable of withstanding the sanctions imposed after the US designated it a “state sponsor of terrorism” in 1984.

The country’s **estrangement from the west is now** all but **complete**. The west won’t buy Iranian oil – or anything else. The country’s young people have difficulty getting visas to travel abroad. The frustrations of isolation from the world have been compounded by official callousness and incompetence at home. On 8 January 2020 the Revolutionary Guard shot down an airliner full of Iranian civilians and took three days to own up to its mistake. In May this year, a tower block being built under government supervision collapsed with the loss of 41 lives. Both disasters led to protests on the streets, quickly suppressed.

Gradually since Khomeini’s death in 1989, the unassuming **Khamenei has** quietly **achieved** absolute **dominance** over the country. He is a frail 83-year-old who has a loyal following among hardened regime supporters, whose numbers are impossible to ascertain but who are generally reckoned to amount to no more than 30% of the population. The protesters have a slogan that they want to “take back” their country. Khamenei’s **footsoldiers** disagree. We **are Iran**, they say, **not you.**

# Impact Turns

## LIO

### Good

#### LIO is stable now – recommitment by Biden

Jake Sullivan 23. ."The Sources of American Power". 10-24-2023. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/sources-american-power-biden-jake-sullivan. Accessed 7-23-2024 \\ TDI

Nothing in world politics is inevitable. The underlying elements of national power, such as demography, geography, and natural resources, matter, but history shows that these are not enough to determine which countries will shape the future. It is the strategic decisions countries make that matter most—how they organize themselves internally, what they invest in, whom they choose to align with and who wants to align with them, which wars they fight, which they deter, and which they avoid.

When President Joe Biden took office, he recognized that U.S. foreign policy is at an inflection point, where the decisions Americans make now will have an outsize impact on the future. The United States’ underlying strengths are vast, both in absolute terms and relative to other countries. The United States has a growing population, abundant resources, and an open society that attracts talent and investment and spurs innovation and reinvention. Americans should be optimistic about the future. But U.S. foreign policy was developed in an era that is fast becoming a memory, and the question now is whether the country can adjust to the main challenge it faces: competition in an age of interdependence.

The post–Cold War era was a period of great change, but the common thread throughout the 1990s and the years after 9/11 was the absence of intense great-power competition. This was mainly the result of the United States’ military and economic preeminence, although it was widely interpreted as evidence that the world agreed on the basic direction of the international order. That post–Cold War era is now definitively over. Strategic competition has intensified and now touches almost every aspect of international politics, not just the military domain. It is complicating the global economy. It is changing how countries deal with shared problems such as climate change and pandemics. And it is posing fundamental questions about what comes next.

Old assumptions and structures must be adapted to meet the challenges the United States will face between now and 2050. In the previous era, there was reluctance to tackle clear market failures that threatened the resilience of the U.S. economy. Since the U.S. military had no peer, and as a response to 9/11, Washington focused on nonstate actors and rogue nations. It did not focus on improving its strategic position and preparing for a new era in which competitors would seek to replicate its military advantages, since that was not the world it faced at the time. Officials also largely assumed that the world would coalesce to tackle common crises, as it did in 2008 with the financial crisis, rather than fragment, as it would do in the face of a once-in-a-century pandemic. Washington too often treated international institutions as set in stone without addressing the ways in which they were exclusive and did not represent the broader international community.

The overall effect was that although the United States remained the world’s preeminent power, some of its most vital muscles atrophied. On top of this, with the election of Donald Trump, the United States had a president who believed that its alliances were a form of geopolitical welfare. The steps he took that damaged those alliances were celebrated by Beijing and Moscow, which correctly saw U.S. alliances as a source of American strength rather than as a liability. Instead of acting to shape the international order, Trump pulled back from it.

This is what President Biden was faced with when he took office. He was determined not just to repair the immediate damage to the United States’ alliances and its leadership of the free world but also to pursue the long-term project of modernizing U.S. foreign policy for the challenges of today. This task was brought into stark relief by Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, as well as by China’s increasing assertiveness in the South China Sea and across the Taiwan Strait.

The essence of President Biden’s foreign policy is to lay a new foundation of American strength so that the country is best positioned to shape the new era in a way that protects its interests and values and advances the common good. The country’s future will be determined by two things: whether it can sustain its core advantages in geopolitical competition and whether it can rally the world to address transnational challenges from climate change and global health to food security and inclusive economic growth.

At a fundamental level, this requires changing the way the United States thinks about power. This administration came to office believing that international power depends on a strong domestic economy and that the strength of the economy is measured not just by its size or efficiency but also by the degree to which it works for all Americans and is free of dangerous dependencies. We understood that American power also rests on its alliances but that these relationships, many of which date back more than seven decades, had to be updated and energized for the challenges of today. We realized that the United States is stronger when its partners are, too, and so we are committed to delivering a better value proposition globally to help countries solve pressing problems that no one country can solve on its own. And we recognized that Washington could no longer afford an undisciplined approach to the use of military force, even as we have mobilized a massive effort to defend Ukraine and stop Russian aggression. The Biden administration understands the new realities of power. And that is why we will leave America stronger than we found it.

THE HOME FRONT

After the Cold War, the United States underweighted the importance of investing in economic vibrancy at home. In the decades following World War II, the country had pursued a policy of bold public investment, including in R & D and in strategic sectors. That strategy underpinned its economic success, but over time, the United States moved away from it. The U.S. government designed trade policies and a tax code that placed insufficient focus on both American workers and the planet. In the exuberance at “the end of history,” many observers asserted that geopolitical rivalries would give way to economic integration, and most believed that new countries brought into the international economic system would adjust their policies to play by the rules. As a result, the U.S. economy developed worrying vulnerabilities. While at an aggregate level it thrived, under the surface, whole communities were hollowed out. The United States ceded the lead in critical manufacturing sectors. It failed to make the necessary investments in its infrastructure. And the middle class took a hit.

President Biden has prioritized investing in innovation and industrial strength at home—what has become known as “Bidenomics.” These public investments are not about picking winners and losers or bringing globalization to an end. They enable rather than replace private investment. And they enhance the United States’ capacity to deliver inclusive growth, build resilience, and protect national security.

The Biden administration has enacted the most far-reaching new investments in decades, including the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act. We are promoting new breakthroughs in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, biotechnology, clean energy, and semiconductors while protecting the United States’ advantages and security through new export controls and investment rules, in partnership with allies. These policies have made a difference. Large-scale investments in semiconductor and clean energy production are up 20-fold since 2019. We now estimate that public and private investment in these sectors will total $3.5 trillion over the next decade. And construction spending on manufacturing has doubled since the end of 2021.

U.S. foreign policy was developed in an era that is fast becoming a memory.

In recent decades, the United States’ supply chains for critical minerals had become heavily dependent on unpredictable overseas markets, many of which are dominated by China. This is why the administration is working to build resilient, durable supply chains with partners and allies in vital sectors—including semiconductors, medicine and biotechnology, critical minerals, and batteries—so that the United States is not vulnerable to price or supply disruptions. Our approach encompasses minerals that are important to all aspects of national security, understanding that the communications, energy, and computing sectors are as essential as the traditional defense sector. All this has put the United States in a position to better absorb attempts by external powers to limit American access to critical inputs.

When this administration took office, we found that although the U.S. military is the strongest in the world, its industrial base suffered from a series of unaddressed vulnerabilities. After years of underinvestment, an aging workforce, and supply chain disruptions, important defense sectors had become weaker and less dynamic. The Biden administration is rebuilding those sectors, doing everything from investing in the submarine industrial base to producing more critical munitions so that the United States can make what is necessary to sustain deterrence in competitive regions. We are investing in the U.S. nuclear deterrent to ensure its continued effectiveness as competitors build up their arsenals while signaling openness to future arms control negotiations if competitors are interested. We are also partnering with the most innovative labs and companies to ensure that the United States’ superior conventional capabilities take advantage of the latest technologies.

Future administrations may differ from ours on the details of how to harness the domestic sources of national strength. That is a legitimate topic for debate. But in a more competitive world, there can be no doubt that Washington needs to break down the barrier between domestic and foreign policy and that major public investments are an essential component of foreign policy. President Dwight Eisenhower did this in the 1950s. We are doing it again today, but in partnership with the private sector, in coordination with allies, and with a focus on today’s cutting-edge technologies.

ALL TOGETHER NOW

The United States’ alliances and partnerships with other democracies have been its greatest international advantage. They helped create a freer and more stable world. They helped deter aggression or reverse it. And they meant that Washington never had to go it alone. But these alliances were built for a different era. In recent years, the United States was underutilizing or even undermining them.

President Biden was clear from the moment he took office about the importance he attached to U.S. alliances, especially given his predecessor’s skepticism of them. But he understood that even those who supported these alliances over the past three decades often overlooked the need to modernize them for competition in an age of interdependence. Accordingly, we have strengthened these alliances and partnerships in material ways that improve the United States’ strategic position and its ability to deal with shared challenges. For example, we have mobilized a global coalition of countries to support Ukraine as it defends itself against an unprovoked war of aggression and to impose costs on Russia. NATO has expanded to include Finland, soon to be followed by Sweden—two historically nonaligned nations. NATO has also adjusted its posture on its eastern flank, deployed a capability to respond to cyberattacks against its members, and invested in its air and missile defenses. And the United States and the EU have dramatically deepened cooperation on economics, energy, technology, and national security.

We are doing something similar in Asia. In August, we held a historic summit at Camp David that cemented a new era of trilateral cooperation among the United States, Japan, and South Korea while bringing the United States’ bilateral alliances with those countries to new heights. In the face of North Korea’s dangerous and illicit nuclear and missile programs, we are working to ensure that the United States’ extended deterrence is stronger than ever so that the region remains peaceful and stable. That is why we concluded the Washington Declaration with South Korea and why we’re advancing extended trilateral deterrence discussions with Japan, as well.

#### LIO solves every existential impact

Alan Dowd 23. ."Defending the Liberal International Order". 1-12-2023. https://providencemag.com/2023/01/defending-the-liberal-international-order/. Accessed 7-23-2024 \\ TDI

From Kabul to Kiev, from the South China Sea to the Persian Gulf, from space to cyberspace, the U.S.-led international order is under relentless assault. That’s the bad news. The worse news may be that many Americans don’t appreciate how much America’s security and prosperity depend on the current international order.

Some call it the “rules-based democratic order,” others the “liberal international order.” These terms may seem esoteric, but they are just descriptions of how America and its allies have tried to make the world work since World War II: They developed rules and norms of behavior; encouraged democratic governance; promoted liberal (open, freedom-oriented) political and economic institutions; and called upon governments to live up to their responsibilities by promoting good order within and across their borders.

Contrary to those who dismiss the liberal international order as some gauzy outgrowth of 1990s-era globalism, it actually has deep historical roots. President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points sketched the broad outlines of a liberal order. A generation later, President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill unveiled the Atlantic Charter—their vision of the better world that could emerge from the rubble of World War II. Key American statesmen used this as the blueprint for a durable and just peace—and a more secure, more prosperous America.

In late 1945, Gen. George Marshall explained that “we fought to prevent Germany and Japan from imposing their kind of order on the world”—and that under what he called the “cooperative idea of global order,” America and its allies would defend “a set of rules for global conduct.”

President Harry Truman at the outset of the Cold War adopted a policy that committed America “to bring about order and justice by means consistent with the principles of freedom and democracy” and “to create a world society based on the principle of consent.” Toward that end, he forged NATO, rescued South Korea and West Berlin, signed on to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, promoted GATT and other tariff-lowering initiatives, and fielded a large peacetime military to buttress the postwar order.

Likewise, President Ronald Reagan at the end of the Cold War committed the United States to defend “a peaceful, prosperous and humane international order.” Toward that end, he redoubled investment in deterrent military strength, renewed America’s commitment to NATO, wielded U.S. might to enforce international law in the Mediterranean Sea and Persian Gulf, used the bully pulpit and economic big stick to promote human rights in the Soviet bloc, and envisioned a North American free-trade zone.

Truman and Reagan recognized that the liberal international order sustains American power—and must be sustained by American power. As historian Robert Kagan explains, “International order is not an evolution; it is an imposition. It is the domination of one vision over others—in America’s case, the domination of liberal free market principles of economics, democratic principles of politics, and a peaceful international system that supports these over other visions.”

There are costs that come with sustaining the liberal international order. But the costs of a world that’s out of order are higher. And like a long-term investment, the benefits are greater than the upfront costs.

Consider the human costs. Before America and its allies began building the liberal international order, “Major powers frequently engaged in direct warfare on a massive scale,” as an Atlantic Council report explains. “Armed conflict killed an average of 1 to 2 percent of the human population from 1600 to 1945.”

Hundreds of thousands of Americans were among that number. More than 116,500 Americans were killed during World War I—in 588 days. America sacrificed 405,399 troops during World War II. Pointing to the 26,000 American troops killed in 47 days during the Great War’s Battle of Meuse-Argonne, the 57,000 American troops killed in an eight-week span in the summer of 1944, the 150 million people killed between 1914 and 1945, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Gen. Mark Milley explains: “That’s what this international order that’s been in existence for seven and a half decades is designed to prevent.”

Indeed, as that Atlantic Council report details, after America began building and sustaining a liberal international order, there was a dramatic drop in lives lost: “During the Cold War, an average of 0.4 percent of the world’s population perished due to war. Since the year 2000, less than one one-hundredth of 1 percent of people have died this way.”

Related, the economic costs of great-power war are far higher than the economic costs of maintaining some semblance of order and great-power peace: In the eight years before entering World War I, the U.S. devoted an average of 0.7 percent of GDP to defense. During the war, the U.S. spent an average of 16.1 percent of GDP waging war. In the decade before entering World War II, the U.S. spent an average of 1.1 percent of GDP on defense. During the war, the U.S. spent an average of 27 percent of GDP waging war. During the Cold War, by contrast, Americans invested an average of 7 percent of GDP on defense. Those investments didn’t end all wars, but they did deter Moscow, prevent World War III, and preserve free markets and free government.

Because of the liberal order we have built, the cost of security is less today than in the past. In 1943, the cost of U.S. security was 36 percent of GDP; in 1953, 13.8 percent of GDP; in 1968, 9 percent of GDP; in 1982, 5.6 percent of GDP. The falling cost of security is a good thing. Americans spend less today on national security, as a percentage of GDP, than during the Cold War because the threat posed by the Soviet Empire is gone. However, in a still-dangerous world, we must remember that diminishing investments in national security will yield diminishing returns. With Russia on the march, China on the rise, the Korean Peninsula on edge and the Middle East on fire, we’ve reached that point.

At $857 billion projected for FY2023, the U.S. defense budget looks enormous. But looks can be deceiving. That figure represents just 3.2 percent of GDP. America’s Cold War average was more than twice that. If the 20th century taught us anything, it’s that shortchanging defense in the face of great-power threats never ends well.

The arguments made by voices on the left and right—“America has done enough for long enough,” “America is too good for the world,” “America can do no good in the world,” “time for nation-building at home,” “time to put America first,” “time for free-riding allies to lead”—may be appealing. But the hard truth is that nations which share our values don’t have the strength to promote an international order—and nations with the strength to promote an international order don’t share our values.

Chief among those values is what Providence’s editors and contributors, in their statementon faith and foreign policy, call “ordered liberty.”

The Free World naturally recoils from order without liberty, which is known as tyranny. But we sometimes forget that liberty without order is just as bad—it’s known as chaos—and that God is deeply interested in order. Genesis tells us God brought order out of chaos. Jeremiah says God “made the earth…and gave it order.” Paul writes, “God is not a God of disorder.”

In the international system they built after World War II, America and its allies offered a happy and healthy medium between a world of micromanaged tyranny and a world of savage chaos. “There is no perfect human political system,” the Providence statement concludes, “but we believe the liberal order is the least flawed of all presently available options and constitutes the best means for accomplishing the ends for which government was ordained.”

As to the benefits side of the ledger, consider this comparison: In the 76 years before World War II—before the liberal international order took hold—America’s per-capita GDP increased by 136 percent. In the 76 years between the end of World War II and 2021—under the liberal international order—America’s per-capita GDP increased by 320 percent.

This increase in economic prosperity didn’t happen magically, organically or accidentally. It was the byproduct of the institutions, systems and guardrails of the liberal international order—and especially the stability and security represented by civilization’s first responder and last line of defense: the United States.

Consider U.S. defense expenditures earmarked for Europe. The International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates that over 5.1 percent of the U.S. defense budget (equaling $40 billion in FY2022) is devoted to European security. Again, that seems like a huge sum of money, but $40 billion represents just 0.17 percent of U.S. GDP. In exchange for that $40-billion investment, Americans get an outer ring of security, the ability to project power, sources of material and diplomatic support for U.S. leadership, a Europe not at war with itself, and a Europe reinforced against invasion (and an Indo-Pacific reinforced against invasion, thanks to similar investments in that region). In addition, age-old foes have the confidence to collaborate under the U.S. alliance umbrella, and nations that once were constant sources of conflict are now exporters of security. All of this militates against another great-power war that would cost Americans far more than $40 billion, far more than $857 billion.

If those benefits aren’t direct enough for those who shrug at the liberal international order, consider the vast trade and economic benefits that flow from these upfront investments in security: U.S. trade (in goods) with EU and NATO allies tops $1.56 trillion annually, with Japan, Korea, Australia, Taiwan and the Philippines $513 billion annually.

The “myth is that our allies are making us poor by free-riding on our military expenditures,” the late Gen. William Odom, former director of the National Security Agency, observed. “How are we to explain that the United States has gotten richer than its allies? Proponents of this argument cannot explain why. They fail to realize that our military alliances, by lowering transaction costs, have facilitated the vast increases in international trade from which the United States profits enormously. Our military costs should be seen as investments that pay us back.”

These investments in the liberal international order—a military capable of deterring war and ensuring open seas and open skies, a network of alliances serving as an outer ring of our security, a community of liberal democracies promoting peace, prosperity and ordered liberty—reflect America’s ideals and promote America’s interests. An international order led by Beijing, Moscow and other tyrant regimes will do the opposite.

#### Absent a US led LIO it causes transition wars with China

Hal Brands 24. ."China and Russia Are Breaking the World into Pieces". 7-21-2024. https://www.aei.org/op-eds/china-and-russia-are-breaking-the-world-into-pieces/. Accessed 7-23-2024 \\ TDI

From Ukraine to Gaza to the South China Sea, the world is littered with crises. International cooperation is paralyzed by diplomatic rivalry; techno-optimism has given way to a pervasive techno-anxiety . The sole superpower is limping toward an election with fateful consequences, as its rivals feverishly arm themselves for wars present and, perhaps, future. Each of these challenges, in turn, is symptomatic of a deeper historic shift underway.

“The current international environment is in turmoil, because its essential elements are all in flux simultaneously.” Henry Kissinger wrote that in 1968, as a whirlwind of change — decolonization, domestic protest, a changing balance of power — was roiling the arrangements that had emerged after World War II. But Kissinger’s assessment is also a good starting point for understanding a disordered globe today.

For a generation after the Cold War, the world was structured by a set of verities : the triumph of democracy over autocracy, the virtues of globalization and innovation, the prospects for great-power peace, and the stabilizing role of American power. Those verities underpinned a world that was remarkably favorable for the US and its allies. They were also historically propitious for global finance and trade. The reason today’s world seems so chaotic is that those old verities are crumbling, as the contours of a new era take shape.

The emerging order is one in which geopolitical blocs are back, and strategic rivals wage vicious ideological and technological fights. The international economy is a battleground, as interdependence and insecurity go hand in hand. Global governance and problem-solving increasingly look like artifacts of a happier age. International violence is intensifying, as the risk of major war — even global war — ticks higher. US power still looms large, but America’s behavior grows more erratic as its politics become less stable.

All this turmoil could still produce a decent future. But first, policymakers and dealmakers must understand the age of fragmentation underway.

The post-Cold War world had its insecurities, its injustices, its outrages. But the world that emerged after the opening of the Berlin Wall still felt like a time of unique progress and promise

Democracy was trouncing autocracy: The number of democracies increased from around 40 in the early 1970s to 120 by the year 2000. Globalization was running riot: World trade increased roughly fourfold between 1989 and 2019, while flows of foreign direct investment grew eightfold between 1992 and 2000. Economic openness was raising living standards around the world. It was also, the thinking went, deflating international tensions by creating a common prosperity that only the most vicious rogues would disrupt.

Globalization was propelled, in turn, by the digital revolution, which facilitated trade and boosted productivity. Information technology also seemed to favor freedom: Social media fueled protests that toppled repressive governments in Egypt and Ukraine in the early 2010s.

Progress had its dark side, of course. Catastrophic terrorism, of the sort the US suffered on 9/11, showed how weak actors could exploit the ease of international travel, communications and finance to strike with global reach. In general, however, a world that was supposedly being pacified by economic integration seemed ever-more conducive to great-power peace. And as the threat of major war receded, the leading powers would channel their energies into initiatives and institutions — from countering violent extremism to building the World Trade Organization — meant to tame transnational threats and strengthen global rules of the road. All this progress was underpinned by the US. American alliances locked in peace and stability in Eastern Europe and the Western Pacific. Washington championed democracy and globalization; it catalyzed collective action against nuclear proliferation and other problems. American tech firms fostered innovations that powered the digital age. The post-Cold War order, as one Pentagon strategy document put it, was “ultimately backed by the US.”

It was also a wonderland for firms and investors that rode globalization’s wave. Multinationals could reap new efficiencies in an open, integrated world economy. They could trade and invest in a climate of security provided by Uncle Sam.

Globalization helped keep inflation low, in part by allowing developed economies to tap bargain-basement labor. Not least, the dilemmas of doing business with repressive regimes, or even potential rivals, seemed negligible given the expectation that trade itself would make problematic actors become responsible stakeholders.

In this sense, the post-Cold War era was a golden age. But now, its key elements have come undone.

In hindsight, post-Cold War progress was more fragile than it appeared: Many new democracies were weakly consolidated, which left them vulnerable to autocratic reverses. Other features of the era were double-edged swords. Globalization brought prosperity but also inequality and cultural insecurity — effects that fueled a neo-populist moment that has yet to end. Information technology gave dissidents new tools for critiquing repressive rulers, but also gave those rulers better ways of tracking and stifling their critics.

Most fundamentally, a post-Cold War order that rested on US and Western dominance encountered trouble once that dominance began to wan.

Russia revived, and China grew explosively, in the flourishing global economy. Washington and many allies neglected their military budgets because they had grown too comfortable in the protective cocoon of American hegemony.

Over time, countries that disliked a system rooted in liberal values and US leadership grew more aggressive in their challenges: Russia invaded its neighbors Georgia and Ukraine, China claimed and incrementally conquered much of the South China Sea; Iran sowed chaos in the Middle East. This onslaught occurred just as America’s commitment to that system was, itself, coming under strain.

Failed efforts to transform Iraq and Afghanistan at the height of America’s post-Cold War influence led to demoralization and retrenchment. The global financial crisis of 2008-09 scrambled America’s politics and sapped its strategic energies. The presidency of Donald Trump, when Washington declared competition against China — but also seemed to be at war with many of its allies — epitomized how uncertain America’s trajectory had become.

By 2022, when Vladimir Putin tried to destroy an independent Ukraine after sealing a remarkable “no limits” alliance with Xi Jinping’s China, the post-Cold War era was unmistakably over. Several features define the era that has begun.

China Rises in Tech

First, blocs are back. Not so long ago, geopolitical dividing lines were fading. Now, rival coalitions are squaring off across the globe.

In Ukraine, a cohort of Eurasian autocracies — North Korea, Iran and China — is aiding Russia’s effort to shatter the norm of non-aggression. They confront a group of advanced democracies — from North America, Europe and the Indo-Pacific — who support Kyiv to sustain a larger system that has served them well.

These alignments are not all-encompassing — many countries in the Global South seek to play both sides — but they are unmistakably hardening as international tensions rise.

A Russia alienated from the West is tripling down on ties to fellow revisionists: Witness Putin’s recent treaty alliance with Pyongyang. The US, for its part, is strengthening, expanding and interlinking its alliances to contain the Eurasian autocracies.

The resulting confrontations spill across regional boundaries. Since 2022, the US has pushed allies in Europe and Asia to choke off the supply of advanced semiconductor manufacturing equipment to China, an illustration of how geopolitical divisions are reshaping economic and technological ties.

Second, the battle of ideas is on again. Russia and China didn’t get the memo about the irresistible triumph of democracy. They are rewiring international norms and organizations to make autocracies more secure. They believe their illiberal systems can produce greater discipline, effort and strength than decadent democracies. To prove the point, they are coercing and destabilizing states that stand in their way.

Russia has used disinformation, cyberattacks and sabotage against democracies on both sides of the Atlantic. Beijing employs an array of weapons — friendly media outlets, bribes, cyberattacks, economic sanctions — to stifle criticism and sow discord in Taiwan and other liberal societies. Technological innovation is fueling political warfare: Moscow and Beijing can now wield AI-enabled disinformation against their democratic foes.

Third, the fight for techno-primacy is raging. A generation ago, America’s technological lead was simply commanding. Things aren’t so lopsided anymore.

China has made huge strides in cyberweapons and hypersonic missiles. It is investing massively in artificial intelligence, quantum computing and other technologies of what’s being called the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Throughout history, geopolitical competitions have been technological competitions. If China dominates key emerging technologies, it may dominate this era.

This means industrial policy is here to stay, as geopolitical rivals invest in, and put up protective barriers around, strategic sectors from semiconductors to clean energy. It also means that economic warfare will become commonplace, as both countries wield subsidies, export controls, investment curbs, tariffs and other tools to accelerate their innovation and hold the rivals back.

Fourth, cutthroat competition is killing global problem-solving. Transnational challenges are getting more severe, but geopolitical tensions have impeded US-China cooperation on issues from Covid to climate change. The great powers can’t even collaborate on keeping vital trade routes open.

The US and China once worked together to suppress Somali pirates. But Beijing is now cutting deals with the Houthi militants shooting up the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, while Iran equips them and Russia urges them on. In the years ahead, expect seemingly fundamental norms, like freedom of navigation on the seas, to become more contested. And expect cooperation to tackle transnational problems, whether climate change or management of advanced technologies, to occur primarily within groups of likeminded countries — for instance, the Group of 7 — than across them.

Fifth, amid cold wars, tech wars, and trade wars, the shadow of real war has become inescapable. Ukraine is being ravaged in Europe’s largest conflict since 1945. The Middle East is being roiled by multiple, interrelated clashes. The overall number of state-versus-state wars is higher than at any time in decades. Don’t expect that trend to turn around anytime soon.

However the war in Ukraine ends, Russia will emerge from it with an experienced military, a mobilized economy and an epic grudge against the West. Iran is inching closer to a nuclear capability that would underwrite its sponsorship of violent instability across the Middle East.

China is stockpiling food and energy; mass-producing ships, aircraft and ammunition; and intensifying its push for supremacy in the Pacific. Hotspots from the Senkaku Islands to Second Thomas Shoal could serve as the trigger for a Sino-American clash.

​The stability of the international system has long been closely related to the stability of the key regions of Eurasia: Europe, the Middle East and East Asia. War or the threat of war pervades all three areas at once.

This makes a final feature of our era more sobering: a still powerful, but less reliable, America. US advantages, economic and military, remain substantial, and American commitment remains indispensable to a decent world. Unfortunately, at a time when many Western countries face political paralysis, instability, or some mixture of the two, America’s own internal dramas could be uniquely damaging.

Yes, the near-term danger is a second Trump presidency that could weaken US alliances and spur frontline states like Poland or South Korea to build their own nuclear weapons — or, alternatively, a second Biden presidency in which America is led by a visibly declining commander-in-chief. But the problems run deeper

Lurking behind Trump is a larger America First movement that would just as soon leave the world to itself. Lurking behind Biden is a potentially potent form of progressive neo-isolationism. The political foundations of American internationalism are thus unstable. Rising polarization and domestic tensions could leave the US distracted, even consumed by its inner demons — just as surging global volatility makes the price of that distraction higher.

World War III?

Eras of turmoil can bring happy endings. The Cold War birthed the liberal international order, which eventually delivered more freedom, peace and prosperity than humanity had ever enjoyed before. Today, realism need not be synonymous with despondency, because the US and its democratic allies still have long-term advantages over their foes, including their free governmental institutions. But for political leaders and business leaders, navigating this age of fragmentation will require keeping some core principles in mind.

First, there is no return to “normal.” Today’s crises in Ukraine, the Middle East and other hotspots aren’t freak occurrences. They are symptoms of deep, ongoing shifts that are changing the basic rhythms of global affairs.

Particular crises may come and go; particular tensions may rise or fall. But leaders in government and business must prepare for an era of persistent vitality, competition and conflict. Levels of risk, both strategic and economic, will be elevated for years to come.

Second, you can’t have it all. After the Cold War, the US and its allies could enjoy a world that was phenomenally congenial to their interests and values at a very low price. Multinationals could exploit the efficiencies globalization offered without worrying too much about the vicissitudes of global politics. Neither approach is sustainable today.

As the leaders who attended this month’s NATO summit can attest, the cost of national security, and of safeguarding democratic values, is rising as autocratic powers make their moves. Meanwhile, Western companies that had to choose whether to stay in Russia after it invaded Ukraine — or are wondering how to protect their assets, operations and reputations if China invades Taiwan — are discovering that the dilemmas of operating in a hothouse environment can be severe.

Third, take worst-case scenarios seriously. Responsible American officials need to consider not just the possibility of a US-Russia clash or a US-China conflict — as cataclysmic as either would be — but also a global war, in which conflicts in multiple theaters erupt at once. International corporations also need to grapple with scenarios that would have seemed outlandish not so long ago.

What if the security of vital sea lanes suffers because the Houthis have set a precedent that others follow? How might their operations be affected by a Sino-American war that causes a decoupling more violent, precipitous and far-reaching than nearly anyone envisions today? We can hope these situations won’t come to pass. But grappling with them is how one builds the resilience, whether military or intellectual, needed to thrive in a tumultuous world.

Fourth, as geopolitics and geoeconomics become inseparable, the West needs to invest in new knowledge. In government, national security is no longer so thoroughly dominated by diplomats and defense nerds. Understanding investment patterns, financial and technological choke points, and private sector decision-making has become crucial to prevailing in modern rivalry. The private sector, for its part, is entering a moment in which geopolitical illiteracy is simply negligent , given that few firms are wholly insulated from the disruption — or opportunity — national rivalries can cause.

This relates to a final precept: Find the upside of adversity. Yes, the world is getting nastier. But an age of fracture creates chances for the US to build deeper connections with like-minded nations in Europe and the Indo-Pacific, to catalyze a historic burst of innovation in critical technologies, and to demonstrate that liberal societies can still outperform illiberal ones

It creates chances, as well, for firms to craft more resilient supply chains; to reap the benefits of the new industrial policy; and to forge stronger partnerships with a US government that desperately needs private-sector creativity and innovation to master a new set of economic, intelligence and military challenges.

We’re in the opening phase of a brutally contentious era. The task is to make the most of it.

### Bad

#### Collapse inevitable – results in instability and reactionary responses

Lau Siu-Kai 24. ."The US-dominated International Order is collapsing". 3-17-2024. https://johnmenadue.com/the-us-dominated-international-order-is-collapsing/. Accessed 7-23-2024 \\ TDI

During the Cold War period after World War II, two “international orders” emerged in the world, namely the “socialist international order” led by the Soviet Union and the so-called “liberal international order” led by the United States. After the end of the Cold War, the “liberal international order” was the only international order in the world. Since then, the United States has continued to use coercion, inducement, and regime change to bring more and more countries into this dominant international order, which has led to many conflicts between the United States and other countries, particularly China and Russia. However, in the past decade or so, the “liberal international order” has increasingly become unviable and unsustainable. The reasons include the fact that more and more countries believe it is an unfair, inequitable, and unreasonable international order catering primarily to the interests of the West and that the United States itself often violates and distorts the “rules of the game” devised by itself.

From a historical perspective, the Russo-Ukrainian war and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict are significant game-changing events that would bring about “tectonic changes” in the global political landscape that would, in turn, lead to the complete collapse of the “liberal international order” in different ways.

First, they verify that the United Nations, as the linchpin of the “liberal international order,” can no longer serve as an organisation for maintaining world peace and international order under the deliberate neglect, defiance, and disruption of the United States. The United Nations cannot act to avoid and end the Russo-Ukrainian war. Moreover, the United States blatantly vetoed most countries in the United Nations’ call for a ceasefire in Gaza. When the United Nations becomes an effete and ineffective international institution, the unilateral actions of the United States taken without the approval of the United Nations will increasingly lose the endorsement and goodwill of the international community, and the international order it leads will also lose legitimacy and support.

Second, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the United States not only condoned but even provided military and diplomatic support to Israel’s near-genocide atrocities against the Palestinian civilians in Gaza, most deplorably women and children. Israel’s actions in Gaza seriously violate and make a mockery of the “liberal international order’s” proclaimed respect for human rights and freedoms and the prohibition and condemnation of genocide. The United States and its Western allies disregarded Israel’s atrocities, which is entirely contrary to their position of severely accusing and condemning Russia for committing “war crimes” in the Russo-Ukrainian war. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has unmistakably and fully exposed the moral hypocrisy and double standards of the United States and the West. It has triggered intense anger and frustration in the international community and brought about the complete moral bankruptcy of the Western camp led by the United States. In other words, the “liberal international order” no longer has powerful moral moorings. Consequently, the “liberal international order” will continue to shrink as more and more countries are reluctant to imbue it with legitimacy. The United States’ global leadership position will also be seriously jeopardised.

Third, the Russo-Ukraine war proved that the “liberal international order” led by the United States is dangerously “expansionary” and “coercive” in nature, thus posing a clear and serious threat to world peace. The United States demands all countries participating in the “liberal international order” adopt Western political and economic models and values. It does not accept or tolerate the existence of other political and economic models and values. The eastward expansion of NATO promoted by the United States can be understood as a strategic plan to further expand the “liberal international order” in Europe to contain Russia and ultimately change its political and economic system in the Western direction. In a sense, the essence of the Russo-Ukrainian war can thus be understood as a “defensive” maneuver by Russia to safeguard the country’s sovereignty, security, and strategic autonomy. Since the continuous and reckless expansion of the “liberal international order” has triggered the Russo-Ukrainian war, and the scale of the Russo-Ukrainian war is likely to expand and pose a graver threat to world peace and development, other countries in the world will be increasingly dismissive of the “liberal international order.” A lot of countries are already deeply apprehensive about a devastating global war triggered by the United States’ dogged efforts at containment of China to make it a qualified member of the “liberal international order.” Global resistance to it is bound to grow day by day. Now, the United States is on the verge of failure in the Russia-Ukraine war, which is commonly seen as a “proxy war” between the United States and Russia. This will encourage and embolden more countries to resist the “liberal international order” in various ways in the days to come.

