

# Where Do the Peacekeepers Go?<sup>1</sup>

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What determines where and when the United Nations (UN) sends peacekeepers in civil wars? This is an important topic for at least two normative reasons. First, it is a necessary prerequisite for judging the extent to which the organization lives up to its aspirations for being a truly global body, capable of working to preserve international security and relieve suffering without preference to a state's choice of government, location, resources, or historical connection to the great powers. Second, given various attempts to suggest criteria or benchmarks for humanitarian intervention, it is important to know which cases are selected for intervention in the absence of such criteria.

The procedures and standards of the UN provide little guidance as to the actual decisions of the Security Council regarding when and where peacekeepers will be deployed. Peacekeepers are deployed with reference to Chapters 6 or 7 of the UN Charter. Although these chapters differ with regard to the use of force or pacific means to resolve disputes, they agree that the prerequisite for their enactment is a threat to or an endangerment of "the maintenance of international peace and security." The question remains, why does the Security Council consider some civil wars threats to international security? The charter is silent on what constitutes a threat to international security, and the Security Council has shown enormous flexibility in invoking the language of threat to justify the deployment of peacekeepers. If previous deployments provide any indication, then one must wrestle with why civil wars in Mozambique, Somalia, Guatemala, and Sierra Leone were deemed essential for the promotion of international security, whereas civil wars in Kashmir, Sudan, Chechnya, and Algeria were judged as peripheral to security.

Despite the importance of the issue, the amount of systematic research on the topic is extremely small in comparison with dozens of other topics that come under the heading of international cooperation. Partly as a consequence, unsupported claims by journalists, policymakers, and even some academics about where the UN sends peacekeepers have proliferated over the years. A common assertion is that peacekeepers go where the permanent members of the Security Council (or in some versions where the United States) have important national interests. Alternatively, it is claimed that peacekeeping is imperialism in disguise and, therefore, peacekeepers are sent where great powers have an economic interest in access to raw materials and primary commodities. A different version holds that peacekeeping since the 1990s embodies an ethos of democracy-building and that the great powers, who have an interest in increasing the number of democracies in the world, choose cases in which democracy is in short supply yet has the potential to take root.

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The issue of where peacekeeping missions are deployed has important policy ramifications. For example, in General Assembly debates in 2000 over the reform of UN peace operations, many Third World member states asserted that deployment of peacekeeping missions reflect the interests of the Security Council and, therefore, systematically ignore Africa and favor Europe. And even though such member states complain about what they see as the biases of the current system, they oppose reform of the system for fear that under new mission selection criteria Africa would be further marginalized (Stedman 2001a). What is noteworthy is that neither claim is based on systematic evidence or analysis.

After examining where and when the UN has sent peacekeepers, and where it has not, we conclude that the UN acts in ways that corroborate its humanitarian and security missions, but the pattern also shows a distinct bias toward conflict in Europe and the Western Hemisphere. Our results show that one of the best predictors of UN intervention is the number of deaths in a conflict, a finding that speaks well to the UN's mission to address costly human suffering. On the other hand, the UN has not been evenhanded in how it responds to deaths. The UN acts more swiftly when the deaths occur in Europe than in Africa, and it acts more swiftly in Africa than in Asia. Furthermore, the UN seems guided by considerations of power, cost, and risk: it responds to civil wars in weaker states, measured by the size of the country's army, at a much higher rate than it does to civil wars in stronger states.

We begin by describing the extant literature on determinants of UN peacekeeping in civil wars and showing the theoretical and methodological flaws in that literature. Very little systematic research has been done on where and when the UN deploys peacekeepers. Moreover, the research that exists suffers from several problems, including selecting on the dependent variable, combining every interest of a permanent member state into a catch-all category called the "national interests of the Permanent 5," treating legal conditions for Security Council interventions as causal explanations for interventions, and treating deployment as an either-or variable. We then discuss our research methodology. To overcome the problems listed above, we used a data set of all post-Cold War civil wars and survival time techniques to predict the duration until the UN intervenes in a given civil war along with the hazard rate of UN intervention given various independent variables. We then present our findings and conclude with a brief discussion of their implications for future research and policy assessment of the UN.

### **Prior Research**

Relatively little research has been done on the determinants of where the UN chooses to deploy peace operations. Journalistic accounts often accuse the UN of displaying a bias toward the interests of the United States or the Permanent 5 members of the Security Council in its decisions to intervene. For example, Phylis Bennis (1996:84) argues:

In the real world any UN decision to intervene or any UN decision to legitimize or endorse any country's unilateral intervention against another country will reflect the dominant power of the intervening side and the relative importance of the subject nation . . . anyone who believes that the real motivation for outside governmental military intervention (UN endorsed or otherwise) is the alleviation of civilian hardship is suffering from a serious delusion of benevolence.

Similarly, David Gibbs (1997) hints at classic imperialistic motives behind decisions to deploy peacekeepers, arguing that even in such seemingly unselfish interventions as Somalia, one can easily find more grubby motivations—such as access to primary commodities.

Although most academics do not go as far as Bennis or Gibbs and sometimes present a more nuanced account of motivations, they also tend to emphasize the extent to which any decision to deploy peacekeepers must partially serve the national interests of the permanent members of the Security Council (the P-5). Chantal De Jonge Oudraat (1996:518–519), for example, argues that the choice of where the UN goes is determined by “the extent to which the interests of one or more of the members of the P-5 are engaged in the case in question; and the extent to which the conflict is believed by the P-5 to constitute a threat to international peace and security.” She defines whether a case is a threat to international peace on the basis of whether the war spills over its borders to pose a larger regional threat.

In a broader but similar vein, Laura Neack (1995) examines the extent to which state participation in peacekeeping operations, the geographical distribution of operations, and accounts of success or failure are the result of an idealistic commitment to the global community or a consequence of states’ national interests. On the basis of an analysis of eighteen operations that took place between 1948 and 1990, she concludes that the findings support a realist interpretation; that is, “states whose interests were better served by the continuation of the status quo—that is, states of the advanced industrialized West and non-Western states that have enjoyed some prestige in the international status quo—have dominated UN peacekeeping” (Neack 1995:181).

