# 1NR---DRR---Round 4

NEG: 6:06

AFF: 12:08

## FDI DA

### 2NC---OV---Africa

#### Attacks on oil facilities escalate and draw in the U.S. and great powers

Doran 20 [Charles F. Doran, Professor of International Relations and director of the Global Theory and History Program and the International Political Economy Program at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, “World Oil Security on a Precipice,” Brown Journal of World Affairs, 26(2), Spring/Summer 2020, pp.57-74, HeinOnline]

By attacking a major Saudi oil facility at Abqaiq on 13 September 2019, Iran established a new norm regarding oil security. Now, no oil field, pipeline, refinery, supertanker, or port facility is free from internecine warfare between oil-producing (OPEC) governments. Ironically, in attempting to defend a country from supply interruption, the United States risks worsening the magnitude and scope of that supply interruption rather than preventing its occurrence. In the era of highly accurate drones and missiles, the old oil field motto "all oil comes from a single barrel" has taken on a newly negative connotation. World oil stability rests on a precipice.

Both exporters and importers suffer from supply interruption, although perhaps not equally, universally, or simultaneously. Supply interruption may benefit those who have oil to sell through resultant oil price increases if their own exports have not been interrupted. The same cannot be said for buyers who, unless they are energy speculators on the futures market, ardently want to prevent supply interruption and the virtually certain subsequent (though sometimes not lasting) increase in price.

Since some 70 percent of the exportable oil in the world comes from a single place-the Persian Gulf-political stability in the Gulf remains a source of anxiety for energy consumers. The emphasis here is on oil exports: oil that has been made available to the global marketplace. This oil has a large, immediate, and global economic and political impact on price and productivity in the overall energy market.

But today's energy security tilts on an edge.' With Iran's attack on the major processing facilities of another exporter government, the old rule of interdependence within the Organization of Oil Exporting Countries (OPEC) ended.2 Through this September 2019 attack-possibly conducted in combination with Shia militias-Iran clearly signaled that it is now bent on striking energy targets directly using drones and highly accurate missiles. Why not, since it assumes it will benefit from the resulting price increases? But Iran's actions have had dangerous consequences.

Deterrence is faltering. In attempting to fend off terrorist attacks, those who want to uphold world order may end up destroying the very pipelines, refineries, processing facilities, ports, tankers, and oil fields that they are working to defend. Hostilities and the capabilities for force projection have reached a point that sharply heightens the risk of serious future supply disruption.

In the following sections, I will justify this claim by: 1) tracing the expansion of recent conflict in the Gulf region, 2) rejecting the purported danger of selective embargoes, 3) explaining how war escalates in the Gulf region, 4) noting China's quite different strategy vis-a-vis conflict in the Gulf, 5) examining the paradoxes of energy crisis, and 6) showing how an Iranian nuclear weapon would likely worsen the prospects for political stability in the region.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CONFLICT IN THE GULF REGION

Every region has a history of conflict that is heavily influenced by global historical trends. Global conflict changed dramatically after 1945 when, under bipolarity, a tenuous but genuine peace prevailed. In contrast, regional conflict has its own sources and own identity.3 The Persian Gulf conflict worsened because of the centrality of its oil and natural gas in the global market as well as a resurfacing of the centuries-old civil war between the Sunni and the Shia Muslim sects. 4

To understand the underlying causes of these conflicts, we must remind ourselves of political and cultural basics. While Iran is predominantly Persian and Shia, Iraq is a more complex composite of Sunni, Shia, Kurdish, and Christian communities with the Shia being by far the most numerous.5 Under Saddam Hussein, the Sunni Baathist Party ruled by brutal repression.

The October War of 1973 between the Arab states and Israel ended one conflict era and began another. A principal explanation is that Israel's military arsenal of approximately 100 nuclear weapons, a nuclear submarine, and accurate missile capacities simply overwhelmed the ability of the Arab states to project force. Palestinian grievances continued with less support from the Arab states as conflict somewhat changed direction and spread across other areas of the Persian Gulf region.