History will prove that the Russo-Ukrainian war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were catalysts for paradigmatic changes in the international landscape and the driving force behind the eventual demise of the US-led “liberal international order.” The Russo-Ukraine war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have already proven that the US-led international order cannot bring peace, development, fairness, and justice to the world; instead, it is becoming increasingly an impetus for instability and even war. The balance of power in the world is shifting irreversibly away from the West with the unstoppable demise of the “liberal international order.” Admittedly, the “liberal international order” may still exist in some form, but its prominent members will be mainly confined to the United States and some of its Western allies. Inevitably, with the gradual demise of the “liberal international order,” the world will experience a period of “international disorder” and the ensuing instability and uncertainty. However, in the past period, many non-Western countries, especially China, have begun to actively and urgently explore alternatives to the “liberal international order.” The Russo-Ukrainian war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will undoubtedly accelerate the pace of work in this area, eventually promoting the birth of a new, fairer, equitable, and reasonable international order that is conducive to world peace and development and respects the interests and needs of all countries.

#### China’s military and economic rise promote a stable world order better than the US –

Chen 20 (Zhimin Chen, professor of international relations at the School of International Relations and Public Affairs at Fudan University “Chinese conception of the world order in a turbulent Trump era”, The Pacific Review, 2020, DOI: 10.1080/09512748.2020.1728574)\\ TDI

There is a more clearly articulated official conception of the world/international order, in the notion of ‘a Community of Shared Future for Mankind’: a vision based on sovereign states and the multi-polarizing balance of power, but supportive of necessary multilateral and bilateral mechanisms to promote the level of cooperation required in a globalized world. It is not an order to replace the existing one, but an improvement of the current order. In a major speech by President **Xi** Jinping at the UN office in Geneva on 18 January 2017, he **presented five aspects** **of** such a future world: countries stay committed to building a world of lasting peace through dialogue and consultation; build a world of common security for all through joint efforts; build a world of common prosperity through winwin cooperation; build an open and inclusive world through exchanges and mutual learning; and make the world clean and beautiful by pursuing green and low-carbon development (Xi, 2017b). Zhang Wenmu commented that, through ‘a Community of Shared Future for Mankind’, China presents a ‘China solution’ for global governance which meets the needs of humankind by embracing ancient oriental wisdoms. (Zhang, 2017, p. 24) Gao Cheng from CASS emphasizes the idea of ‘contributing together and benefiting together’ within ‘a Community of Shared Future for Mankind’, allowing China’s development model to serve as a template and inspiration to countries encountering similar development challenges, in order to help them achieve long-term political stability and prosperity (Gao, 2016, p. 104).

Overall, Chinese scholars are cautiously optimistic that this is a future world order to be promoted. First of all, Chinese in general believe that US dominance in the world **is not sustainable**. A recent survey conducted in China showed that a majority of Chinese citizens (57.7%) who participated in the survey believed that China will eventually surpass the US in terms of overall development (Huazhong keji daxue guojia chuanbo zhanlue yanjiuyuan (Huazhong University of Science & Technology National Communication Strategy Institute), 2019). A future China might not be a new dominating power, but the US will surely lose its dominating position (Zhang, 2019). Therefore, any hegemonic world order will not be viable in the future.

Secondly, a globalized world demands cooperation among states and other global actors. Even if globalization has its many flaws, it remains one of the mega-trends in the world. Globalization is already an ‘objective reality of the contemporary world’ and could not ‘be altered by the subjective will of some people’ (Qin, 2017). The mounting number of global issues has also enlarged the wide gap between the necessity of global governance and current global governance capacity, creating a fundamental problem which **requires the adjustment of the international order** (Fu & Fu, 2017).

Thirdly, in the wider global South, and even in most Western countries, China would still find many like-minded partners in terms of developing economic partnerships, and governance partnerships to address large-scale regional and global challenges, such as regional security, **nuclear proliferation, climate change and sustainable development**,. Countries in the European Union are mostly NATO allies and key supporters of the past USled liberal international order. While European states share some concerns of the Trump administration regarding policy towards China, they are also bewildered by rising US unilateralism and are willing to work with China on many key bilateral and global agendas. Chinese observers are following the EU’s new foreign direct investment review mechanism, which has a fairly explicit aim to restrict Chinese direct investment in EU countries (Zhang, 2019) They are also paying close attention to the EU’s collaboration with the US and Japan in pushing WTO reforms which would restrict state subsidies and curb the role of state-owned companies in national economies (Xu & Zhang, 2019). Nevertheless, these differences do not overshadow the broader shared understanding and support between European states and China on the key aspects of a desired future world order. Both sides champion multilateralism (Michalski & Pan, 2017), while a number of key European countries have joined the China-initiated ‘AIIB’ (Pang, 2015). In a recent Joint Statement from the 21st EU-China Summit, leaders on both sides stressed that the EU and China ‘reaffirm their resolve to work together for peace, prosperity and sustainable development and their commitment to multilateralism, and respect for international law and for fundamental norms governing international relations, with the UN at its core’ (European Council, 2019). This European example showcases that the rest of the world is unlikely to follow the template of the Trump government, or embrace similar forms of narrow nationalism and isolationism in economic and foreign policy.

Conclusion

After becoming the world’s second largest economy in 2010, China embarked on a road of ‘major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics’, and discussions thereafter about world/international order proliferated. If Zhao Tingyang’s Tianxia view and its variations represent an idealist cosmopolitan imagination of a world order, and moral realism presents a realist China-centric conception, then sitting in the middle is the official vision of ‘a community of shared future’ and the mainstream view centred on a desired cooperative world based on sovereign states. This official and mainstream vision does not aim to overthrow the existing world order by promoting an entirely different one. It is mainly calling for an improvement of the current order. To achieve this, Chinese observers share a general consensus that the world needs to preserve the UN and many aspects of the liberal order including open trade, climate governance and sustainable development. Chinese observers have strong reservations in relation to the hegemonic side of the liberal international order, whether in the form of unilateral US leadership

or **collective Western leadership**. They also have a problem with the heavy-handed promotion of liberal political values and norms, above respect for the principle of sovereignty. Therefore, the mainstream view in China demands some reforms of the existing arrangements, to increase the representativeness of developing countries in the current major multilateral institutions, making them compatible with an increasingly post-hegemonic new power balance reality. Chinese scholars also call for reforms to allow developing countries to better participate in multilateral rule-making processes, so that these rules and norms fall more closely in line with their interests and aspirations. They also see an additional need to further enhance capacity to conduct effective global governance, and support China as a new supplier of material and ideational resources. As Qin Yaqing observed, such **a loosely-organized but multilateral order based on sovereignty** may be less efficient, yet it is a relatively democratic and inclusive order, and it **might be a practical order for the 21st century** (Qin, 2014, p. 15).

This Chinese view of a desired world order encounters a turbulent world in the era of the Trump administration. Within countries, **even the developed world** **is starting to feel the governance challenges associated with the rise of** anti-establishment **populism** and **anti-globalization nationalism**. Among the countries, an open trading system, which has been the foundation for the globalization process, is under attack from countries that helped to build it in the first place. The problem of the global leadership deficit is exacerbated by the Trump administration, while the problem of inadequate leadership and poor decision-making in the past, notably the disastrous intervention in Libya, has not been mitigated.

#### A China led order solves every risk, US reinvestment causes transition wars

Feng Liu and Kai He 23. ."China’s Bilateral Relations, Order Transition, and the Indo-Pacific Dynamics on JSTOR". 2-1-2023. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48717987?seq=2. Accessed 7-23-2024 \\ TDI

The power transition between China and the United States has led to a gradual order transition in the Indo-Pacific region, which is further accelerated by the intensifying Sino-U.S. strategic competition in the context of COVID-19. The process and outcome of regional order tran- sition are often shaped by two factors. The first is the nature of the competition between the ruling power or hegemon and a rising power. Whether the ruling state is willing to transfer its dominance to the rising power and what strategies the rising power would adopt to compete for domination largely determine how the regional order transition would play out. The second factor is how other regional states react to the potential order transition. The legitimacy of a new order comes from the recognition and support of the members within the order. In other words, hegemony or any regional leadership needs to secure followship from others. Therefore, the attitude of other regional states toward the hegemon and the rising power will also affect the process as well as the outcome of order transition. China’s bilateral relationship with other powers is at the core of these two factors, shaping the order transition in the Indo-Pacific region. Besides the evolution of Sino-U.S. relations, bilateral relations between China and other major regional actors, especially Australia, Japan, and India, also need to be taken into consideration when contemplating how the rise of China fosters the regional order transi- tion. To a certain extent, the nature and process of the order transition, peacefully or confrontationally, largely depend on how China interacts with the United States and other key players in the region. For example, if other regional powers support U.S. hegemony, China’s efforts to reshape the regional order will face more hindrances. However, if others side with China to challenge U.S. hegemony, it will accelerate the order transformation in the Indo Pacific. 2 Bilateral relations between China and the above key players have not only varied greatly but also undergone dramatic changes over time. For example, China established a “constructive strategic partnership” with the United States in the 1990s. The United States under the Bush admin- istration encouraged China to become a “responsible stakeholder” after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. The two countries claimed to build a “constructive relationship of cooperation” but the word “strategic” was dropped from the official documents. During the Obama administration, China promoted a “new type of great power relationship” with the United States despite the cold shoulder from the United States. Trump waged a China’s Bilateral Relations, Order Transition, and the Indo-Pacific Dynamics 13 trade war with China, which was labelled as a “strategic competitor” of the United States. How to define and characterize a bilateral relationship with a foreign country is not a matter of diplomatic rhetoric. Instead, it reflects the nature and expectation of the bilateral relationship. One of the most notable features of China’s foreign policy is the so-called “strategic part- nership diplomacy.”3 It is reported that China has established 18 types of “partnership” with more than 100 countries in the world, mostly since the early 2000s. 4 A bilateral relationship is a basic building block of international relations among states.5 How to explain the nature and rationale of China’s bilateral relationships beyond the diplomatic rhetoric is the key to understanding the process and outcome of the order transition in the region. If China’s relations with other states are those of partners instead of rivals, the order transition among partners in the context of China’s rise is more likely to be peaceful than widely believed. However, if China’s bilateral relations with others feature rivalry instead of partner- ship, the order transition among rivals will be more likely to be conflic- tual in nature.

#### Multipolarity is peaceful

Andrea Ratiu 23. ."How Beijing’s newest global initiatives seek to remake the world order". 6-21-2023. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/how-beijings-newest-global-initiatives-seek-to-remake-the-world-order/. Accessed 7-23-2024 \\ TDI

In March 2023, China stunned the world by achieving a rare and unexpected diplomatic breakthrough. Chinese leader Xi Jinping brokered an agreement between longtime antagonists Iran and Saudi Arabia to restore diplomatic relations.1 It was a coup, one that could reshape the Middle East, and the role of the United States in that vital region.

In comments after the deal was signed, Wang Yi, the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP’s) top official for foreign affairs, noted that the dialogue was a successful application of the Global Security Initiative, or GSI.2 That proposal remains obscure to many practitioners of international relations, but it is of growing importance to Beijing as part of Xi’s intensifying campaign to remake the world order in China’s favor.

Xi and his diplomats have been propagating the GSI with greater urgency in recent months. Beijing’s 12-point “position paper” (also called a “peace plan”) on resolving the Ukraine war, released in February on the first anniversary of the Russian invasion, also relied heavily on ideas found in the GSI.3 First proposed by Xi in April 2022 and further articulated in a concept paper released in February 2023,4 5 the GSI is a manifesto for an alternative system of international affairs to the current “rules based” order led by the United States and its partners in Europe and the Indo-Pacific. In it are China’s core principles of diplomacy, including the paramount importance of state sovereignty and territorial integrity; noninterference in the internal affairs of states; and opposition to “unilateral” sanctions and “bloc confrontation.” Though many of its ideas are not new, the GSI, taken as a whole, is Xi’s first attempt to present a more comprehensive vision of a new world order and formulate the ideological backbone for a global governance system that elevates Chinese influence at the expense of American power.

The GSI has a twin, the Global Development Initiative, or GDI. The two are interconnected through the Chinese Marxist belief that “security is a prerequisite for development, and development is a guarantee for security,”6 otherwise known as “peace through development.”7 Xi first outlined this proposal to the United Nations General Assembly in 2021 “to help revive global efforts to achieve the [UN’s] Sustainable Development Goals” by 2030.8 But just as the GSI aims to guide discourse on global governance, the GDI’s goal is to usurp the international dialogue on the global development agenda, place it under Chinese tutelage, and infuse it with (supposed) Chinese principles. The GDI has gained traction in the development sphere and within the UN system.

These twin initiatives are China’s “blueprint” for transforming the global order.9 They are likely part of a corpus of ideas still to come; all meant to be mutually reinforcing and aimed at forging an increasingly comprehensive vision of a new global governance system. As part of this broader framing effort, Beijing introduced the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI) in March 2023, which promotes a state-focused and state-defined values system and marks another effort by Beijing to eliminate universal values in areas such as human rights and democracy, in line with principles in the GSI.10 In this future, China will be in the lead, and the international system will be friendlier to autocratic governments; sovereignty will come at the expense of individual liberties, while universal values such as democracy and human rights, which have been at the core of world affairs for decades, will be stripped from global governance. Together, the three global initiatives stem from the ideological edge of Xi’s efforts to roll back American global primacy. They are, therefore, crucial features of Chinese foreign and security policy. Policymakers in the United States and its partners in Europe and the Indo-Pacific need to know more about them and their role in China’s foreign policy.

The GSI and GDI in China’s worldview

“The world is undergoing great changes unseen in a century,” Xi has said. On the surface, this now-ubiquitous formulation refers to major global drivers, such as climate change, terrorism, recessions, disruptive technologies, and a fourth industrial revolution. As any major stakeholder, China must adapt to these shifts.

But such internationally held truths on the state of the world belie a unique Chinese belief of another type of change; China, as the world’s rising power, must assume a more global role to guide the international community through these new challenges and ensure that the “great changes unseen in a century” fuel, rather than thwart, the “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”11

That is the starting point for the three initiatives. They are a response to a world undergoing historic changes—ones that could, if managed properly, benefit China. Beijing holds that “China is in its best development stage since modern times,” just as the world’s geoeconomic center gravitates from the North Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific.12

And as this dynamic region’s most valuable player, China juxtaposes its resurgence against a post-Trump, post–financial crisis America13 and what Beijing’s leaders believe is the United States’ diminishing global influence, universally described by Chinese intelligentsia as “a rise of the East and a decline of the West.”14 Despite the caveats of senior economists, Xi’s China is self-confident: “Time and momentum are on our side,” Xi routinely insists.15 The Chinese political elite believe that by 2049—the centennial of the Communist regime—the rejuvenated, wealthy, and powerful modern socialist Chinese state will have equaled or surpassed the United States in every factor that contributes to a country’s comprehensive national power.

The GSI and GDI are two crucial tools to help China achieve global primacy. Though short on details, albeit not on platitudes, they are China’s answer to the future of the international order.

Since Xi’s premier international development program, the Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI, was announced in 2013, Beijing has been offering Chinese alternatives to global governance, and in the process undermining Washington’s preferences for international order. The BRI, though, as mainly an infrastructure-building project, and one with mixed results, fell short of a full vision of a post-Western world, which became increasingly necessary amid China’s systemic rivalry with the United States. In 2017, Xi introduced another key concept for the country’s international agenda, calling for the building of a “community of a shared future for mankind,” which further laid the groundwork for advancing his strategic vision.16 Enter the GDI, GSI, and GCI. Chinese leaders describe these initiatives as new, badly needed, and superior solutions to the world’s ills. In June 2022, Xi explained that the GDI was initiated “at a time when…the North-South gap keeps widening, and crises are emerging in food and energy security.”17 Wang described the GDI as “a rallying call to galvanize greater attention on development and bring it back to the center of the international agenda.”18 He added that “it offers a ‘fast track’ to promote development, as well as an effective platform for all parties to coordinate development policies and deepen practical cooperation.” The main principles expressed in the GDI, as Xi outlined them, include a commitment to a “people-centered” and “innovation-driven” approach to development, and a focus on “results-oriented actions” that bring “benefits for all.”19

Similarly, the GSI is another “public good from China to the world,” offered at an especially uncertain moment, shortly after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Wang has outlined its significance in maintaining world peace and preventing conflicts and wars, and upholding multilateralism.20 The GSI is underpinned by “six commitments,” some of which borrow ideas directly from the Kremlin’s playbook:21 a vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security; respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter; taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously; peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation; and maintaining security in both traditional and nontraditional domains.

This official narrative may give the impression that China is reacting to global changes by tackling “two of the most pressing issues” for most developing countries: development and security.

Yet this tells only half the story. The bigger picture shows how Beijing is taking the initiative—both literally and figuratively. For the first time in recorded history, a global Chinese polity with global aspirations is stepping up to save the world. Speaking at the Boao Forum in 2021 under the theme of “A World in Change,” Xi lamented about “the four deficits” that humanity is facing: a “growing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit,” further asking, “What has gone wrong with the world? What is humanity’s way forward?”22 These remarks would later be known in CCP parlance as the “Questions of Our Time.”23

Xi has the answers. Western leaders, who have guided the international community for two centuries, demonstrated they do not. According to Beijing’s version of events, just when the world needed a strong and united global leadership the most, the Western-led global governance system failed it. Chinese sources paint a “picture of helplessness”24 of the US-led West, too preoccupied with internal crises and hell-bent on containing China’s rise to maintain its hegemony and its “unfair and unjust” global order.25

And in this “world full of uncertainty,” so goes the CCP narrative, “China is the greatest source of stability.”26 Armed with the “ideological essence of Chinese excellent traditional culture” combined with Marxism’s “global outlook and methodology”27 and “scientific” guidance,”28 the party’s leadership has been able to “correctly evaluate” the “world’s ills.” Party theorists advocate that this compendium of wisdom has been distilled into the “answer sheet” to the Questions of Our Times,29 and that the key to the shared future of mankind can be found in “Chinese prescriptions” for global maladies.30

Thus, the GDI and GSI offer elements of prescriptions to “fix” the world order. They should be first viewed as components of a larger push to establish China as a leader in global governance. The GDI “embodies China’s fundamental experience over the past 40 years of viewing ‘development’ as the solution to every problem,” writes Liu Hongwu of Zhejiang Normal University.31 The “China Model” not only serves as an example for other developing nations, according to Yu Yunquan, president of the Academy of Contemporary China and World Studies. As a global major power, “China should share China’s development opportunities with the rest of the world, especially developing nations, and emphasize China’s role as a global provider of public goods.”32

The twin initiatives, therefore, signify an evolving Chinese worldview in which internal policies are externalized. Beijing aims to create a favorable external environment that will support China’s sovereignty, security, and development interests. But the twin initiatives cannot be understood outside of the context of China’s confrontation with the United States. Chinese leaders often define them in terms of great power competition. “Strive to build the most extensive ‘anti-hegemonic united front’ to break the ‘anti-China alliance’ that the US is trying to create,” according to top CCP theoretician Liu Jianfei. “This great game is not only a geopolitical competition between major powers, but also a contest between national governance systems and the direction of global governance and international order.”33

To that effect, the Chinese solutions are first celebrated as the epitome of “real multilateralism.” Then-Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng described it as opposed to the “fake multilateralism, fake rules, fake human rights and fake democracy” of the US-led West.”34 “These solutions also improve and go beyond the Western theory of geopolitical security,” according to Wang Yi. Beijing can further neutralize US-led Western “containment and suppression” by tethering its own security and development strategies to the rest of the world’s.

In addition, the new initiatives aim to redefine universal values and the rules-based international order in favor of “absolute sovereignty”35 and the “common values of humanity.”36 They can potentially deflect Western criticism of China’s internal repression and human rights abuses on a reactive level. On a proactive level, they can give other authoritarian regimes more leeway to operate with impunity and greater legitimacy on the world stage.

Finally, the initiatives sidestep key Chinese foreign policy principles such as its stated non-alliance policy—which holds that Beijing does not build military alliances—and its nonaggression policy. At the same time, the initiatives make it easier for Beijing to create anti-Western multilateral platforms. For one thing, the GSI formally adopts the Kremlin’s concept of “indivisible security,”37 with Chinese leaders joining Russian president Vladimir Putin in excusing the unlawful invasion of Ukraine by blaming the US-led NATO for committing the “original sin” that led to the war.38 Beijing has been using this terminology more frequently to describe US initiatives and alliances in the Indo-Pacific as threatening China’s security. In doing so, Beijing can lay the rhetorical, legal, and political groundwork to justify a People’s Liberation Army invasion of Taiwan as a righteous act of self-defense in response to US moves in the region that threaten Chinese interests by, for example, creating conditions that enable Taiwan to move toward independence.

Consequently, the GSI and GDI have become core elements of China’s foreign policy. In almost each and every diplomatic interaction China has had in the past year, it has ensured that the foreign parties always exalt the initiatives as having “strategic significance in resolving risks and challenges faced by today’s world.”39 In another attempt to heed Xi’s call to “expand China’s circle of friends,” China’s Foreign Ministry exploited an obscure mechanism at the United Nations to quickly establish the Group of Friends of the GDI. It should come as no surprise that a meeting of the group in New York in September, hosted by Wang, was attended by representatives of the Global South, many of them closely aligned with Beijing or linked to its development programs, including Laos, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Uzbekistan, and Egypt.40 That category of country is, after all, the initiative’s primary target. As of April 2023, the GDI received the support of more than 100 countries and international organizations and the blessing of the UN Secretary-General, and nearly 70 of those countries joined the Group of Friends of the GDI in Geneva.

## North Korea

### 1NC—Prolif Good

#### SoKo and Japan Proliferation Good

Robert E. **Kelly** **'22** [(Robert E. Kelly, professor of political science at Pusan National University. ) "The U.S. Should Get Out of the Way in East Asia’s Nuclear Debates," Foreign Policy, https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/07/15/us-south-korea-japan-east-asia-nuclear-debates-nonproliferation/,] TDI

A February poll found that 71 percent of South Koreans wanted their country to have nuclear weapons. Another in May found 70.2 percent supported indigenous nuclearization, with 63.6 percent in support even if that violated the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). **The drivers, unsurprisingly, are North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and China’s growing belligerence.** These factors impact the Japanese nuclearization debate too, though interest there is noticeably lower. **The United States has long opposed South Korean/Japanese counter-nuclearization. But in the light of the Ukraine war, Washington should not hegemonically dictate the outcome of its allies’ WMD debates.**

NATO anxiety over possible Russian WMDs in the Ukraine war illustrates potential limits on U.S. counter-escalation when facing a nuclearized opponent. Western pundits have been quite candid that Russian nuclear weapons were the reason for rejecting the no-fly zone sought by Kyiv. Chinese and, especially, North Korean WMDs might play a similar blocking or limiting role in East Asian contingencies.

Importantly, U.S. guarantees to South Korea and Japan are formalized as treaty, whereas NATO is not similarly committed to Ukraine. But during the Cold War, Britain and France were incredulous enough that the United States would sacrifice “New York for Paris” that they built their own nuclear weapons despite formal U.S. guarantees. **That same logic is at work in East Asia today. The United States will not sacrifice “Los Angeles for Seoul.”**

China, with its relatively restrained nuclear rhetoric, is less the issue here than N**orth Korea, which regularly and flamboyantly invokes its nuclear weapons. Pyongyang is not going to reform, will march relentlessly toward more and better WMDs, and is building its doctrine around their use, including possible tactical deployments.**

**Alternatives to direct South Korean/Japanese nuclear deterrence of North Korean WMDs are soft. Extended nuclear deterrence is weakly credible if it means nuked U.S. cities to defend South Korea or Japan. Missile defense does not work well enough to provide a roof against as many weapons North Korea appears to be building. China will not take serious action to stop Pyongyang**. A negotiated deal—the best solution and hence discussed at length below—might control Pyongyang’s programs somewhat via missile or warhead limits or inspector access. But North Korea seems unwilling to negotiate seriously, is an untrustworthy counterparty, is unlikely to cut enough to relieve the existential threat its WMDs now pose to South Korea and Japan, and would demand exorbitant counter-concessions as payment.

This poor option set is already forcing “thinking the unthinkable” discussions in the region. South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol has suggested preemptive strikes on North Korean missile sites in a crisis, and former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe suggested the return of U.S. nuclear weapons to the region. The sheer precarity of South Korean and Japanese exposure to a nuclearized/missile Orwellian tyranny—which will be evident yet again this year if Pyongyang tests another nuclear weapon as predicted—will make it increasingly awkward for the United States to hegemonically insist that Seoul, and Tokyo even, may not investigate all security options.

**Worse, U.S. resistance to allied nuclearization assumes a traditional American internationalism that is no longer assured**. One of the United States’ two parties increasingly disdains alliances and admires authoritarianism. **If former U.S. President Donald Trump—or a similar Trumpist—retakes the U.S. presidency in 2024, American opposition to East Asian allies’ nuclearization will decline dramatically**—if only because the United States will no longer care what they do. As president, Trump was more interested in personal relationships with regional autocrats like Chinese President Xi Jinping or North Korean leader Kim Jong Un than with traditional U.S. partners. He notoriously “fell in love” with Kim and signaled a desire to “blow up” the US-ROK alliance if re-elected. He also hinted at breaking the 1951 U.S.-Japan security treaty. So, there is a reasonable chance that South Korea will nuclearize after 2024 regardless of what the Americans think. **U.S. abandonment of South Korea would also push the Japanese nuclearization discussion to the right.**

**This would not be the first time the United States has tacitly accepted another country’s nuclearization.** Ostensibly, the United States has supported the NPT for decades. **In practice though, Washington tolerates at least five other states—Britain, France, Israel, India, and Pakistan—being unwilling to build down their stockpiles.** **Using the vague standard implied by these examples—friendship with the United States; reasonable state capacity; and at least theoretically, democratic rule—South Korea and Japan more than clear the bar for what is effectively a U.S. NPT exemption.**

Judged by U.S. behavior toward NPT contravention, the NPT is better understood as a U.S. effort to prevent unfriendly or hostile states from nuclearizing rather than as a blanket, “Global Zero” commitment to fewer nuclear weapons in the world. The United States does not pressure friendly nuclear weapons states, including itself, to meet NPT requirements. It gave up sanctioning India and Pakistan’s violation after just three years. Applying this more honest standard of U.S. interests to arms control, the NPT is of questionable utility in East Asia.

**China, Russia, and North Korea already possess nuclear weapons and show no signs of building down. So there is no regional nuclearization cascade for South Korea or Japan to provoke, because it has already happened**. . And Taiwanese nuclearization is unlikely, as Taiwanese elites are quite aware that their nuclearization would provoke China.

Next, there is an under-discussed NPT downside: It provokes the alliance-debilitating, “New York for Paris” debates mentioned above. **If U.S. allies do not nuclearize and must rely on U.S. nuclear weapons for nuclear deterrence, then they will inevitably question whether the United States will use those weapons in their defense if that might incur a retaliatory nuclear strike on the U.S. homeland. The answer to that question is almost certainly no**, as then-French President Charles de Gaulle realized 61 years ago. The easiest way to reduce this bitter, alliance-undermining dissension is to let U.S. allies self-insure via indigenous nuclearization.

as British and French **Finally, South Korean/Japanese nuclearization could serve shared regional interests by providing supplemental, local deterrence (nukes did during the Cold War)** **and by improving alliance burden-sharing. Further, the threat of South Korean/Japanese nuclearization might finally prompt Pyongyang and Beijing to take North Korean denuclearization negotiations seriously. Should South Korea and Japan respect the NPT and Global Zero plan while China, Russia, and North Korea do as they will, the effective outcome is unilateral disarmament**. This is politically and strategically infeasible; we regrettably live in a world of persistent nuclear armament.

Global Zero advocates, such as political scientist Scott Sagan, worry about the transactional issues of WMD possession because they are uniquely dangerous weapons. Indeed, theft, loss, rogue scientists, and so on are legitimate fears. But they are no more resonant with South Korea or Japan than with any other nuclear weapons state. Indeed, as liberal democracies with robust state capacities and preexisting, well-managed nuclear energy programs, they will likely be quite responsible, as Britain and France have been.

**No one seriously believes Seoul or Tokyo will launch an out-of-the-blue, nuclear-first strike on an opponent; set up something like the A.Q. Khan proliferation network; sell WMDs to terrorists or other rogues; put Homer Simpson in charge of nuclear safety; or be so sloppy as to require something like the Nunn-Lugar program.** **Even Pakistan and India have been better with their arsenals than the panic of the late 1990s suggested.** Even dictatorships have been cautious about these issues. And as democracies with a history of foreign-policy restraint, democratic peace theory suggests they would be good stewards, certainly better than East Asia’s autocratic nuclear powers.

**There is generalized anxiety about a regional arms race, which South Korean/Japanese nuclearization might exacerbate. Perhaps, but as noted above, there is no local cascade to be sparked because it has already occurred**. China, Russia, and North Korea have all moved first. China and Russia have established nuclear arsenals and no intention of complying with the build-down imperative. Russia’s growing rhetorical invocation of its nuclear weapons is a disturbing evolution. North Korea repeatedly agreed, non-bindingly since 1992, to avoid nuclear weapons—only to exit the NPT and keep building. It now has intercontinental ballistic missiles and several dozen nuclear warheads.

**Ostensibly, South Korea and Japan are not competing in this race—but only because they outsource their nuclear deterrence to the United States. Extended deterrence does not remove the U.S.-Japan-South Korea alliance on WMDs from the East Asian security discussion**. It only means they are not located in-theater. That may have value in keeping China from building more WMDs (although it is already doing so) or Russia from playing the nuclear card in the region as it does in Europe. But it is not stopping North Korea. And that is the core issue—always and again.

**North Korea will not sign a deal that reduces its arsenal enough to reduce the strategic threat that brought Yoon to float preemption earlier this year. Even if Pyongyang signed a deal—and did not cheat—it would never cut deeply enough to obviate the existential threat it now poses to Japan and South Korea**. Nuclear weapons are an excellent deterrent for North Korea, and tactically, they help equalize the conventional military competition with the South and the United States, where Pyongyang lags behind. Complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization is fantasy.

The negotiations between Kim, Trump, and previous South Korean President Moon Jae-in strongly suggest this. **From 2018 to 2020, North Korea had the best chance in its history to capture a balance-positive deal with South Korea and the United States. Revealingly, Kim passed it up**, even though the constellation of forces was nearly ideal for Pyongyang in two, overlapping dovish presidencies in the North’s primary opponents.

With Trump, Pyongyang had the best U.S. president ever for its interests. Trump loathed South Korea. He knew little about Korean history, nuclear weapons, or ballistic missiles; according to former Trump National Security Advisor John Bolton, Trump did not even prepare for his summits with Kim. Trump did not care about the U.S. position in East Asia and disliked U.S. allies generally. He desperately wanted to sign a peace deal with Kim to win a Nobel Peace Prize and help his reelection bid while Moon came from a South Korean left that has often been eager to engage with Pyongyang.

It is hard to imagine better counterparties to whom Kim might have made some genuine concessions with to receive large counter-concessions. Instead, Kim’s one serious offer to Trump, at Hanoi in 2019, was very unbalanced. Kim offered to shutter one aging nuclear plant for full sanctions removal. Even Trump realized this was a bad deal, and talks collapsed.

**Finally, a South Korean/Japanese nuclearization discussion indicates a seriousness about their own security, which is long overdue. Cheap-riding and strategy immaturity among U.S. allies are long-established problems**. **This is glaringly obvious in Europe now, where local U.S. allies, much more impacted by the Ukraine war, are nonetheless buck-passing leadership of the response to America. The United States should discourage this if it is to finally achieve a more restrained, less sprawling foreign policy, a less gargantuan defense budget, greater focus on China, fewer forever war interventions, and so on.**

**If allied democracies want nuclear weapons, if their foreign-policy elites and voters decide to take this step, then the United States should accept that this is their choice**. As a liberal alliance leader, the United States should not tell its partners what to do nor what they may even debate**. South Korean/Japanese interest in WMDs is defensive, in good faith, and follows decades of restraint**; it is obviously not offensively intended. The United States should want its allies to take greater responsibility, develop deep national security doctrines, spend more, stop turning to America for foreign-policy direction, and so on. Indeed, Yoon recognizes that in the very title of his Foreign Affairs article for the 2022 South Korean presidential election: “South Korea Needs to Step Up.” Precisely.

**Allied cheap-riding is bad for the United States at home too. Militarized hegemony is deeply toxic to U.S. domestic politics**. The American national security state is too large and intrusive. American policing has become militarized, and the culture fetishes soldiers and military violence in a manner unique and disturbing for a republic. Greater allied burden-sharing has long been a goal of U.S. foreign policy, and it would be good for U.S. republican values at home if America did less abroad. There is no reason why greater allied strategic responsibility should not include WMDs if well-governed democratic allies so choose.

No one wants more nuclearization if avoidable. The decision is momentous, and I do not endorse it. Ideally, arms control with North Korea would alleviate some risk, as would missile defense, while extended deterrence and Chinese resistance could encourage North Korea to slow down.

But these options are all poor and getting worse. The United States will not fight a nuclear war solely for its allies, a point which American analysts should be honest with even if U.S. officials dance around it. Direct South Korean/Japanese deterrence is increasingly a better option than these alternatives, and the United States should at least allow its allies to debate the issue without strong-arming them.