Peter Jacobsen (1996) argues that national interest is not the *sine qua non* for intervention that many believe, but that the power of what is known as the CNN effect is also less than many believe. He reaches these conclusions by examining the impact of five explanatory factors in a focused comparison of five peace enforcement missions. He finds evidence of two distinct motivational patterns, one of which is driven by self-interest in the form of concern about consequences of unambiguous interstate aggression and one of which is animated by humanitarian sentiment precipitated by massive human suffering. The two motivations operate in different ways. States are willing to take far higher levels of casualties when national interests are at stake than they are when only humanitarian motivations are present. The CNN effect is real, but it only operates when there is both a high probability of success and low probability of casualties.

Andreas Andersson (2000) also disputes the argument that the national interests of the permanent members invariably account for where the UN chooses to go. Noting the broad geographical distribution of interventions and the many deployments that appear to be independent of any permanent member’s direct interest, he argues that the Security Council has been guided primarily by a desire to promote democracy in the world. He interprets this motive as an idealistic interest of the permanent members related to the democratic peace hypothesis. If democracies never go to war with other democracies, then for reasons of international security the permanent members should desire to increase the number of democracies in the world.

Taken in its entirety, the literature on the determinants of peacekeeping has a number of problems. At the theoretical level, the tendency to lump every interest of any permanent member into a category called the “national interests of the Permanent 5” threatens to obscure as much as it reveals. For example, the ongoing debate between realists and liberals has less to do with whether the permanent members are motivated by some national interest than the specific role of security and trade interests. More broadly, it makes a great deal of difference whether the interest we are talking about is a security or trade interest as opposed to a humanitarian interest.

The evidence used to establish the fact that permanent member interests are paramount often approaches tautology. Because any permanent member can veto a Security Council resolution and their acquiescence is a legal requirement for any operation, it is impossible to disagree with statements like: “peacekeeping missions

do not get off the ground without great power support” (Durch 1993:36). However, no research is necessary to support such a statement. It is true by definition. The more important issue is which cases get great power support. We want to know what motivates great power interest, and how, if at all, this has evolved over time. This information will allow us to think about the extent to which permanent member interests have distorted the role of the UN in relation to that which was envisioned in its charter and is embodied in the statements of principles that have been issued over the years.

Similarly, if one thinks of great power support as a supply-side explanation for intervention, then one can examine the willingness of local parties to request or consent to the deployment of a peacekeeping mission as a demand-side explanation for intervention (Durch 1993:18–20). It is well established that the Security Council is much more likely to dispatch peacekeepers to a country that has consented to a mission; what we want to know is which states are more likely than others to request or at least to consent to such an intrusion. Two possible demand-side explanations deserve attention. First, stronger states may be better able to resist pressure on them to consent to intervention or to raise the costs of possible intervention enough to deter UN intervention. Second, the war aims of the rebels in civil wars may affect both the willingness of a state to consent to a mission and the willingness of the UN to deploy a mission. For example, states may be less willing to concede to a UN intervention if rebels are attempting to secede, out of fear that the mission may freeze a *de facto* partition of territory.<sup>2</sup> The supply-side explanation may be that the permanent members may be less willing to intervene in conflicts in which the state sovereignty principle is threatened, given that two of the permanent members, China and Russia, are themselves threatened by secessionist movements.<sup>3</sup>

Another theoretical limitation of the literature is that the rationales behind various hypotheses tend to be less well-developed than elsewhere in the international relations literature, often raising as many questions as they answer. Take, for example, Andersson’s (2000) provocative thesis that peacekeeping decisions reflect a desire on the part of the permanent members to spread democracy. Although it is reasonable to assume that this is a priority for democratic states, it is far from clear why a desire to spread democracy should lead to a higher priority being placed on intervention in nondemocratic states than on intervention in existing democracies that are threatened with destruction. After all, success in the former seems far less likely than in the latter, which involves trying to sustain something that already exists. Although Andersson doubtless has reasons for believing why an emphasis on promoting democracy would focus on the bird in the bush rather than the one in the hand, he never makes those reasons explicit. As a consequence the reader cannot help but wonder whether Andersson’s positive results stem less from a preoccupation on the part of the permanent members to convert states to democracy than from the fact that most civil wars take place in nondemocratic states. It is also unclear why China, a nondemocracy, would, as a permanent member of the Security Council, accede to interventions aimed primarily at promoting democracy.

A lack of theoretical development is also evident in the literature that tries to determine which of a number of models best explains, on the basis of self-interest versus humanitarian-idealistic motives, where the UN intervenes. A single indicator often represents an entire perspective, and authors have a tendency to assume that because a given indicator is central to a particular perspective, any evidence that the variable is important demonstrates automatically the validity of that model and the weakness of rival models.

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<sup>2</sup>We thank David Laitin and James Fearon for suggesting that war aims may influence deployment of missions and for providing us with the coding of this variable from their own data set on civil wars.

<sup>3</sup>We thank Andrew Mack for this suggestion.

The difficulty is that even though an indicator may be especially central to one model, it may also be correlated with a variable that plays an important role in another model or is actually included in a rival model by virtue of its playing a very different function. As an example of the first problem, “massive human suffering” is a variable that is often associated exclusively with a humanitarian or idealist model of motivation, and the connection makes a lot of sense. If eliminating or reducing massive human suffering is not the central humanitarian goal, what is? The difficulty is that massive human suffering, although not a primary realist goal, tends to be correlated with the scale of conflict, which is a variable that a realist strategist potentially cares about a great deal.<sup>4</sup>

The presence or absence of a peace treaty provides another example of how the same variable can play different functions in different theories. From a realist perspective, the existence of a treaty is important because it signals the conditions under which a compromise among the conflicting interests of the permanent members is more likely than it would be otherwise. This factor was especially important during the Cold War, when the absence of a treaty would likely have suggested that either the allies of the Eastern or the Western bloc believed they currently held the advantage. For the realist, the existence of a treaty is also important because it indicates that the intervention will be more successful and involve lower costs than a prospective mission where there is no treaty. For the idealist, the existence of a treaty makes a mission more attractive because it allows the UN to function as a rule-driven and unbiased peacemaker that is defending the norm of neutrality in an increasingly partisan world.

These interpretations raise the prospect that from an empirical standpoint distinguishing between the idealist and realist explanations will not be as easy as it first appears. Things can be clarified somewhat if we can find a more precise measure of the scale of conflict than massive suffering and use this in the model, but multicollinearity is still likely to create interpretation problems. If no separate and reliable indicator of scale of conflict apart from massive human suffering is available, then the same indicator will have to be used in both model specifications. The treaty variable must be used in both.