Attempting to fend the larger Iran off, Iraq fought an eight-year war (1980-1988) against Iran. But Iran halted Iraq's advance a few feet from where the war had begun.6

Two years later, on 2 August 1990, Saddam invaded the tiny, oil-rich state of Kuwait on its southern border, seeking to obtain Kuwait's OPEC share of oil production in order to pay the debts Iraq had incurred in the eight-year war with Iran. 7 George H.W. Bush, with his considerable knowledge of world politics and of the oil business, understood that Saddam's next step could have been to intimidate Saudi Arabia, thereby controlling the world price for oil. In the First Gulf War, which began on 28 February 1991, the United States and its allies expelled Iraq from Kuwait but left Saddam in power in Baghdad. George H.W. Bush did not want to replace Saddam and get involved in the quagmire of domestic Iraqi politics.

In contrast, in the Second Gulf War a decade later, George W. Bush forced Saddam out of Baghdad militarily on 20 March 2003, entangling the United States in a conflict that lasted until 18 December 2011.8 Moreover, with the demise of Iraq as a strong (though problematic) balancing force, Iran once again began to threaten the region.

These choices had profound strategic implications. After the Second Gulf War, the regional balance of power fundamentally shifted, and energy politics were threatened from a new direction. With a far larger population than any of the other states in the region, Iran continued to hegemonize. As epitomized by the eight-year Iraq-Iran War, Iraq and Iran were counterpoises. 9 However, once Saddam was gone and in the absence of any strong central government for Iraq, a political vacuum emerged. The United States obligingly, if quite naively, stepped in virtually alone, believing it could fill the empty political vessel that was Iraq without immense cost.

With the defeat of the Russian forces in Afghanistan, the United States was drawn into the vacuum there as well. Suddenly, the United States found itself intermediating among Pakistan, India, Russia, and China on the contested turf of the warlord Afghanistan region, where politics were still more splintered than in the Gulf Arab kingdoms.

The United States also began acting as an intermediary between the Sunni and the Shia populations in Iraq and regionally, most notably in its bitter fight against the Sunni-leaning ISIL. But with the apparent defeat of ISIL in 2019, the United States faced not peace and a unified Iraqi polity, but instead a set of warring Shia militias stoked by Iranian money and the casuistry of Qassem Suleimani. As of 2020, this is the outline of Persian Gulf politics into which the world oil issue has also been thrown.

ARE SELECTIVE OIL EMBARGOES POSSIBLE?

The first kind of energy conflict to consider occurred in the shadow cast by the attempted selective oil embargo of the United States and the Netherlands in 1973 and 1974. Central questions in such a case include how far the risk of a selective oil embargo extends, and regarding what threats. Does the new threat to energy supply now confronting the Gulf region mean, for example, that individual importing countries will be targeted for a selective embargo?

Following the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973, Arab oil producers attempted to punish the United States and the Netherlands for their purported (and indeed actual) support of Israel during the war through weapons re-supply. Ultimately, the selective oil embargo failed. These two countries could not be isolated from the larger world market. But by cutting production substantially, Arab oil producers realized that they could manipulate prices under the guise of a selective embargo. In the face of strong demand, the attempt at embargo abruptly drove up the global price for oil fourfold. Such was the beginning of the first so-called price revolution in oil and gas production.1

Interdependence in oil markets taught the world a lesson: massive oil or gas cutbacks cause significant collective price shocks. But isolated, selective price sanctions employed vis-h-vis individual countries are virtually impossible to implement. Oil tankers have a way of changing course mid-ocean toward the direction of the highest bidder.

Whether used against independence and white supremacy in Rhodesia, apartheid in South Africa, or the foreign policy orientation of the United States and the Netherlands in the October War, selective boycotts or embargoes focusing on individual countries have always failed. The oil producers cannot successfully isolate individual targets because all users in the world will be affected by a production cut; the price of gasoline everywhere is affected by the reduction of supply." OPEC quickly learned the limits of this form of power on the world stage.