#### soko and Japan prolif k2 US primacy

Choi 22[(Seung-Whan Choi teaches International Relations and Korean politics at the University of Illinois at Chicago. A retired Army officer, he is the author of several books, including Emerging Security Challenges: American Jihad, Terrorism, Civil War, and Human Rights) “The Time Is Right: Why Japan and South Korea Should Get the Bomb”, The National Interest, 7/12/22. <https://whanchoi.people.uic.edu/The-Time-Is-Right-Why-Japan-and-South-Korea-Should-Get-the-Bomb.pdf>] TDI

For more than half a century, **one of the United States’ grand strategic missions has been to inhibit the proliferation of nuclear weapons**. This strategic mission has been successful to the extent that the United States prevented the global spread of the most destructive, indiscriminate, and inhumane weapons. Since almost all U.S. allies believe in the efficacy of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, nuclearization is a pursuit of those beyond its reach. **However, the international security environment has changed dramatically in recent years**. Above all, China and North Korea have expanded their capabilities to project military power globally, emerging as the biggest security threats to East Asian countries and the United States. **As global hegemonic power is slipping through Washington’s fingers, the United States faces increased difficulties balancing the two new military aggressors alone**. It is time to pass the buck: **the United States should allow South Korea or Japan to go nuclear.** This buck-passing strategy could **encourage one of the two countries to bear the burden of deterring or possibly fighting China and North Korea in East Asia before they cross the Pacific Ocean**. Thus, the United States could **share world policing with a wealthy Asian ally rather than allowing it to free ride.** Buck-passing is transferring the responsibility to act on an emerging bully, but it is **one of the most well-conceived security strategies for a great power to check an aggressor** while remaining on the sidelines. In a way, England and France assume buck-catching, as they take responsibility for thwarting military aggression of European and U.S. rivals in Western Europe; Israel plays the role of a buck catcher in the Middle East; and India and Pakistan catch the buck in South Asia. **These buck catchers minimize America’s direct military involvement with potential aggressors.** Regrettably, no country in East Asia, one of the most volatile regions in the world, is buck-catching. This is almost certainly a by-product of confusion over the rapid ascent of China. I see four potential reasons the United States might prefer Japan as a strategic buck catcher over South Korea. First, while developing its failed nuclear weapons program in the 1970s, **South Korea “displayed a pattern of deception, manipulation, evasion, or even obstruction of the expressed [geopolitical] interests of” the United States.** In contrast, **Japan**, whose national security is also at stake due to the threats from China and North Korea, **has not shown such disrespect to the United States though it has retained the technical capability to go nuclear on short notice if necessary.** Since Washington understands that “once a cheater, always a cheater, ” it might perceive Seoul to be less reliable than Tokyo when push comes to shove. Second, **South Korea is politically less reliable than Japan since its fixed presidential term of five years often leads to policy inconsistency.** When a conservative president is in office for five years, foreign policy tends to be in sync with U.S. interests so that Washington rarely has trouble addressing its security concerns in South Korea. But **if a power transition occurs and a progressive president comes to power for the next five years, this tends to drastically change foreign policy, emphasizing the importance of national sovereignty and rejecting nuclear weapons as a viable security option.** When a conservative president loses power, the United States must deal with a progressive president who is less compromising and even sometimes recalcitrant. In contrast, Japan has been largely dominated by a conservative party, which has been in power almost continuously since its foundation in 1955. Japanese prime ministers are exceptionally cooperative, so they are more willing to accommodate any U.S. security needs in East Asia. Third, **since South Korea has greater economic interests in China in comparison to Japan, it might be more reluctant to balance the rising power of China on behalf of its American friends**. In 2021, South Korea’s trade balance with China amounted to a surplus of about $24 billion. In contrast, Japan incurred a trade deficit of about $18 billion with China. Fourth, when it comes to deterring or fighting China and North Korea, public opinion in South Korea might turn against the United States more strongly than in Japan. For example, since South Koreans view China to be much less threatening as a nation than the Japanese, they might be less willing to support a president entertaining America’s security agenda. This perspective can be inferred from March and April 2021 surveys by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. At the time of polling, 28 percent of South Koreans believed that China seeks to replace the United States as the dominant player in the Asia-Pacific, compared to 40 percent of Japanese. Furthermore, 24 percent of South Koreans viewed the alliance with the United States as purely based on the security interests of both countries, in contrast with 35 percent of Japanese. (In contrast, a majority of Koreans, 54 percent, feel that their alliance with the United States is based on a mixture of security interests and shared values; only 26 percent of Japanese share this opinion.) These survey results suggest that the geopolitical goals of the United States and South Korea might overlap not as much as those of the United States and Japan. **China and North Korea’s behavior has become increasingly provocative and assertive just as the United States’ once omnipotent military is faltering with an economy beset by economic challenges**. This newly competitive security environment calls for an alternative to current U.S. grand strategy—the inhibition of nuclear proliferation, which is ineffective in countering the two growing security challenges in East Asia. **To contend with these threats, the United States should stop thwarting the independent nuclear weapons programs of its two key allies in East Asia.** Buck-passing to a wealthy Asian country is an **effective strategy to defend the westernmost front line of the Pacific.** In an era of relative decline, the United States would do well to think about this approach on a global basis.

## Venezuela

### 1NC—High Food Prices Good

#### High food prices are good—they’re associated with a significant reduction in poverty and an increase in food production, which solves scarcity.

**Headey** **&** **Hirvonen '23** [(Derek Headey, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Colombo, Sri Lanka, Kalle Hirvonen, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Colombo, Sri Lanka, United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), Helsinki, Finland ) "Higher food prices can reduce poverty and stimulate growth in food production," Nature, https://www.nature.com/articles/s43016-023-00816-8, 8-9-2023] TDI

Main regression results

Table 1 reports our main results for the association between changes in the US$3.20-per-day poverty headcount and changes in the food-to-non-food CPI ratio. Column 1 is a very basic linear first-differenced model, while column 2 adds year fixed effects. In both columns, the coefficient on **changes** in real food prices is negative, similar in magnitude and **highly** statistically **significant**, suggesting that increases inreal domestic food **prices predict** **reductions in poverty**, on average. Regression 2 suggests that a 1 s.d. annual change in the food-to-non-food CPI ratio (approximately 5 percentage points) is associated with a modest 0.45-percentage-point reduction in the US$3.20-per-day poverty headcount.

In columns 3 and 4, we estimate a model that introduces an interaction term between changes in real food prices and a country’s average urban population share. The estimated coefficient on changes in the food-to-non-food CPI ratio is now highly significant (P < 0.01) and still negative, whereas the interaction term is highly significant (P < 0.01) but positive, suggesting that the beneficial impacts of higher food prices on poverty reduction are attenuated or even reversed for countries with higher urban population shares.

How should one interpret the magnitudes of these coefficients in the interaction models? The solid upward-sloping line in Fig. 2a represents the predicted change in poverty from a 1-percentage-point increase in real food prices conditional on the urban population share (across the range present in our data), based on the coefficients reported in column 4 of Table 1. The least urbanized MICs could expect economically and statistically significant reductions in poverty from large increases in real food prices. For example, a 5-percentage-point increase in food prices is associated with a 1.25-percentage-point reduction in poverty in the least urbanized countries in our dataset. At higher levels of urbanization (at around 70%), the benefits are no longer statistically different from zero.

The results are similar when we switch from urbanization as our ‘non-farm’ indicator to the share of the country’s labour force in non-agricultural employment. The regression results for the non-agricultural employment share interaction model (columns 5 and 6 in Table 1) correspond closely to the urbanization interaction effects reported in columns 3 and 4 of Table 1. Likewise, Fig. 2b shows that increases in real food prices are associated with reductions in poverty rates in countries that have relatively more people working in agriculture, but the relationship weakens in countries with fewer people working in agriculture. While the poverty headcount measures the share of the population falling into or out of poverty, the poverty gap tells us about changes in the depth of poverty. In Fig. 3, we observe that when we use the poverty gap measure as the dependent variable in our regression model, the key interaction coefficient between food price changes and urbanization still holds (Supplementary Table 4): at low levels of urbanization, a 5-percentage-point increase in the food-to-non-food CPI ratio is associated with a 0.6-percentage-point reduction in the poverty gap index, whereas at higher levels of urbanization, this association weakens and even becomes positive in highly urbanized MICs.

Sensitivity tests

Next, we explore the robustness of the main regression results reported above.

First, when we include potential confounding factors, discussed above, the coefficients on the non-interacted and interacted terms remain stable and comparable to those reported in column 4 of Table 1 (Supplementary Table 5). Second, we re-estimate all our regression models using the US$1.90-per-day poverty headcount instead of the US$3.20-per-day poverty headcount (Supplementary Table 6 and Supplementary Fig. 2); the results remain similar to those in Table 1 and Fig. 2. Third, we apply a robust regression method to the first-difference estimator instead of the ordinary least square (OLS; Supplementary Table 7), which yields results qualitatively similar to the OLS results, although there is some modest attenuation of the coefficients after downweighing outliers. Similarly, the results are robust to a quantile regression approach25 that estimates the median of the outcome variable and is thus less sensitive to outliers than the OLS (Supplementary Table 8). Supplementary Table 9 also checks whether individual countries influence key associations, but they do not. Fourth, we make the right-hand-side variables in equation (2) interact with a binary variable equal to one if the survey was conducted during years when international food, fuel and fertilizer prices spiked (2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011), but these interactions are not statistically significant, indicating no special impacts during crisis years (Supplementary Table 10).

Potential mechanisms

Why would increases in the real prices of retail foods be associated with reductions in poverty in more rural and more agrarian economies? Clearly, rural populations are poorer and more likely to be farmers and potential net food producers, but annual reductions in poverty presumably also require evidence that higher food prices stimulate an agricultural supply response, which in turn raises wage earnings. To test that hypothesis, we use a large panel (for the same 33 MICs) to model associations between growth rates of various measures of agricultural production and changes in the real domestic food price index.

Figure 4a shows a scatterplot and linear regression fits of changes in the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) food production quantity index as a function of lagged changes in real retail food prices. The relationship is positive and statistically significant, suggesting that food production is, on average, highly responsive to retail food price changes in the short run. Figure 4b shows a positive but slightly weaker relationship for total agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) growth (that is, including non-food agricultural outputs), whereas Fig. 4c shows a strong positive association between crop production growth and real food price changes. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, livestock production is not correlated with domestic food price changes (Fig. 4d). Unlike crop production, where it is possible to expand a variety of inputs in the short run (for example, seeds, fertilizers, land, labour and machinery), expanding livestock production mostly requires acquiring larger herds or changing herd composition, which is almost impossible in the short run.

These bivariate results are robust to the inclusion of various controls (Supplementary Table 11) and to the robust regressor that down- weighs the extreme values apparent in Fig. 4 (Supplementary Table 12), although those coefficients are smaller in magnitude than the OLS results. Specifically, a 5% increase in the real price of food predicts growth in total food production of around 1.95 percentage points in OLS regressions compared with 1.75 percentage points in robust regressions, and the corresponding responses for crop output growth are 3.3 percentage points and 1.8 percentage points.

These relatively strong short-run supply responses for crop production are likely to induce increased demand for unskilled labour and a relatively quick increase in wages15, although the speed and size of wage adjustments to rising food prices will be context specific and can also change over time with structural shifts in rural and urban labour markets (for example, urbanization and migration) and agricultural practices (for example, increased mechanization). One previous study found that rural wages in Bangladesh took only around 6 months to adjust to higher domestic food prices24, well within our annual time span, but another study from Bangladesh found that the association between food prices and farm wages has weakened over time26. Unfortunately, data on rural and urban wages for a wider array of countries are not available for more extensive testing of this mechanism, nor is there recent empirical evidence on other forms of rural non-farm spillovers from growth in domestic agricultural production.

#### Economic inequality fuels instability and protests that cause populist uprise.

**Cohen and Nicas '7-5** [(Patricia Cohen covers the national economy for The New York Times. Jack Nicas covers technology from San Francisco for The New York Times.) "Growing Economic Anxiety and Inequality Fuels Unrest Worldwide," The New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/05/business/global-economy-debt-inequality.html?searchResultPosition=5, 7-5-2024] TDI

Like a globe-spanning tornado that touches down with little predictability, deep economic anxieties are leaving a trail of political turmoil and violence across poor and rich countries alike.

In Kenya, a nation buckling under debt, protests over a proposed tax increase last week resulted in dozens of deaths, abductions of demonstrators and a partially scorched Parliament.

At the same time in Bolivia, where residents have lined up for gas because of shortages, a military general led a failed coup attempt, saying the president, a former economist, must “stop impoverishing our country,” just before an armored truck rammed into the presidential palace.

And in France, after months of road blockades by farmers angry over low wages and rising costs, the far-right party surged in support in the first round of snap parliamentary elections on Sunday, bringing its long-taboo brand of nationalist and anti-immigrant politics to the threshold of power.

The causes, context and conditions underlying these disruptions vary widely from country to country. But a common thread is clear: rising inequality, diminished purchasing power and growing anxiety that the next generation will be worse off than this one.

The result is that citizens in many countries who face a grim economic outlook have lost faith in the ability of their governments to cope — and are striking back.

The backlash has often targeted liberal democracy and democratic capitalism, with populist movements springing up on both the left and right. “An economic malaise and a political malaise are feeding each other,” said Nouriel Roubini, an economist at New York University.

In recent months, economic fears have set off protests around the world that have sometimes turned violent, including in high-income countries with stable economies like Poland and Belgium, as well as those struggling with out-of-control debt, like Argentina, Pakistan, Tunisia, Angola and Sri Lanka.

On Friday, Sri Lanka’s president, Ranil Wickremesinghe, pointed to Kenya and warned: “If we do not establish economic stability in Sri Lanka, we could face similar unrest.” Even in the United States, where the economy has proved resilient, economic anxieties are partly behind the potential return of Donald J. Trump, who has frequently adopted authoritarian rhetoric. In a recent poll, the largest share of American voters said that the economy was the election’s most important issue.

National elections in more than 60 countries this year have focused attention on the political process, inviting citizens to express their discontent.

Economic problems always have political consequences. Yet economists and analysts say that a chain of events set off by the Covid-19 pandemic created an acute economic crisis in many parts of the planet, laying the groundwork for the civil unrest that is blooming now.

#### Populism causes extinction—nuclear war.

**Alvira '22** [(Sanaa Alvira is a Marie Sklodowska-Curie fellow at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a recent graduate in the Non-Proliferation and Terrorism Studies master’s programme at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey.) "Is nationalist populism creating new nuclear dangers?," James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, https://nonproliferation.org/is-nationalist-populism-creating-new-nuclear-dangers/, 10-14-2022] TDI

One of the most significant developments of recent times has been the global rise of populism. In research published in the Nonproliferation Review, Oliver Meier and Maren Vieluf explore particular aspects of this phenomenon—the emergence of leaders they classify as “nationalist populists” in countries that are “at the core of the nuclear order.” Now that nuclear arsenals are in the hands of such leaders, “[t]he view that a few responsible nuclear-armed states guard against irresponsible behavior by states mostly peripheral to the nuclear order is no longer defensible, if it ever was,” the two scholars say. Focusing their analysis on four former and current world leaders—Donald Trump in the United States, Boris Johnson in the United Kingdom, Narendra Modi in India, and Vladimir Putin in Russia—Meier and Vieluf explore three ways nationalist-populist leaders effectively increase nuclear dangers through their foreign and defense policies.

Loose talk and risky actions

First, such leaders talk about nuclear weapons very loosely and strongly. Using exaggerated and emotional rhetoric, nationalist populists aim primarily to please their domestic political base. Second, nationalist populists tend to be unpredictable when making decisions regarding nuclear weapons. They are willing to take risks, disregarding the more cautious advice of their expert advisers. Finally, nationalist populists focus on short-term gains, disregarding international institutions and ignoring long-term implications.

Arguments that nuclear weapons could have a restraining effect on leaders’ immoderate behavior have little credibility when the leaders in question are nationalist populists, according to Meier and Vieluf. Such leaders also are unreliable with regard to security guarantees and other international obligations; furthermore, “populists are less likely to inform allies, let alone consult them, on nuclear issues.” In short, nationalist populism is corrosive to alliances and to the international order more broadly—even more so when nationalist-populist leaders have access to nuclear weapons.

In delineating the issue, Meier and Vieluf note that are no easy remedies, and they argue that “wait[ing] the populists out” is unlikely to be a successful strategy. For them a “strategy to deal with the challenge posed by nationalist populists must start by recognizing that we cannot assume that nuclear weapons are safe in the hands of some states but not in the hands of others.”

### 1AR—AT: High Food Prices Good

#### High prices don’t solve poverty.

**Wibowo et al. '22** [(Hariz Eko Wibowo, Ridha Rizki Novanda, Rihan Ifebri, Departement of Socio-Economic of Agriculture, Faculty of Agriculture, Bengkulu University, Ariffatchur Fauzi, Departement of Plant Protection, Faculty of Agriculture, Bengkulu University.) "Overview of the Literature on the Impact of Food Price Volatility," No Publication, https://ejournal.unib.ac.id/jagritropica/article/view/27053, 6-1-2022] TDI

Although the results linking price volatility and investment can be applied to the agricultural sector, it is nevertheless important to emphasize that this industry has unique features because of the nature of its products. Agricultural land is both a source of income and a guarantee of the family's food rations in emerging nations. So, to avoid rivalry for land and labour, it is important to distinguish between the two forms of production: cash crops and food crops. The most common aspect of agriculture, which Fafchamps (1992) built an analytical framework for, is that the poorest farmers devote a bigger portion of their land and labour to producing food crops.

Food crops often have lower yields and are more susceptible to climatic shocks. According to Fafchamps, farmers in the least developing nations are forced to rely primarily on themselves to feed their families because those marketplaces are often insufficient or non-existent (self-sufficiency). In other words, they cannot take the chance of growing crops with great yields without they [sic] secured their food supply first. Need to be considered to a minimum amount of land on which it would be feasible to converse to cash crops partially.

Yet, beyond this limit, farmers are caught in a cycle of poverty due to their specialization in low-return, high-volatility food crops, which are occasionally insufficient to provide necessities. According to Poulton et al. (2006), between 70 and 80 percent of rural households in Africa are net deficit producers (who do not produce enough food to fulfil their requirements).

At the microeconomic level, price instability impacts agricultural investment patterns, mainly when markets are sparse or isolated. The characteristics of the farming population will determine how they react to increased volatility. From a theoretical perspective, food price volatility will have different effects on surplus and deficit households (Poulton et al., 2006). It will tend to encourage deficit households to continue investing limited resources in the production of staple foods, preventing the transition to value crops, while discouraging investment in staple agriculture by surplus households, which are significant local and national food sources.

Uncertainty in food prices can be a significant barrier for many deficit households to escape poverty. A formal survey by Place, Adato, and Hebinck (2007) shows that few of the poor in Kenya tend to grow cash crops, use hybrid seeds, or use fertilizers. On the other hands, surplus households can save.

Looking at the bigger picture, fluctuating food prices might also result in a sharp decline in investment along the entire agricultural value chain, keeping the sector in a trap of low productivity and high volatility (Poulton et al., 2006).

#### Inequality is decreasing at a lightning pace.

Yascha Mounk 7-16-2023, Professor of the Practice of International Affairs at Johns Hopkins University, a Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, expert on the crisis of liberal democracy and the rise of populism, PhD in Government from Harvard University. "Goodbye to the Prophets of Doom." Atlantic. https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/07/economics-inequality-piketty-milanovic/674702/. DL

During the Great Recession, public discourse about the economy underwent something of a Great Disappointment.

For much of the country’s history, most Americans assumed that the future would bring them or their descendants **greater affluence**. Despite periodic **economic crises**, the overall story seemed to be one of progress for **every stratum** of the population. Those expectations were **largely borne out**: The standard of living enjoyed by working-class Americans for much of the mid-20th century, for example, was far superior to that enjoyed by affluent Americans a generation or two earlier.

But after the 2008 financial crisis, those assumptions were upended by a period of intense economic suffering coupled with a newfound interest among economists in the topic of inequality. Predictions of economic decline took over the conversation. America, a country long known for its inveterate optimism, came to dread the future—in which it now appeared that most people would have less and less.

Three arguments provided the intellectual foundation for the Great Disappointment. The first, influentially advanced by the MIT economist David Autor, was that the wages of most Americans were stagnating for the first time in living memory. Although the income of average Americans had roughly doubled once every generation for most of the previous century, wage growth for much of the population began to flatline in the 1980s. By 2010, it looked as though poorer Americans faced a future in which they could no longer expect any real improvement in their standard of living.

The second argument had to do with globalization’s impact on the worldwide distribution of income. In a graph that came to be known as the “elephant curve,” the Serbian American economist Branko Milanović argued that the world’s poorest people were experiencing only minor income growth; that the middle percentiles were benefiting mightily from globalization; that those in the upper-middle segment—which included many industrial workers and people in the service industry in rich countries, including America—had seen their incomes stagnate; and that the very richest were making out like bandits. Globalization, it seemed, was a mixed blessing, and a distinctly concerning one for the bottom half of wage earners in industrialized economies such as the United States.

The final, and most sweeping, argument was about the nature and causes of inequality. Even as much of the population was just holding its own in prosperity, the wealth and income of the richest Americans were rising rapidly. In his 2013 surprise best seller, Capital in the Twenty-First Century, the French economist Thomas Piketty proposed that this trend was likely to continue. Arguing that the returns on capital had long outstripped those of labor, Piketty seemed to suggest that only a calamitous event such as a major war—or a radical political transformation, which did not appear to be on the horizon—could help tame the trend toward ever-greater inequality.

The Great Disappointment **continues to shape** the way many Americans think about the current and future state of the economy. But as the pandemic and the rise of inflation have altered the world economy, the **intellectual basis** for the thesis has **begun to wobble**. The reasons for economic pessimism have started to look **less convincing** than they once were. Is it time to revise the core tenets of the Great Disappointment?

One of the **most prominent** labor economists in the U.S., **Autor** has over the past decade provided much of the evidence regarding the stagnation of American workers’ incomes, especially for those without a college degree.

The U.S. economy, Autor wrote in a highly influential paper in 2010, is bifurcating. Even as demand for high-skilled workers rose, demand for “middle-wage, middle-skill white-collar and blue-collar jobs” was contracting. America’s economy, which had once provided plenty of middle-class jobs, was splitting into a highly affluent professional stratum and a large remainder that was becoming more immiserated. The overall outcome, according to Autor, was “falling real earnings for noncollege workers” and “a sharp rise in the inequality of wages.”

Autor’s past work on the falling wages of a major segment of the American workforce makes it all the more notable that he now sounds far more optimistic. Because companies were desperately searching for workers at the tail-end of the pandemic, Autor argues in a working paper published earlier this year, low-wage workers found themselves in a **much better** bargaining position. There has been a **remarkable reversal** in **economic fortunes**.

“Disproportionate wage growth at the bottom of the distribution reduced the college wage premium and reversed the rise in aggregate wage inequality since 1980 by approximately one quarter,” Autor writes. The big winners of recent economic trends are precisely those groups that had been left out in preceding decades: “The rise in wages was **particularly strong** among **workers** under 40 years of age and without a **college degree**.”

Even after accounting for inflation, Autor shows, the bottom quarter of American workers has seen a **significant boost** in income for the first time in years. The scholar who previously wrote about the “polarization” in the U.S. workforce now concludes that the American economy is experiencing an “**unexpected compression**.” In other words, the **wealth gap** is **narrowing** with **surprising speed**.

Autor is **not the only** leading economist who is calling into doubt the underpinnings of the Great Disappointment. According to **Milanović**, his “**elephant curve**” proved so influential in part because it confirmed fears many people had about the effects of globalization. His famous graph was, he now admits, an “empirical confirmation of what many thought.” He is **no longer** so sure about that piece of **conventional wisdom**.

A few years ago, Milanović set out to update the original elephant curve, which was based on data from 1988 to 2008. The result came as a shock—a positive one. Once Milanović included data for another decade, to 2018, the curve changed shape. Instead of the characteristic “rise, fall, rise again” that had given the curve its viral name, its steadily falling gradient now seemed to paint a straightforward and much more optimistic picture. Over the four decades he now surveyed, the incomes of the **poorest** people in the world **rose very fast**, those of people toward the **middle** of the distribution **fairly fast**, and those of the **richest** rather **sluggishly**. Global economic conditions were improving for nearly everyone, and, **contrary** to conventional wisdom, it was **the most needy**, not the most affluent, who were reaping the **greatest rewards**.

In a recent article for Foreign Affairs, Milanović goes even further. “We’re **frequently told**,” he writes, that “we live in an age of inequality.” But when you look at the most recent **global data**, that turns out to be false: In fact, “the world is growing **more equal** than it has been for **over 100 years**.”

#### Populism is constrained.

Dr. Kurt Weyland 24, PhD, Mike Hogg Professor, Liberal Arts, University of Texas–Austin, "Why Democracy Survives Populism," Journal of Democracy, Vol. 35, No. 1, January 2024, Project Muse. //JDi [italics in original]

The global wave of populism, especially the unexpected 2016 election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency, instilled **great fear** in many observers: If such a personalistic leader could win executive office even in the global paragon of democratic liberalism, how much greater was the risk facing all the other countries where populists had been growing more competitive or had even won office? Would **populism's proliferation** soon bring about a proliferation of competitive **authoritarianism**?1 Academics took note and produced analyses of the threat such as Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt's outstanding—and deeply worrisome—2018 book *How Democracies Die*.2

There is no denying that even democratically elected chief executives can, in principle, **abuse** their positions to concentrate power, squeeze the opposition, constrain civil society, take control of the media, and skew the electoral playing field: In short, they can **weaken** and possibly **even destroy** constitutional democracy from within. Recent or current populist figures such as Peru's Alberto Fujimori (1990–2000), Venezuela's Hugo Chávez (1999–2013), Hungary's Viktor Orbán (2010–present), and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (2003–present) have used these tactics to suffocate liberal pluralism and thereby shown the way to other power-hungry heads of government who may be inclined to follow the same playbook.

Yet while the analysis of **how** democracies die highlights the ***possibility*** of political liberalism's downfall, it **does not establish the *probability*** of this deleterious outcome. How big is this risk, actually? To ascertain the effective danger facing contemporary democracy, we must do more than examine emblematic cases in which populist leaders have [End Page 43] destroyed democracy. Instead, we must consider the **whole set of instances** in which such charismatic populists have **won** executive office and then ask **how many** of them, and under what conditions, succeeded in grabbing overweening power and **strangling** democracy.

For this purpose, it is useful to focus on the two world regions where populist leaders have most often come to power: Latin America and Europe. My research finds that of **forty populist governments** which took power between **1985** and **2020** in these two regions, only **seven** pushed their countries into **authoritarian** rule.3 Beside the four cases on which Levitsky and Ziblatt concentrate—those of Fujimori, Chávez, Orbán, and Erdoğan—this major regression also happened in Bolivia under Evo Morales (2006–19), in Ecuador under Rafael Correa (2007–17),4 and recently in El Salvador under Nayib Bukele (2019–present).

Thus, while populism certainly **can be a mortal threat** to democracy, the **worst outcome** is **less common than observers have feared**. Instead, liberal pluralism often commands **considerable** strength as institutional checks and balances hold firm and opposition forces **mobilize** to foil the machinations of domineering chief executives. As a result, **most populist** assailant**s** have failed. Several have found themselves **hemmed** in by institutional checks and balances, while others have seen their careers done in by their own **haphazard** decisions and unruly confrontational urges before they could inflict serious damage on democracy.5

### 1NC—Maduro Diversionary War

#### Maduro’s desperate to stay in power—he’ll do anything to cling on.

Daniels and Abreu '24 [(Joe Daniels In Bogotá and JesúS Abreu In Caracas, ) "Venezuela’s Nicolás Maduro launches charm offensive as rival soars in polls," Financial Times, https://www.ft.com/content/89e8a043-4c09-4522-9a8a-572a4fe0853e, 7-13-2024] TDI

Nicolás Maduro, Venezuela’s authoritarian president, has overseen a slow-motion economic collapse, an exodus of millions of people, and escalating oppression during his 11 years in office. But the deeply unpopular leader now faces one of his toughest challenges ahead of elections on July 28 — and she is not even listed on the ballot paper. The banned opposition leader María Corina Machado has helped to secure a commanding lead for her proxy in the race, little-known former diplomat Edmundo González. That has prompted Maduro to launch a charm offensive to try to win the public over, appearing on TikTok and at rallies with a spry, avuncular persona. The leader who has presided over an economic disaster dances, poses for selfies and sings for his audience. At a campaign rally in a downtrodden Caracas neighbourhood on a balmy afternoon after two merengue singers worked up attendees, Maduro framed the election as a choice between a relatable everyman and a pliant stand-in for the elite. “Do you want a puppet president, who is weak, who can be manipulated and who nobody has heard of?” he asked the crowd, some decked out in the crimson of the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela. “Or do you want a president from the barrio [neighbourhood], of the people?” Maduro is seeking a third consecutive term, having inherited power in 2013 from his late populist mentor Hugo Chávez, the founder of the country’s ongoing Bolivarian Revolution, which combines a state-led economy with nationalism. High oil revenues underwrote generous social spending under Chávez, while sinecures were handed to inexperienced loyalists. But Chávez benefited from personal charisma — and high oil prices. Maduro has doubled down on his mentor’s authoritarianism as the economy contracted 75 per cent in the eight years to 2021, and about 7.7mn Venezuelans fled, more than a quarter of the population. Protests are violently put down by the military. Many opposition figures have been jailed or exiled, while the country has relied on support from Russia, Iran, Turkey and China. Now, analysts wonder how Maduro will stay in power, with even bearish pollsters giving González a lead of 20 per cent. “Authoritarians love holding elections, which continue to be a critical source of legitimacy, both externally and domestically,” said Steven Levitsky, professor of government at Harvard University and the co-author of How Democracies Die. “If you know you’re unpopular, and Maduro knows he’s unpopular, and you don’t want to lose power, then you must take steps to avoid a truly competitive election early on.” Maduro has already taken some of those steps. He controls the courts and electoral authorities. Opposition-friendly media are limited to operating online, with critics of the government absent from state-run broadcasters while “deepfake” images of Machado circulate on social media. One army general shared a manipulated image suggesting Machado had pledged to cut defence spending. Rights groups say that of at least 3.5mn eligible Venezuelans living abroad — the vast majority are seen as likely opposition supporters — only 69,000 were able to register to vote amid a bureaucratic roadblock of impossible requirements. In January, the government-allied supreme court upheld a ban on the candidacy of Machado, a former lawmaker who overwhelmingly won the opposition’s primary last October and has since filled squares with supporters around the country. González is standing in Machado’s stead, though it is his patron who draws the largest crowds. Machado’s campaign has faced harassment: some 14 aides have been arrested and another six taken refuge in the Argentine embassy, while businesses — including restaurants and ferry operators — have been shuttered by authorities after serving her. “We’re not in a normal election campaign. We’re up against the entirety of the government’s power,” said Delsa Solórzano, who stood in the opposition primary but now campaigns with Machado on behalf of González. “Maduro’s regime is capable of just about anything and the reality is that if he wants to stay in power, the only way is through fraud.” Only a small team from the UN and the Carter Center, a non-profit, has committed to monitor the vote after the EU’s large-scale delegation was uninvited by the government. In response, the opposition is leading a drive to register tens of thousands of witnesses to keep watch at polling stations. Maduro’s 2018 election victory was widely regarded in the west as a sham, leading the administration of Donald Trump to levy “maximum pressure” sanctions on the country and government figures. Sanctions on the state-owned oil major PDVSA were temporarily lifted following an agreement signed in Barbados in October 2023 with the opposition committing to steps towards a “free and fair” election. In April, with the agreement unfulfilled, Washington reimposed the measures, but allowed individual companies to request exemptions. Talks with the White House have since resumed, though the substance of them remains unknown. Some analysts speculate that they could signal a possible transition of power if Maduro loses later this month. Maduro has reasons to cling to power. He and his inner circle face criminal charges in the US of human rights abuse, corruption and involvement in the narcotics trade. The International Criminal Court is investigating allegations of crimes against humanity by government and military figures. “This election is a life or death situation for the government,” said Eugenio Martínez, a Venezuelan political consultant and journalist specialising in elections. “It’s only really the US that can give guarantees that the cost of leaving power will be lower for them than it is today.” One former adviser to Maduro said the Venezuelan leader had no intention of stepping aside while sanctions were in place. “Just as the US has its definition of a ‘free and fair’ election, for the Venezuelan government, it means no sanctions,” he said. Analysts have suggested Maduro could also try disqualifying González’s candidacy and force the opposition to either boycott the election or back another candidate already on the ballot. As a desperate last resort, the government could postpone or cancel the election. It could also use diversionary tactics, such as flaring up tensions with neighbouring Guyana over its Essequibo region, which Venezuela claims. But whatever route Maduro may take, he also appears keen to shore up domestic support, making fresh promises of social spending. At one campaign event, he pledged to build 3mn homes. Having lost weight — the result of green smoothies, he tells rallies — Maduro cuts a lively figure. On his weekly televised chat show, an echo of Chávez’s own Aló Presidente broadcast, he riffs on geopolitics with an air of bonhomie. On TikTok he appears to be courting younger voters. At the rally in Caracas, José Polanco, a public sector worker, said Maduro would win, with up to 7mn votes. “I want the 28th to arrive so that Maduro wins,” he said. But in neighbourhoods across the capital, where many see the election as their best chance to oust the government, the president’s charm offensive is not resonating. “I’m going to vote to end all this craziness,” said Katiuska Lugo, a single mother. Rafael Durán, a retired lawyer, said that “people aren’t afraid any more, and that’s why it’s very difficult for Maduro to win”. Andrés Izarra, who served as communications minister under Chávez but broke with Maduro in 2018, said Maduro’s attempts to cast himself as a friendly face were not landing. “The campaign has been catastrophic as there’s no message there, there’s no hope,” Izarra said. Asked what advice he would give to Maduro, Izarra was unequivocal. “Resign!”

#### Guyana invasion escalates and draws in UN, US, and Brazil.

Cook '23 [(Ellie Cook is a Newsweek security and defense reporter based in London, U.K. Her work focuses largely on the Russia-Ukraine war, the U.S. military, weapons systems and emerging technology. She joined Newsweek in January 2023, having previously worked as a reporter at the Daily Express, and is a graduate of International Journalism at City, University of London.) "US risks being dragged into third war," Newsweek, https://www.newsweek.com/us-military-venezuela-guyana-essequibo-nicolas-maduro-1850475, 12-7-2023] TDI

The U.S. could be heading toward involvement in another global conflict as tensions between Venezuela and neighboring Guyana skyrocket following a controversial referendum that sparked fears of a land grab in South America. The U.S. military said on Thursday that its Southern Command forces would carry out "flight operations within Guyana" later in the day, and that Washington would "continue its commitment as Guyana's trusted security partner." On Sunday, voters in Venezuela backed the proposals of Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro to claim sovereignty over the contested Essequibo region, which has been a bone of contention between Venezuela and Guyana for more than a century. The resource-rich Essequibo region is controlled by Georgetown, making up more than two-thirds of Guyana's territory. An 1899 ruling declared Essequibo a part of Guyana, which was then a British colony. A 1966 agreement between the U.K. and Venezuela to resolve the dispute has not stopped the flaring of tensions between the two countries, which intensified after oil and gas giant ExxonMobil said in 2015 it had made a "a significant oil discovery" in the region. Venezuela says the 1966 Geneva Agreement effectively undid the 1899 ruling by international arbitrators. The vote's results were perceived by Guyana as a step toward annexation. And there's precedent for such anxieties, as Russia has held referendums widely believed to be sham votes to try to legitimize claiming swathes of Ukraine. "We have taken the first steps of a new historical stage to fight for our Guayana Esequiba, for peace and to recover what the liberators left us," Maduro said following the announcing of the referendum's results, referring to the region by its alternative name. Guyana had asked the court to stop the referendum, suggesting Venezuela could take "unilateral measures to 'resolve' the controversy with Guyana by formally annexing and integrating into Venezuela all of the territory at issue." Following the vote, Guyanese President Irfaan Ali denounced "a direct threat to Guyana's territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence." Ali said Georgetown would "intensify precautionary measures to safeguard its territory," adding that he had spoken with the United Nations, global leaders and reached out to the U.S. military. The Venezuelan government's actions "fly in the face of international law and constitute a grave threat to international peace and security," Ali said in an address to Guyanese citizens on Wednesday. The language has clear echoes of the U.S. rationale for its involvement in the ongoing wars in the Middle East and eastern Europe, prompting speculation over how far U.S. military backing for international peace and order will extend in the Americas. The U.S. is currently providing aid, including military backing, to Israel, increasing its support in the wake of the October 7 attacks launched by Palestinian militant group Hamas from the Gaza Strip. Washington has also thrown its weight behind Kyiv following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with Ali to "reaffirm the United States' unwavering support for Guyana's sovereignty" on Wednesday, the U.S. government said in a statement. Just before the vote, Guyanese Vice President Bharrat Jagdeo said that "all options are on the table for the defense of our country." Brazil's Defense Ministry had also said it was bolstering its military presence along its northern border with Venezuela and Guyana.