In such cases, it is important to identify secondary and tertiary attributes of the two models that overlap less. This task is not easy given that the variety of reliable data collected for all, or even most, peacekeeping missions is modest. However, sometimes it is possible to expand the set of model indicators beyond what is normally employed in such a way that more clearly differentiates among the different approaches. For example, even though considerable overlap exists between the realist and humanitarian models with respect to the impact that massive suffering will have—if for quite different reasons—their predictions with respect to the effect of the conflict location are more distinct. For a realist, the location of a conflict plays a critical role in determining its importance because it plays a significant role in determining the degree of threat the conflict poses to a state’s vital interests. This relationship stands in sharp contrast to the humanitarian or idealist model in which the location of the conflict should be largely irrelevant. But again even here modesty is required. A finding that the UN is more willing to intervene in Europe than in Africa may be a function of heightened international media attention and, therefore, greater demands for humanitarian action for conflicts in Europe.

The literature on determinants of peacekeeping also tends to suffer from several methodological problems. By far the chief among these is a tendency to select cases on the basis of the dependent variable and, by so doing, to restrict the sample to

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<sup>4</sup>Thus, De Jonge Oudraat (1996:519–522) uses a scale of conflict as a proxy for Security Council judgment about whether a civil war is a threat to international peace and security.

peacekeeping operations that the UN has chosen to undertake. Characteristics that these cases share in common are then argued to be the keys to understanding UN motivation. Cases of civil wars or interstate aggression in which the UN has chosen not to intervene are simply ignored, so the reader has no idea whether they too possess these same characteristics—which would invalidate the inferences about what is responsible for the decision to intervene. Given that it is obviously important to know whether this is a problem or not, expanding the cases to include all situations in which the UN could have potentially intervened is critical. Doing so would also solve the related problem that the number of cases used in many of the analyses is often far too small to support a reliable conclusion in a statistical sense.

A subtler problem has to do with how one measures intervention—the dependent variable. Almost invariably, when this is dealt with at all (recall most authors restrict their sample to interventions), it is dealt with as a dummy variable. Either the UN has initiated a peacekeeping mission in a given situation or it has not. However, it is important to know not only whether a peacekeeping mission has been initiated but also when it has been initiated. Everything else being equal, prompt intervention not only has a greater potential to save lives, but the timing of interventions can potentially tell us much more about what motivates and constrains the UN than can the analysis of where intervention has taken place and where it has not.

### **Research Approach**

In this piece, we do not propose to test alternative theories of UN intervention. As we state above, there are powerful limitations on spelling out and testing theories of intervention that derive from the larger traditions of international relations theories. Rather, as a first step to understanding UN intervention, we hope to be able to provide some empirical findings on intervention that will allow us to evaluate claims about where and when the UN intervenes.

To do so we examine the set of post–Cold War civil wars—civil wars that began after 1988 or those that began before 1988 but were still active after 1988. We have strong reasons for believing that pooling Cold War and post–Cold War samples would be inappropriate. During the Cold War, when there were sixty-three civil wars, the UN undertook only four missions in civil wars: two in Cyprus, one in Korea, and one in the Congo. In the post–Cold War era, there were sixty civil wars, and the UN launched nineteen missions. Clearly, a five-fold increase in the rate at which the UN has allocated missions to civil wars suggests that the mission selection procedures have changed dramatically with the end of the Cold War. In our results below, we provide some evidence that our choice to concentrate on the post–Cold War era was the appropriate one.

We chose to examine the following independent variables associated with the various claims about UN deployment of missions. The variable “Deaths” is military and civilian deaths from the conflict in millions. We use it as a measure of humanitarian need for an intervention in the conflict. “Treaty” is a dichotomous dummy variable that equals one if the combatants had signed a peace treaty and equals zero otherwise. We use this variable to control for the possibility that the UN is more likely to intervene in a conflict if the combatants have signed a peace treaty. “Cold War” is a dichotomous dummy variable that equals one if the civil war in question began before 1989 and equals zero otherwise. It is used to control for the substantially lesser rate of UN involvement during the Cold War. We also include “Primary commodity exports” in millions of Summers and Heston real GDP units to test if the UN intervenes more in countries that are important sources of raw materials. To test the claim that the UN is more likely to send missions to countries that are democracies, we use a dummy variable that equals one if the civil war occurred in a “Democracy,” as specified in the Alvarez et al. (1997) data set, and

zero otherwise.<sup>5</sup> We also test if the UN intervenes more in countries with which the permanent members have close ties, using a dummy variable that equals one if the civil war occurred in a country that is a “Former colony” of a permanent member of the Security Council and zero otherwise. To control for any regional differences in the way the UN allocates missions, we include dummy variables for four regions: “Latin America and the Caribbean,” “Europe,” “Asia,” and the “Middle East.” Africa is the excluded region (and, therefore, the baseline case). Prewar “Population” (in millions) and “Size of government army” (in thousands of troops) are included to see if the UN is more likely to avoid conflicts in large, militarily powerful countries. Finally we wanted to examine if the rebel’s war aims affected the likelihood that the UN would intervene. Therefore, we included “Rebels’ Aims: Control of Government,” a dummy variable that is coded one if the civil war was a contest over control of the country’s central government and zero otherwise, and “Rebels’ Aims: Autonomy,” a dummy variable that is coded one if the rebels were fighting to achieve national autonomy and zero otherwise. A third variable that is not reported below was coded one if the rebels have a mixture of the two motives and zero otherwise, and it serves as our residual category.<sup>6</sup> Unless otherwise noted, we use the same data used by Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis (2000), which is available on their World Bank web site ([www.worldbank.org/research/conflict/papers/peacebuilding/index.htm](http://www.worldbank.org/research/conflict/papers/peacebuilding/index.htm)). We have made some minor changes to the data (which are discussed in the appendix to Gilligan and Stedman 2003).