HOW TO TRIGGER A REALLY BIG WAR

While selective embargoes are not a threat, the emergent threat to world energy security posed by the new drone and missile technology is very real and intimidating.

The September 2019 attack on an oil processing unit in Abqaiq drove the global price of crude oil up by over $10 per barrel-one-sixth of its value-in just one day. The attack knocked out 5 million barrels of Saudi production, the equivalent of 5 percent of world crude oil consumption. Had the Saudis not been able to draw down the equivalent of this loss from storage, the effect of the supply disruption would have been even greater and far more enduring. In a tighter market, more extensive destruction could close off necessary production for months, driving prices skywards.

Other threats have challenged world oil markets even more severely. Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait caused the oil markets to jump 20 percent in a single day. War in the Persian Gulf could generate even more striking and enduring impacts on global commerce and political stability inside and outside the Middle East. A deeper examination of the Abqaiq attack reveals how the prospect of a Persian Gulf war might rock the global energy market.

PROBING IRAN'S POLITICAL MOTIVATIONS

Fighting in Yemen, the Iran-backed Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for the 2019 attack; however, this assertion was a convenient fiction. According to UN monitors, the direction of the attack was from the North or Northwest-that is, from Iranian territory, or territory in lraq where Iranian sympathizers operate, not from the South where Yemen is located. 12 The training and sophistication that would have been necessary to operate this weaponry was beyond the Houthi skill level at this time.13 As a result, Iran was the likely perpetrator.

If Iran was the mastermind and perpetrator of this attack, as the United States government maintains and as Saudi Arabia asserts, then what was Iran's motivation?

First, since oil exports comprise a massive proportion of Iran's total GDP, a large price increase would likely have boosted the Iranian economy. Not only would the regime in Tehran have enjoyed the internal popularity that it seeks in the midst of street protests and other domestic political opposition, but a large influx of funds could also have offset its growing financial deficits. The domestic political and economic explanations appear to be important justifications for this brash and carefully planned attack on Saudi oil export capacity.

Second, Iran may have hoped to signal to other states inside and outside the region that the United States was an unreliable defense partner for the Persian Gulf oil exporters. 4 Did Iran believe it was able to demonstrate that the United States could not protect Saudi Arabia, as some of the contemporaneous reportage suggested? Much depends upon what "protection" entails. It is one thing to fail to stop a single physical attack; it is quite another to demonstrate that the overall security of the Kingdom is imperiled.

Ostensibly, Iran sought to end U.S. sanctions. Instead, the attack induced the United States to reinforce the economic sanctions.

If a demonstration of Saudi vulnerability was Iran's primary motivation at a time when the U.S. Fifth Fleet was anchored in Bahrain, what did Iran think other states would regard as an alternative to the current defense arrangement? Who or what would replace the United States? Iran was scarcely a candidate to defend the status quo. Iran continues to immerse itself in disputes throughout the Arab world, alienating the Sunni and Wahabi members of the Arab community. Did Tehran believe that anyone would imagine that a more benign or pacific Iran would follow this violence?

Third, was Iran trying to unseat Saudi Arabia inside OPEC? Perhaps Iran was casting itself as an alternative leader for the organization and a better partner, alongside Russia, to manage global oil and gas matters. The problem with this alleged motivation for the attack on the Saudi oil facilities is that it defies the logic of OPEC leadership. As former Saudi Petroleum Minister Ahmed Zaki Yamani put the matter, power in OPEC is measured by "how many barrels of oil you can bring to the bargaining table."' 5 Iran could at best pump only a fraction of the oil that Saudi Arabia brings to this table.

Regardless of Iran's motivations, this attack is likely to induce a much greater U.S. troop presence in the area.16

HOW MUCH IS AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER WORTH?