### 1AR—AT: Maduro Diversionary War

#### Removal of US sanctions greenlights maduro’s invasion of Guyana.

Andres Oppenheimer, 12-11-2023, "Will Maduro invade oil-rich Guyana — and use it as excuse to cancel 2024 elections?", Miami Herald, https://amp.miamiherald.com/news/local/news-columns-blogs/andres-oppenheimer/article282839498.html Accessed 7/23/2024 CSUF JmB TDI

Venezuelan dictator Nicolás Maduro is known to make outlandish statements, but his latest threat to invade neighboring Guyana and take control of its fabulous oil reserves **should not be taken lightly.** Maduro is politically cornered, and he may use an escalation of Venezuela’s long-standing dispute with Guyana as an excuse to postpone his country’s 2024 elections. Much like Argentina’s military dictatorship invaded the Falkland/Malvinas islands in 1982, Maduro may hope that a **border skirmish** or a military takeover of the disputed Esequibo region — which most Venezuelans consider part of their country — **would eclipse all other political issues.** In recent days, Maduro has made **explicit threats to take over Guyana’s Esequibo area**. In a Dec. 5 speech, he held a map titled “The new map of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela” that includes the Esequibo area, and announced plans to create a new Venezuelan state there. The Esequibo region makes up about three quarters of Guyana’s entire territory. “The **Esequibo is ours**,” Maduro said, in his televised address to military and government officials. He also announced creation of a Venezuelan military zone in that region, and said that he will order Venezuela’s state oil company PDVSA to start exploring oil there. He added that he will give Venezuelan citizenship to the region’s estimated 125,000 residents. Guyana is taking the threat seriously, and is asking the United Nations Security Council to demand that Venezuela respect current international borders. In an interview with my colleague Jacqueline Charles of the Miami Herald, Guyana president President Irfaan Ali called the move by Maduro “reckless.” The U.S. Southern Command started joint flight operations within Guyana on Dec. 7 “to enhance security partnership” between the two countries, according to a statement by the U.S. embassy in Guyana. Brian Fonseca, a Latin America expert at Florida International University, told me that “there are certainly **real motivations** for Maduro to take this region.” Politically, Maduro has recently suffered a string of defeats. Despite controlling the media and banning virtually all leading opposition candidates from running for the presidency, the opposition ran an independent primary election in which hard-line government critic Maria Corina Machado won with 93% of the vote. More importantly, an estimated 2.3 million Venezuelans participated in the oppositions’ primary — much more than its own organizers had expected. Days before the primary, an opposition organizer had told me that, with luck, 1.5 million Venezuelans were likely to vote. In an effort to recover from that setback, Maduro convened a Dec. 5 national referendum on annexing Esequibo, reviving the ancient dispute over that area. But contrary to Maduro’s claim that more that 10 million Venezuelans voted, journalists and independent observers noted that voting booths were almost empty, and that not more than 2.5 million people may have cast votes. Maduro’s popularity is at 14%, according to a September ORC poll. Despite controlling the electoral tribunal and being able to fraudulently alter the results, as he did when he re-elected himself in 2018, Maduro would have a hard time convincing even his own followers that a 2024 re-election would be legitimate. Militarily, **Guyana is no match for Venezuela**. According to Britain’s International Institute for Strategic Studies’ database, Venezuela’s armed forces have 123,000 regular troops and 400,000 paramilitary and militia members. By comparison, Guyana’s defense force has 3,500 troops, and 25,000 paramilitary members. “It’s a **David and Goliath situation**,” Fonseca says. There has been speculation in the media that Maduro has revived the Esequibo conflict to divert public attention from his latest round of repression. Last week, the Maduro regime issued warrants for the arrest of a dozen leading opposition politicians, including the now exiled former interim president, Juan Guaidó, for “treason to the fatherland.” They are accused of allegedly conspiring to spoil Maduro’s referendum on the Esequibo region. Other experts speculate that Maduro may have escalated the border conflict in order to increase his **leverage in negotiations with Washington**. The Biden administration and the Maduro regime are negotiating the relaxation of U.S. sanctions in exchange for Venezuela allowing free elections next year. Maduro knows that President Biden would not want a war in Latin America in a U.S. election year. Thus, the Venezuelan dictator may want to step up the border conflict as a **new negotiating card to obtain U.S. concessions**, supporters of this theory say. Maybe so. Still, the most convincing reason that Maduro is threatening to invade Guyana is that he knows that **he is likely to lose** the 2024 elections by a landslide, and is **looking for a reason to cancel** them. **Nationalism** has always been the **last refuge of scoundrels**, and Maduro is no exception to the rule. Washington and democracies around the world should not let him get away with an invasion of a neighboring country, nor with using this dispute as an excuse not to hold Venezuela’s scheduled 2024 elections.

#### No Guyana Invasion—Military capabilities and Ulterior Motives.

Ryan C. Berg '24 [(Ryan C., director of the Americas Program and head of the Future of Venezuela Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.) "Pivotal States: The Venezuela Problem," CSIS, https://carnegieendowment.org/events/2024/04/pivotal-states-the-venezuela-problem?lang=en, 4-10-2024] TDI

Ryan C. Berg: So it’s a great question. I think we’re still very **unlikely to see any kind of kinetic action** against Guyana, first because the state of the Venezuelan Armed forces, they’re **not a fighting force**. They’re better understood analytically speaking as a drug trafficking organization, as an organization that participates in any number of criminal activities. Morale is low, equipment is old. If you are stationed out there on the border near Essequibo, it’s because you’re doing penitence for something. You’re trying to avoid getting dengue or malaria. It’s not a nice post. So I think a lot of this was about increasing nationalism and hoping to get a electoral boost right after the opposition’s primaries. Note that it was right after the opposition’s primaries, when almost 2.5 million people came out to vote. Many of them for María Corina Machado. The regime wanted to have an effort that **tested their electoral apparatus.** The feedback mechanism that they got for that event was that their electoral apparatus was in shambles. They said that 10 million people voted, but there were five questions on the referendum. If you divide that, you get about 2 million people. That’s being very generous. There were plenty of photos all over social media showing completely empty voting booths. And this should have been a clear win for the regime, because this is an issue. Well, you grew up and understand- Carolina Jiménez Sandoval: Yeah, drawing the map. Ryan C. Berg: Exactly. And so as young children, all learn in Venezuela that we’re missing this part of the country, and all the maps are drawn with the extra little finger, which is of course two-thirds of territory that is administered by Guyana. So a lot of it is the domestic and **Maduro didn’t get the boost that he thought**. Now, I think we at CSIS are slightly unique in the sense that we’ve said that this could be maybe 20% or 30% some kind of international strategy. We’ve said, "Okay, let’s just assume that there’s some kind of strategy there against Guyana. What could actually be happening here?" And we’ve been **tracking using satellite data**, and we put out a couple pieces showing satellite imagery of the regime, moving some of their military hardware to the border to intimidate, to engage in what we think is an **active course of diplomacy**. What is it that they’re trying to get out of Guyana? We’re speculating that they might be trying to get some element of the resources that are being exploited in the Essequibo region. How might they do that? By increasing the cost or the perceived cost to Guyana of that military equipment being on the border, of exercises being done on the border, including in January, Chris. When Brazil was negotiating and arbitrating the two sides, they were doing tank exercises at a place called Ankoko Island, which is about one football field away from the border. Not a very friendly, neighborly thing to do if you’re in Brazil negotiating peace terms and trying to climb back from escalation. So, what we think **Venezuela’s goal might be is to get Guyana** into a situation where they’re actually **negotiating** over some of the **territory or negotiating** over some of the claims that are currently in the International Court of Justice. Why? Because they might be able to get a better deal by negotiating bilaterally than they would be able to waiting to probably lose the case. And then have to explain to a population that’s been told since they were very young, that there’s actually this other way that we draw the map and we’ve been historically wronged and so on. So the strategy is to try to bring military equipment to the border, do some exercises, build some infrastructure way out there in the middle of the jungle and **make Guyana think that there’s a greater threat than there actually** is. And so far it hasn’t amounted to anything, but there’s a whole lot of **nationalistic rhetoric** going on if you follow Venezuelan Twitter and Venezuelan social media, where the general who’s been put in charge of that area is tweeting every day that [foreign language 00:52:59] and look at these new buildings we’re building out here in the middle of the jungle at this jungle warfare training school.

## Iran

### 1NC—Prolif Good

#### Iran proliferation is key to regional stability

Reder 5/5[(Dr. Julian Reder is a former researcher from the University of Hull.) "Kenneth Waltz’s Final Warning on Iran", Mediterreanean Institute For Regional Studios, 5/5/24, https://www.mirs.co/details.aspx?jimare=239] TDI

Kenneth Waltz, a proponent of defensive realism, felt compelled to argue in an essay in Foreign Affairs that **the regional imbalance against Iran is the ultimate reason for strife in the Middle East** near the end of his life. Waltz proposed that **the only road to stability in the anarchic world order would be to allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons and create parity with the only Middle Eastern nuclear power: Israel.** This was several months before he died in 2013, and more than a decade later after Waltz’s last essay “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb,” this issue has become tremendously more important given Israel’s war against Hamas after the October 7th terrorist attacks. **Iran’s financial and political support for a multitude of proxies is a key reason for the current bloodshed in Gaza and casualties in Israel.** Iran’s role in the October 7th attacks was not direct, but Tehran has provided abundant financial resources to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Global affairs experts realized quickly that the **potential for Iran, its proxies, and allies to be drawn into a regional coalition against Israel was dangerously high. The likelihood of regional conflagration has altered the geopolitical landscape and severely impeded global supply chain routes**. Israel, a major player in the global economy, was now causing a decrease in investor confidence and created a chain reaction in the global economy. Houthi rebels, who support the Palestinian cause and are a proxy of Iran, fired on ships in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. Supply chain routes were now unable to continue the natural flow of goods, resources, and supplies. The Iranian fingerprints on the Houthi attacks are beyond dispute, and Tehran is **seeking leverage against Israel and retribution for devastating sanctions enforced against it by the international community**. Iran has further bolstered its offense by proxy warfare against Israel to Israel’s north. Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corp in Syria, and pro-Iranian paramilitary groups in Iraq have been additional facets of the Iranian campaign against Israel via proxy. The **multitude of Iranian proxies is evidence that the Iranian regime is desperately seeking gains from the detrimental effects** it has had on Israel’s military, economy, and citizenry from supporting the October 7th attack and its perpetrators, Hamas. Iran is a vestige of past empires that ruled the world and challenged powerful empires for regional supremacy. The idea of “the Persian Empire” is not lost on Iran’s current leadership regardless of its theocratic mode of government. Iranian history books are filled with the glorious retellings of Cyrus the Great who established the Achaemenid Empire, which was the largest empire by area in its time, and Darius the Great whose conquests established the Persian Empire as the first superpower in recorded history. The Iranian view of Israel, a country established in 1948, is naturally dismal. **The majority of Muslims in the Middle East view Israel as a Zionist occupation by an illegal seizure of land from indigenous Palestinians, as well as neighboring territories. For example, the Iranian regime has never wavered in supporting Syria’s claim that the Golan Heights were illegally seized by Israel or that the Palestinians had their land stolen by the Zionists.** In the nuclear age, **global and regional supremacy in the security arena depends on nuclear weapons development**. **The Iranian view is that Israel, an illegitimate state illegally occupying Muslim territory, is wrongfully projecting its power by military and nuclear means while Iran is confined to middle power status in the region**. This clashes with Iran’s historical sense of “the Persian Empire,” and it seeks parity in the nuclear security field. In Kenneth Waltz’s last Foreign Affairs essay, he insisted that his defensive realism model of international relations dictates that **stopping Iran from achieving nuclear status would only exacerbate tensions and inflame more animosity.** According to Waltz, **economic sanctions are not effective, and history has shown that states that acquire nuclear power status are met not with hostility, but with cooperation**. According to Waltz’s lifelong academic research, the anarchic system is balanced by states seeking to develop their capabilities to maintain order and stability for their own respective positions. Waltz’s main tenet is that **balance in power dynamics on the world stage leads to cooperation**. Waltz asserts that “Israel’s nuclear monopoly” in the region is creating an imbalance in regional power dynamics, and this is the root cause of the Iran-Israel rivalry. Waltz points out that **Israel has taken great measures to ensure its nuclear monopoly in the region, specifically Iraq in 1981 and Syria in 2007**. In Dick Cheney’s memoirs, he remembers both episodes and says that he supported the Israeli decisions in both cases. During the Persian Gulf War in 1991, then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney called Minister of Defense Moshe Arens to thank him for the Israeli military action that destroyed the Iraqi nuclear program in 1981. Cheney bluntly states that if Israel had not taken that military action against Iraq, the United States would have had to confront a nuclear-armed Saddam Hussein who may have launched nuclear strikes against the United States and Israel. According to Cheney, a nuclear holocaust was averted in 1991. During the second term of President George W. Bush, the Israeli government provided intelligence that indicated Kim Jong-Il of North Korea was providing the Syrians with nuclear weapons development material at the Al Kibar site in eastern Syria. Mossad and CIA intelligence concurred that the Assad regime was secretly developing a nuclear weapons program with the help of North Korean scientists. Dick Cheney had advocated that the United States destroy the facility rapidly and efficiently, but the American national security apparatus experienced a transformation during George W. Bush’s second term. With the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and the rise in influence of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, Dick Cheney was marginalized in policy debates and the opposing view won out. The American response to the Israelis was that Jerusalem pursue military action through the UN Security Council. The Israelis bombed the Al Kibar facility without ever consulting another country or the United Nations. Waltz’s claim that these actions have provided power disparities and led to conflict would require an analysis of the fact that no regional war has yet to erupt. Waltz still maintained that a restoration of a military balance of power is required for peace. Waltz contended that **even if Iran acquired nuclear capabilities, Tehran was led by rational-minded government officials who practiced restraint.** Waltz admits that the concern that **Iran may arm terrorists or proxies with nuclear weapons is possible, but history has shown this has never been the case.** Waltz highlights Pakistani-Indian cooperation after both acquired nuclear capabilities. He neglects to mention that Pakistan and India have had multiple disputes and confrontations that inflamed the nuclear security dilemma. Waltz claimed that the Israeli nuclear weapons program did not start a regional nuclear arms race, and the same would happen if Iran announced a robust, operational nuclear weapons arsenal at its disposal. Waltz ended his essay by providing India and Pakistan as a beacon of hope for the Iranian nuclear quest. He states that **at no time in history did two nuclear powers wage war against each other, and that the Iranian goal of creating nuclear balance in the region would lead to greater peace.** Waltz said: “Most importantly, **policymakers and citizens in the Arab world, Europe, Israel, and the United States should take comfort from the fact that history has shown that where nuclear capabilities emerge, so, too, does stability. When it comes to nuclear weapons, now as ever, more may be better**.”

#### Israel first strikes Iran now.

Judith Miller '24 [(Judith, former New York Times Cairo bureau chief and investigative reporter.) "The Lebanon War Is Coming," Tablet Magazine, https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/israel-middle-east/articles/lebanon-war-coming-hezbollah-israel, 7-16-2024] TDI

Increasingly, there is a growing view in Israel that, given Hezbollah’s enduring enmity and its vast, sophisticated military arsenal, a war with the Party of God and, in effect, with its patron Iran, may be inevitable.

But there remains deep division within Israel’s national security establishment over when such a war should occur. Some analysts say that now is the right moment to strike. The threat from Hamas has been severely degraded, if not neutralized. The north is already evacuated and the Israeli Defense Forces are already mobilized and in fighting mode. Many Israelis, terrified by their country’s obvious vulnerability, favor striking Israel’s enemies sooner rather than later, suggesting that a war with Hezbollah would enjoy strong public support. The assassination of so many senior Hezbollah commanders suggests that Israel’s operational intelligence is far better in Lebanon today than it was in 2006, when the IDF had only 10 days’ worth of targets to strike.

If Israel chooses to go to war with Hezbollah, it would have to strike before October and the start of the rainy season and then winter. In fact, some Israeli analysts believe that the ongoing IDF strikes in Lebanon and targeted assassinations of key Hezbollah commanders are not simply opportunistic but have been methodically shaping the battlefield for an eventual, though not necessarily imminent, ground invasion. Amiad Cohen, an IDF reservist officer who heads the Herut Center, a conservative think tank, recently [described](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baWsilpb_Ko) what he saw as the IDF strategy over the past eight months: “We’re crushing, mostly with airstrikes, first of all the people running the operations in southern Lebanon, and the second part of it, the infrastructure,” including underground structures.

Cohen told me over the phone that Israel should have invaded southern Lebanon months ago. “In April I said that this was the time to force Hezbollah back behind the Litani River,” he said. “But President Biden’s opposition to escalating the conflict prevented us from doing that.”

### 2NR—Yes Israel First Strike

#### Israel will preemptively strike Iran.

Cohen 4/25[(Raphael S. Cohen is director of the Strategy and Doctrine Program at RAND Project AIR FORCE.) “The Iran-Israel War Is Just Getting Started”, RAND Corporation, 4/25/24. https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/04/the-iran-israel-war-is-just-getting-started.html] TDI

In the early hours of April 13, two minor miracles happened. First, in a remarkable display of technical prowess, Israel—with help from Britain, France, Jordan, and the United States—intercepted some 170 drones, 120 ballistic missiles, and 30 cruise missiles fired primarily from Iran toward Israel, reportedly with 99 percent effectiveness and minimal damage to lives and infrastructure. Second, after many months of largely negative media coverage and mounting international pressure, Israel enjoyed some sympathy and positive press. Given the double success of a repulsed attack and an improved image for Israel, U.S. President Joe Biden reportedly counseled Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: **“You got a win. Take the win.” A host of other allies and experts had similar advice for Israel.**

**Israel, however, has shown little interest in taking this advice.** While it reportedly called off an immediate counterattack and seems content to “slow things down,” as Biden requested, **Israeli leaders**—including Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, Israel Defense Forces chief Herzi Halevi, war cabinet member Benny Gantz, and Netanyahu himself—**all promised retaliation**. And Friday morning, **Israel conducted a counterstrike on an air defense system at an Iranian air base in Isfahan in central Iran. Although the strike appears to have been largely symbolic**, it nonetheless raises the question: **Why is Israel bucking the United States and its other allies yet again, especially after those very same countries just came to Israel's aid?**

Ultimately, there are a lot of bad reasons floating around for why Israel struck back. But there is also one good and overarching one, and that is the fact that Israel and Iran remain locked in war, which will continue beyond today. As long as that conflict goes on, the operational logic of that conflict will push toward escalation.

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For some, the answer to why Israel struck back boils down to Netanyahu's ambitions. According to this narrative, he is simply trying to save his own skin. **Netanyahu** is deeply unpopular inside Israel; he has a mere 15 percent approval rating. His **principal source of political legitimacy—his claim to guarantee Israeli security**—**has been badly battered by Hamas's October 7 massacre and everything that has come in its wake**. And so, unsurprisingly, some observers, including the Iranian regime, argue that **Netanyahu wants war with Iran in order to restore his image domestically**—or, at the very least, **to** prolong the political reckoning from the October 7 catastrophe—and, in the process, **increase his chances of political survival.**

Netanyahu may be a desperate man, but the push for retaliation is not coming solely from him. Indeed, some of the louder voices inside Israel calling for a counterattack came from Netanyahu's political rivals, such as Gantz, Gallant, and others who have the most to gain politically from Netanyahu's demise. According to polling, Gantz likely would be prime minister if elections were held today.

Nor is it clear that striking Iran is a good political move for Netanyahu or anyone else. According to Hebrew University polling published last week, some 74 percent of Israelis opposed a counterattack “if it undermines Israel's security alliance with its allies.” The same poll found that 56 percent of Israelis said their country “should respond positively to political and military demands from its allies” in order to “ensure a sustainable defense system over time.” Even within Netanyahu's coalition, Israel's limited counterstrike on Friday was not a clear-cut political win. Right-wing National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, for example, criticized the action on X as “lame.”

By contrast, Israel's stated reasons for counterattacking ring hollow. **Israeli officials talked about the need to “send a message” to Tehran and “teach them a lesson.”** But **Israel's own recent history shows that tit-for-tat violence rarely has the intended pedagogical effect. Israel's four limited military operations in Gaza before the current war**—with even more limited strikes in between—**failed to dislodge or deter Hamas,** as the October 7 massacre so vividly demonstrated. And Iran has used almost identical language—about needing to “teach” Israel about not striking its operatives in Syria or elsewhere—to justify its attack. All of which, in turn, **raises the question of whether Israel would be any more effective trying to “teach” Iran.**

There are, to be fair, a handful of cases where Israel did indeed succeed in teaching its adversaries a lesson. The best example, perhaps, is the 2006 Lebanon War, which started after Hezbollah operatives crossed into Israel, killed eight Israeli soldiers, and kidnapped two others. After the conflict, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah told reporters that he regretted his decision to launch the operation. “You ask me, if I had known [before] that the operation would lead to such a war, would I do it? I say no, absolutely not.” But the teaching of this lesson involved a 34-day, full-fledged, highly destructive war that cost the lives of 121 Israel soldiers, hundreds of Hezbollah fighters, and more than a thousand civilians and displaced well over a million people on each side of the border—hardly the limited strike Israel just conducted against Iran.

Of course, there is a more **basic motive behind Israel wanting to strike Iran: revenge.** After all, even if the attack was ultimately ineffective, Iran hurled some 60 tons of explosives directly at Israel, shattering the unwritten rules of the Israel-Iran shadow war and keeping an entire nation on edge, if only for one night. Understandably, some Israelis wanted—and continue to want—to hit back.

But, as Bret Stephens reminded readers in the New York Times, “revenge is a dish best served cold.” In general, emotional decisions do not make for a prudent strategy. That's particularly true here, given the military and diplomatic stakes for Israel, and the region as whole, should a regional war break out. And indeed, the Isfahan strike appears deliberately calibrated to not provoke such an escalation.

Moreover, on some level, even before Isfahan, the balance sheet was already even. Iran, after all, lost seven Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) members—including Brig. Gen. Mohammad Reza Zahedi, the highest-ranking Quds Force member to be killed since the United States killed Qassem Suleimani in Iraq in 2020—in Israel's strike on the Iranian diplomatic compound in Damascus; Israel has lost nothing comparable at the hands of Iran.

But if there are a lot of bad reasons for current and future Israeli strikes on Iran, there is at least one good one: **Israel and Iran are at war. This war has been mostly covert for years, but since October 7, it has come out of the shadows.** The common denominator between Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and other groups that have attacked Israel for more than six months now is that they are all—to varying degrees—funded, trained, and equipped by Iran. Consequently, when seven IRGC operatives—including Zahedi, who coordinated Iran's relationship with Hezbollah and the Assad regime—showed up in Damascus in late March, Israel concluded—probably correctly—that they were not there to sample the Syrian restaurant scene.

After Iran's retaliatory barrage and Israel's response, the ball is in Iran's court in this weirdly performative display of military might. Initial indications are that Iran may let this one go, at least for the time being. If so, both the United States and the region will breathe a sigh of relief.

Unfortunately, though, **any respite is unlikely to last**. Israel will likely still need to continue to strike Iranian operatives abroad, if only to disrupt or perhaps even sever the flow of material and strategic support from Iran to its proxies. Contrary to Iran's claims that “the matter can be deemed concluded,” **as long as Iran continues supporting its proxies and those proxies remain engaged in conflict with Israel, the operational need for such strikes—like the one on the Iranian diplomatic compound in Damascus—will remain.**

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And if the simmering conventional conflict is not a sufficient reason to drive Israeli military action vis-à-vis Iran, then there is an even larger reason looming on the horizon: the Iranian nuclear program. **Since the collapse of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action—also known as the Iran nuclear deal—Tehran has been inching closer to a bomb. Israeli leaders have long worried that a nuclear-armed Iran would be emboldened to raise its support to its proxies**, if not **use the weapons to outright attack Israel**. For many Israelis, Iran's strike last weekend has only reinforced such fears. After all, if **Israel's widely suspected nuclear arsenal proved insufficient to deter an Iranian conventional strike now**, then why would Israel believe that it can successfully deter Iran once it has nuclear weapons? **This makes Israeli preemptive action against the Iranian nuclear program all the more likely, despite some significant military challenges.**

From its perspective, **Israel will need to continue to strike Iranian targets, even if one strips away the dubious political motives, fuzzy deterrence thinking, or just plain raw emotion.** As long as Israel and Iran remain engaged in conflict, they will continue to trade blows—no matter what the United States and other allies may counsel Israel to avoid escalation.

Ultimately, if the United States and Europe wish to forestall the chances of a regional war in the Middle East, they will need to convince Iran to rein in its proxies and do something about its nuclear program. Otherwise, the conflict will continue to spiral.

### 1AR—No Israeli First Strike

#### No Israeli first strike now but Iran prolif would incite Israel

Beres 7-24 [(Prof. Louis René Beres , ) "Analysis," https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/62523, 07-24-2024] TDI

3. Nuclear preemption **It is highly unlikely** (perhaps inconceivable) that **Israel would ever decide to launch a preemptive nuclear strike against Iran.** Though circumstances could arise wherein such a strike would still be rational and permissible under international law, it is **improbable that Israel would ever allow itself to reach such end-of-the-line circumstances.** In principle, an Israeli nuclear **preemption could reasonably be expected only: (a) where Iran had already acquired authentic (chain-reaction) nuclear** and/or other weapons of mass destruction; (b) where **Iran had clarified that its intentions paralleled its capabilities**; (c) **where Iran was believed ready to begin a "countdown to launch**;" and (d) wher**e Jerusalem believed that exclusively conventional preemptions could no longer be consistent with preservation of the Jewish State.** 4. Nuclear war-fighting **If nuclear weapons should ever be introduced into a conflict between Israel and Iran, some form of nuclear war-fighting could ensue.** This would hold true so long as (a) Iranian first-strikes would not destroy Israel's second-strike nuclear capability; (b) Iranian retaliation for an Israeli conventional preemption would not destroy Israel’s nuclear counter-retaliatory capability; (c) Israeli preemptive strikes involving nuclear weapons would not destroy Iran’s second-strike nuclear capabilities; and (d) Israeli retaliation for conventional first-strikes would not destroy Iran’s nuclear counter-retaliatory capability. **For the time being, any Iranian nuclear capacity would be limited to radiation-dispersal weapons. Israel is already at the 11th hour of nuclear war preparedness.** For the moment, the only reasonable focus in Jerusalem should be on Iranian capabilities and intentions, but **this focus ought to include various coinciding intersections with Hezbollah objectives and operations**. In the final analysis, the **Hezbollah threat to Israel is not “just” a significant terror threat or strategic threat, but one that could “open the floodgates” to nuclear war with Iran.**

### 1NC—Turkey Prolif Good

#### Turkey proliferation causes nato instability

Kosnett 23 [Philip Kosnett (Ambassador Philip Kosnett (Ret.) represented the United States during a Foreign Service career focusing on international security and post-conflict governance. His assignments included Ambassador to Kosovo, Charge d’Affaires in Turkey and Iceland, and Deputy Chief of Mission in Uzbekistan, as well as tours in Afghanistan, Iraq, The Netherlands, and Japan. “A Farewell to İncirlik?” The Center for European Policy Analysis, March 28, 2023. Accessed: 12/8/23. https://cepa.org/article/a-farewell-to-incirlik/]

Turkey’s blocking of Swedish NATO membership is disappointing but not disastrous. Nonetheless, this would be a **good moment** to set **alliance security ties** with Turkey on a **businesslike path** and remind Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan that his allies can **only be pushed so far**. We can start by withdrawing US forces from the strategic İncirlik Air Base in southern Turkey. The United States began constructing this massive facility in 1951, initially as a key link in the chain of sites meant to contain the Soviet Union (including as a base for U-2 “spy plane” missions). Over time its purpose evolved, and it has been employed time and again in pursuit of US interests in the Middle East. But its value is **now less than in the past**, and President Erdoğan’s behavior in **holding up Sweden and Finland’s NATO membership** applications, along with other policies like assisting Russian sanctions evasion, suggests it is time for the US to reassess. How important is it that Sweden and Finland gain NATO membership? It’s a **powerful sign** of **Western resolve** in the face of Russia’s **renewed aggression**. The two countries have long cooperated with NATO on peacekeeping and defense planning, but most Finns and Swedes had seen no compelling need to formalize the relationship. (Thank you, Mr. Putin.) NATO operates by **consensus**, and it was undeniably disappointing when Erdoğan announced after months of negotiations that he would agree to Finland’s accession but not Sweden’s. (Finland had initially claimed it wouldn’t join alone, but seems to have changed its mind.) Is Turkey doing Russia’s bidding in vetoing Swedish accession? While the Kremlin benefits, that’s not the Turkish leader’s motivation. Erdoğan and Putin cooperate in some areas and oppose one another in others. Turkey has angered NATO allies by foregoing sanctions against Russia and providing a haven to oligarchs and their assets. Yet it continues to support Ukraine militarily, and to position itself as a broker, e.g. facilitating the resumption of Ukrainian grain exports. So what is Erdoğan’s game? At the top of Erdoğan’s wish list: Swedish action to curb fund-raising and organizational activity by opponents, including the Kurdish PKK (which Sweden, like the US and EU, designates as a terrorist group) and exiled cleric Fethullah Gülen’s Hizmet organization (widely seen as responsible for the failed 2016 coup attempt), and to extradite alleged operatives. More broadly, Erdoğan saw an opportunity to remind NATO members of **Turkey’s veto power**. Nobody who has ever negotiated with a disciplined, knowledgeable Turkish diplomat or executive should have been surprised. Does NATO fail to take Turkish security seriously? To an extent. Belief is widespread in Turkey that NATO/EU members have long done less than their laws permit to suppress terrorist support operations on their soil, and in some cases, this is likely true. Turkish suspicion of the West is a hardy perennial going back to the Republic’s birth in the 1920s when Ataturk pushed European armies out of Anatolia. Turks – including many who don’t much care for Erdoğan – are also troubled by US support for the PKK’s Syrian affiliate, the YPG, which has partnered with the US since 2014 to combat ISIS. The Obama administration assured Turkey that the US could simultaneously support Turkey against the PKK, and arm and direct the YPG against ISIS and that the latter relationship would be “temporary, tactical, and transactional.” That alliterative arrangement has now lasted into its third US administration, as Turks feared. So is Turkey’s position productive? Not if it seeks more concessions from Sweden. Erdoğan may have wrung all he can from Sweden and Finland, and a **continued standoff** seems both likely and pointless. Erdoğan’s **blind spot** where Western standards of **rule of law** are concerned, and a tendency to **conflate free speech with support for terrorism**, have led him to make impossible demands. Erdoğan appears — either sincerely or willfully — to have interpreted Swedish promises to energize judicial cooperation as a pledge to simply turn over the opponents on Turkey’s extradition wish list. His reported fury over anti-Turkish/anti-Islamic demonstrations in Stockholm recalled the incident during Erdoğan’s 2017 visit to Washington when his security detail brawled with pro-PKK demonstrators (aka the “Battle of Sheridan Circle”), scoring votes and likes at home. Standing up to the West **plays well with Erdoğan’s base**, at least until the West pushes back. His attitude toward Sweden echoes his stance after the 2016 coup attempt when Turkey demanded the US hand over Gülen — who lives in Pennsylvania — despite the absence of evidence sufficient to meet a US court’s standard for extradition. This led Turkey to hold a number of American citizens on blatantly false charges, until the US tired of quiet diplomacy and instituted sanctions. The risk is that Turkey and Sweden maintain this standoff indefinitely. How much does it hurt NATO if Sweden doesn’t join? Operationally, not so much. Before Finland and Sweden sought to accede, observers pointed out that there was already close military cooperation with NATO and individual member states, which continues to build. (NATO members Norway and Denmark recently agreed to coordinate air defense with Sweden and Finland, for example.) Politically, Turkey’s actions don’t negate the value of Sweden’s (and Finland’s) new commitment to the alliance and vice versa. The real challenge is in **global messaging** — Russia, naturally, seeks to use the episode as proof that **Western resolve is crumbling** and NATO is in **disarray**. NATO’s consensus decision-making is a feature, not a bug, of a democratic alliance. (**This isn’t the Warsaw Pact, comrades.**) A Western overreaction would play into the Russian narrative. So what should NATO – and Washington – do? First, stay calm. The US and other NATO members should continue to seek mutually beneficial defense ties with Turkey, which has the second-largest military in the alliance and a critical geographic position. Ignore calls to retaliate, e.g. by abandoning the effort to rebuild defense industrial cooperation largely suspended in the wake of the 2016 coup attempt and Erdoğan’s decision to purchase Russian S-400 missiles. But that said, after the May elections – whether Erdoğan or his electoral opponent Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu prevails – **we should remind Turkey that no member of the alliance is indispensable**, except the United States. One way: begin the process of **withdrawing** US Air Force personnel and assets from **İncirlik** Air Base in southeast Turkey. Don’t we need İncirlik? Need is a big word. İncirlik was vital to the US logistic enterprise supporting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Turkey retains tight control over US use of the facility and today İncirlik appears **less important to US operations** in, say Syria and the Persian Gulf region than bases in partner countries in the Gulf. NATO allies **Greece and Romania** have proved eager to host US forces. How is withdrawing from İncirlik “staying calm?” İncirlik is a **perennial flashpoint**. There is a history of Turkish governments **threatening to suspend US operations** in response to US action, going back at least to the 1970s, and continuing under Erdoğan. It would be useful to pursue continued bilateral and NATO defense cooperation with Turkey **without the question of İncirlik’s status** forever looming over the **negotiating table.** Has this worked before? Every country is different, but there is **precedent** for base closures clearing the way for more balanced cooperation, including continued base access. Consider the **Philippines**: for decades, Naval Base Subic Bay and Clark Air Base engendered popular resentment; that began to subside with their closure in 1991. This year, the two countries agreed to US forces’ use of Philippine bases to counter China. Through the Cold War and beyond, U.S. relations with NATO ally **Iceland** were dominated by the status of US forces at Naval Air Station Keflavik, which were solely responsible for the defense of Iceland. Icelandic politicians periodically threatened base closure, but in the end it was the US that decided to withdraw its 3,000 personnel in 2006. NATO developed a sustainable rotational system whereby several allies (including the US) provide forces for the defense of Iceland. A side benefit has been that the US and Iceland are able to focus more on areas of non-defense partnership, such as trade and the environment. Won’t the Russians try to benefit? Oh, sure, on a propaganda level. I mean, a chatbot could write the talking points – NATO in disarray, Washington fleeing from the Middle East. We can counter that our aim is a **balanced, respectful relationship**, which should include **continued access to Turkish bases**, including İncirlik when the sides agree it is necessary. In 2016, Erdoğan’s prime minister Binali Yildirim mused publicly that **Turkey would consider letting Russia base forces at İncirlik** – a suggestion that even the Russians couldn’t bring themselves to take seriously.