We address our question of where peacekeepers are sent by employing survival time techniques. In other words, our dependent variable is the time elapsed (measured in years) until the UN intervenes in a given civil war. Transformation of the Doyle and Sambanis data into survival time data was relatively straightforward with a few exceptions, which we describe in Section 4 of the appendix in Gilligan and Stedman (2003). As a further check for robustness, we also estimate our results using logit on a dichotomous dependent variable equal to one if the UN sent an observer, traditional peacekeeping, or enforcement mission to the conflict, and zero otherwise. We also estimate ordered probit on a categorical dummy variable that is equal to one if the UN sent an observer mission, two if the UN sent a traditional peacekeeping mission, three if it sent an enforcement mission, and zero otherwise. As a final robustness check, we estimate a tobit model using the cost of the UN operations in millions of US dollars. Tobit is appropriate in this case because operation cost is bounded by zero: the UN could not spend less than zero dollars on the mission. Summary statistics for these variables and the independent variables described above are reported in Table 2 of Gilligan and Stedman (2003).

We regard survival time techniques to be the most appropriate for our purposes because the data are right censored. Most of the wars in our sample ended before the UN intervened. We do not know what the UN would have done had those wars persisted. Logit or probit estimates with right censoring overestimate standard errors, which might cause us to reject inappropriately some of the hypotheses we discussed in the previous section. Besides, such methods throw away valuable information present in the data. Earlier intervention in a conflict suggests that the UN was more concerned about that conflict for some reason—information that is useful to us as we seek to uncover the determinants of UN intervention (Peterson 1991; Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 1997).

In theory at least, survival time techniques are able to give us the same information that we could retrieve from logit or probit analysis on noncensored data, given that duration data are just an aggregation of binary data over time (Alt, King, and Signorino 2000). In addition to predicting the duration until the UN

<sup>5</sup>These data have been updated through 1999. See also Przeworski et al. (2000).

<sup>6</sup>We thank James Fearon and David Laitin for sharing these measures with us. See Fearon and Laitin (2003).

intervenes in a given civil war, survival time analysis allows us to predict the hazard rate of UN intervention, conditional on our independent variables. This rate is the instantaneous rate at which the UN intervenes in a conflict given that it has not done so up to that point. Furthermore, like logit and probit, survival time techniques allow us to generate a predicted probability that the UN will intervene in a conflict given that it has not done so up to that point. Both of these values give us precisely the information that we want given that we are interested in determining which types of conflicts the UN is more prone to help pacify. The coefficients that we present in the tables below represent the change in the hazard rate for a one-unit change in the respective independent variable. Because hazard rates are sometimes difficult to interpret, we also report expected probabilities of UN intervention in a few examples.

### Findings

The findings of our survival time analysis are presented in Tables 1 and 2. In most cases, we estimate the model on the post–Cold War sample of civil wars, but in columns 4 and 5 of Table 2 we estimated the model on the sample of 120 post–World War II civil wars to check the robustness of our results with respect to choice of sample. In Table 3 we check the robustness of survival time results with respect to other possible choices of the dependent variable and estimation techniques. Logit results using the dichotomous dependent variable are reported in columns one and two, ordered probit estimates using the categorical dependent variable are reported in columns three and four, and tobit estimates using the cost of the operation are reported in columns five and six. We do not regard the results in Table 3 to be as trustworthy as those in Tables 1 and 2 because of the censoring problem mentioned above, but we present them as a robustness check. The results in Tables 1 through 3 point to ten broad findings, which we summarize below.

**FINDING 1:** The more severe a conflict, measured by the number of deaths, the more likely the United Nations is to intervene.

This was the most robust result in our analysis. The coefficient on this variable was significant at the 5 percent level or better in a one-tailed test in all specifications. Figure 1 graphs the probability that the UN will intervene in a conflict in a particular year given that it has not intervened in that conflict up to that point. It graphs this function for several of the independent variables of interest.<sup>7</sup> For the moment we are concerned with the effects of deaths. To see the effects of deaths on these probabilities compare the line marked “baseline” with the line marked “hi deaths.” The “hi deaths” case assumes one standard deviation more deaths (roughly 630,000). The probability of UN intervention in the tenth year in the baseline case is only about 1 percent whereas the probability of UN intervention in the high deaths case is by that point almost 50 percent.

We also can examine the effects of deaths on the duration until the UN intervenes in a conflict. Take the case of Cambodia. The UN intervened in that civil war after 13 years. Our model predicts a UN intervention after 13.1 years—very close to the actual value. If the number of casualties in that war had been one million rather than three million, our model predicts that the UN would have intervened after 130 years, quite a dramatic difference. For all practical purposes, the model is telling us the UN would not intervene in this conflict with that level of casualties.

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<sup>7</sup>To generate the predicted probabilities in Figure 1, we used the specification in column 1 of Table 2. The baseline case assumes the average number for each of the continuous variables—that is a value of 0.182, or 182,000 deaths, and of 246, or 246,000, for the size of the government army. It assumes a value of zero for each of the dummy variables—that is a civil war in an African country that began after the end of the Cold War.



TABLE I. Determinants of UN Intervention in Civil Wars, Weibull Regression Estimates

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Deaths	<b>2.0295</b> (1.2216)	<b>3.0852</b> (1.1296)	<b>2.9434</b> (1.1416)	<b>2.9420</b> (1.1500)	<b>2.2540</b> (1.0600)	<b>2.1893</b> (1.0248)
Treaty	1.1158 (1.0756)	1.1875 (0.9624)	1.1221 (0.9725)	1.1716 (0.9669)	1.2519 (1.0262)	1.5417 (0.9895)
Cold War	<b>-4.1432</b> (1.1087)	<b>-3.7221</b> (1.0483)	<b>-3.4533</b> (1.0029)	<b>-3.4445</b> (1.0008)	<b>-3.1813</b> (0.8924)	<b>-3.3444</b> (0.8882)
Asia	-3.4439 (4.2757)	-7.9059 (3.1674)	-7.6614 (3.2350)	-7.6519 (3.2628)	-5.8119 (3.0038)	-5.4776 (2.8878)
Europe	<b>4.1256</b> (1.9828)	<b>4.8936</b> (1.9074)	<b>4.7730</b> (1.8873)	<b>4.4492</b> (1.4365)	<b>2.9077</b> (1.0290)	<b>2.7158</b> (1.0167)
Middle East	2.3387 (1.6294)	3.4074 (1.3306)	3.1866 (1.2865)	3.0535 (1.2144)	1.6107 (1.1433)	1.7654 (1.1376)
Latin America & Caribbean	<b>2.0649</b> (1.3167)	<b>3.2937</b> (1.0447)	<b>3.3198</b> (1.0903)	<b>3.3213</b> (1.0748)	<b>2.8875</b> (1.0143)	<b>2.4878</b> (0.8818)
Democracy	-1.2015 (1.2516)	-1.3850 (1.2080)	-1.5730 (1.2101)	-1.5717 (1.2086)	-1.0295 (1.1667)	—
Size of Government Army	-0.0112 (0.0145)	<b>-0.0232</b> (0.0136)	<b>-0.0222</b> (0.0140)	<b>-0.0222</b> (0.0139)	<b>-0.0249</b> (0.0119)	<b>-0.0214</b> (0.0108)
Primary Commodity Exports	-0.0007 (0.0004)	-0.0006 (0.0004)	-0.0006 (0.0004)	-0.0006 (0.0004)	—	—
Former colony of P5 member	-1.5961 (1.3798)	—	—	—	—	—
Rebels Aims: Control of Government	-1.3225 (0.9238)	-0.9511 (0.8549)	—	—	—	—
Rebel's Aims: Autonomy	-1.6395 (1.6158)	-1.3248 (1.6114)	-0.3590 (1.3462)	—	—	—
Constant	<b>-3.8903</b> (1.8199)	<b>-4.9204</b> (1.5822)	<b>-5.5640</b> (1.4699)	<b>-5.6256</b> (1.4656)	<b>-5.0674</b> (1.3922)	<b>-5.3625</b> (1.4037)
$p^*$	<b>2.9483</b> (0.5953)	<b>2.9750</b> (0.6088)	<b>2.8496</b> (0.5716)	<b>2.8553</b> (0.5714)	<b>2.4587</b> (0.4787)	<b>2.4520</b> (0.4804)
$n$	59	59	59	59	59	59
LL	-18.73	-19.37	-19.9	-19.9362	-23.1385	-23.5955