Before he was killed by a U.S. drone attack near the Baghdad airport on 2 January 2020, Major General Qassim Suleimani, commander of both the Iranian Quds Force and the Revolutionary Guards, had publicly threatened to attack a U.S. aircraft carrier. The German and British governments did mention the many "provocations" for which Suleimani was responsible.17 But the killing of the mastermind of so many plots to unsettle Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and even Saudi Arabia and Israel, came as a shock even to a careful reader of Middle East politics.18

Suleimani's threat to sink a U.S. aircraft carrier demonstrates the degree to which military provocations involving energy security have escalated. In response to Suleimani's death, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei promised to intensify the dispute still further, likely through harassment and scattered attacks, but potentially to the brink of full-scale war.

Suppose that a U.S. aircraft carrier was attacked as part of a larger assault on U.S. naval defenses in the Gulf. How should the United States respond? Certainly, the response would involve military and naval targets in the Gulf and inside Iran. The problem then would be how to avoid hitting energy installations on either side of the Gulf. Violence could easily start in Iraq or spread there, with the oil fields and port facilities providing easy targets. Once one country's oil facilities become a target, as in the Iraq-Iran War with regard to Gulf shipping, those of another country may either be taken hostage or find themselves under attack. No natural limits for this type of military exchange exist. Energy facilities are particularly vulnerable because they cannot readily be defended against drones and missiles.

It is a tactical error to leave an aircraft carrier, notwithstanding its marvelous defenses and awesome firepower, bottled up in the narrow confines of the Persian Gulf and anchored at Bahrain or the United Arab Emirates. The United States ought to reposition this aircraft carrier to the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia or a similar location, where it would have more room to maneuver, be less vulnerable to a comparatively primitive, massed attack, and still retain the capacity to hit all potential targets.

President Trump faced political criticism in the United States for not mounting an immediate military response to the Iranian destruction of the Saudi processing facilities. The principal reason for this hesitation is likely that he feared a counterattack from Iran, not against a U.S. aircraft carrier but against oil fields in the Persian Gulf.

The classic issue concerning sub-conventional warfare (e.g., counterterrorism) is that it can occur in a nuclear setting because nuclear weapons are of little help in ferreting out small and widely dispersed adversaries. This is also true of energy warfare. Modern weapons technology, combining satellites, drones, and smart bombs, narrows the gap between conventional and sub-conventional warfare, but not between conventional and nuclear warfare. Yet the hesitance to cross the nuclear threshold in a world of proliferating nuclear weapons, for very solid normative and strategic reasons, can become a stimulus to sophisticated conventional attacks on energy facilities, causing massive supply disruption.

CHINA'S STRATEGY

Iran and Afghanistan are important links in the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. They are both mineral-rich countries. In neo-mercantilist fashion, China wants to tie up Iran's natural gas and Afghanistan's vast mineral cornucopia as soon as opportunity permits-meaning as soon as the United States stabilizes these regions or pulls out of them.

China's strategy is quite different from that of the United States. China's autocratic regime does not care for democracy or liberal free trade. For example, despite U.S. efforts to tamp down the war in Afghanistan, China continued selling arms to the Taliban. China will accept any political regime in either country that can effectively wield absolute political control. Then, China will suborn the regime economically by sealing commercial deals that corrupt governments will be unlikely to resist. China's bold, though not particularly feasible, dream is to ultimately replace the United States as the arbiter of energy security in the Persian Gulf and, in future decades, globally.19

As President Trump understands the situation, despite energy interdependence, the United States must avoid the trap of shouldering all the human and financial costs of ensuring Persian Gulf energy security, while enjoying few of the direct commercial and financial gains. Indeed, it is the United States' possible hesitance to continue to provide the defense necessary to keep the oil flowing that could precipitate the worst supply disruptions. As the largest oil importer in the world, China would become the greatest loser of all.