# FDI DA

## Neg

### 1NC --- Generic

#### FDI low now globally

Fdi Intelligence '22 [(Fdi Intelligence, Part of the Financial Times Group, fDi Intelligence is recognised globally for its credible full range of investment promotion and research solutions) "Global FDI forecast to decline further," No Publication, https://www.fdiintelligence.com/content/news/global-fdi-forecast-to-decline-further-81604, 10-24-2022] TDI

Global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows have passed a critical juncture and are now on a downward trajectory, as ongoing uncertainty, inflation and the risk of recession dampen investor sentiment.

James Zhan, Unctad’s director of investment and enterprise, says that the second quarter of 2022 was a “turning point” whereby FDI across greenfield projects, cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&A) and project finance globally is now falling. He expects the decline to continue into 2023.

In the second quarter of 2022, global FDI flows reached roughly $357bn, down 31% from the first quarter, according to Unctad’s quarterly trend monitor report.

It is happening

“In the World Investment Report we released in June, we said that there will be a downward trajectory. Now, we’re simply saying that it is happening,” Mr Zhan tells fDi, having previously said that the prospects for global FDI were “gloomy” amid the crises in fuel, food and finance.

“The outlook for global FDI in 2022 remains bleak due to the multiple ongoing geopolitical and economic crises. Tightening financial conditions and heightened investor uncertainty are visible in the declining monthly trends in new project announcements,” the report says.

Overall flows to developed economies were 22% lower in the second quarter of 2022 compared to the average quarter of 2021. Meanwhile, FDI flows to developing economies increased by 6% to $220bn, driven mostly by continued growth in several large emerging economies, Unctad says.

Mr Zhan nonetheless expects FDI flows into developing and developed countries alike to continue falling in the short-term.

“It seems to me that developing countries over the course of the rest of 2022 will suffer from the decline in FDI,” he says, adding that a large number will be “very much impacted by the combined crises of high debt, interest rate hikes of major economies, high energy prices and food security”.

Countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations reported lower inflows in the second quarter of 2022, with the exception of Malaysia and Vietnam, according to the quarterly report. The biggest declines in new investment project announcements were registered in Latin America and in Central Asia.

The report also says that China reported a continued upward trend, with 18% higher inflows in the second quarter, compared to last year, and strong investment in high-tech industries. Mr Zhan confirmed that this figure comes from China’s Ministry of Commerce, but declined to comment further.

FDI decline across the board

With the Ukraine war and the major Western governments’ push for reshoring, Mr Zhan also says that FDI into OECD countries will not fare much better.

Inflows to developed economies were 22% lower in the second quarter of 2022 compared to the average of 2021, at an estimated $137bn, the report says. Flows to EU countries were up 7%, while FDI elsewhere in Europe were down 80% and FDI into North America dropped by 22%.

Cross-border M&A, which was the driving force behind the FDI recovery initially in 2020 and 2021, he says, “will only pick up again once the next economic recovery takes place”.

At the same time, the increased call for ambitious capital-intensive projects in sectors such as energy has meant that there has been a significant amount of mega projects, or investments involving at least $1bn of capital expenditure.

This year, fDi Markets has recorded the highest number of mega projects over the first half of the year since 2008 — and therefore the second-highest first half of the year on record.

Overall greenfield FDI projects for the first half of 2022 were up by 2.7% on the same period last year, according to fDi Markets. In the first quarter of the year, projects were down by about 13% on the previous year.

Mr Zhan says that “FDI can still be part of the solution” as there is potential for investments in the energy sector, particularly in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, but also in the extractive sector.

Faced with an ever-challenging macroeconomic environment where national governments are focused on national security and reshoring, Mr Zhan says that “FDI can help to build supply capacities in areas like infrastructure, health and energy security, and it’s important for countries to focus on investment promotion in these areas”.

FDI flows into extractive industries in the second quarter of 2022 went up by 531%, compared to the average quarter in 2021, while flows into electricity and gas supply were also up 152%, according to Unctad.

#### Sanctions decrease FDIs

Vidal '10 [(Adriana Hauer Vidal) "," Tilburg School of Economics and Management, https://arno.uvt.nl/show.cgi?fid=107657, 6-25-2010] TDI

The static real income loss caused by sanctions should translate into lower GDP growth. In the Solow growth model, a loss of gross domestic product or of capital per capita is associated with higher short-term growth, as the scarcity of capital increases the rate of return. However, this hinges on the assumption that capital is available for investment. In a sanctioned country, this is unlikely to be the case. Rather, the sanctions are expected to significantly decrease both domestic and foreign investment in the target; either directly or indirectly, depending on their type.

Investment sanctions will affect the level of foreign investment directly. At best, they imply a prohibition of select new investments in the target country, meaning that the latter cannot speedily grow back to its previous level of GDP; and at worst, a policy of rigorous disinvestment, where capital is retrieved from the target. Machinery, foreign scientists, know-how and assets may be retrieved. The unavailability of foreign capital may also make domestic investment less attractive. Although investment sanctions initially raise the rate of return to capital in the target country, the decrease in the inflow of new capital from abroad eventually constrains the target’s growth.

The exact extent of the damage ultimately depends on the target’s ability to replace or even forgo foreign investment. However, even if it succeeds in alleviating the scarcity of capital in the sanctioned sectors, a negative impact is inevitable for two reasons. First, the domestic capital stock is reduced, and the capital used to replace foregone foreign investment cannot be used for other purposes. Second, if a certain investment opportunity arises which would have been taken by a foreign investor in direct competition with domestic investors, it means that the foreign investor offers more favorable conditions. If said foreign investor is driven out by the imposition of sanctions, the investment may be made by a domestic competitor, but under less favorable conditions.

Trade sanctions will likewise have a dampening effect. As embargoes make many imports unavailable, some production processes are halted and many technologies cannot reach economic viability, and investment in certain areas becomes unprofitable. The disappearance or reduction of the export sector implies some economies of scale can no longer be carried out. Unavailability of key technology decreases productivity. Reduced foreign trade also implies lower foreign exchange revenue both for the target government and for industries in the country, which in turn prevents the acquisition of foreign capital and therefore decreases investment. According to Porter (1979), the welfare loss caused by sanctions represents losses at the critical margin, which will cause inefficiencies in the use of labor and capital. Again, both foreign and domestic investment becomes less attractive.

Further, the imposition of economic sanctions creates uncertainty. It sends the signal of a deteriorating economic and political situation, and puts the credit worthiness of the target state into question, which scares private investors away. In other words, the frequently used types of economic sanctions depress investment in the target country. This eliminates the “catching up” effect typical in the Solow-Swan model. The target, having lost a certain percentage of its GDP due to the sanctions, cannot grow faster to regain its former position because capital is unavailable, and grows sluggishly until the effects of the sanctions wear out. By definition, a decrease in investment implies a decrease in GDP growth, since growth consists of investment.

#### [INSERT LINK]

#### FDI investment causes environmental degradation

Lyubov Tsoy and Almas Heshmati '23 [(Lyubov Tsoy (Department of Economics at Sogang University) and Almas Heshmati (is Professor of Economics at the Jönköping University (Sweden). He was professor of Economics at the Sogang University, Korea University, Seoul National University, University of Kurdistan at Hawler, RATIO Institute, Stockholm and MTT Agrifood Research, Helsinki and Research Fellow at the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), The United Nations University, Helsinki during 2001-2004. From 1998 until 2001, he was an Associate Professor of Economics at the Stockholm School of Economics)) "Is FDI inflow bad for environmental sustainability?," SpringerLink, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10668-023-03844-3, 9-7-2023] TDI

Environmental degradation is an issue for all communities, and it is becoming increasingly important due to climate change, the growing number of climate refugees and environmental migrants, as well as effects on health. In the last few years, discussions and debates around environmental sustainability have become a key goal of the global agenda. This is because the latest studies and our direct experiences of the consequences of environmental degradation and climate change are showing that economic models need some urgent modifications.

According to the pollution haven hypothesis, FDI is one of many possible factors that worsen environmental quality. A negative nexus between FDI and environmental quality is considered because industrialized countries relocate their polluting factories and set up offices in developing countries due to their weak environmental regulations, which result in environmental degradation in the host developing countries.

As statistics show, FDI flows have increased much in the last decades in almost all countries in the world, especially in developing countries. Increased FDI has raised debates about advantages and disadvantages of FDI inflows, with emphasis on the environmental effects and employment generation.

There are two categories of theoretical and quantitative research investigating the costs and benefits of FDI inflows. The first category of studies is about the effects of FDI on economic growth at the aggregate level (e.g., Lucas 1988; De Mello 1999; Carkovic and Levine 2002; Choe 2003; Addison and Heshmati 2004; Moura and Forte 2010). From theoretical aspects of the modern endogenous growth theory, countries that have more open and liberal policies toward FDI inflows influence and generate long-term economic growth of the countries. On the other side, quantitative research that focuses on the impact of FDI on economic growth of the receiving countries with different levels of development shows divergent and inconclusive results.

To mention a few studies aligned with the endogenous growth theory considering the FDI–growth nexus, De Mello (1999) argues that the growth effect of FDI is found positive within OECD countries, but it has negative growth effect in other countries. Carkovic and Levine (2002) showed that FDI does not impact the economic growth of the host country. Choe (2003) investigated the causal relationships between economic growth and FDI in a sample of 80 countries with different levels of development. By using a panel vector autoregressive (VAR) model, the author showed that as expected FDI inflow Granger causes economic growth, but the reversed effects are stronger from economic growth to FDI inflows than from FDI to growth. Addison and Heshmati (2004) investigated the new global determinants of FDI flows, with a particular focus on the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) and democratization process, on FDI inflows to developing countries. The main findings suggest that democratization and ICT increase FDI inflows to developing countries. Moura and Forte (2010) tried to explain the divergence of the results from existing theoretical and empirical studies about the economic impacts of FDI. They argue that the effects of FDI on economic growth depend on internal conditions and characteristic factors of the receiving country, such as economic, political, social, and cultural factors.

The second category includes studies related to the effects of FDI on the environmental conditions in the developing host countries (e.g., Taylor and Copeland 2003; Aliyu 2005; Baek and Koo 2009; Chakraborty and Mukherjee 2013; Yoon and Heshmati 2021). Recent studies on the pollution haven hypothesis show that under rapid globalization, developed countries tend to relocate “dirty” industries to developing countries due to their comparatively weaker environmental policies and regulations. The relocation of dirty production allows them to avoid costly pollution taxes in their home countries (Taylor and Copeland 2003).

Aliyu (2005) investigated two possible empirical consequences of the pollution haven hypothesis, namely: the correlation between FDI outflow in developed countries and environmental policy stringency, and the effect of FDI inflow on pollution in developing host countries with lax environmental policies and regulations. Using disaggregated FDI data, they showed that environmental control is one of the main factors that affect the outflow of FDI originating from OECD countries to developing destination countries. However, FDI inflow was not found to have a significant impact among others on the total concentration of known pollutants, level of temperature, and energy use, but it was correlated with CO2 emissions. Baek and Koo (2009) using the commonly used autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL) model showed that FDI inflows in China negatively impacted the environmental quality in both the short- and long-run perspectives. But in the case of India, FDI was found to have a significant detrimental effect on the environment in the short run, but FDI had little negative effect on the environment the long run. Chakraborty and Mukherjee (2013) using panel data conducted empirical analysis over period of 2000–2010 for 114 countries. They showed that consistent with the pollution heaven hypothesis, the environmental sustainability of studied countries is negatively related to FDI inward movements, but as expected the environmental sustainability is positively influenced by FDI outward movements. Yoon and Heshmati (2021) investigate the environmental regulation’s effects on FDI decisions of the Korean manufacturing sector. The results showed that the stricter the regulations in host countries in Asia, the lower the FDI flows in these countries. The findings are in line with the prevalence of a pollution haven hypothesis.

### 1NC --- Iran

#### Iranian sanction relief increases FDIs.

Lob '15 [(Eric Lob, an associate professor in the Department of Politics and International Relations at FIU. His research focuses on the intersection of development and politics in the Middle East. It specifically explores how state and non-state actors in the region instrumentalize development as a soft power mechanism to further their political interests both domestically and internationally. He currently teaches courses on comparative politics and international relations of the Middle East and on political violence and revolution) "What Iran will really do with its sanctions relief windfall," Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/11/04/what-iran-will-really-do-with-its-sanctions-relief-windfall/, 11-4-2015] TDI

Sanctions relief will allow Iran to reconnect to international financial markets, import previously restricted goods, expand export markets and receive greater foreign direct investment (FDI). Estimates of the sum of unfrozen assets range from $30 billion to $180 billion in an economy valued at approximately $400 billion. Analysts have not only tried to project the deal’s exact windfalls but also to what ends they will be used and to what extent they will alter Iran’s regional conduct.

In the short term, sanctions relief will not radically transform Iran’s regional behavior but will likely trigger incremental change. Recent political science research – which focuses primarily on the effects of imposing economic sanctions rather than alleviating them – demonstrates that they further empower entrenched elites within targeted states like Iran and fail to modify their behavior. Thirty-six years of sanctions did not lead to regime change; they did not drastically alter, but even worsened, Iran’s regional conduct. Reversing this trend will likely require engaging and inducing Tehran with fewer sticks and more carrots or – to borrow David Balwin’s phrase – “positive sanctions” comprised of economic statecraft and soft market power in the form of foreign aid, investment, trade, and technology transfers.

Since signing the agreement, the Iranian government has sought immediate and maximum sanctions relief to alleviate external pressure and stabilize the economy before upcoming elections for the parliament and Assembly of Experts. While the Guardian Council will vet the candidates, Iranians will cast their votes based on perceptions of whether citizens directly benefit from the deal. To promote economic stability and raise voter confidence, the Iranian government says it will channel sanctions relief, in a targeted manner, into specific economic sectors to which it has already dedicated significant attention and resources.

The government’s stated top priority is attracting FDI and importing machinery and technology to expand and modernize the oil and natural gas sectors, which are by far the country’s largest. Iran contains the world’s second-largest natural gas reserves and fourth-largest petroleum reserves. Oil export revenues account for nearly half of the government’s budget. Economic sanctions curbed oil and natural gas exports as well as restricted imports of machinery and technology. This reduced the efficiency and productivity of upstream and downstream operations, leading, at times, to rising imports of refined and processed fuel.

The government’s second priority is economic diversification. This is essential given the economy’s susceptibility and vulnerability to petroleum price shocks and foreign exchange shortages. To counter recent price drops, the government seeks to strengthen secondary industries, beginning with the automobile sector. After oil and natural gas, this sector is the country’s second-largest and contributes up to 10 percent of GDP.

During the administration of former president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, automobile and tractor manufacturers opened factories in Africa to produce and export taxis, buses, tractors and other commercial vehicles. Sanctions relief will enable companies such as these to attract FDI and upgrade machinery and parts to maintain and expand operations on the continent and beyond. Beyond improving economic diversification, these operations will increase export revenues and alleviate an official national unemployment rate of 11.4 percent in 2014.

#### Iran wants FDIs now.

Ghodsi 16 [(Mahdi Ghodsi, is an Economist at wiiw. His research focuses on international trade, international trade policy, non-tariff measures, industrial policy, foreign direct investment, global value chains, environmental technologies and innovation, political economy of sanctions, and the Iran economy) "wiiw Opinion Corner: What are the consequences of the Iranian sanctions relief? (news article)," https://wiiw.ac.at/wiiw-opinion-corner-what-are-the-consequences-of-the-iranian-sanctions-relief--n-132.html, 3-7-2016] TDI

Assessing the impact of sanctions

After the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Iran became an isolated economy lacking foreign direct investment (FDI). In spite of efforts during the presidency of former president Rafsanjani to attract FDI for building up the post-war economy, foreign investors did not consider Iran a secure and stable environment for their projects. The oil and gas, transport and vehicle industries, and the mining sectors had been the branches of the economy attracting FDI. However, investors left the Iranian industry after the imposition of the sanctions hurting them heavily. Moreover, the sanctions against these major industries reduced their capacities as production was lacking intermediates (e.g. spare parts, tools and devices) and could not be maintained.

Increasing Iran’s attractiveness for FDI

Recently, Iranian officials have announced their desire for Iran to again become an attractive place for FDI after the abolishment of the sanctions. Ali Tayebnia, Iran’s Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, recently indicated that Iran economy needs USD 45 billion FDI, a quarter of which is needed in the next Iranian calendar year starting from March 20, 2016.  However, despite manifold opportunities for investment, which are to enhance the Iranian capacities and technology in the manufacturing industries, Iran still needs to achieve more stability in its economy, e.g. by reducing two-digit inflation that erupted during the past years, in addition to offering tax credits and loan plans.

#### Investments increase after sanctions relief – infrastructure, transportation, and telecommunication is attractive.

Mehdi Rasouli Ghahroudi and Li Choy Chong '19 [(Mehdi Rasouli Ghahroudi (Associate Professor at University of Washington Bothell, School of Business. His research specifically targets FDIs in countries around the world) and Li Choy Chong (is director of the Research Institute for International Management at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland) "Role of Sanctions and Macroeconomic Determinants on FDI Inflow: A Case Study," No Publication, https://www.preprints.org/manuscript/201911.0357/v2, 11-27-2019] TDI

Our findings demonstrate that most of macroeconomic factors tend to impact on the FDI inflow into Iran. Gross & Trevino (1996) state that countries which have high levels of GDP growth are highly inclined to increase foreign direct investment flows by attracting trust from multinational corporations (MNCs) and encouraging them to invest. However, according to Biglaiser & DeRouen (2011), more economic development attracts investors and they believe that the potential market is for a high return on investment.

Further, there is a positive significant relationship between infrastructure and FDI. This imply that development of infrastructures will increase inflows of FDI to Iran (Alavinasab, 2013).

FDI investors are usually looking for location that have suitable infrastructure such as roads, transportation and telecommunications. Investing in developed host markets, can reduce investor's production costs and then increase their profits. Foreign investors in Iran have more focused on energy sectors including oil and gas, petrochemicals, as well as telecommunications, car manufacturing, and mine industries.

Javidan & Dastmalchian (2003) have, however, indicated that there are two internal movements with totally different thoughts to determine the direction of the future of the country: those who are not opposed to development and consider it as a means to achieve religious goals; and those who feel that the survival of Islam and the progress of Iran require a more modern perspective. However, continued confrontation between the two streams has caused political instability and turmoil, and has slowed the progress of the country.

Our finding indicate that sanctions has a significant impact on governance. This imply that Circumvent of sanctions may lead to the corruption and bad governance, which increase administrative costs and therefore reduce FDI inflows. However, the governance affects the security of property rights, transparency and legal process.

Furthermore, the results indicate a negative effect of sanction on GDP. This may be due to embargos on Iran's oil and gas, and by which reducing oil exports. Along with dependency of real GDP growth in Iran is oil. Therefore, sanctions have had a significant impact on Iran's economic growth in recent years due to increasing the severity level of sanctions.

Additionally, sanction has a positive impact on inflation rate and exchange rate in Iran. When international financial sanctions hampered access to oil revenues, Iran experienced a currency crisis that led to a sharp decline in the Rial. On the other hand, the government faced a problem to increase foreign currencies for its import needs, since demand for foreign currencies exceeded supply, which in turn led to a depreciation of the Rial. Moreover, sanctions are not the major cause of exchange rate crisis in recent years.

Our results indicate that sanctions do not have a significant moderating role in the relationship between macroeconomic factors and foreign direct investment. Surprisingly, international sanctions has a positive relationship with FDI inflows in Iran. This means that, despite the sanctions, some of multinational companies have realized the opportunities in the Iranian market as a developing economy; and have invested in less-under-threatened industries. Moreover, the special conditions of Iran during the years after the Iraq-war, including the abundance of natural resources, geographic location, the young and educated population; and the growing economy, have set the country as one of the objectives of direct foreign investment.

However, over the years, sanctions have serious consequences for the people and the economy of Iran. Nevertheless, the impact of sanctions is often denied in the Iranian press.

Iran has taken measures to circumvent sanctions, in particular through using barter trade and with help of front countries or companies. Moreover, in response to the sanctions, the Iranian government has backed a " resistance economy," such as more domestic use of oil due to limited export markets and the use of alternative industries.

After, the agreement between Iran and the P5+1 in 2015, the so-called post-sanction era has begun in Iran.

In addition, sanctions relief will affect Iran's economy in four main ways: (1) the release of Iran's frozen funds abroad by 2015, which is over $ 100 billion; (2) the lifting of the sanctions against Iran's oil exports; (3) allowing foreign companies to invest in oil and gas, automobiles, hotels and other parts of Iran; (4) permitting trade with the rest of the world and access to a global banking system, such as SWIFT. However, with lifting sanctions, prospects are brighter for Iran, with new opportunities arising in oil and gas, and investment in manufacturing industries. Iran’s government have established several incentive programs in order to encourage foreign companies to invest to Iran.

In addition, the attitude toward providing incentives for attracting FDI among economists is widely different. Moreover, some economists (e.g., Blomstrom & Kokko, 2003; Bora, 2002; Black & Hoyt, 1989) argued that providing incentives will attract more foreign investment, create jobs, and provide access to new technologies; and will result to other social and economic benefits. Cleeve (2008) argue that incentive costs outweigh their benefits, and he believes that improvements in local infrastructure, political stability, and macroeconomic stability are better tools for stimulating foreign direct investment inflows.

#### Middle Eastern FDI causes warming.

**Ayad et al. '23** [(Hicham Ayad, University Centre of Maghnia, LEPPESE Laboratory, Maghnia, Algeria, Abdelhak Lefilef, University Center of Abdelhafid Boussouf, Mila, Algeria, Atif Jahanger, International Business School, Hainan University, Haikou City, 570228, Hainan, China, & Daniel Balsalobre-Lorente, Department of Applied Economics I, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Ciudad Real, Spain.) "Reinvestigate the Effect of Foreign Direct Investment on Environmental Quality in the MENA Region: Is There Any Difference Using the Load Capacity Factor?," SpringerLink, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13132-023-01629-7, 12-25-2023] TDI

\*\*LCF: Load Capacity Factor (environmental index, lower = worse environment)

\*\*EKC: Environmental Kuznet’s Curve

Results of PMG‑ARDL Procedure

After completing all the necessary pre-tests and determining the direction of the study to examine the elasticities, we can now proceed to estimate the equations under study using the PMG-ARDL methodology. The results are demonstrated in Table 6.

To start with, model (2) showed a negative effect of FDI on LCF in the long term, implying that a rise in FDI by 10% leads to a decline in LCF by 0.87%, indicating an environmental worsening in the region. Particularly, FDI inflows in the region damage the environment over the long-term. This outcome affirms the PHH hypothesis in the MENA region, consistent with the results reported by Abdo et al. (2020) in selected Arabic nations, Gorus and Aslan (2019), and Awan et al. (2020) both in the MENA region. The FDI in the MENA region primarily focuses on the hydrocarbons sector or natural resources in general, as the region is known for its large oil production and abundance of natural resources. This sector is known for its significant emissions and use of vast areas. Moreover, the region comprises developing countries prioritizing economic development over environmental concerns, making it a desirable location for companies and organizations to avoid countries with strict environmental regulations.

Besides, the results indicate a strong link between GDP and environmental degradation, as shown by the negative correlation between GDP and LCF. Specifically, an upsurge of 10% in GDP leads to a 3.49% shrinkage in LCF over the long term. This finding confirms previous research in MENA countries by Ibrahim and Alola (2020) and Ayad et al. (2023) both in MENA nations, which also found similar associations with CO2 emissions. Similarly, economic growth in the region heavily relies on natural resources, particularly oil, which necessitates significant consumption of non-renewable energy sources. As the region’s countries are developing nations, the increased demand for products stemming from economic growth further strains the environment through significant carbon emissions and other greenhouse gases, harming all aspects of the environment. Additionally, the findings indicated that energy consumption significantly impacts the deterioration of LCF in the area, with a 3.39% reduction in LCF for every 10% rise in ENE.

On the other hand, model (3) suggests that the relationship between GDP and LCF does not align with the EKC hypothesis, which proposes an inverted U-shaped correlation between GDP and environmental degradation using CO2 emissions of EF and U-shape using LCF. Hence, the model shows that GDP and GDP2 have positive and negative effects, respectively, indicating that economic growth in its early stages improves environmental conditions until a certain point (estimated at $4582 per capita) is reached, after which the impact becomes negative. It is worth noting that most of the sample countries have already surpassed this threshold, indicating a negative impact of economic growth on the environment in the region. These results contradict those of Farhani et al. (2014), Charfeddine and Mrabet (2017), and Usman et al. (2021) in MENA, and Sarkodie (2018) in Africa, who found an inverted U-shape connection using CO2 releases and EF as environmental indicators.

#### Iran environmental degradation spills over. Extinction.

Khani '22 [(Khalil Khani (is an Environmental Specialist and a Human Rights activist. He holds a Ph.D. in Ecology, Botany, and Environmental Studies from Germany and has taught at the University of Tehran and the Hesse State University in Germany)) "Iran's environmental degradation," https://www.atalayar.com/en/opinion/khalil-khani/irans-environmental-degradation/20220127133616136114.html, 1-26-2022] TDI

Iran is facing an unprecedented environmental crisis, with dwindling water resources, rapid deforestation, desertification, overgrazing of rangelands, and pollution that chokes its cities. This problem, if left unchecked, threatens not only Iran, but also the stability of the region and the world. Iran’s environmental status these days include air pollution, pesticide pollution, soil depletion and erosion, water scarcity and pollution, natural resource loss, lack of appropriate waste management, lead poisoning, and desertification. Environmental policy regulations and how to implement is described under the previous regime and the clerical regime, however, no implementation of those regulations exist.

Iran is challenged with many interrelated political, social and natural crisis including environmental degradation, unemployment, poverty, and population growth. Sustainability is being undermined in every aspects of environmental issues at the cost of future generations.

Iran with a population of over 80 million, the country is having difficulty in maintaining its current infrastructure, housing, food, and educational facilities. Population growth leads to increased demand for infrastructure and resources. The regime additionally is faced with extreme uprisings of various sectors of the society demanding Iran’s  “Freedom and Water”.

The effects of climate change in Iran have already caused internal political unrest and, if unaddressed, threaten further to inhibit the country’s economic, social health, and destabilize an already turbulent region. Toxic air, lack of water, and desertification of agricultural lands have the potential to prompt massive movements of populations fleeing to find more sustainable homes and livelihoods

Today, Iran with abundant oil reserves, natural gas, copper, lead, and  other raw material may be permanently dependent on food imports. Here, exchanging natural resources for food and technology has time and resource limits. Iran has signed many international environmental agreements and has enacted detailed environmental policies and regulations, but actual management and enforcement is lacking.

The air quality in metropolitan Tehran and some other major cities across Iran has gradually become unbreathable for past decades,  and in recent years, the pollution index reaching dangerously high levels for elders and others with respiratory illnesses.

The Air Quality Index (AQI), which measures levels of air contamination, has seen an alarming upturn in the capital of Iran in recent weeks, crossing the threshold of 200 or more, deemed “heavily polluted.”

There are various pollutants in Iran’s air. The most commonly measured are: particulate matter (PM), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), sulfur dioxide (SO2), and ozone (O3).

Particulate matter (PM) is defined as fine inhalable particles that are suspended in the air, regardless of the size of the particle. The two most common size fractions of PM measures are PM10 and PM2.5. PM10, also referred to as “coarse PM,” particles of 10 micrometers in diameter or smaller; PM2.5, also referred to as “fine PM” are a subset of those particles, namely those that are 2.5 micrometer in diameter or smaller. Sources of PM10 include crushing or gridding operations, dust stirred up by vehicle, and roads. PM2.5, on the other hand, originates from all types of combustion, including motor vehicles, power plants, residential wood burning, forest fires, agricultural burning, and some industrial processes. PM2.5 poses the most severe health impacts out of all measurable particle sizes, because the fine particles can get deep into the alveolar region of the lungs and even into the bloodstream.

A thick layer of smog enveloping the city remains trapped for winter months due to the phenomenon called “temperature inversion,” which degradation of natural ecosystems, long spell of droughts, and climate change makes it only worse.

The World Health Organization (WHO) had in 2018 categorized Tehran as ‘most polluted cities in the world,’ while the World Bank in its 2018 report said the city accounts for 4,000 of the 12,000 deaths due to air pollution in Iran annually. These fatalities are due to cancer, heart disease, lung disease and strokes. However, the data is disputed and some has given 30,000 deaths or even more.

The situation has become even worse this year, according to government officials and environmentalists, with the AQI reaching a record high not only in Tehran but also in other major cities such as Tabriz, Isfahan, Shiraz, Ahvaz, Zabol, and Mashhad.

There are no accurate figures available to show the impact of polluted air, but experts say deaths due to ailments caused by air pollution are likely to be higher this year than previous years.

Iran with an approximately of 85 million population, some 28 million people live in severe water stressed areas, mostly in the central and southern regions of the country. At the same time, according to reports 30 provinces of 31 are experiencing water stress. Water scarcity is hitting all segments of society, from urban households to rural farming communities.

In the eyes of Iranians, water resources have always been a precious asset, whether from a religious, personal, or historical perspective. Iran’s civilization has been formed and expanded around rivers or outlets of Qanats over past millennia, with most cities originating from an agriculturally based system, which was completely dependent on riverine irrigation and Qanats. As Iran is a country with predominantly arid and semiarid climate, water has always been a top priority for its people who have a long tradition of sustainable water management. Qanats or underground water canals have historically been efficient in conserving water, dams and water saving structures has also been attracted the attention of earlier Iranians as is attested by the remains of numerous water structures built from about 240 AD.

Similar to other dramatic socio-economic changes in the twentieth century, however, the waterscape of Iran has also been altered. Large-scale dams have been erected, rivers diverted, traditional water sharing rules abolished, wetlands dried up, and precipitation patterns changed while water demand and withdrawals have increased unsubstantially.

The major cause has been unprecedented population growth leading to the expansion of cities, increased water hungry industries, which shouldn’t be established at those locations in the first place, devastation of simple rural lifestyles and disruption of traditional water management systems that had been in place for centuries. These changes have brought about a new lifestyle in Iran and dictated new behaviors, including higher water consumption for daily personal care and leisure. Water consumption in both urban and rural Iran is now very high compared to the global norms. Across the country, infrastructure, mega-dams, has been expanded to keep pace with these new demands, though environmental consequences have been considerably omitted.

Now, the question is why Iran is facing with water crisis? As one is looking at rainfall data patterns, there are no significant change in precipitations regime for past many years. Also, as one knows that Iran is a country historically known as the land of drought and floods and people inhibited this region has adapted to such environment, its weather patterns, and has established a significant civilization.

Iranian politicians have consistently blamed climate change, droughts, and lack of precipitations for the current water shortages. While, devastating floods of recent years have caused many loss of lives and economic damages. Even though, this is a serious problem, a 2021 study in Nature journal categorically stated that most of Iran’s groundwater depletion is “anthropogenic”. It means, that is caused or exacerbated by human activity.

However, one must know that all such environmental crisis are clerical regime made crisis, which even regime own experts are admitting total contribution of clerical government in creating such crisis as, deforestation, overgrazing of rangelands, sinkholes, land subsidence, plundering of water resources, and increased desertification. Iran’s ruling clerical regime has destroyed natural ecological balance of the country to the extent that most of these devastation are irreversible.

Nowadays, the clerical regime officials, some foreign and domestic experts trying to tie this water shortage severity to drought, climate change and global warming instead of connecting it to notorious Iran’s “Water Mafia,” which protesting farmers rightfully are calling for its abolishment. However, none are coming close to identify this “Water Mafia”.

Also, many are relating this massive water shortage to the mismanagement, corruption, and plundering of water resources. It’s somehow misleading statement. Since 1979 anti-monarchial uprising and the overthrow of monarchy, Iran’s clerical regime has cleverly managed country’s wealth, natural resources, and water resources in the name of the “deprived” but for the benefits of immensely “rich” religious foundations under the Supreme Leader’s supervision, IRGC, elite clerics, and their affiliates. So, here is the “Godfather” and its patronages.

Iran’s aquifers have been depleted due to massive over extraction of underground water resources as the number of deep wells have increased during the clerics rule. IRGC affiliated companies are relentlessly building dams, regardless of their usefulness for the nation, without any environmental considerations, and farming of water intensive crops, which are again under the control of affluent IRGC members, elite clerics or foundations under the supervision of Iran’s Supreme Leader. Farmers hit by water shortages are abandoning their villages to live in shacks and ghetto settlements on the outskirts of cities.

Additionally, in recent years, the Iran’s clerical regime has given some privileged citizens tacit or explicit permission to exploit water resources that are not easily renewable, through such means as illegal wells. Some estimates are tallying wells without permits 600,000 to 1,000,000. Dams and investment in water transfer projects have exacerbated the issue of water shortage, as the government has not created the appropriate infrastructure to ensure floods are controlled and absorbed into underground aquifers.

The Iran’s clerical regime has no plan for collection and harvesting of flash floods as man has witnessed economic devastation, loss of lives, and massive destruction of homes and country’s infrastructures past few years. The government’s negligence, and its systematic natural resources mismanagement can clearly been seen since 1979, the inception of Islamic Republic. Since, watershed management is almost none existent, as a result significant amount of floodwater and rainwater, which could have been stored and put to use in times such as this, has been wasted.

This is the case of water scarcity in Iran, what might seem decades of mismanagement, that has turned water scarcity into a national crisis and caused several interrelated socioeconomic problems. Results indicate that the inefficient management and monitoring the water scarcity and lack of appropriate standardization and tariffs are the most important system failures of the water scarcity. But, the most important of all is the regime’s policy implications toward water management that has been applied in more than 42 years of its ruling, and brought the country to this diar situation.

Iran also has been faced with severe subsidence in most of its plains.   The rate of land subsidence in the country is increasing day by day, while the performance of the responsible bodies is not satisfactory.

Environmentalists and land experts are emphasizing the need to review the operation of wells, groundwater withdrawal, and water resources management. Some 29 provinces of 31 are currently at risk of subsidence. If this trend is not stopped, there will be regrettably great irreversible environmental degradation.