\*This parameter affects the shape of the Weibull distribution. A value significantly greater than one implies that the hazard rate of UN interventions increases over time. (Standard errors are in parentheses; coefficients that are significant at 5 percent are in bold).

It is perhaps worth dwelling on one potential threat to the validity of this finding. We only have data for the total number of deaths in each war, so our measure cannot distinguish between pre-intervention deaths and postintervention casualties, the latter of which obviously could not have affected the UN's decision to intervene. The two most prominent cases in which a large number of deaths

TABLE 2. Determinants of UN Intervention in Civil Wars, Weibull Regression Estimates

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Deaths	<b>2.3675</b> (0.9936)	<b>2.7676</b> (1.0993)	<b>1.7284</b> (0.7460)	<b>2.9039</b> (1.4194)	<b>1.8888</b> (0.9756)	<b>6.2470</b> (3.2167)
Treaty	—	—	<b>1.5191</b> (0.6357)	0.2385 (0.6928)	0.4645 (0.6132)	—
Cold War	<b>-2.8052</b> (0.7795)	<b>-2.9380</b> (0.7965)	<b>-3.4496</b> (0.8110)	<b>-2.0870</b> (0.6317)	<b>-2.1049</b> (0.5886)	<b>-5.1880</b> (1.5175)
Asia	<b>-6.0691</b> (2.8528)	<b>-6.9939</b> (3.1297)	-3.2757 (2.1334)	-7.6499 (4.5614)	<b>-5.1590</b> (2.7107)	<b>-15.880</b> (8.7279)
Europe	<b>1.9144</b> (0.9073)	<b>1.7591</b> (0.9098)	<b>0.5912</b> (0.8211)	<b>2.0191</b> (1.0715)	<b>2.4252</b> (0.7691)	<b>2.7533</b> (1.3742)
Middle East	—	—	—	0.2458 (1.4409)	0.7338 (0.9450)	—
Latin America & Caribbean	<b>2.4800</b> (0.8300)	<b>2.4072</b> (0.8719)	<b>1.3002</b> (0.6351)	<b>2.7922</b> (1.1668)	<b>2.2718</b> (0.8033)	<b>4.4511</b> (1.3029)
Democracy	—	—	—	-1.8079 (1.1196)	-1.1694 (1.0692)	—
Size of Government Army	<b>-0.0216</b> (0.0099)	<b>-0.0198</b> (0.0111)	—	-0.0211 (0.0144)	<b>-0.0219</b> (0.0099)	<b>-0.0319</b> (0.0147)
Primary Commodity Exports	—	—	—	-0.0008 (0.0005)	—	—
Former Colony of P5 member	—	—	—	-0.2393 (1.0005)	—	—
Rebels Aims: Control of Government	—	—	—	-0.7264 (0.8649)	—	—
Rebels Aims: Autonomy	—	—	—	1.5951 (1.2925)	—	—
Population	—	-0.0879 (0.0853)	—	—	—	—
Constant	<b>-3.5994</b> (0.8704)	<b>-3.1013</b> (0.9551)	<b>-4.9693</b> (0.8928)	<b>-3.1404</b> (1.6058)	<b>-3.4420</b> (0.8825)	<b>-5.7617</b> (1.4540)
$p^*$	<b>2.1888</b> (0.4141)	<b>2.1585</b> (0.4093)	<b>1.9187</b> (0.3699)	<b>2.2101</b> (0.3980)	<b>1.8564</b> (0.3187)	<b>3.3079</b> (0.7671)
$n$	59	59	60	120	120	51
LL	-25.263	-24.4807	-32.547	-31.1902	-36.9215	-11.0152

\*This parameter affects the shape of the Weibull distribution. A value significantly greater than one implies that the hazard rate of UN interventions increases over time. (Standard errors are in parentheses; coefficients that are significant at 5 percent are in bold).

occurred after the UN intervened are Bosnia and Rwanda, but other possible cases might include Somalia, Liberia, and Angola. To address this issue we re-estimated the results excluding these cases. Those results, which are presented in column 6 of Table 2, are significantly stronger, suggesting that this finding is not an artifact of cases in which high casualties occurred after the UN intervened.

