

International treaties do not decrease VEO activity.

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General Description of the Literature:

Cooperation on anti-terrorism conceivably should lower VEO activity. This can be through multilateral or bilateral treaties. Examples of the former include the myriad UN conventions (e.g., conventions related to hijackings). Examples of the latter include a 50-year agreement between France and the UK signed in November 2010 that includes language to cooperate on anti-terrorism measures (see Siddique 2010). Enders, Sandler and Cauley (1990) find no evidence of a long- or short-term reduction in terrorism as a result of international conventions on terrorism. They note that the conventions lack enforcement capacity.

Detailed Analyses

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Summary of Relevant Empirical Evidence: This summary assumes the hypothesis refers to multilateral as opposed to bilateral treaties. Enders, Sandler and Cauley (1990) use interrupted time-series methods to ascertain the effect of UN conventions. As mentioned above they find no supporting evidence thus confirming the hypothesis. They use a prisoner's dilemma dynamic to explain the finding. Siddique (2010) mentions an example of a bilateral treaty but does not present empirical evidence. Ender et al. note that since multilateral agreements lack a central mechanism for enforcement, more attention should be given to bilateral agreements where enforcement is more likely to obtain.

Empirical Support Score: 7 = Single, high-quality quantitative analysis supporting the hypothesis.

Applicability to Influencing VEOs: This finding is applicable to the extent it informs of what very probably does not work to reduce VEO activity.

Applicability Score: Direct: At least some of the empirical results directly concern the context of influencing VEOs.

Bibliography:

Enders, Walt, Todd Sandler, and Jon Cauley. 1990. "UN Conventions, Technology and Retaliation in the Fight against Terrorism: An Econometric Evaluation." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 2(1): 83-105.

Siddique, Haroon. 2010. "UK-France Treaties Will Help Defeat Terrorism, says David Cameron." *The Guardian*, November 2. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/nov/02/uk-france-treaties-terrorism-america>.