Iran’s immediate way out of its environmental crisis are to ban excess extraction of water from underground resources, a scientific review of surface water use, a critical review of IRGC water transfer system, and finally implement plans for the maintenance of land reserves.

Groundwater exploitation has dramatically been increased over the past decades leading to aquifer depletion. Iran’s government has claimed persistent droughts for water crises, which are mostly due to plundering of water resources, enormous dams construction, massive deforestation, destruction of rangelands due to overgrazing, persistent land subsidence, and desertification.

The head of Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration said: 80% of the groundwater is withdrawn annually in Iran, which outpacing the global rate. In the world, water resources withdrawal is between 3 to 20%, and when it reaches 40 to 60%, which is considered problematic, and it will be a crisis when exceeding 60-80%.

Over the past decades, some of the aquifer levels dropped by 100 centimeters. In addition to digging illegal wells, improper irrigation methods are the other main causes of groundwater extraction-induced subsidence, as out of 50,000 wells pumping underground water resources in the capital, 30,000 are illegal. Out of 609 plains in Iran, more than 300 are vastly sinking and forbidden to enter.

According to a study carried out by the Transport, Housing, and Urban Development Research Center of Iran, some 18 densely populated provinces are vastly subsiding and consequently, became increasingly vulnerable to flooding and natural incidents as well as bearing huge infrastructure damage.

Provinces of Isfahan, Tehran, Kerman, Khorasan Razavi, Alborz, Fars, Yazd, Hamadan, Markazi, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, East Azerbaijan, Zanjan, Qom, Ardabil, Kurdistan, West Azerbaijan, North Khorasan, and Kermanshah reported the highest rates of subsidence, respectively.

Tehran is the most populous city in West Asia, which is sinking into the ground at an alarming rate. The metropolis is home to some 15 million people and is a victim of dramatic subsidence. New research reveals that the region is sinking by more than 25-45 centimeters annually in some parts.

In addition to Above mentioned serious environmental issues, if one adds the catastrophic vanishing of Lake Urmia and Gotvand dam, another IRGC created environmental disaster in Khuzestan province, man can imagine extend of clerical regime generated environmental degradation for Iranian generations to come and challenges the humanity will face.

There have been protests across Iran demanding water, freedom, and to express solidarity with water deprived cities and farmers of Khuzestan, Isfahan, Bakhtiari, Baluchistan and elsewhere; also, in Tehran, Tabriz, Bojnourd, Saghez, and other big cities. People expressed their anger and dissatisfaction at the ruling class, which has responded with sending riot police, killing, blinding, injuring, arrests and attempts at shutting down social media.

At the same time that Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has expressed his sympathy with the demands of the protesters and promised that water would be made a top priority, his riot police is suppressing farmers demands with utmost force. The brutal killings and suppressing of famers of Khuzestan and Isfahan set the example. Him and his officials have thus far failed to improve water resources management or address climate change issues.

#### Iranian water scarcity revives terror and causes war.

CNA '17 [(The Center for Naval Analysis, an independent, nonprofit research and analysis organization dedicated to the safety and security of the nation. With a staff of more than 650, we bring scientific rigor to the protection of our citizens, our infrastructure, and our national interests. For more than 80 years, our real-world approach to data has enabled public sector leaders to navigate complexity with confidence, make informed decisions, and drive meaningful change in their organizations) "The Role of Water Stress in Instability and Conflict," No Publication, https://www.cna.org/reports/2017/the-role-of-water-stress-in-instability-and-conflict, 12-1-2017] TDI

When Localized Violence Becomes International

Water-stress-induced localized violence can transcend national borders and involve international politics, raising the security threat to the national and global levels. The Hari Rud River on the border between Afghanistan and Iran provides illustration. It is a source of water for Iran's second-largest city, Mashad, and of irrigation for Herat Province in Afghanistan. As many irrigation channels in Herat have been destroyed or polluted over time, residents of the Kohsan district have tried to divert river water for agriculture. They claim that Iranian border guards shoot at them in retribution; according to Kohsan authorities, 10 villagers have been killed. Officials of Herat Province, which receives development funds from Iran, deny the allegations. The dispute underscores the lack of sufficient water agreements between Iran and Afghanistan [11, 72].

TERRORISM, INSURGENCIES, AND CIVIL WARS

This category of conflict is defined by violent struggles that involve non-state actors competing for legitimacy and influence, typically to control territory and populations, usually against governments. In these types of conflicts, non-state actors, such as VEOs, militias, and terrorist organizations, often employ small units and networks to engage and undermine local and central governments [14]. They tend to favor indirect and asymmetric approaches, and some can employ the full range of military and other capabilities to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will [14, 73].Today, particularly throughout Africa and the Middle East, these types of conflicts—many of which are within states and not between states—are prevalent. Examples of non-state actors involved include ISIS; Boko Haram; and Al-Qaeda and its affiliates such as Al-Shabaab, AlQaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and its branch in Syria.

Factors at play within conflicts involving non-state actors include ideology, territorial claims, political marginalization, economic inequities, and ethnicity [74]. VEOs are frequently involved, including those listed above. In these conflicts, extremist organizations have demonstrated an ability to exploit political, economic, and social conditions within the areas they operate and seek to operate to their benefit. For example, where there is weak or no government, these groups can move in and provide services, winning them followers and support. Water stress creates conditions these organizations can exploit in this manner—they may provide needed water where the government does not, or cut off supplies to weaken an adversary and turn a population.

While the United States has dedicated considerable resources to fighting terrorist organizations since 2001, and defeating them remains a top priority, their number and strength have expanded, as has the size of their operating areas in Africa and the Middle East over the past 16 years. Despite the exploitation of water stress by VEOs, addressing water stress conditions has not traditionally been part of U.S. counterterrorism efforts. The security community tends to see water stress as a humanitarian concern and, consequently, responses to date have largely come in the form of humanitarian assistance. Exploitation of these conditions by non-state actors is perhaps overlooked.

#### Water shortages don’t cause conflict.

Mehsud et al. ’17 — Muhammad Imram Meshud is Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Hazara University Mansehra. Manzoor Ahmad is Chairman, Department of Political Science, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. Adil Khan is Lecturer, Department of Pakistan Studies, Hazara University Mansehra. 2017; "When States Go Thirsty: A Critical Analysis of Water War Thesis"; *Global Strategic and Security Studies Review*; Volume 2, Number 1; <https://gsssrjournal.com/papers/1%20When%20States%20Go%20Thirsty%20-%20Imran%20Mehsud.pdf>; //CYang

This group argues that no doubt water is scarce and is unevenly distributed across planet earth. However, water scarcity doesn’t necessarily result in war. In fact, water scarcity could create both conflict and cooperation. For Toynbee, such a scarcity or challenge would create a cooperative environment whereas for Homer-Dixon such scarcity would generate conflicts. This dichotomy of two divergent perspectives thus resulted in the creation of two different and contending schools of thought. The first school which draws their argument from Toynbee is represented by the writings of Sandra I.Postel, and Aaron T.Wolf. This group is sanguine about the peaceful resolution of water disputes.

Their claim is based on certain arguments. Firstly, it is argued that there exist almost 3600 water treaties at different levels, and nearly all of the disputed parties to water conflicts of one form or another have either managed to reach an agreement or is in the process of charting a strategy to manage waters (Priscoli and Wolf 2008). Egypt-Sudan in 1959 over the Nile, IndianPakistan in 1960 over Indus, Thailand-Vietnam, Lao Peoples Democratic Republic-Cambodia in 1995 over the Mekong, the eleven co-riparian countries of the Danube River in 1994, India-Bangladesh in 1996 over the Ganges are few of the examples where water disputes have been resolved through cooperative arrangements.

Secondly, most of these treaties remained intact even when the parties to the agreement actually waged war against one another. The functioning of the Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan amidst large scale wars between these two nations and the smooth working of the Lebanese water supply system during Lebanese civil wars (Global Water Shortages1999) are cited as solid examples in this regard. Thirdly, Wolf further augments the arguments in hand by arguing that historical water disputes have never turned violent and that water war is strategically irrational, hydrographically ineffective and economically not viable (Chakraborty and Serageldin 2004). Fourthly, it is opined that increase in a number of water dispute’s resolution mechanisms, the expanding international law of waters and positive role of third parties in the resolution of water disputes have left no room for the water war thesis (Wolf 1998). Owing to the aforementioned reasons, some of the analysts from Swedish Water House echoed that, “the loudest alarmist calls for future “water wars” have died away” (Brennan 2008, 10).

#### Water wars escalate---history doesn’t assume new environmental dynamics.

Peter Engelke 16. Senior fellow at the Atlantic Council’s Strategic Foresight Initiative. “Will the world's next wars be fought over water?” LA Times. <http://www.latimes.com/world/global-development/op-ed/la-fg-global-water-oped-story.html>

As evocative as this hypothesis is, the track record also shows that water wars are overblown – thankfully. Exhaustive research by Aaron Wolf, a geographer at Oregon State University, has documented the surprising fact that there have been no interstate wars fought directly over water for thousands of years. In fact, his team’s research indicates that states have cooperated over shared water resources far more often than they have fought over them.

But the absence of a historical record of interstate warfare over water does not mean that we have no reason for concern. On the contrary. There are two very good reasons why we should intensify our efforts to understand how water intersects with conflict and to build the structures necessary to ensure that water leads to peace and prosperity rather than war.

One reason is that the future is not going to look exactly like the past. This is a truism: No future ever looks exactly like any past. But in terms of how the Earth’s various systems operate, we likely are looking at a future that is very different from the past.

For years now, Earth scientists have been debating whether we should rename the geological epoch in which we live, whether we should drop the term Holocene (the period since the last ice age) and substitute for it the term Anthropocene. As the root of the word Anthropocene suggests, the scientists’ basic idea is that human interference in Earth systems has become so pervasive that we have, in effect, a new planet on our hands. Indicators such as climate change, ozone depletion, massive sedimentation, and ocean acidification are proof that human interference in Earth systems already has altered how the planet works.

So too with fresh water: Water cycling will become less predictable in the future. For example, a changing climate will create more droughts and floods more frequently in more places. As water systems become less reliable – say, transboundary river flows no longer follow historic, seasonal patterns – states will come under greater pressure to deal with the consequences. States might begin to take matters into their own hands and lay claim to water resources that others believe belong to them. No one can say whether such a causal chain will result in future water wars.

But the second reason we should remain concerned about the potential for water-based conflict is the overly narrow frame we use to understand the relationship in the first place. Interstate warfare represents only a small part, indeed the far less significant part, of a much larger equation involving conflict and water. We would be smart to focus on that larger equation rather than on the narrower if spectacular "water wars" hypothesis.

The smart frame is to think about how water can either contribute to peace and stability or, conversely, help destabilize vulnerable countries and regions around the world. Water is essential for all human activities, indeed for all life. When present in sufficient quantity and quality, water is an enabler of other good things, whether we are talking about human health or food production or energy production or a thousand other things. However, when water is not present in sufficient quantity and quality, the reverse becomes true: human health suffers, food cannot be grown, electricity cannot be produced, and so on. Under extreme conditions, society can begin to break down, and conflict becomes inevitable.

The current Syrian tragedy provides an important case study of what happens to a society under severe water stress. Between 2007 and 2010, Syria experienced one of the worst droughts in recorded history, the effect of which was to decimate rural communities and drive hundreds of thousands off the land and into Syria’s cities, where they were marginalized. When the "Arab Spring" began in 2011, Syria therefore was an especially vulnerable society. The effects of the drought combined with long-standing grievances against the Assad regime to create the conditions for violence. Once conflict began, rebel groups found willing recruits from those regions most affected by drought. Since the onset of civil war, moreover, combatants have "weaponized" water, meaning they have turned water into an instrument of war. The Islamic State has been the most egregious offender, alternatively flooding areas or deliberately withholding water in order to punish civilians or p prosecute their conflict against other combatants.

#### Terrorism causes extinction---retaliation.

Matthew Bunn & Nickolas Roth 17. \*Professor of practice at the Harvard Kennedy School. \*\*Research associate at the Belfer Center’s Project on Managing the Atom at Harvard University and research fellow at the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland. “The effects of a single terrorist nuclear bomb.” Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, http://thebulletin.org/effects-single-terrorist-nuclear-bomb11150

The escalating threats between North Korea and the United States make it easy to forget the “nuclear nightmare,” as former US Secretary of Defense William J. Perry put it, that could result even from the use of just a single terrorist nuclear bomb in the heart of a major city. At the risk of repeating the vast literature on the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and the substantial literature surrounding nuclear tests and simulations since then—we attempt to spell out here the likely consequences of the explosion of a single terrorist nuclear bomb on a major city, and its subsequent ripple effects on the rest of the planet. Depending on where and when it was detonated, the blast, fire, initial radiation, and long-term radioactive fallout from such a bomb could leave the heart of a major city a smoldering radioactive ruin, killing tens or hundreds of thousands of people and wounding hundreds of thousands more. Vast areas would have to be evacuated and might be uninhabitable for years. Economic, political, and social aftershocks would ripple throughout the world. A single terrorist nuclear bomb would change history. The country attacked—and the world—would never be the same. The idea of terrorists accomplishing such a thing is, unfortunately, not out of the question; it is far easier to make a crude, unsafe, unreliable nuclear explosive that might fit in the back of a truck than it is to make a safe, reliable weapon of known yield that can be delivered by missile or combat aircraft. Numerous government studies have concluded that it is plausible that a sophisticated terrorist group could make a crude bomb if they got the needed nuclear material. And in the last quarter century, there have been some 20 seizures of stolen, weapons-usable nuclear material, and at least two terrorist groups have made significant efforts to acquire nuclear bombs. Terrorist use of an actual nuclear bomb is a low-probability event—but the immensity of the consequences means that even a small chance is enough to justify an intensive effort to reduce the risk. Fortunately, since the early 1990s, countries around the world have significantly reduced the danger—but it remains very real, and there is more to do to ensure this nightmare never becomes reality. Brighter than a thousand suns. Imagine a crude terrorist nuclear bomb—containing a chunk of highly enriched uranium just under the size of a regulation bowling ball, or a much smaller chunk of plutonium—suddenly detonating inside a delivery van parked in the heart of a major city. Such a terrorist bomb would release as much as 10 kilotons of explosive energy, or the equivalent of 10,000 tons of conventional explosives, a volume of explosives large enough to fill all the cars of a mile-long train. In a millionth of a second, all of that energy would be released inside that small ball of nuclear material, creating temperatures and pressures as high as those at the center of the sun. That furious energy would explode outward, releasing its energy in three main ways: a powerful blast wave; intense heat; and deadly radiation. The ball would expand almost instantly into a fireball the width of four football fields, incinerating essentially everything and everyone within. The heated fireball would rise, sucking in air from below and expanding above, creating the mushroom cloud that has become the symbol of the terror of the nuclear age. The ionized plasma in the fireball would create a localized electromagnetic pulse more powerful than lightning, shorting out communications and electronics nearby—though most would be destroyed by the bomb’s other effects in any case. (Estimates of heat, blast, and radiation effects in this article are drawn primarily from Alex Wellerstein’s “Nukemap,” which itself comes from declassified US government data, such as the 660-page government textbook The Effects of Nuclear Weapons.) At the instant of its detonation, the bomb would also release an intense burst of gamma and neutron radiation which would be lethal for nearly everyone directly exposed within about two-thirds of a mile from the center of the blast. (Those who happened to be shielded by being inside, or having buildings between them and the bomb, would be partly protected—in some cases, reducing their doses by ten times or more.) The nuclear flash from the heat of the fireball would radiate in both visible light and the infrared; it would be “brighter than a thousand suns,” in the words of the title of a book describing the development of nuclear weapons—adapting a phrase from the Hindu epic the Bhagavad-Gita. Anyone who looked directly at the blast would be blinded. The heat from the fireball would ignite fires and horribly burn everyone exposed outside at distances of nearly a mile away. (In the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, visitors gaze in horror at the bones of a human hand embedded in glass melted by the bomb.) No one has burned a city on that scale in the decades since World War II, so it is difficult to predict the full extent of the fire damage that would occur from the explosion of a nuclear bomb in one of today’s cities. Modern glass, steel, and concrete buildings would presumably be less flammable than the wood-and-rice-paper housing of Hiroshima or Nagasaki in the 1940s—but many questions remain, including exactly how thousands of broken gas lines might contribute to fire damage (as they did in Dresden during World War II). On 9/11, the buildings of the World Trade Center proved to be much more vulnerable to fire damage than had been expected. Ultimately, even a crude terrorist nuclear bomb would carry the possibility that the countless fires touched off by the explosion would coalesce into a devastating firestorm, as occurred at Hiroshima. In a firestorm, the rising column of hot air from the massive fire sucks in the air from all around, creating hurricane-force winds; everything flammable and everything alive within the firestorm would be consumed. The fires and the dust from the blast would make it extremely difficult for either rescuers or survivors to see. The explosion would create a powerful blast wave rushing out in every direction. For more than a quarter-mile all around the blast, the pulse of pressure would be over 20 pounds per square inch above atmospheric pressure (known as “overpressure”), destroying or severely damaging even sturdy buildings. The combination of blast, heat, and radiation would kill virtually everyone in this zone. The blast would be accompanied by winds of many hundreds of miles per hour. The damage from the explosion would extend far beyond this inner zone of almost total death. Out to more than half a mile, the blast would be strong enough to collapse most residential buildings and create a serious danger that office buildings would topple over, killing those inside and those in the path of the rubble. (On the other hand, the office towers of a modern city would tend to block the blast wave in some areas, providing partial protection from the blast, as well as from the heat and radiation.) In that zone, almost anything made of wood would be destroyed: Roofs would cave in, windows would shatter, gas lines would rupture. Telephone poles, street lamps, and utility lines would be severely damaged. Many roads would be blocked by mountains of wreckage. In this zone, many people would be killed or injured in building collapses, or trapped under the rubble; many more would be burned, blinded, or injured by flying debris. In many cases, their charred skin would become ragged and fall off in sheets. The effects of the detonation would act in deadly synergy. The smashed materials of buildings broken by the blast would be far easier for the fires to ignite than intact structures. The effects of radiation would make it far more difficult for burned and injured people to recover. The combination of burns, radiation, and physical injuries would cause far more death and suffering than any one of them would alone. The silent killer. The bomb’s immediate effects would be followed by a slow, lingering killer: radioactive fallout. A bomb detonated at ground level would dig a huge crater, hurling tons of earth and debris thousands of feet into the sky. Sucked into the rising fireball, these particles would mix with the radioactive remainders of the bomb, and over the next few hours or days, the debris would rain down for miles downwind. Depending on weather and wind patterns, the fallout could actually be deadlier and make a far larger area unusable than the blast itself. Acute radiation sickness from the initial radiation pulse and the fallout would likely affect tens of thousands of people. Depending on the dose, they might suffer from vomiting, watery diarrhea, fever, sores, loss of hair, and bone marrow depletion. Some would survive; some would die within days; some would take months to die. Cancer rates among the survivors would rise. Women would be more vulnerable than men—children and infants especially so. Much of the radiation from a nuclear blast is short-lived; radiation levels even a few days after the blast would be far below those in the first hours. For those not killed or terribly wounded by the initial explosion, the best advice would be to take shelter in a basement for at least several days. But many would be too terrified to stay. Thousands of panic-stricken people might receive deadly doses of radiation as they fled from their homes. Some of the radiation will be longer-lived; areas most severely affected would have to be abandoned for many years after the attack. The combination of radioactive fallout and the devastation of nearly all life-sustaining infrastructure over a vast area would mean that hundreds of thousands of people would have to evacuate. Ambulances to nowhere. The explosion would also destroy much of the city’s ability to respond. Hospitals would be leveled, doctors and nurses killed and wounded, ambulances destroyed. (In Hiroshima, 42 of 45 hospitals were destroyed or severely damaged, and 270 of 300 doctors were killed.) Resources that survived outside the zone of destruction would be utterly overwhelmed. Hospitals have no ability to cope with tens or hundreds of thousands of terribly burned and injured people all at once; the United States, for example, has 1,760 burn beds in hospitals nationwide, of which a third are available on any given day. And the problem would not be limited to hospitals; firefighters, for example, would have little ability to cope with thousands of fires raging out of control at once. Fire stations and equipment would be destroyed in the affected area, and firemen killed, along with police and other emergency responders. Some of the first responders may become casualties themselves, from radioactive fallout, fire, and collapsing buildings. Over much of the affected area, communications would be destroyed, by both the physical effects and the electromagnetic pulse from the explosion. Better preparation for such a disaster could save thousands of lives—but ultimately, there is no way any city can genuinely be prepared for a catastrophe on such a historic scale, occurring in a flash, with zero warning. Rescue and recovery attempts would be impeded by the destruction of most of the needed personnel and equipment, and by fire, debris, radiation, fear, lack of communications, and the immense scale of the disaster. The US military and the national guard could provide critically important capabilities—but federal plans assume that “no significant federal response” would be available for 24-to-72 hours. Many of those burned and injured would wait in vain for help, food, or water, perhaps for days. The scale of death and suffering. How many would die in such an event, and how many would be terribly wounded, would depend on where and when the bomb was detonated, what the weather conditions were at the time, how successful the response was in helping the wounded survivors, and more. Many estimates of casualties are based on census data, which reflect where people sleep at night; if the attack occurred in the middle of a workday, the numbers of people crowded into the office towers at the heart of many modern cities would be far higher. The daytime population of Manhattan, for example, is roughly twice its nighttime population; in Midtown on a typical workday, there are an estimated 980,000 people per square mile. A 10-kiloton weapon detonated there might well kill half a million people—not counting those who might die of radiation sickness from the fallout. (These effects were analyzed in great detail in the Rand Corporation’s Considering the Effects of a Catastrophic Terrorist Attack and the British Medical Journal’s “Nuclear terrorism.”) On a typical day, the wind would blow the fallout north, seriously contaminating virtually all of Manhattan above Gramercy Park; people living as far away as Stamford, Connecticut would likely have to evacuate. Seriously injured survivors would greatly outnumber the dead, their suffering magnified by the complete inadequacy of available help. The psychological and social effects—overwhelming sadness, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, myriad forms of anxiety—would be profound and long-lasting. The scenario we have been describing is a groundburst. An airburst—such as might occur, for example, if terrorists put their bomb in a small aircraft they had purchased or rented—would extend the blast and fire effects over a wider area, killing and injuring even larger numbers of people immediately. But an airburst would not have the same lingering effects from fallout as a groundburst, because the rock and dirt would not be sucked up into the fireball and contaminated. The 10-kiloton blast we have been discussing is likely toward the high end of what terrorists could plausibly achieve with a crude, improvised bomb, but even a 1-kiloton blast would be a catastrophic event, having a deadly radius between one-third and one-half that of a 10-kiloton blast. These hundreds of thousands of people would not be mere statistics, but countless individual stories of loss—parents, children, entire families; all religions; rich and poor alike—killed or horribly mutilated. Human suffering and tragedy on this scale does not have to be imagined; it can be remembered through the stories of the survivors of the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the only times in history when nuclear weapons have been used intentionally against human beings. The pain and suffering caused by those bombings are almost beyond human comprehension; the eloquent testimony of the Hibakusha—the survivors who passed through the atomic fire—should stand as an eternal reminder of the need to prevent nuclear weapons from ever being used in anger again. Global economic disaster. The economic impact of such an attack would be enormous. The effects would reverberate for so far and so long that they are difficult to estimate in all their complexity. Hundreds of thousands of people would be too injured or sick to work for weeks or months. Hundreds of thousands more would evacuate to locations far from their jobs. Many places of employment would have to be abandoned because of the radioactive fallout. Insurance companies would reel under the losses; but at the same time, many insurance policies exclude the effects of nuclear attacks—an item insurers considered beyond their ability to cover—so the owners of thousands of buildings would not have the insurance payments needed to cover the cost of fixing them, thousands of companies would go bankrupt, and banks would be left holding an immense number of mortgages that would never be repaid. Consumer and investor confidence would likely be dramatically affected, as worried people slowed their spending. Enormous new homeland security and military investments would be very likely. If the bomb had come in a shipping container, the targeted country—and possibly others—might stop all containers from entering until it could devise a system for ensuring they could never again be used for such a purpose, throwing a wrench into the gears of global trade for an extended period. (And this might well occur even if a shipping container had not been the means of delivery.) Even the far smaller 9/11 attacks are estimated to have caused economic aftershocks costing almost $1 trillion even excluding the multi-trillion-dollar costs of the wars that ensued. The cost of a terrorist nuclear attack in a major city would likely be many times higher. The most severe effects would be local, but the effects of trade disruptions, reduced economic activity, and more would reverberate around the world. Consequently, while some countries may feel that nuclear terrorism is only a concern for the countries most likely to be targeted—such as the United States—in reality it is a threat to everyone, everywhere. In 2005, then-UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned that these global effects would push “tens of millions of people into dire poverty,” creating “a second death toll throughout the developing world.” One recent estimate suggested that a nuclear attack in an urban area would cause a global recession, cutting global Gross Domestic Product by some two percent, and pushing an additional 30 million people in the developing world into extreme poverty. Desperate dilemmas. In short, an act of nuclear terrorism could rip the heart out of a major city, and cause ripple effects throughout the world. The government of the country attacked would face desperate decisions: How to help the city attacked? How to prevent further attacks? How to respond or retaliate? Terrorists—either those who committed the attack or others—would probably claim they had more bombs already hidden in other cities (whether they did or not), and threaten to detonate them unless their demands were met. The fear that this might be true could lead people to flee major cities in a large-scale, uncontrolled evacuation. There is very little ability to support the population of major cities in the surrounding countryside. The potential for widespread havoc and economic chaos is very real. If the detonation took place in the capital of the nation attacked, much of the government might be destroyed. A bomb in Washington, D.C., for example, might kill the President, the Vice President, and many of the members of Congress and the Supreme Court. (Having some plausible national leader survive is a key reason why one cabinet member is always elsewhere on the night of the State of the Union address.) Elaborate, classified plans for “continuity of government” have already been drawn up in a number of countries, but the potential for chaos and confusion—if almost all of a country’s top leaders were killed—would still be enormous. Who, for example, could address the public on what the government would do, and what the public should do, to respond? Could anyone honestly assure the public there would be no further attacks? If they did, who would believe them? In the United States, given the practical impossibility of passing major legislation with Congress in ruins and most of its members dead or seriously injured, some have argued for passing legislation in advance giving the government emergency powers to act—and creating procedures, for example, for legitimately replacing most of the House of Representatives. But to date, no such legislative preparations have been made. In what would inevitably be a desperate effort to prevent further attacks, traditional standards of civil liberties might be jettisoned, at least for a time—particularly when people realized that the fuel for the bomb that had done such damage would easily have fit in a suitcase. Old rules limiting search and surveillance could be among the first to go. The government might well impose martial law as it sought to control the situation, hunt for the perpetrators, and find any additional weapons or nuclear materials they might have. Even the far smaller attacks of 9/11 saw the US government authorizing torture of prisoners and mass electronic surveillance. And what standards of international order and law would still hold sway? The country attacked might well lash out militarily at whatever countries it thought might bear a portion of responsibility. (A terrifying description of the kinds of discussions that might occur appeared in Brian Jenkins’ book, Will Terrorists Go Nuclear?) With the nuclear threshold already crossed in this scenario—at least by terrorists—it is conceivable that some of the resulting conflicts might escalate to nuclear use. International politics could become more brutish and violent, with powerful states taking unilateral action, by force if necessary, in an effort to ensure their security. After 9/11, the United States led the invasions of two sovereign nations, in wars that have since cost hundreds of thousands of lives and trillions of dollars, while plunging a region into chaos. Would the reaction after a far more devastating nuclear attack be any less?

### 1NC --- Venezuela

#### Sanctions relief in Venezuela causes huge investments.

Leigh Crestohl and Stephanie Milagros Limaco Blas '21 [(Leigh Crestohl (BA in History and PoliSci) and Stephanie Milagros Limaco Blas (is a Peruvian qualified lawyer and English qualified solicitor, with experience in commercial litigation, sanctions, international commercial arbitration, domestic (Peruvian) arbitration, regulatory law, and public procurement)) "Leigh Crestohl and Stephanie Limaco examine foreign investment in Venezuela and sanctions challenges in WorldECR," No Publication, https://zaiwalla.co.uk/news/article/leigh-crestohl-and-stephanie-limaco-examine-foreign-investment-in-venezuela-and-sanctions-challenges-in-worldecr, 9-13-2021] TDI

There has been some renewed interest in Venezuela by high-risk appetite investors in the last year. According to Reuters, at least two private equity funds (3B1 Guacamaya Funds and Knossos Asset Management) were seeking to acquire stakes in Venezuelan companies that remained alive despite the economic crisis in the country.[1] Last year, some companies acquired private companies / branches in Venezuela, including DirectTV and Cargill,[2] and an economic adviser at London’s EM Funding has said that the opportunities for profit in the first phase of economic recovery are “immensely high”.[3]

One of the main reasons for this incipient interest is the optimism that the Biden administration may ease (at least partially) sanctions on Venezuela. Although the country has vast oil and gas reserves and natural resources, any potential investor in the country would need to be concerned about navigating multiple concurrent sanctions regimes.

Potential sanctions relief

As mentioned, recent events provide hope that the Biden administration could relieve sanctions on Venezuela. Recently, the Venezuelan Government moved to house arrest a group of American Citgo executives, imprisoned on corruption charges. It reached an agreement with opposition representatives for a new formation of the Venezuela’s National Electoral Council and also attained an agreement with the World Food Programme. These acts were seen by Democratic Rep. Gregory Meeks as “important gestures of goodwill that the US government should recognize”.[4]

There are reasons for hope. A report of the Congressional Research Service (“CRS”) dated 26 May 2021 indicates that US officials are currently reviewing sanctions on Venezuela, although recognising that they have also stated that “they are in no rush to lift sanctions.”[5] Biden officials were reportedly reviewing existing sanctions, and that the Biden administration may seek alternative measures, such as more targeted sanctions, asset forfeitures and indictments of Maduro officials.[6]

On 25 June, the US, the EU and Canada released a statement indicating willingness to review sanctions policies if there is meaningful progress in a comprehensive negotiation with participation “from all stakeholders”.[7] In this regard, the Venezuelan Government and the opposition are preparing for new negotiations in Mexico, with Norwegian mediation, which have been approved by the US.[8]

Sanctions relief for Venezuela, especially with regards to oil, would be very important for foreign investors because the country is subject to several sanctions regimes. The US one undoubtedly being the most severe.

US sanctions regime[9]

The US has imposed a broad range of sanctions on Venezuela – they apply not only to US persons, but non-US entities are also at risk of secondary sanctions.[10] Through primary sanctions, US persons are prohibited from entering into certain transactions with Venezuelan Specially Designated Nationals (“SDN”). Secondary sanctions go further and affect third parties, such as EU or UK companies, which are exposed to the risk of being excluded from the US market (including the US financial system). The Trump administration was a big proponent of secondary sanctions and repeatedly imposed them as a foreign policy tool. However, the US government has started to ease sanctions on Venezuela. Recently, it authorised some exports and re-exports of liquified petroleum gas (LPG) to Venezuela,[11] which had been prohibited during the Trump administration. A quick review of the SDN list available on the website of the US Department of the Treasury shows the breadth of the sanctions programme. It includes the State oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) and State financial institution Banco de Desarrollo Económico y Social de Venezuela (BANDES) [12]   As of 22 January 2021, the programme included broader sectoral sanctions, such as the gold and oil sector, and any program or project administered by the Government of Venezuela.[13]

UK sanctions regime

UK legislation relating to sanctions is primarily found in Regulations made under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018. The UK sanctions regime relating to Venezuela is contained in the Venezuela (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (“Venezuelan Sanctions Regulations”), and its amendments contained in the Sanctions (EU Exit) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 2) Regulations 2020 and Sanctions (EU Exit) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 4) Regulations 2020.

The Venezuelan Sanctions Regulations state that the Secretary of State may designate a person if he has reasonable grounds to suspect that the person has been involved in serious human rights violations, the repression of civil society and opposition or other actions which undermine democracy or the rule of law in Venezuela.[14] A person could also be designated, for example, for providing financial services or making available funds that could contribute to any such activity, or being involved in the supply to Venezuela of goods or technology which could contribute to any such activity.[15]

Unlike US sanctions, UK sanctions are enforceable against persons within the UK, and UK persons abroad – i.e. the UK regime does not include secondary sanctions. The list of Venezuela sanctions targets is more limited in scope than the US sanctions list. It mainly consists of certain government officials and authorities and, so far, it has been limited to natural persons and not included commercial entities.[16]

It should be noted that, although the UK sanction regime against Venezuela is more targeted than the US sanctions regime, a UK-based investor does not need to be in the US, doing business in the US, to feel the impact of US sanctions, given their extraterritorial enforcement. Many entities will be reluctant to deal with companies that have been sanctioned by the US, or which are operating in a designated economic sector, even if the transaction has no US nexus. Litigation in the English Courts shows the complexities which may arise related to the performance of contractual obligations for and by individuals or entities sanctioned by the US but not the UK. In Banco San Juan Internacional v Petróleos de Venezuela[17], the English High Court reinstated that illegality under foreign law (such as US sanctions) does not in general excuse a party from performance of an English law contract. These are the types of practical considerations that international investors may be keen to avoid.

EU sanctions regime

The EU began imposing sanctions against Venezuela in 2017, with Council Regulation (EU) 2017/2063 and Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/2074 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Venezuela, both dated 13 November 2017. These restrictive measures include an arms and related material embargo, and provide the legal framework for the targeted listing of persons. The EU sanctions regime is broadly similar to the UK regime, the UK Regulations mentioned above having come into effect after Brexit on 31 December 2020.  These are of substantially the same effect as the relevant pre-existing EU legislation and related UK Regulations.[18]

Under the Council Regulation, natural or legal persons can be listed for being responsible for serious human rights violations, repression of civil society and opposition and for undermining democracy or the rule of law in Venezuela, or for being associated with people doing so.[19] Persons so designated will have their funds and assets frozen, and no funds or economic resources can be made available – directly or indirectly - to them.[20] Individuals can also be listed for the purpose of being subject to travel restrictions.[21]

Similar to the UK, the EU sanctions regime does not apply extraterritorially, but only within the territory of the European Union,  to nationals of a Member State, or to an entity incorporated or constituted under the law of a Member State.[22] The list of individuals subject to EU sanctions related to Venezuela is also limited in scope and it does not include commercial entities.[23] Further, the Court of Justice of the European Union has recently indicated that Venezuela has standing to bring a legal complaint against EU sanctions, so Venezuela's challenge against them will be reviewed on the merits.[24] Potential investors will likely be interested in the outcome of this case.

Foreign Investments in Venezuela - challenges

Beyond external factors, a possible change of approach of the Venezuelan Government, including the liberalisation of the economy in the last few years and the anti-blockade law, could also open a path to increased foreign investment in the country and in the oil industry. It is unsurprising that, given the latest developments, some investors with higher risk tolerance could be tempted to invest in the country’s companies in the hope of securing bigger wins should the political and economic situation improve.