TABLE 3. Logit, Ordered Probit, and Tobit Estimates of Determinants of UN Intervention in Civil Wars

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Dependent Variable	Intervention	Intervention	Level of Intervention	Level of Intervention	Cost of Operation	Cost of Operation
Estimator	Logit	Logit	Ordered Probit	Ordered Probit	Tobit	Tobit
Deaths	<b>14.7701</b> (6.1055)	<b>8.5798</b> (3.7189)	<b>1.5856</b> (0.7237)	<b>1.7124</b> (0.7703)	<b>2115.44</b> (961.5721)	<b>2121.297</b> (1019.151)
Treaty	1.4118 (1.3953)	—	0.4290 (0.6983)	0.3944 (0.8138)	342.6481 (520.8233)	245.3126 (589.735)
Cold War	<b>-4.5214</b> (1.5777)	-1.8528 (1.2405)	-0.3404 (0.4101)	-0.3106 (0.3892)	-69.2868 (429.8699)	-389.539 (464.526)
Asia	<b>-27.8552</b> (12.9734)	<b>-17.1798</b> (7.1102)	-3.5112 (2.1245)	<b>-3.9823</b> (1.9616)	-4197.08 (3100.257)	-4261.95 (2877.673)
Europe	3.5594 (2.5702)	0.5786 (1.3041)	1.2131 (0.8618)	1.1333 (0.8089)	2592.16 (1023.153)	<b>1511.751</b> (618.5604)
Middle East	1.6555 (1.8512)	—	-0.4342 (0.7457)	-0.5045 (0.8389)	357.9556 (932.1456)	64.83039 (700.0333)
Latin America & Caribbean	<b>18.8602</b> (7.0047)	<b>8.8585</b> (2.6421)	<b>1.7923</b> (0.7749)	<b>1.9522</b> (0.6904)	1165.335 (736.6521)	<b>1470.08</b> (683.0769)
Democracy	—*	—*	-1.2409 (0.8021)	-1.3050 (0.7662)	-1303.89 (751.5265)	-1027.35 (876.7648)
Size of Government Army	-0.0549 (0.0374)	<b>-0.0455</b> (0.0165)	<b>-0.0091</b> (0.0039)	<b>-0.0099</b> (0.0036)	-8.10424 (6.139003)	-12.2676 (7.483431)
Primary Commodity Exports	-0.0015 (0.0010)	—	0.0000 (0.0001)	—	-0.7572 (0.326267)	—
Former Colony of P5 Member	-2.3804 (1.9404)	—	-0.1619 (0.5958)	—	-272.548 (753.9577)	—
Rebel's Aims: Government Control	-1.2668 (2.3748)	—	-0.1983 (1.1624)	—	-712.179 (577.3001)	—
Rebel's Aims: Autonomy	-3.2666 (3.2571)	—	-0.3424 (1.3228)	—	-678.274 (946.6207)	—
Cutpoint 1**	4.7983 (3.7305)	1.5479 (1.0762)	-0.6022 (1.5849)	-0.3371 (0.9020)	742.296 (901.017)	-201.284 (723.204)
Cutpoint 2	—	—	0.0705 (1.6861)	0.3295 (0.9899)	—	—
Cutpoint 3	—	—	1.6848 (1.8894)	1.9434 (1.2534)	—	—
<i>n</i>	59	59	59	59	59	59
LL	-10.2319	-13.6880	-34.7824	-34.9473	-159.05	-163.35

\*The democracy variable is excluded from this specification because it would not converge with the variable included.

\*\*In the Logit and Tobit results in columns one, two, three and four, "Cutpoint 1" is actually the constant.

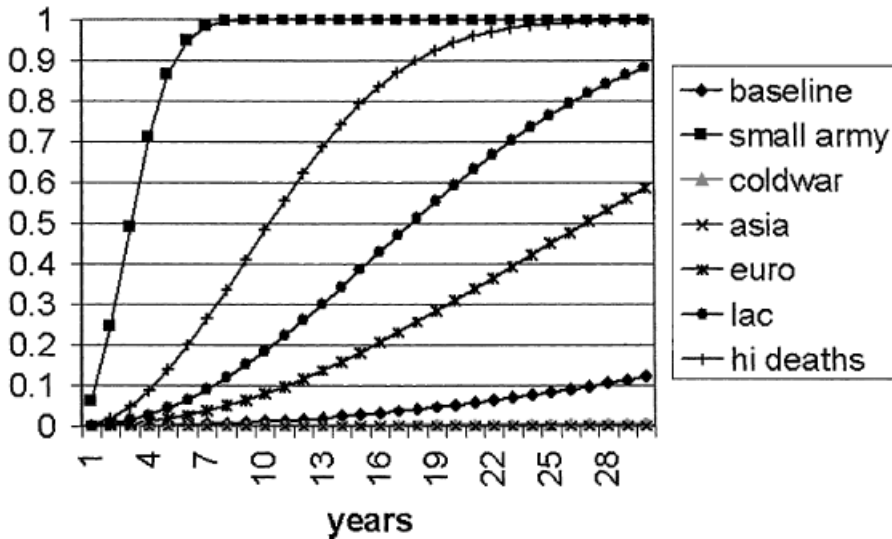


FIG. 1. Probability of UN Intervention under Various Conditions.

**FINDING 2:** The United Nations is significantly less likely to intervene in civil wars in countries with large government armies.

This was the strongest result in our analysis, in the sense that the size of government army variable produced the largest changes in the probability of a UN intervention. This result is illustrated in Figure 1. The line marked with squares represents the “small army” case. Instead of an army of 246,000 assumed in the baseline case, we assumed an army of only 100,000. The standard error of the government army variable is approximately 330,000 so this is a change of less than one-half of a standard error from the baseline case. The effects of this relatively small change are profound. The probability that the UN would intervene in the conflict in the ninth year given that it had not intervened up to that point is virtually one whereas the probability that the UN would intervene in the baseline case in that year is only about 1 percent. We interpret these results to mean that strong states are less likely to welcome UN intervention in their internal affairs, and the UN, for reasons of cost and risk, is much less willing to send troops to a country with large armed forces without that country’s permission.

This result is not simply due to the fact the UN avoids missions in large countries, and large countries happen to have large armies. In column 2 of Table 2 we included a measure of each countries’ population in millions. The coefficient is negative, suggesting that the UN has a slight bias against large countries, but it is not at all significant. Meanwhile, the coefficient on size of government army and its statistical significance changed little as a result of the inclusion of the population variable. The UN seems to care more about the military might than the size of the countries in which it intervenes.

**FINDING 3:** The probability of a UN intervention in a given war increases as the war drags on.

This finding is shown by the estimated value of the shape parameter  $p$ . A value of that parameter greater than one implies that UN interventions occur with an increasing hazard rate. The parameter in all our post–Cold War sample results is greater than two and significantly different from one at high levels. For example

the estimate of  $p$  in our baseline specification in column 1 of Table 2 implies that the UN has roughly a twenty-five times higher rate of intervening in a war after ten years than after one year, other things being equal. Obviously, this result is also illustrated by the fact that all the lines in Figure 1 are monotonically increasing.