Companies interested in investing in Venezuela will need to navigate multiple sanctions regimes at the same time, which could change depending on the political landscape at the national and international level. Potential investors should, therefore, take legal advice from experts on sanctions, compliance and export control issues. Further, investors would be wise to obtain comprehensive legal advice, including from a local counsel, as to the best way to structure their investments in order to achieve maximum legal protection. Choice of law and forum selection clauses, for instance, shall be very carefully drafted.

#### Venezuela spills over and causes extinction.

Sarosh Nagar '21 [(Sarosh Nagar (is a Marshall Scholar and researcher at Harvard & UCL studying emerging technologies. Prior to graduating from Harvard College in 2024, he served as an HIR Executive Content Editor) "Venezuela's Environmental Collapse: A Harbinger of Health and Environmental Harm," Harvard International Review, https://hir.harvard.edu/venezuelas-environmental-collapse-a-harbinger-of-health-and-environmental-harm/, 8-18-2021] TDI

Meanwhile, pollution and oil spills are harming the Venezuelan environment as well. Water pollution has made agriculture less successful, harming the many rural communities who depend on their crops for both their health and sustenance as well as their livelihoods. Pollution is also devastating the local ecosystem, killing off precious plant and animal species. Moreover, this environmental collapse threatens to spill over to other countries in the region, as pollution and oil spills travel across borders into neighboring countries like Brazil.

Lastly, unrestricted and unceasing oil production is almost certain to contribute to the ongoing challenge posed by climate change, threatening to increase Venezuelan emissions in a manner that will be harmful to global climate goals. Therefore, Maduro's reckless policies are not only creating a national crisis in Venezuela but also risk causing a regional and global one as well.

The Harbinger of the Green Paradox

But the ecological woes of Venezuela are a potential harbinger for another crisis that the world may see more of in decades to come: the green paradox. The green paradox is a theoretical argument about the ways in which environmental policy can affect and sometimes counterproductively increase resource extraction for fossil fuels like oil. The chief premise of this theory is that as governments begin to use carbon taxes, renewable energy, and decrease demand for fossil fuels, the price of oil drops. As a result, oil producers end up attempting to sell as much of their oil as quickly as possible before more renewables and regulations further limit the global demand. Naturally, this promotes reckless and highly unsustainable production practices as oil companies try to extract as much as possible, only accelerating the pace of climate change.

In Venezuela's case, the green paradox is a bit different—demand for Venezuelan oil is down, but not due to environmental regulations. Rather, it has been caused by the degradation of Venezuelan oil production infrastructure. This is what spurred the Maduro government's reckless and unrestricted actions. However, in both cases, the underlying logic is the same: oil producers in other countries will start ramping up production to sell as they can before renewables enter the market. Venezuela is choosing to amplify production before its infrastructure collapses.

### 1NC --- Noko

#### Lifting sanctions causes FDI in NOKO

Center for Strategic and International Studies — December 22, 2020 '20 [(Transcript — December 22, 2020, ) "Online Event: The Outlook for North Korea’s Economy Post-Pandemic," No Publication, https://www.csis.org/analysis/online-event-outlook-north-koreas-economy-post-pandemic, 12-22-2020] TDI

Thank you so much, Sue Mi. It’s my great pleasure to be with you today. It is a matter of fat that Kim Jong-un came to negotiating table to get the sanctions lifted. The sanctions significantly negatively affect the North Korean economy. This is theoretically proven and empirically supported in the North Korean context. Their effects have reduced since 2018, mainly because of China factor, but the cumulative ones keep increasing. I believe the most vulnerable area from North Korean perspective is foreign currency reserves, which could run out within some years. The sanctions aim to increase the opportunity cost of developing and having nuclear weapons, and thus transform Kim’s strategy from the parallel development of nuclear weapon and the economy to a tradeoff between these two. Some argue that economic pressure will be irrelevant to denuclearization given Kim Jong-un is an absolute dictator. However, I wonder if there is any dictator who does not care for the economy while keeping power for an extended period. Having said that, the sanctions alone are unlikely to achieve complete denuclearization that we would hope. I believe that the economic leverage is useful for denuclearization, not only in negative terms that is sanctions, but also in positive ones such as projects for economic development. For the future of North Korea, as well as us, the best scenario, however unlikely, is that Kim Jong-un abandons all nuclear weapons, materials, and facilities, together with ICBMs, while he opens up the economy and makes transition toward market economy. If he is ready for this, he may implement transition policies, such as privatization and liberalization to be a way of establishing legal and institutional foundation for capitalism. At the same time, he could allow FDI to flow into any parts of North Korea and North Korean workers to be employed in firms owned by South Korea, Japan, the United States, et cetera. But the problem is that such policies are likely to weaken Kim’s power and undermine regime stability. A more realistic scenario is that Kim accepts economic projects only if they are regarded as non-regime threatening. Such projects may include energy assistance, tourism to confined regions, and construction of some infrastructure. Special economic zones, such as Kaesong complex can be considered as well. He can also launch policies for some decentralization and liberalization within the boundary of socialist principles. Then what should be our strategy? First, we should bear the aims of economic engagement clearly in our mind. I suggest the following four aims: inducement for North Korea to denuclearize, support for North Korea’s internationalization, contribution to North Korea’s sustainable development, and facilitating economic integration between the two Koreas. If I’m allowed to give some example, although simple nuclear buyouts with certain conditions can be considered as positive economic incentives for denuclearization. Support for gaining a membership in international financial organizations, such as the IMF and the World Bank, would contribute to North Korea’s internationalization and growth. Economic integration between the two Koreas will lead to North Korea’s permanent denuclearization and economic development. An important question is how to increase the probability of successful denuclearization using economic leverage, at the same to lead to North Korea’s transition to market economy. To achieve this, I would suggest the following strategies. First, include economic projects in a package on nuclear deal with North Korea. We can select three of four concrete projects and offer them to North Korea in negotiations in return for denuclearization. Of course, the better – the best one is North Korea suggests what they want and both sides make a deal on the basis of the preference of which side. Given uncertainty of this, however, we need to select projects by ourselves to identify what North Korea really wants, but more importantly we should be able to sow seeds for North Korea’s transition to a market economy. A second, enlarge the role of United States allies – South Korea, Japan, et cetera – at the early stage of economic engagement. If economic engagement – such as lifting sanctions or projects – empower only China, not only denuclearization could be endangered but also the future of the Korean Peninsula becomes more uncertain. I’ll stop here. Thank you so much.

#### Noko environmental degradation causes nuclear blowout, natural disasters, and food insecurity.

Frank Aum and Lucy Stevenson-Yang '22 [(Frank Aum (is the senior expert on Northeast Asia at the U.S. Institute of Peace. He oversees the Institute’s work on Northeast Asia and focuses on ways to strengthen diplomacy to reduce tensions and enhance peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. From 2010 to 2017, he worked at the Department of Defense, including as special counsel to the Army General Counsel, special assistant to the assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, and senior advisor on North Korea in the Office of the Secretary of Defense) and Lucy Stevenson-Yang (who previously served as a Program Specialist and Research Analyst for China and Northeast Asia at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP))) "Could Climate Change Compel North Korea to Cooperate?," United States Institute of Peace, https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/09/could-climate-change-compel-north-korea-cooperate, 9-22-2022] TDI

Like much of the rest of the world, North Korea is experiencing more frequent and more intense climate-related disasters. In the last few years, it has seen its longest drought and longest rain season in over a century. In 2021, the country’s reclusive leader, Kim Jong Un, called for immediate steps to mitigate the dramatic impacts of climate change, which compound other challenges facing the country, like food insecurity. While North Korea is not exactly known for its efforts to cooperate with the international community, the severe threats posed by climate change could lead to broader engagement that serves Pyongyang’s interests, as well as the interests of the United States, South Korea and China, who all want peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

Both North Korea and the United States will need to be more flexible to spur bilateral engagement; until then, engagement with European and international counterparts may be the only way forward for North Korea on climate-related cooperation.

USIP’s Frank Aum and Lucy Stevenson-Yang look at the climate shocks threatening North Korea, the potential impact on the country’s governance and society and how the international community can help.

Are there specific climate shocks that North Korea is vulnerable to? What risk does climate-induced migration pose to the Korean Peninsula?

North Korea frequently experiences weather-related disasters, including typhoons, flooding and droughts, many of which could be amplified by climate change. In 2020, North Korea was hit by five major typhoons, three within a period of several weeks, causing major structural damage to buildings, roads, factories and water systems and internally displacing thousands of citizens. Since 1995, the country has recorded major flooding every year, except for four. Significant deforestation in North Korea has also caused soil erosion and depletion, which exacerbates the flooding problem. The Asian Disaster Reduction Center reported that in 2019, four out of 10 North Koreans were affected by natural disasters, which was attributable to the widescale impact of drought on North Korean food production.

The devastating impact of climate-related disasters on the agricultural sector, homes and infrastructure, and health system strains a country already in crisis due to government mismanagement and international sanctions. The Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that over 40% of the population has been undernourished since 2009, including 10.9 million North Koreans, or 42.4% of the population, from 2018 to 2020. A 2017 UNICEF survey found that only 61% of North Korean households and 44% of rural households have access to safely managed water. The current economic sanctions regime against North Korea as well as its self-imposed border lockdown due to COVID have also severely impeded the country’s normal economic activity and ability to receive humanitarian assistance.

Climate-related disasters will compound existing food insecurity. North Hwanghae province, a major breadbasket for North Korea, is projected to almost double its extreme flood risk by 2050. In addition, South Hamgyeong and North Pyongan, two other provinces responsible for a large portion of domestic food production, are set to experience “up to an additional 3 months of severe drought each year by 2035.”

North Korea’s poor infrastructure and disaster management systems have secondary effects that could threaten North Korean and regional stability. Major flooding near North Korea’s main nuclear facility at Yongbyon has raised fears about nuclear security and damage to the facility. Past environmental shocks have also contributed to North Korean migration to China from the northeastern provinces of North Hamgyeong and Ryanggang, raising human rights concerns as North Korea increases border surveillance and China resumes forced repatriation of refugees back to North Korea. In addition, North Korea has repeatedly opened floodgates at a dam near the inter-Korean border without providing notice to Seoul, which has caused flooding damage and casualties in South Korea.

#### Food shocks trigger nuclear escalation.

FDI 12. A Research Institute providing strategic analysis of Australia’s global interests; citing Lindsay Falvery, PhD in Agricultural Science and former Professor, University of Melbourne. “Food and Water Insecurity: International Conflict Triggers & Potential Conflict Points.” May 25. http://www.futuredirections.org.au/workshop-papers/537-international-conflict-triggers-and-potential-conflict-points-resulting-from-food-and-water-insecurity.html

There is a growing appreciation that the conflicts in the next century will most likely be fought over a lack of resources.

Yet, in a sense, this is not new. Researchers point to the French and Russian revolutions as conflicts induced by a lack of food. More recently, Germany’s World War Two efforts are said to have been inspired, at least in part, by its perceived need to gain access to more food. Yet the general sense among those that attended FDI’s recent workshops, was that the scale of the problem in the future could be significantly greater as a result of population pressures, changing weather, urbanisation, migration, loss of arable land and other farm inputs, and increased affluence in the developing world.

In his book, Small Farmers Secure Food, Lindsay Falvey, a participant in FDI’s March 2012 workshop on the issue of food and conflict, clearly expresses the problem and why countries across the globe are starting to take note.

He writes (p.36), “…if people are hungry, especially in cities, the state is not stable – riots, violence, breakdown of law and order and migration result.”

“Hunger feeds anarchy.”

This view is also shared by Julian Cribb, who in his book, The Coming Famine, writes that if “large regions of the world run short of food, land or water in the decades that lie ahead, then wholesale, bloody wars are liable to follow.”

He continues: “An increasingly credible scenario for World War 3 is not so much a confrontation of super powers and their allies, as a festering, self-perpetuating chain of resource conflicts.” He also says: “The wars of the 21st Century are less likely to be global conflicts with sharply defined sides and huge armies, than a scrappy mass of failed states, rebellions, civil strife, insurgencies, terrorism and genocides, sparked by bloody competition over dwindling resources.”

As another workshop participant put it, people do not go to war to kill; they go to war over resources, either to protect or to gain the resources for themselves.

Another observed that hunger results in passivity not conflict. Conflict is over resources, not because people are going hungry.

A study by the International Peace Research Institute indicates that where food security is an issue, it is more likely to result in some form of conflict. Darfur, Rwanda, Eritrea and the Balkans experienced such wars. Governments, especially in developed countries, are increasingly aware of this phenomenon. The UK Ministry of Defence, the CIA, the US Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Oslo Peace Research Institute, all identify famine as a potential trigger for conflicts and possibly even nuclear war.

### 2NR --- UQ FDI High Now

#### FDI declining now

OECD '23 [(OECD) "Foreign direct investment (FDI)," https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/foreign-direct-investment-fdi.html, 2023] TDI

Global foreign direct investment flows declined in 2023, for the second consecutive year

Global FDI flows dropped by 7%, continuing a downward trend and failing to reach pre-pandemic levels for the second year in a row. Mergers and Acquisitions also hit a ten-year low. Downswings were recorded for more than two-thirds of OECD economies and other major FDI recipients, such as the People’s Republic of China, who received record-low FDI flows. Despite the drop, the United States was the leading FDI recipient worldwide, followed by Brazil and Canada.

## Aff

### 1AR—No Link Uq

#### Iran’s evading sanctions and gaining foreign investment now.

Erport and Fadlon ‘23 [(Yulia Erport & Tomer Fadlon, Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) – Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University of Jerusalem.) " Economic Maneuvering: How States Evade Economic Sanctions," Strategic Assessment—A Multidisciplinary Journal on National Security, https://www.inss.org.il/wp- content/uploads/2023/09/Adkan26.2\_Eng\_4.pdf#page=92, 07-2023] TDI

The Iranian Case

Iran has been subject to a variety of sanctions since the late 1970s, and until sanctions were imposed on Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine, Iran was the target state with the largest number of sanctions imposed on it (Zandt, 2023). Over the course of the past few decades, and especially since the mid-1990s, different types of sanctions have been leveled on Iran by various states, including the United States, Canada, and Australia, as well as multilateral sanctions by international organizations like the United Nations and the European Union. These sanctions include restrictions on foreign trade, especially in the fields of energy and technology, financial services, a ban on insurance services, and travel restrictions (Laub, 2015; “Sanctions against Iran,” n.d.). Iran represents an interesting case of an actor for whom sanctions are a recurring game. It takes advantage of the intervals between the waves of sanctions to prepare for the next sanction wave. This refers not only to how Iran has used these pauses to attract foreign investment and increase its foreign trade but also to the way it learns from one sanction campaign to the next how to reduce the ability of future sanctions to harm its economy. Moreover, it uses the breaks between sanctions to improve its various methods of evading sanctions.

Methods of Bypassing Sanctions

Over the years, Iran has developed a variety of methods to evade sanctions, and it continues to improve them in order to overcome the challenges sanctions pose to its economy.

The current sanctions campaign, imposed when the United States withdrew from the Iranian nuclear agreement in May 2018, is especially challenging, given that it also includes secondary sanctions. The US withdrew from the JCPOA unilaterally but imposed sanctions that barred American companies and citizens from engaging in commercial ties with Iran. However, these sanctions also apply indirectly to non-American companies, which are then forced to choose between trading with Iran and trading with the United States; those choosing the former will find it hard to conduct trade relations with the US. Therefore, the first measure that Iran undertook to evade sanctions of this kind is allowing businesspeople to obtain a second citizenship. Officially, Iran does not recognize dual citizenships, but in order to make it easier for businesspeople trying to evade sanctions by registering their companies in other countries, it unofficially allows them to obtain citizenship from tiny countries like St. Kitts and Nevis. Thereafter, they are entitled to open bank accounts and register companies in these countries—that will subsequently serve as fronts for Iranian companies (Ajiri, 2018; Sharafedin & Lewis, 2018). This activity also enables Iranian businesspeople to work with companies that do business with the United States and who are concerned about American sanctions.

The second method is the sale of oil. The sanctions on Iran’s energy sector harmed its ability to produce and sell oil. First, the lack of advanced technology and investment in infrastructure damaged its production capabilities. Second, the concern over American sanctions prevents Iran from exporting large quantities of oil when sanctions are in effect, something it has been able to do between waves of sanctions. Therefore, over the years Iran has lessened its dependence on oil and started to develop other areas to contribute to its economy and diversify its sources of income during periods of no sanctions, and particularly when sanctions are in effect. However, Iran has not given up on oil revenues, which still account for a significant share of its income. Thus in order to promote oil sales, affected by the sanctions, Iran offers improved terms for potential customers, including discounts on the oil itself and on maritime transportation. In addition, since international insurance companies refuse to insure Iranian oil cargo due to the sanctions, the Islamic Republic insures its own cargo (Dawi, 2023; “Iran Offers,” 2018; Verma, 2013, 2018). China is the chief beneficiary of the generous terms that Iran offers and helps it to evade sanctions. In the first months of 2023, Iran exported around 1,000,000 barrels of oil to China every day (Bloomberg News, 2023). According to various estimates, China enjoys a 25-percent discount on the oil it imports from Iran.

Another method used by Iran, connected to oil but relevant to other goods as well, involves maritime transportation. Iran uses a number of methods in order to enable oil trade and its sea transportation. It uses its own vessels to transport purchased oil to the buyer since foreign maritime companies are reluctant to trade with Iran over fear of sanctions (Dagres & Slavin, 2018). These vessels use various means to disguise their identities, including deactivating location systems, changing the color of the vessel, and even altering its name. Iran also uses the technique of oil transfer from one vessel to another in the open sea (Karagyozova, 2021). This technique enabled Iran to make use of another way of smuggling oil: mixing Iranian oil with oil from Iraq. This way, Iran can conceal the origin of the oil and make it hard for governmental bodies to correctly identify Iranian oil (Lipin, 2022).

### 1AR – Impact Defense

#### No food wars.

Vestby et al. ’18 — Jonas; Doctoral Researcher at the Peace Research Institute Oslo; Ida Rudolfsen, doctoral researcher at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University and PRIO; and Halvard Buhaug, Research Professor at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Professor of Political Science at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), and Associate Editor of the Journal of Peace Research and Political Geography. May 18, 2018; “Does hunger cause conflict?”; *Peace Research Institute Oslo*; https://blogs.prio.org/ClimateAndConflict/2018/05/does-hunger-cause-conflict/

It is perhaps surprising, then, that there is little scholarly merit in the notion that a short-term reduction in access to food increases the probability that conflict will break out. This is because to start or participate in violent conflict requires people to have both the means and the will. Most people on the brink of starvation are not in the position to resort to violence, whether against the government or other social groups. In fact, the urban middle classes tend to be the most likely to protest against rises in food prices, since they often have the best opportunities, the most energy, and the best skills to coordinate and participate in protests.

Accordingly, there is a widespread misapprehension that social unrest in periods of high food prices relates primarily to food shortages. In reality, the sources of discontent are considerably more complex — linked to political structures, land ownership, corruption, the desire for democratic reforms and general economic problems — where the price of food is seen in the context of general increases in the cost of living. Research has shown that while the international media have a tendency to seek simple resource-related explanations — such as drought or famine — for conflicts in the Global South, debates in the local media are permeated by more complex political relationships.

#### No nuke terror.

Fettweis ’19 — Christopher; associate professor of political science at Tulane University in New Orleans. He holds a doctorate degree from the University of Maryland–College Park specializing in political psychology and US foreign policy. Spring 2019; “Pessimism and Nostalgia in the Second Nuclear Age”; *Strategic Studies* *Quarterly*, Volume 13, Issue 1; <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-13_Issue-1/Fettweis.pdf>; //CYang

Finally, despite the string of bleak and terrifying projections from a variety of experts, nuclear weapons have remained well beyond the capabilities of the modern apocalyptic terrorist. The great fear of the SNA literature, that scientific knowledge and technology would gradually become more accessible to nonstate actors, has remained only a dream. Nor does there appear to be a great reservoir of fissile material in the world’s various black markets waiting to be weaponized.58

Just because something has not yet occurred does not mean that it cannot or will not occur eventually. However, it is worth noting that the world has not experienced any close calls regarding nuclear terrorism. Forecasting future unique events is a necessarily dicey enterprise, but one way to improve accuracy is to examine events that have already or almost happened. Given the many complexities involved with nuclear weapons, especially for amateurs as any terrorists would almost certainly be, it is not unreasonable to expect a few failures, or near misses, to precede success. While it is possible that we might not know about all the plots disrupted by international law enforcement, keeping the lid on nuclear near misses would presumably be no small task. As of this writing, the public is aware of no serious attempts to construct, steal, or purchase nuclear weapons, much less smuggle and detonate one. “Leakage” does not seem to be a problem, yet.59

The uniformly pessimistic projections about the second nuclear era have not, at least thus far, been borne out by events. Post–Cold War trends have instead been generally moving in directions opposite to these expectations, with fewer nuclear weapons in the hands of the same number of countries and none pursuing more. Why, then, does nuclear pessimism persist? What are the roots of the current fashionable unwillingness—or even inability—to detect positive patterns in nuclear security?

#### No breaches.

Schlesinger et al. ’16 — James; Former Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Energy, Director of Central Intelligence, and Chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. Keith B. Payne, Director of the Defense and Strategic Studies Department @ Missouri State University. 2016; “Minimum Deterrence: Examining the Evidence”; *Routledge*

Weapon Numbers and Unauthorized Use, Theft and False Warning. What of the claim that more nuclear weapons make for greater risks of unauthorized use or theft? These dangers are not shown in the figure for the simple reason that there are no known incidents of theft, and clearly no cases of unauthorized use, for either the United States or the Soviet Union, even for those years when each had tens of thousands of weapons. The risks here are less a function of weapon numbers than of the effectiveness of organizational, procedural and physical safeguards for preventing unauthorized use or theft. Fifty, not 500 or 5,000, weapons were in the U.S. nuclear stockpile when President Truman, during the Berlin blockade, expressed his determination to exercise tight control over the use of atomic bombs and his concern not "to have some dashing lieutenant colonel decide when would be the proper time to drop one."250 The United States, in the following years, put into effect precautions to minimize the risk of unauthorized nuclear use, including authorization codes for nuclear release, the two-man rule for personnel with nuclear responsibilities, and permissive action links (electromechanical locks) on nuclear weapons.251 The Soviet Union instituted similar safeguards as well as others that differed from U.S. practice.252 To prevent theft, the United States protected its nuclear weapons facilities with a combination of controlled access, physical barriers, intrusion detection systems, and armed security forces.253 The Soviet Union likewise employed a "multi-layered approach" comprising "physical, procedural, and technical measures."254 When the perceived risk of unauthorized use or theft of Russian nuclear weapons increased in the 1990s, this was not because of an increase in the number of weapons—which in fact was going down255—but because the Soviet collapse, in various ways, weakened the control and security of the nuclear arsenal. On the other hand, the consolidation of the Russian stockpile at fewer sites—from approximately 500 storage facilities before 1991, to about 90 by the end of the 1990s, and an estimated 48 in 2009—helped mitigate the risk of theft, independent of the reduction in weapon numbers.256

#### Water shortages are overhyped—they’re not the cause of war and lead to peace negotiations.

**Boccaletti '22** [(Giulio Boccaletti, Scientific Director of the Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change.) "The Water Wars Myth," OpenMind Magazine, https://www.openmindmag.org/articles/the-water-wars-myth, 06-09-2022] TDI

Water shortages are brewing wars,” warned the BBC last year. People who worry about climate change are drawn to this dramatic, high-stakes idea. After all, persistent droughts and destructive floods are symptoms of a changing climate, and it seems irresistibly intuitive to claim that when water becomes scarce or unpredictable, states will go to war with each other to secure it. But by paying so much attention to an exaggerated, simplistic scenario (even with good intentions), we miss the true risks of water shortages and the solutions at hand.

Take the current conflict in Ukraine, described by some people as a conflict over water: Russia intervened, they say, to ensure Crimea would get water that Ukraine has been holding back since 2014. But alleged causes of the ongoing invasion also include economics, identity, history, security, and an unhinged dictator.

This does not mean that water is immaterial. Water infrastructure can be a target in war, as when Russian forces cut off Mariupol from its water supply to conquer the city. Water can also be weaponized, as both Ukrainian and Russian forces have done by breaching dams to flood the landscape and shift the odds in the ground fight. And, of course, localized conflicts can ignite over water when institutions collapse, as when Russian-backed separatists took over parts of the Donbass region in 2014, cutting in half the Soviet-era integrated water system that served it. History is littered with examples of times when water, or the infrastructure designed to manage it, played some role in war. But that is not the same as being the cause of an international war. Attributing wars to water scarcity implies that material conditions inevitably determine armed conflict, when in fact military aggression is almost always a matter of choice.

Blaming war on water absolves politicians of their responsibility and deprives people of their agency, undermining efforts to resolve the very conflicts water is supposedly driving. There are 310 river basins straddling national boundaries, covering nearly half of the earth’s land surface and home to half of humanity. Many of those rivers are under stress today. Focusing on them as possible theaters of war—as the “water wars” story would have it—diverts us from seeing them for what they could be: 310 instruments of peace. In fact, cooperation rather than conflict is the most common response to a difficult water situation.

In contemporary culture, the thesis of a war over water has a modern archetype: the Arab–Israeli conflict. The Jordan River, more than 300 kilometers long, is fed by tributaries in southern Lebanon and Syria and flows into the Sea of Galilee. From there it receives water from two more tributaries on its eastern bank—the Yarmouk and the Zarqa—and runs along borders that, after the armistice in 1949, separated Israel and the West Bank on one side from Jordan on the other.

In the early 1950s, both Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan began drawing from that system to support economic development. Jordan announced plans to divert the Yarmouk. Two years later, Israel began construction of its National Water Carrier, a system of pipelines and canals that would draw water mainly from the Sea of Galilee. These developments were not meant as threats, but they set the stage for what happened next.

By 1956, with Israel’s Carrier system still under construction, Egypt had blocked Israeli ships from passing through the trade route of the Suez Canal. Amid growing tensions, in 1964 Egyptian president Gamal Nasser convened a summit of Arab states—a meeting notable for the birth of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Famously, participants declared that the continued economic development of Israel would displace more Palestinians and pose an existential threat to the Arab world.

One way to constrain Israel’s development was to divert the Syrian headwaters of the Jordan River, reducing the amount reaching the Sea of Galilee by about a third and limiting what Israel could draw for its Carrier system. With construction of the system finally completed, Israel declared the diversion an infringement of its sovereign rights. Things escalated, and in May 1967 Nasser’s troops surrounded Israel. During the Six Day War that followed, Israel destroyed the Syrian diversion and took over the Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Sinai, vastly extending its control over the region. This not only secured control of the Jordan River but gave Israel access to the aquifers below the West Bank. Its National Water Carrier had even more room to grow.

Water clearly played a key role in this conflict. The Arab attempt to divert the headwaters weaponized the river’s sources. But water was not the cause of the conflict. Water in the Jordan valley has always been scarce. It took the carving up of the Middle East, Israel’s quest for statehood, Arab nations’ refusal to recognize it, and Egypt’s desire for Arab unity and expansion to fuel war.

Besides, the very same war offered an important, if incomplete, example of how difficult water conditions could facilitate peace. Following 1978 negotiations at Camp David, Anwar Sadat, Nasser’s successor as president of Egypt, resurrected an old water plan, offering Israel its Nile waters to develop the Negev desert in the hopes of finding a workable compromise for regional stability. Sadat was assassinated in 1981 and nothing came of the offer, but the attempt showed how water scarcity could be a precursor to cooperation rather than a cause of conflict.

#### Warming will be gradual, cushioned by inevitable intermediate mitigation.

Wade ’21 — Robert; Professor of Global Political Economy at the London School of Economics, DPhil and MPhil in Social Anthropology from Sussex University, Master’s in Economics from Victoria University, BA in Economics from Otago University; 2021; “What is the Harm in Forecasting Catastrophe Due to Man-Made Global Warming?”; *Global Policy Journal*; https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/22/07/2021/what-harm-forecasting-catastrophe-due-man-made-global-warming

Conclusion

I have argued that the “plausible” risks of climate change are commonly exaggerated within the climate community. Recall for example, Christiana Figueres, 2020, “The scary thing is that after 2030 it basically doesn’t really matter what humans do”; Kevin Drum, 2019, “[The Green New Deal] would only change the dates for planetary suicide by a decade or so”; Frank Fenner, 2010, “We’re going to become extinct. Whatever we do now is too late.” Many more in the same doomsday vein.

We have seen that the standard global warming models have a powerful built-in bias to exaggerate the rate of future temperature rise, as seen in (most of) them “hindcasting” temperature rises several times faster than actually observed. We have seen that forecasters commonly take “worst-case scenarios” as “likely scenarios in the absence of radical action” (eg reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050), to the point where Nature recently published a paper sub-titled, “Stop using the worst-case scenario for climate warming as the most likely outcome”.

The dismaying thing is that scientists and advocates have been making catastrophising global warming forecasts of this kind for decades past, normally dated some 10 to 30 years into the future. The due date comes without catastrophe, but never a retrospective holding to account. Rather, on to the next catastrophising forecast another 10 to 30 years ahead. Scientists-writers-activists know the catastrophe forecasts get the attention, the clicks, the research funding. We saw the exaggeration mechanism spelled out by Richard Betts of the BBC, Holman Jenkins of the Wall St Journal, and climate scientist Judith Curry.

The built-in exaggeration of the costs of climate change blunts the parallel with nuclear power plants. We know with high certainty the costs of nuclear explosions. We know the costs of global temperature going above 1.5 C above “pre-industrial” much less certainly, and we can see the mechanisms by which the likely costs are being systematically exaggerated.

On the other hand, there is abundant evidence that even without the doomsday exaggerations the plausible risks of climate change could be very serious, in particular because of the inherent political economy difficulty of getting needed global or regional cooperation when political action is mostly at the level of sovereign nation states (see the G20).

Coal power generation is the single biggest source of GHG emissions, and emissions from coal consumption will probably not fall fast, whatever the promises. First, coal is cheap, accessible and generates reliable power for many developing countries; in Asia, coal alone generates 40 percent of energy consumption, much higher than the world average of 29 percent. (12) Second, developing countries, including China, assert a strong claim on carbon space to power their economic development. They see it partly as a matter of fundamental justice, since developed countries emitted most of the CO2 that is already in the atmosphere and seas as the necessary condition for them becoming developed. Developed countries promise finance and technical assistance on a massive scale to accelerate the energy transition in developing countries – and have a long track record of leaving promises as promises. (See the global distribution of Covid vaccines. See the results of vaunted “voting reform” in the World Bank, leaving the US with 17% and China with 6%.) What is more, the Japanese government plans up to 22 new coal power plants, as it closes nuclear plants in the wake of Fukushima.

Then comes a question: does drawing attention to the doomsday exaggerations of the CCC – “disaster”, “catastrophe”, “extinction”, “fiddling while the planet burns” - serve to reduce the political and public pressures for necessary ameliorative action, in a world where powerful fossil lobbies seek to block or delay such action for reasons independent of “evidence”? Should “Third Way” essays like this one not be published, because “give them (deniers, sceptics) an inch and they will take a mile”? To what extent must mass publics be “panicked” in order to induce enough collective political and business action – national, international – to substantially slow the growth of GHG emissions? If we can sustain emission- and temperature-curbing action only by holding up the certainty of disaster, catastrophe, extinction, then better to let the doomsday exaggerations continue as the necessary condition for that ameliorative action. What is the harm, when the alternative is ruin for humanity and the biosphere?

The danger is that the repeated wild exaggerations produce a public backlash, a discrediting, and a strengthening of the many “deniers” who see “leftists, governments, and the United Nations” as the source of malevolence in the world. A more accurate accounting of the evidence would (hopefully) produce a more calibrated and sustained public and business response.

What to do? (13)

The IPCC should allocate some 10% of its budget to a Red Team, dedicated to independent scrutiny of its evidence and conclusions (especially the Summary for Policymakers). (14) The IPCC should revise its mandate to require it explicitly to focus on interactions between natural forces and human actions, as it is now almost required not to, biassing its assessment of the state of scientific knowledge towards “man-made global warming” as an almost separate system.

Learned societies should more actively seek to understand and publicize the reasons for repeated large-scale discrepancies between “hindcasts” and “forecasts” on the one hand and actual observations on the other, discrepancies strongly biased towards “disaster”.

It is particularly important that the knee-jerk attribution of extreme weather events to global warming be challenged with reference to evidence. Judith Curry explained – quoted earlier -- why CCC advocates have a powerful incentive to attribute cases of extreme weather to global warming, tout court. She has recently written, “Apart from the reduced frequency of the coldest temperatures, the signal of global warming in the statistics of extreme weather events remains much smaller than that from natural climate variability, and is expected to remain so at least until the second half of the 21rst century.” She goes on to amplify a point made earlier about the limits of the climate models used for the IPCC assessment reports: they are driven mainly by predictions of future GHG emissions. They do not include predictions of natural climate variability arising from solar output, volcanic eruptions or evolution of large-scale multi-decadal ocean circulations. They do a particularly poor job of simulating regional and decadal-scale climate variability. (15)

Participants on both sides have to learn the art of respecting the principle of free speech while maintaining the standards of civil discourse.

While I have stressed the CCC’s support for urgent and radical changes to the way we live, work and govern, some CCC champions argue that the world economy could continue on a largely unchanged growth trajectory provided that we switch fast from fossil fuels to renewables. Indeed, this switch is beginning to happen fast, with coal and nuclear energy production unable to compete without subsidies in areas where natural gas, wind and solar resources are readily available.

But to say that life can continue as before provided we substitute renewables for fossil fuels obscures the huge difficulties for many developing countries of getting out of fossil fuels while growing fast enough to reduce the income gap with developed countries.

We must give high priority to investments in “clean coal” technologies, such as carbon capture, storage and use, to make the dirtier coal cleaner in existing and new coal-power plants; and link coal-power retirement to the coming on-stream of attractive alternatives. The multilateral development banks have recently or will soon announce bans on coal power. The G7 leaders meeting in mid 2021 promised to stop using government funds to finance new international coal power plants by the end of 2021. China’s Belt and Road Initiative should increase its pressure on host countries to cut back on dirty coal and boost clean coal and renewables.

A high and immediate priority is to build a robust financing and technical assistance mechanism for help from developed to developing countries. The Paris Agreement instituted a Mitigation pillar and an Adaptation pillar. Intense debate took place around the third, Loss and Damage, the name of a mechanism to compensate for the destruction that Mitigation and Adaptation cannot prevent. Developed countries by and large have sought to marginalize the Loss and Damage pillar, as they have long sought to marginalize Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries in trade and investment agreements. “Finance is something that really rich countries, particularly the US, have made sure that there is no progress and not even discussion on”, remarked Harjeet Singh, senior advisor at Climate Action Network International. (16)

My “forecast” is that in the next two to three decades to midcentury we will make rapid progress in scientific knowledge about weather and climate, helped by longer and more accurate satellite and ocean records and by a new generation of climate models that operate at one to ten kilometers scale (as distinct from the current models’ 50 kilometer scale). We will probably continue to make rapid progress in decoupling GHG from GDP growth, with a combination of state direction-setting and private innovation focused on transformations in energy, transport, buildings, industry and agriculture, using incentives like research and development subsidies and tax credits for technology investment, and penalties for carbon-intensive activities. (17) In transport, this entails coordination across urban planning decisions, public transport investment, future of remote working, infrastructures for electric charging and hydrogen loading. (18) Transformations in these systems are already underway, and the prospect of vast new green investments, supported and under-written by the state, will intensify them. These green investments will open productive investment opportunities previously limited by stagnant wages and rising debt, which have driven investment into increasingly speculative ventures. If by two or three decades ahead it looks as though the second half of this century could well experience globally extreme climate and ocean events, we will be much more knowledgeable about what to do than we are today. (19)

#### No biodiversity impact.

Hance ’18 — Jeremy; wildlife blogger and journalist focusing on forests, indigenous people and climate change. He is the author of Life is Good: Conservation in an Age of Mass Extinction. January 16, 2018; “Could biodiversity destruction lead to a global tipping point?”; *The Guardian*; https://www.theguardian.com/environment/radical-conservation/2018/jan/16/biodiversity-extinction-tipping-point-planetary-boundary; //CYang

But what’s arguably most fascinating about this event — known as the Permian-Triassic extinction or more poetically, the Great Dying — is the fact that anything survived at all. Life, it seems, is so ridiculously adaptable that not only did thousands of species make it through whatever killed off nearly everything (no one knows for certain though theories abound) but, somehow, after millions of years life even recovered and went on to write new tales.

Even as the Permian-Triassic extinction event shows the fragility of life, it also proves its resilience in the long-term. The lessons of such mass extinctions — five to date and arguably a sixth happening as I write — inform science today. Given that extinction levels are currently 1,000 (some even say 10,000) times the background rate, researchers have long worried about our current destruction of biodiversity — and what that may mean for our future Earth and ourselves.

In 2009, a group of researchers identified nine global boundaries for the planet that if passed could theoretically push the Earth into an uninhabitable state for our species. These global boundaries include climate change, freshwater use, ocean acidification and, yes, biodiversity loss (among others). The group has since updated the terminology surrounding biodiversity, now calling it “biosphere integrity,” but that hasn’t spared it from critique. A paper last year in Trends in Ecology & Evolution scathingly attacked the idea of any global biodiversity boundary. “It makes no sense that there exists a tipping point of biodiversity loss beyond which the Earth will collapse,” said co-author and ecologist, José Montoya, with Paul Sabatier Univeristy in France. “There is no rationale for this.”

Montoya wrote the paper along with Ian Donohue, an ecologist at Trinity College in Ireland and Stuart Pimm, one of the world’s leading experts on extinctions, with Duke University in the US. Montoya, Donohue and Pimm argue that there isn’t evidence of a point at which loss of species leads to ecosystem collapse, globally or even locally. If the planet didn’t collapse after the Permian-Triassic extinction event, it won’t collapse now — though our descendants may well curse us for the damage we’ve done.

Instead, according to the researchers, every loss of species counts. But the damage is gradual and incremental, not a sudden plunge. Ecosystems, according to them, slowly degrade but never fail outright. “Of more than 600 experiments of biodiversity effects on various functions, none showed a collapse,” Montoya said. “In general, the loss of species has a detrimental effect on ecosystem functions...We progressively lose pollination services, water quality, plant biomass, and many other important functions as we lose species. But we never observe a critical level of biodiversity over which functions collapse.”

#### The environment’s generally resilient.

Bailey ’20 — Ronald; Science Correspondent at Reason, Member of the Society of Environmental Journalists and the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities. August 1, 2020; “The Global Environmental Apocalypse Has Been Canceled”; *Reason Magazine*; https://reason.com/2020/08/01/the-global-environmental-apocalypse-has-been-canceled/

According to these activists and politicians, humanity is beset on all sides by catastrophes that could kill off civilization, and maybe even our species. Are they right?

Absolutely not, answers the longtime environmental activist Michael Shellenberger in an engaging new book, Apocalypse Never: Why Environmental Alarmism Hurts Us All. "Much of what people are being told about the environment, including the climate, is wrong, and we desperately need to get it right," he writes. "I decided to write Apocalypse Never after getting fed up with the exaggeration, alarmism, and extremism that are the enemy of positive, humanistic, and rational environmentalism." While fully acknowledging that significant global environmental problems exist, Shellenberger argues that they do not constitute inexorable existential threats. Economic growth and technological progress, he says, can ameliorate them.

Shellenberger's analysis relies on largely uncontroversial mainstream science, including reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization. And as a longstanding activist, Shellenberger is in a good position to parse the motives behind the purveyors of doom.

Shellenberger's activism is the real deal. To raise a donation to the Rainforest Action Network, he charged his friends $5 to attend his 16th birthday party. At 17 he went to Nicaragua to experience the Sandinista revolution. In the 1990s he worked with the Landless Workers' Movement in Brazil.

In 2003, Shellenberger and allies launched the New Apollo Project to jumpstart a no-carbon energy revolution over the next 10 years. In 2008, Time named him "A Hero of the Environment." He co-founded the ecomodernist Breakthrough Institute, which advocates the use of advanced technologies such as nuclear power and agricultural biotechnology to decouple the economy from the ecology, allowing both humanity and the natural world to flourish. More recently, he founded Environmental Progress, which campaigns for, among other things, the deployment of clean modern nuclear power. He is an invited expert reviewer of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's next assessment report.

Ohio Passes Controversial Conscience Clause for Doctors

So what does he say about climate change? "On behalf of environmentalists everywhere, I would like to formally apologize for the climate scare we created over the last 30 years," he wrote in an essay to promote his new book. "Climate change is happening. It's just not the end of the world. It's not even our most serious environmental problem." Needless to say, there are environmentalists everywhere who do not believe they have anything to apologize for. A group of six researchers assembled by the widely respected Climate Feedback fact-checking consortium rated his article as having low scientific credibility.

Shellenberger doesn't devote much of Apocalypse Never to the science behind man-made climate change. He basically accepts the consensus that it's a significant problem and instead focuses on various claims about the harms it is supposedly already causing. In that promotional essay, he argues that (1) human[s] being are not causing a "sixth mass extinction," (2) the Amazon rainforests are not the "lungs of the world," (3) climate change is not making natural disasters worse, and (4) fires have declined 25 percent around the world since 2003.

Shellenberger isn't denying the reality of man-made climate change. He's arguing that humanity is already adapting to the ways climate change has been making weather patterns evolve, and that we will continue to adapt successfully in the future. His book is ultimately a sustained argument that poverty is world's most important environmental problem, and that rising prosperity and increasing technological prowess will ameliorate or reverse most deleterious environmental trends.

### 1AR – FDIs Good

#### Foreign direct investment prevents conflict escalation

Bryan Borzykowski ’17 [(Bryan Borzykowski, ) “The dire ripple effect from a US-China trade war: A drop in foreign investment worldwide,” CNBC, https://www.cnbc.com/2018/07/05/ripple-effect-from-pending-us-china-trade-war-drop-in-fdi-worldwide.html, 11-9-2017] TDI

While FDI may not get the kind of attention that trade does, falling figures should be a concern for international investors and anyone who believes in globalization, said Bernard Wolf, an economics and international business professor at Toronto’s Schulich School of Business. “Both trade and FDI generally make the world a more efficient place,” he said. It can increase competition in markets, it brings people with new skills and knowhow to new countries and in the case of a merger of a public company, where one company buys another for a premium price, it can give investors a portfolio boost. “Globalization, including FDI, has enormous benefits,” he said. FDI also helps cooler heads prevail during conflicts, added Zandi. If countries are doing business with each other, they’ll be less likely to go to war with one another. “If your economic interests are aligned, and if we own a piece of their economy and they own a piece of ours, then everyone has skin in the game,” he said. “That’s a benefit we’re going to give up if we continue on this path.” In Zandi’s view, the timing for an FDI decline couldn’t be worse. As populations in emerging market countries move into the middle class, demand for developed market-made goods and services has never been higher. While he does say that globalization hasn’t benefited everyone, especially on the manufacturing side, more money will start flowing from China and other developing nations into America instead of vice-versa. “Pulling back now is a dark irony,” he said. “Countries like the U.S., Canada and the U.K. are producing things no one else on the planet is producing and we were really going to reap the benefits of that.” While American FDI into other countries is still robust ­— the U.S. invests about four times more into China than vice-versa — a global trade war could cause other countries to put restrictions on U.S. operations and that could impact domestic jobs and the American economy, said Hanemann. “That’s a major concern and something politicians in the U.S. aren’t talking about,” he said. “If we see a change in U.S. openness to Chinese investment, we will most certainly see a retaliation from China against U.S. investors. The U.S. has a lot more to lose from a more restrictive investment environment than China has.”

#### fdis good

Bertrand et al. 3/15 [(Jérémie Bertrand is Professor and Deputy Academic Director of the Grande École Program. Joseph Lemoine is the director of the Atlantic Council's Freedom and Prosperity Center. Dan Negrea is the Senior Director of the Freedom and Prosperity Center. Research consultant, World Bank, and Postdoctoral Researcher, Utrecht University, Netherlands.) “Attracting foreign direct investments”, Atlantic Council, 3/15/24. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/attracting-foreign-direct-investments/>] TDI

The attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI) is a pivotal objective for countries seeking to bolster their economic development and global competitiveness. Several critical factors influence a nation’s ability to draw in FDI, and among these, economic freedom, institutions, and the rule of law stand out as essential determinants. This dynamic interplay between political and economic factors not only impacts a country’s FDI inflows but also shapes its overall economic landscape and prospects for long-term prosperity.

The influence of institutional characteristics on FDI is a topic of paramount importance in the realm of international economics and global business. Institutions, which encompass a country’s legal, regulatory, and governance frameworks, significantly impact the decisions of multinational corporations when considering investment destinations. These institutional characteristics serve as a critical lens through which investors assess the risks and opportunities associated with a particular host country.

Democracy, as a system of governance characterized by political freedoms, accountability, and the rule of law, has often been associated with greater transparency and stability. Similarly, economic freedom, gauged by factors such as regulatory efficiency, property rights, and trade openness, creates an environment conducive to business activity. Institutions, including the quality of government institutions and their effectiveness in safeguarding property rights and enforcing contracts, play a pivotal role in shaping investor confidence. Moreover, the rule of law provides a foundation of legal certainty, which is essential for businesses operating within a country’s borders.

This report delves into the multifaceted relationship between freedom and FDI attraction using the Atlantic Council’s Freedom and Prosperity Indexes. By examining the mechanisms through which institutions influence investment decisions, we seek to shed light on the nuanced dynamics that determine a country’s attractiveness to foreign investors. Furthermore, we will explore the strategies that countries employ to improve their institutional frameworks, thereby enhancing their prospects for increased FDI inflows and sustainable economic growth. In doing so, we aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of the pivotal role that institutions play in shaping the global landscape of foreign direct investment. The objective is to offer recommendations and insights that can assist in achieving this overarching goal.

To begin, this paper will delve into the significance of strengthening democracy and various facets of freedom, drawing upon the Freedom and Prosperity Indexes and other pertinent evidence. This section will underscore why bolstering these elements is not only beneficial but also essential for the enhancement of FDI. In the second section, we highlight the Georgian case study to illustrate the tangible benefits of freedom in fostering an environment conducive to FDI. The final section of this report will provide actionable recommendations focusing on the practical integration of democracy and freedom-strengthening components into initiatives aimed at addressing fragility, thereby fostering a more stable and prosperous global landscape for FDI.

The freedom and FDI nexus

The Atlantic Council’s Freedom Index plays a pivotal role in assessing the intricate interplay between a nation’s freedom environment and its attractiveness to foreign investors, particularly in the realm of FDI. This comprehensive tool evaluates a country’s overall level of freedom across economic, political, and legal dimensions. The literature on FDI already has extensively discussed the impact of a nation’s institutional quality on FDI inflows.1 We aim to use the index data to further investigate this relationship.

Countries classified as “free” according to the Freedom Index exhibit the most robust FDI per capita, boasting an average of $2,200 of FDI investment per person in 2022. This remarkable FDI per capita suggests a strong correlation between economic freedom, political stability, and foreign investment, contributing to these nations’ thriving economies and prosperity. (see Figure 1). “Free” economies significantly outperform “mostly free” economies in terms of FDI per capita. “Mostly free” countries may have various factors, such as some restrictions on economic activities or less developed legal and political institutions, which can result in a lower level of FDI per capita. “Mostly unfree” and “unfree” countries lag far behind in terms of FDI. Unfree economies often struggle with issues such as political instability, weak property rights, and high levels of corruption. These factors erode investor confidence and hinder the flow of foreign capital. As a result, these nations find themselves at a significant disadvantage when it comes to FDI.

This correlation remains if we look at FDI levels as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) (see Figure 1, gray line).

Europe, notably Western Europe, emerges as the preeminent region characterized by the highest degree of freedom (see Figure 2). Impressively, out of the forty-five countries categorized as “free,” thirty belong to Europe. Remarkably, the top ten nations in this category are all located within the confines of this continent. When we examine the relationship between freedom and FDI, we find that countries with high levels of freedom are associated with substantial FDI inflows. Investors are drawn to these nations due to their strong legal frameworks, well-defined property rights, and transparent governance structures, which provide a stable and welcoming environment for foreign capital.

In North America, both nations are in the “free” category: the United States and Canada. Neighboring Mexico is classified as “mostly free” and highly attractive to foreign investors, who value the stable and business-friendly climate it offers. The East Asia and the Pacific region also plays a prominent role in the context of FDI. Six out of the eighteen economies in this region, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore, fall into the “free” category. These nations have not only embraced economic and political freedom but also attracted substantial FDI, leading to economic growth and prosperity. While most regions have their share of mostly free and mostly unfree countries, Europe continues to dominate the “free” category with thirty out of a total of forty-three countries. It serves as a prime example of how a commitment to freedom, both economically and politically, can be a driving force behind attracting FDI and fostering economic development.

Economic development also plays a key role in terms of FDI attraction (see Figure 3). Low-income countries are mostly categorized as “unfree” and are less likely to attract FDI. Macroeconomic factors—trade freedom, quality of infrastructure, market size, and human capital, for instance—positively impact FDI.2 These elements create an attractive investment landscape for foreign investors seeking opportunities with strong domestic demand. Economic freedom serves as a proxy for market size and return on investment in developing economies, making it an appealing factor for FDI.3 Furthermore, the level of openness and domestic market size plays a role in FDI attraction, with trade freedom being statistically significant in certain regions.4 Moreover, some literature has highlighted that business transparency and an open economy are vital aspects that promote FDI inflows.5 These mechanisms demonstrate the intricate interplay between macroeconomic, governance, and trade-related factors in shaping the FDI landscape within different regions.

Another critical aspect of a nation’s freedom environment is the legal framework, which includes elements like the rule of law and property rights. A well-functioning rule of law serves as a bulwark for private investments, encouraging entrepreneurial endeavors.6 It significantly reduces transaction costs and mitigates the risks and uncertainties associated with future profitability. Conversely, when a government fails to establish and protect a robust legal system and safeguard property rights, as assessed by this subindex, it naturally dampens the enthusiasm of multinational enterprises (MNEs) for engaging in FDI within that particular host environment. In such cases, the prospects of MNEs participating in productive and entrepreneurial ventures are substantially diminished.7

Any restrictions imposed on international trade can result in significant operational expenses for companies.8 For MNEs to achieve their economic goals, the free flow of goods and services within and between primary, intermediate, and final markets is considered a vital necessity, as evaluated by the Freedom index. Interference with international trade through measures like tariffs, nontariff barriers, and other trade-related administrative obstacles would impede the operations of foreign branches and affiliates of MNEs in accessing and capitalizing on global networks, ultimately hampering their productive endeavors.9

In addition, the limitations placed on the international movement of capital and labor are both critical factors influencing FDI. These limitations increase transaction costs for MNEs, consequently reducing the inflow of FDI.10 Restrictive regulations in business, labor, and credit markets deter FDI. Such regulations result in additional production and transaction costs, placing significant burdens on private investment and the operations of companies, including the foreign subsidiaries of MNEs. These regulations often serve as substantial barriers to entry, leading to reduced FDI inflows.11

Finally, political freedom plays a pivotal role in fostering democratic governance, which empowers citizens to participate in the decision-making processes of their nation. This framework has been shown to positively influence FDI inflows. Empirical studies have indicated the significance of political freedom in attracting foreign investment.12 Modifications in governmental policies or political structures hold the potential to impact the investment strategies of multinational corporations. This, in turn, affects the risk premium considered in investment projects and, consequently, the decision-making process concerning the choice of location, all of which are influenced by political risk.

This suggests that a democratic and politically free system encourages foreign investors to engage with a nation.13 Furthermore, research emphasizes the long-lasting influence of political freedom on a country’s capacity to attract FDI.14 In light of this evidence, it becomes evident that political freedom is not only a fundamental aspect of democratic governance but also a crucial determinant of a country’s capacity to attract FDI.

The synergy of freedom and FDI: Georgia’s success story

Georgia, located at the crossroads of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, has experienced a remarkable transformation in recent years, becoming a magnet for FDI. Georgia is particularly relevant when studying the effect of freedom and prosperity since the country has switched from “mostly unfree” in 1995 to “free” in 2018 (see Table 1). The nation has undergone sweeping economic reforms since gaining independence in 1991, resulting in a relatively well-functioning and stable market economy.

Underpinning this transformation is Georgia’s commitment to political and economic freedom. The government initiated a series of reforms aimed at creating an open and competitive business environment. This included streamlining bureaucratic procedures, simplifying tax systems, and enhancing property rights, all of which significantly reduced the barriers to entry for businesses. Consequently, Georgia earned a reputation as one of the easiest places to start and conduct business, attracting a diverse range of investors from across the globe.

Over the period spanning from 2004 to 2019, Georgia’s average economic growth rate surpassed 5%, a testament to the efficacy of its comprehensive reforms. Simultaneously, the nation garnered accolades in global indices measuring freedom and ease of doing business. Notably, in the 2020 World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business index, Georgia ranked seventh, underscoring its commitment to creating a business-friendly environment. This success can be attributed to the government’s unwavering focus on fiscal and monetary policies aimed at maintaining low deficits, controlling inflation, and sustaining a floating exchange rate (i.e., unencumbered by government controls or limits).

Despite these achievements, it is important to acknowledge that Georgia’s economic trajectory has not been without external influences. Regional developments, such as sanctions on Russia, have exerted an impact on the country’s economic landscape. Additionally, the strength of the US dollar and other global factors have also played a role in shaping Georgia’s economic circumstances. These external forces have necessitated adaptability and resilience on Georgia’s part as it continues to progress on its path to economic prosperity.

Georgia embarked on a fresh chapter under a new government, following the peaceful Rose Revolution in 2003 (see Figure 4). Georgia’s economy began to experience growth, driven by the implementation of political and economic stabilization initiatives, but it was significant policy shifts and reforms that accelerated its journey toward economic freedom. In 2004, the nation cut rates for existing taxes, implementing a flat 20 percent income tax and a 15 percent corporate profit tax, creating a favorable fiscal environment for businesses. This tax structure significantly reduced the financial burden on investors, promoting economic growth and entrepreneurship. Georgia introduced the “single window” system for business registration in 2005. This groundbreaking reform simplified bureaucratic procedures, enabling entrepreneurs to complete company registration and obtain necessary licenses within a few hours, making it one of the easiest places to start and conduct business. From the late 2000s through the early 2010s, Georgia embarked on a comprehensive land registry reform, significantly bolstering property rights protection. This reform secured land transactions and simplified property ownership, enhancing investor confidence. The commitment to free trade agreements, which started in the mid-2000s and continues to this day, has been emblematic of Georgia’s dedication to economic freedom. These agreements expanded market access for Georgian businesses, fostering import and export activities, and promoting international trade. The pursuit of anti-corruption measures, exemplified by the zero-tolerance policy, has been active since the early 2000s. This approach brought about heightened transparency and accountability in the public sector, further solidifying Georgia’s reputation as an attractive investment destination.

Cranes in front of buildings. Pexels/Quang Nguyen Vinh.

Georgia’s progression toward political freedom commenced in the early 2000s with significant developments in establishing democratic governance and safeguarding civil liberties. Here, too, the Rose Revolution marked a turning point as Georgia embraced democratic governance, ensuring political stability through regular elections, a multiparty system, and the peaceful transition of power. Over the years, Georgia made substantial progress in safeguarding civil liberties, particularly freedom of speech, media, and assembly. This commitment to civil liberties fostered a vibrant and open society where citizens could freely express their views and engage in public discourse. The establishment of strong and independent political institutions, which started in the early 2000s, solidified the rule of law and prevented political interference. The judiciary and law enforcement agencies operated without undue political influence. The zero-tolerance policy against corruption, initiated in the early 2000s, brought about increased transparency and accountability in the public sector, reinforcing political freedom by instilling trust and credibility in the government’s functioning.

Legal freedom in Georgia has been shaped by a transparent and efficient legal system that upholds the rule of law, protects property rights, and ensures access to justice for its citizens. Georgia’s commitment to a transparent legal system gained momentum in the early 2000s, ensuring the fair and equitable treatment of individuals and businesses. Transparency became essential in upholding the rule of law and ensuring that legal processes were just and impartial. Property rights protection received a significant boost through the comprehensive land registry reform initiated in the mid-2000s, continuing into the early 2010s. This reform enhanced the security of land transactions and simplified property ownership, instilling investor confidence. Efficient dispute resolution mechanisms were integrated into Georgia’s legal system, ensuring the timely and fair resolution of legal conflicts. These mechanisms were developed over the years, ensuring that individuals and businesses had access to justice when disputes arose. Furthermore, Georgia’s legal system was designed to enable citizens to seek legal remedies when their rights were violated. This commitment, developed over the years, upheld the rule of law, ensuring that legal processes were just and impartial, and strengthened the overall legal freedom in Georgia.

Hence, over the past two decades, Georgia’s resolute commitment to enhancing economic and political freedom has significantly impacted the evolution of FDI in the country (see Figure 4). The early wave of economic reforms and property rights protection in the 2000s created a favorable environment for FDI, with investments pouring into sectors like real estate and infrastructure. The political watershed moment of the Rose Revolution in 2003 further bolstered Georgia’s reputation as a destination for FDI, as it ushered in a more open and transparent political landscape. Georgia’s consistent improvement in economic freedom rankings has been accompanied by increased FDI, as investors seek the stability and business-friendly climate offered by the country. Its relative political stability, especially in comparison to neighboring nations, has also made it an attractive prospect for FDI. Although regional conflicts, such as the Russo-Georgian War in 2008, briefly disrupted FDI flows, Georgia’s resilience and commitment to freedom have contributed to a steady recovery. Moreover, the country’s strategic location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, combined with its free trade agreements, has positioned it as an appealing destination for FDI, particularly in logistics and trade-related sectors. Recent trends indicate a growing influx of FDI, with a focus on tourism, manufacturing, and services, driven by streamlined regulations and reduced bureaucracy, solidifying Georgia’s status as a burgeoning hub for foreign investment. However, it is of prime importance to mention that the COVID-19 crisis has strongly affected FDI, which has not yet regained earlier levels.

Policy recommendations: Where to start?

The road map for policymakers seeking to enhance a country’s attractiveness for FDI involves multiple interconnected factors. In order to efficiently build this section, we estimate the effect of each subindex and indicator of the Freedom Index on FDI as a percentage of GDP (see Annex in the PDF version). A simplified version of the results is displayed in Table 2. The higher the number of “+”, the greater correlation between the variable of interest and FDI. In line with our argument, we first find that a higher freedom score is strongly associated with a higher level of FDI. This positive correlation underscores the pivotal role that a comprehensive commitment to freedom plays in creating an environment conducive to international capital inflow.

Economic freedom stands as a cornerstone in fostering FDI by providing an environment conducive to business growth and innovation. Nations that prioritize economic freedom often witness increased FDI due to the enhanced attractiveness of their business landscapes. For instance, countries like Singapore, renowned for its economic freedoms, have strategically positioned themselves as magnets for foreign investment. Singapore’s commitment to free-market principles, low trade barriers, and efficient regulatory frameworks has not only propelled its own economic growth but has also made it an enticing hub for international investors. Similarly, Ireland’s implementation of low corporate tax rates and favorable business policies has led to a surge in FDI, with multinational corporations establishing their European headquarters in the country. The positive correlation between economic freedom and FDI highlights the importance of embracing policies that encourage entrepreneurship, free markets, and minimal government intervention to attract substantial foreign investments.

In particular, our estimations show that property rights play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape for FDI, serving as a critical factor that influences investor confidence and security. Nations with robust protection of property rights are often more successful in attracting FDI, as investors seek assurance that their assets and investments will be safeguarded against arbitrary expropriation or infringement. Estonia’s post-Soviet era transformation, marked by a commitment to the rule of law and property rights, exemplifies this correlation. The establishment of a judicial system ensuring fair dispute resolution and robust property rights protection has positioned Estonia as a key destination for foreign investment in the Baltic region. Additionally, countries with clear and well-enforced property rights frameworks, such as Singapore, have successfully attracted FDI by assuring investors that their intellectual and tangible assets are secure. The link between property rights and FDI underscores the significance of legal frameworks that prioritize and protect the rights of individuals and businesses, fostering an environment conducive to international investment.

While political freedom is an important aspect of a conducive investment environment, its correlation with FDI is not very strong due to several reasons. First, investors, especially multinational corporations, often prioritize economic factors and market conditions over political considerations. Economic freedom, ease of doing business, and market potential tend to have a more direct impact on investment decisions. Moreover, political freedom is a multifaceted concept that includes components like civil liberties, political rights, and legislative constraints on the executive. The presence of political freedom doesn’t necessarily guarantee a stable and predictable business environment. Investors may be cautious if there is a history of political instability, frequent changes in government, or uncertainties related to policy continuity. Additionally, some authoritarian regimes with limited political freedom have managed to attract significant FDI by offering economic incentives, stable regulatory environments, and infrastructure development. China is a notable example where the government’s control is high, but its economic policies and massive infrastructure projects have made it an attractive destination for foreign investors.

In contrast, the legal subindex presents the strongest positive association with FDI. It suggests the necessity to strengthen the legal and regulatory framework. This entails creating a judicial system that assures fair dispute resolution and robust protection of property rights. Transparency and predictability in legal proceedings are key, as they instill confidence in foreign investors who need to be certain their investments are secure and enforceable. Estonia adopted a model of democracy, political stability, and the rule of law in its post-Soviet era. Alongside its commitment to transparency and accountability, these reforms positioned Estonia as a magnet for foreign investment in the Baltic region. Estonia also streamlined administrative procedures and one-stop shop mechanisms for investors, further enhancing the ease of doing business. This practical approach has been integral to its success in attracting FDI.

Security, as an indicator within the legal subindex, emerges as one of the most determinant factors influencing FDI. Investors prioritize nations with high levels of security to safeguard their investments against various risks, including political instability, civil unrest, and threats to property. A secure environment ensures the protection of businesses, employees, and assets, fostering a sense of confidence among investors, as Estonia has experienced. Singapore, which also is renowned for economic freedoms, has invested significantly in maintaining high levels of security, contributing to its appeal as a stable and secure destination for foreign investment. Similarly, Estonia serves as a compelling example of how a strong rule of law reinforces foreign direct investment. Following its post-Soviet era, Estonia undertook comprehensive legal reforms, establishing a judicial system that prioritizes fair dispute resolution and robust protection of property rights. This commitment to transparency and accountability has positioned Estonia as a magnet for foreign investment in the Baltic region. Conversely, nations facing challenges in legal freedom and security often experience difficulties in attracting foreign investment. Countries with weak legal systems, rampant corruption, and inadequate security measures may struggle to instill confidence in investors. In such cases, the lack of legal protection and security becomes a deterrent, hindering the inflow of foreign capital and impeding economic growth.

By taking these political recommendations into account, governments create an environment that not only attracts foreign investment but also promotes political stability, transparency, and accountability. This fosters a win-win situation where foreign investors can thrive, and host countries can reap the economic benefits of increased FDI.

#### FDI leads to laundry list of good impacts

U.S. Department Of Commerce, International Trade Administration 'xx [(U.S. Department Of Commerce, International Trade Administration, ) "Impacts of Inward Investment," No Publication, https://legacy.trade.gov/investamerica/impacts.asp, xx-xx-xxxx] TDI

Impacts of FDI

The United States is the world’s largest recipient of foreign direct investment. In 2007 alone, the United States received $237 billion in FDI. Foreign direct investment impacts the U.S. economy in many positive ways. For example, FDI:

Creates New Jobs: U.S. affiliates of foreign companies (majority-owned) employ approximately 5.3 million U.S. workers, or 4.6% of private industry employment. Between 2003 and 2007, over 3,300 new projects were announced or opened by foreign companies, yielding $184 billion in investment and about 447,000 new jobs.

Boosts Wages: U.S. affiliates of foreign companies tend to pay higher wages than other U.S. companies. Internationally owned companies support an annual U.S. payroll of $364 billion, with average annual compensation per employee of over $68,000. On average, U.S. subsidiaries of foreign firms pay 25 percent higher wages and salaries than that of all U.S. establishments.

Increases U.S. Exports: U.S. companies use multinationals’ distribution networks and knowledge about foreign tastes to export into new markets. Approximately 19 percent of all U.S. exports ($195 billion) come from U.S. subsidiaries of foreign companies.

Strengthens U.S. Manufacturing and Services: Thirty percent of the jobs supported by U.S. affiliates of foreign companies are in the manufacturing sector, accounting for 12 percent of all manufacturing jobs in the United States. Approximately 60 percent of all foreign investment in the United States is in the service sector, improving the global competitiveness of this critical segment of the U.S. economy.

Brings in New Research, Technology, and Skills: Affiliates of foreign companies (majority-owned) spent over $34 billion on research and development in 2006 and $160 billion on plants and equipment.

Contributes to Rising U.S. Productivity: Inward investment leads to higher productivity growth through an increased availability of capital and resulting competition. Productivity is a key factor that increases U.S. competitiveness abroad and raises living standards at home.

### 1AR – Noko

#### North Korea’s evading sanctions and gaining foreign investment now.

**Erport and Fadlon ‘23** [(Yulia Erport & Tomer Fadlon, Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) – Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University of Jerusalem.) " Economic Maneuvering: How States Evade Economic Sanctions," Strategic Assessment—A Multidisciplinary Journal on National Security, https://www.inss.org.il/wp- content/uploads/2023/09/Adkan26.2\_Eng\_4.pdf#page=99, 07-2023] TDI

The North Korean Case

Since 2006, when North Korea conducted its first nuclear test, the country has been under a sanctions regime imposed by various international bodies and countries. These sanctions include trade embargoes and restrictions, especially in arms and military equipment; financial restrictions and limits on investment; assets freeze; and travel bans (“Fact Sheet,” 2022). Despite these sanctions, North Korea has continued to export coal, one of most important parts of its economy, most of it to the Chinese market. Similarly, it also exports oil and trades various goods, including weapons and other military equipment (Kim, 2021). Although North Korea is perceived as isolated and disconnected from the global economy, in practice it has managed to run its economic and financial systems, notwithstanding the limits imposed by sanctions, thanks to several methods it has developed over the years.

Methods of Bypassing Sanctions

The first method is the use of third-party countries as export markets, import markets, and transit states. North Korea’s primary trading partner is China (Figure 2). Data show an asymmetrical dependency between the two countries, since two-thirds of North Korea’s exports are sent to China and more than 90 percent of its imports come from China (“Korea, North,” 2023). China helps North Korea bypass sanctions in a number of ways, in part because of the countries’ geographic proximity. A shared border also allows China to act as a third-party country, through which, using straw companies and mediators, North Korea can import from countries that have joined the boycott against it. These companies ostensibly import goods from China for personal or local use, but in practice, they transport them to North Korea. The shared border allows for smuggling of goods and gray trade, which has the blessing of officials on both sides of the border. North Korea also sells China fishing rights in its territorial waters (Watts, 2020).

Moreover, North Korea smuggles various types of weapons and military equipment to more than 30 nations, territories, and armed groups, in violation of various sanctions. Among the countries that receive North Korean weapons are Iran, Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Myanmar, and Libya. African nations are among the most important of North Korea’s export markets, some of which are themselves subject to sanctions and have neither the desire not the ability to enforce sanctions imposed by the UN (Young, 2021). North Korea also has extensive and long-term ties with some of these countries in the development of ballistic missiles. This trade allows North Korea to obtain foreign currency and thereby mitigate the impact of the sanctions—one of whose stated goals is to prevent it from obtaining foreign currency (Griffiths & Schroeder, 2020).

Another measure by North Korea in recent years is cyberattacks against financial institutions. There is evidence that North Korea has tried of late to attack banks and cryptocurrency exchanges, in an effort to steal foreign currency and virtual assets in other countries. According to the Wall Street Journal, in the past three years alone, North Korean hackers have stolen around $3 billion of cryptocurrency (McMillan & Volz, 2023). At the same time, using this fortune requires the assistance of intermediaries from other countries, so the total that North Korea actually earns from such activity could be far less (Rosenberg & Bhatiya, 2020).

A third method is to obscure the source of the money, transfer it physically, and use barter. To facilitate payment and money transfers, North Korea employs a number of methods. First, some of its trade is conducted in barter. Second, in some cases, money is transferred using couriers (who could also be diplomats representing the country). To transfer money via international financial systems, North Korea transfers money to the bank accounts of its embassies and diplomats, and sometimes their families; transfers money to front companies or to small banks that do not have the resources to fully investigate the source of the money; or transfers the money several times between banks in different countries to make it harder to track the source (Mallory, 2021).

In addition, North Korea takes advantage of the mobility and immunity of its diplomatic representatives to facilitate smuggling. Arms and other goods are smuggled with the significant help of North Korean diplomats wherever they might be stationed, and they act as intermediaries and sometimes even as smugglers. They play a key role in North Korea’s smuggling operations, from the first approach to a potential client up to the relay of the goods, using their diplomatic immunity, which allows them far greater freedom of movement. To transport banned goods to Syria, for example—a country that it itself is under a sanctions regime and therefore is subject to far tighter supervision—documents needed to claim goods that were sent to the Syrian port of Latakia were sent to the North Korea embassy in Damascus, which sent its diplomats to the port to collect the goods. These same diplomats can also help smuggle the material for manufacturing weapons and the money from arms deals on civilian flights (Griffiths & Schroeder, 2020).