**FINDING 4:** There is no evidence that the United Nations intervenes in secessionist conflicts at a different rate than it intervenes in attempts to take over control of the government.

In column 1 of Table 1, the coefficients on the two variables “Rebels’ Aims: Control of Government” and “Rebels’ Aims: Autonomy” are very similar in magnitude, and neither is significantly different from zero. The UN does not seem to intervene in secessionist movements at a higher or lower rate than in civil wars aimed at control of the central government. The two coefficients continue to be at very low statistical significance in column 2 for which the insignificant variable—“Former colony of a permanent member”—is removed. In column 3, for which we dropped “Rebels’ Aims: Control of Government” and used only “Rebels’ Aims Autonomy,” the coefficient on the latter still has very low significance levels. These results suggest that we can be quite confident that no strong relationship exists between the war aims of the rebels and the likelihood that the UN will intervene in a civil war.

**FINDING 5:** There is evidence of regional bias in the UN’s selection of missions, but the worst bias is against Asia, not Africa.

Africa is the residual category among our regional dummy variables; so if there were systematic bias against missions to Africa, we would expect the signs on all the regional dummy variables to be negative. Three of them are. The UN is consistently more likely to allocate missions to Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean than it is to Africa. The coefficient on the Middle East dummy is positive but not consistently significant across specifications. The coefficient on the Asia dummy, however, is negative and highly significant. Civil wars in Asia are the least likely of all the regions to receive UN help. For example, the civil war in Cambodia lasted thirteen years before the UN intervened. Our model predicts 13.1 years. Our estimates on the regional dummy variables tell us that the UN would have intervened in an identical war in Africa in less than a year (approximately 0.8 years), after about four months (roughly one-third of a year) if the war had been in Europe, and after only about three months (roughly one-quarter of a year) if the war had been in Latin America.

These regional effects are illustrated in Figure 1. Recall that the baseline case corresponds to a conflict in Africa. The line with the asterisk markers graphs the probability of a UN intervention in the given year for a European conflict with all other variables at the same values as those for the baseline case. Notice that the probability of a UN intervention in the fifteenth year of a conflict, given that one has not occurred until that point, is less than 5 percent in the baseline (African) case, whereas it is about 15 percent in the European case. Conflicts in Latin America and the Caribbean are even more likely to receive a mission than those in Europe, *ceteris paribus*, as shown by the line marked with circles. The Asia case is very difficult to see from Figure 1 because the probability of UN intervention remains very low (virtually indistinguishable from the horizontal axis) for the whole range of years. These three lines illustrate the rather striking differences in the propensity of the UN to intervene in each of the four regions.

**FINDING 6:** There is no strong evidence that the United Nations is more likely to intervene in a conflict when the combatants have negotiated a peace treaty, but this is probably due to multicollinearity.

This result is quite a surprise given the conventional wisdom that the UN *requires* a peace treaty before it will send in a peacekeeping mission. The variable is the proper sign in all specifications but simply not significant in any of them. A look at a contingency table like the one in Table 4 reveals that there is a significant *bivariate* relationship between the presence of a treaty and whether or not there was an intervention. A bivariate Weibull regression using only the treaty variable (not shown) also reveals a strong bivariate relationship in the right direction. The problem arises in the multivariate results. The culprit appears to be multicollinearity between the treaty and size of government army variable. The correlation coefficient between treaty and size of government army is  $-0.23$ . When size of government army is excluded from the equation, as we do in column 3 of Table 2, the standard error on the treaty coefficient falls by about a third, making the coefficient statistically significant. It would be premature to claim that the UN does not react positively to a negotiated peace treaty. These relatively weak results of the treaty variable are due to correlation between treaty and size of government army and a small sample size.

TABLE 4. Bivariate Relationship between Treaty and Intervention

	Treaty	No Treaty
Intervention	16	3
No Intervention	11	30

**FINDING 7:** There is no evidence that the United Nations intervenes more in countries with high primary commodity exports.

In fact, the coefficient on primary commodity exports was the wrong sign. Clearly we can reject the hypothesis that the UN is intervening in some neocolonialist fashion because of permanent member interests in securing steady flows of raw materials.

**FINDING 8:** There is no strong evidence that the United Nations intervenes in democracies at a lower rate than it does in nondemocracies.

The coefficient on “Democracy” is negative, suggesting that the UN has a lower hazard rate for intervening in democracies, but the coefficient is significant in only one of the specifications in Table 1. A different measure of democracy, a five-year average of Ted Gurr’s democracy measure, produced even weaker results, so to save space we do not report them. These weak results, combined with the logical flaws inherent in the argument that produced this hypothesis, make us confident that we can reject the claim that the UN sends fewer missions to democracies.

**FINDING 9:** There is no evidence that the United Nations intervenes in former colonies of permanent members of the Security Council at a higher rate than it does in other areas.

In fact the coefficient on “Former permanent member colony” is negative in the specification in column 1 of Table 1. Because of its wrong sign and insignificance, we remove it from the analysis in the remaining specifications.

**FINDING 10:** The end of the Cold War had a profound effect on the UN’s propensity to conduct peacekeeping missions.

Obviously this result is no surprise. The coefficient on the “Cold War” variable tells us that conflicts that began during the Cold War had a significantly lower

hazard rate of UN intervention. The variable was highly significant in all of the specifications in Tables 1 and 2. Our estimates tell us that it would have been extraordinarily unlikely for a conflict like the one in Cambodia, with three million deaths, to last as long without UN intervention if it began in the post-Cold War era. Had that civil war begun in the post-Cold War era, our model predicts that the UN would have intervened in only 3.7 years rather than in the 13 years it actually took. This result is also shown in Figure 1. The line marked with triangles assumes the same variable values as the baseline case, except that the conflict began during the Cold War. The line follows the horizontal axis very closely showing that the probability that the UN would intervene in a conflict that began before the end of the Cold War was lower in any given year than a conflict that began after the end of the Cold War.

### Discussion

The results that we report here suggest an image of a UN that attempts to balance between dictates of power and concerns of principle. With regard to the latter, the UN seems to respond, other things being equal, to civil wars that involve the greatest human catastrophes. The number of deaths that a conflict produced was the most robust predictor of UN intervention across all our specifications. In making its decisions, however, the organization responds to basic power considerations—both in terms of the importance that the Security Council places on different regions and in its reluctance to intervene in states that have greater lethal capacity. The result is that the UN has not been evenhanded in how it responds to deaths. More people must die in Africa than in Europe, and even more must die in Asia than in Africa, before the UN will intervene. Furthermore, the UN does not intervene at the same rate in countries with large government armies. Our estimates indicate that civil wars in countries with just average size armies have very low probabilities of receiving a UN mission, even after several decades of conflict. Our findings suggest two further research questions: (1) What are the causes of regional bias in UN interventions, and (2) is there a differential quality of care among those cases in which the Security Council intervenes?

### Regional Bias

While it is understandable that the UN is loathe to become involved in civil wars in relatively powerful countries (measured by size of army), an interesting area of future research would be to try to understand why the regional differences exist. We can speculate that both supply- and demand-side reasons help explain the discrepancy. On the supply side, several answers suggest themselves. First, the permanent members, especially the United States, France, and the United Kingdom likely see wars in Europe, as opposed to wars in Africa, as more important to their vital security interests. Indeed, the single variable that clearly differentiates between explanations based on security interests of the permanent members as opposed to humanitarian interests is the location of the conflict. Just as plausibly, one can posit that these same members act in response to their own public opinion, and domestic demands for intervention are likely to be stronger when the wars are in Europe. This result may be attributable to the CNN effect or to the greater presence of immigrants from those countries, who then lobby for intervention. Or it could be that wars in Europe produce more asylum seekers to the major European powers, and hence a greater sense of urgency to terminate the war.

All these explanations sound plausible for the results comparing intervention in Europe as opposed to Africa, but they seem problematic for understanding the Asia result. Given the rising prominence of that region for the security interests of the

permanent members, as well as the increase in immigration from Asian countries to the United States and Europe, one would predict more interventions in Asia than Africa. It is possible that the answer lies in the demand side for intervention. During the Cold War, consent of warring states was viewed as a prerequisite for the deployment of a mission, and in the 1990s consent remained a key consideration in intervention decisions. One way of addressing the problem of regional bias would be to explore why Asian states that suffer from civil wars are less likely to provide consent for intervention than states in Africa in similar conditions. Our results suggest that a possible explanation for the greater proclivity of African states to consent to intervention may be their greater inability to resist pressures for intervention and to claim the prerogatives of sovereignty. A different answer might focus on regional norms and institutions. Whereas the Organization of African Unity gradually changed its stance in the 1990s toward conditional acceptance of interference in state sovereignty to encourage conflict resolution and war termination, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and states in the larger Asian region have consistently resisted the suggestion that humanitarian principles take precedence over state sovereignty and noninterference (Stedman 2001b).

### **Quality of Care**

Understanding where the UN intervenes in civil wars is only a first step in evaluating whether the organization lives up to its universal aspirations. A second question is whether the UN provides an equitable quality of care to the countries in which it intervenes. Whereas the first question is akin to evaluations of public health systems that focus on who is admitted for care, the second question is akin to evaluations of such systems in terms of the quality of care, once people are admitted into the system.

The results we have discussed so far suggest the patterns by which the UN allocates missions to civil conflicts. As a measure of the quality of the mission, we use the cost of the UN operation in millions of dollars. Table 5 reports summary statistics for this measure for all nineteen interventions in the postwar period and in various regional subsamples. The average cost of a mission in Europe is significantly higher than the cost of a mission in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, or the Middle East. Interestingly the one mission that the UN did conduct in Asia was also quite expensive.

The specifications in columns 3 and 4 of Table 3 use cost of operation as the dependent variable.<sup>8</sup> The tobit coefficients confirm some of the more important patterns we discussed above. As before, the UN seems to react strongly to the number of casualties. The UN spent more resources, other things being equal, on civil wars that had large numbers of casualties. The bias in favor of missions to Europe continues to be evident. The strong bias against Asia was no longer evident in these specifications, probably because the one mission that was sent to Asia was also quite expensive. Size of government army was less significant in these results, although using a log of government army (results not reported) did produce significant results.

Although these findings are preliminary, they suggest the need for further investigation into the question of quality of care in UN interventions. On the one

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<sup>8</sup>Again we need to interpret these results with caution because the data exhibit right censoring. That is, we have no measure of what the UN would have spent on missions in wars that ended without an intervention had those wars continued. Furthermore, the data in this case are also *left* censored, not in time, but in the different sense that the UN could not spend less than zero dollars on a mission. As such, all missions in which the UN did not intervene take on the same value even though some may have been less a priority for the organization than others. To combat this latter form of censoring, we estimated the results using tobit, which controls for the left censoring problem.



TABLE 5. Summary Statistics on Operations Cost by Region

	Observed	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Full Sample	19	591.44	1101.53	4.57	4642.83
Africa	8	480.24	5550.42	16.40	1686.42
Europe	3	1583.66	2649.45	27.04	4642.83
Asia	1	1620.96	—	1620.96	1620.96
Latin America & Caribbean	5	196.07	185.16	4.57	443.41
Middle East	2	21.55	12.99	12.37	30.74

hand, using UN resources as a proxy for quality is misleading, as each of the cases of intervention receive supplementary resources from regional organizations and member states. In the case of Bosnia, for example, the resources provided directly by the United States and the European Union dwarf the funds directly allocated by the UN. On the other hand, the fact that the European cases are much more likely to receive dramatic supplements by member states should raise greater concern about discrepant levels of UN funding by region. In either case, such an investigation would have to address the possibility that missions in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean cost less simply because the missions in those regions required fewer resources.

### Conclusion

By examining where and when the UN sends peace missions, our research provides important evidence to gauge whether the institution is fulfilling its humanitarian and security missions, and what biases it shows in attempting to live up to its mandate. The results contain good news and bad news. The UN is probably more sensitive to its humanitarian mission than it is given credit for, but its behavior confirms the claims by many critics inside and outside the organization that it shows distinct biases toward different regions and regimes.

Our findings present fundamental problems for an institution that has pledged to uphold universal norms and especially for its current secretary general, Kofi Annan, who argues that humanitarian intervention to stop horrific atrocities and abuses, whether they be the result of civil war or governmental policy, should be a universal imperative. The results suggest that considerations of power are at least as important as considerations of sovereignty in constraining the UN's universalism.

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