HOW WAR BECOMES MAJOR

Because oil fields, tankers, and pipelines are difficult to defend, Iran will be tempted to attack these targets first in an energy conflict. If, instead, the U.S. naval presence in Bahrain was the initial military target of an Iranian assault, nearby oil facilities might be collateral damage.

About 21 million barrels of oil transit the Gulf on average each day.20 This volume of energy amounts to approximately 21 percent of the total liquids consumed worldwide. About one third of the traded seaborne volume of crude oil and about one-quarter of the traded liquified natural gas passes through the Strait of Hormuz.

From a naval perspective, Iran might try to close the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz, thereby cutting off traffic through the Strait where the bulk of the energy trade must pass. At its narrowest point, two channels run parallel to one another, each about a mile wide. One channel handles incoming maritime and naval traffic, while the other handles outgoing traffic. By sinking a supertanker in either of these channels, shipping would come to a virtual standstill. In addition, Iran has made no secret of its plan to scatter mines along the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz in the event of war, further hindering all traffic.

If the oil facilities of Iraq, Kuwait, the U.A.E., and Saudi Arabia were targeted as part of a larger Iranian assault, it is highly likely that either the United States or one or more of these governments would be induced to respond in kind by attacking Iranian energy facilities.

The U.S. Fifth Fleet, in part anchored in Bahrain, includes two carriers, 20 ships, 103 strike aircraft, and approximately 20,000 sailors and marines.21 Other ships, including high-speed cruisers, have been re-located from ports in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere.

The principal thrust of an Iranian attack would likely be a crowd of small patrol boats armed with powerful and quite accurate missiles and torpedoes. Simulations have examined possible outcomes. A U.S. response would certainly involve bombing from the air. Iran would attempt to move its army into place, although a U.S. counterattack from the air would make this action difficult to execute.

Nonetheless, the net result of this carnage would be oil fields, facilities, shipping, and pipelines in ruins on both sides of the Gulf, with a large share of the exportable oil and gas left as a casualty. China, India, Japan, South Korea, and much of Southeast Asia-some of the largest importers of oil and gas would certainly pay a price, although a huge rise in the market price of oil and gas would end up punishing all consumers.

#### Independently, decline in FDI makes a litany of conflict vectors more likely to escalate including CBRN, cyber, resource, and ethnic conflicts

Cartwright 15 [Gen. (Ret.) James E. Cartwright, Chair of the Global Zero Commission on Nuclear Risk Reduction, Chair in Defense Policy Studies, Center for Strategic and International Studies, former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; “De-Alerting and Stabilizing the World’s Nuclear Force Postures,” Global Zero Commission on Nuclear Risk Reduction, April 2015, p.15-16, http://www.globalzero.org/files/global\_zero\_commission\_on\_nuclear\_risk\_reduction\_report.pdf]

IV. STILL AN ANARCHIC INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM In the post-Cold War era it seems almost unimaginable that states could become embroiled in confrontations that escalate to the level of nuclear brinksmanship or worse. The growing interconnectedness and interdependencies among nations in the 21st century have made major conventional war extremely costly and nuclear war unthinkable. These thickening sinews of international stability include instantaneous worldwide communications and information transfer, rapidly growing trade, massive flows of people and corporations across national boundaries, and the dramatic rise of direct foreign investment and global debt underwriting. Economic clout increasingly overshadows military might as the currency of power. And an expanding constellation of electoral democracies (tripling in number since the 1970s and growing from 70 to 125 during the past 25 years)8 has emerged. History shows that democracies do not wage war with each other. Despite counter-globalization trends in some isolated cases – notably, the partial re-nationalization and de-globalization in evidence in Russian state capitalism and in its societal introversion, and the pre-globalization stasis of the North Korean hermit kingdom – as well as the ebbing of democracy in a dozen key nations, the tide of history is heading inexorably toward greater integration of the 195 sovereign nations in the world. And this tide is ineluctably eroding the role of the threat of nuclear weapons use or actual use in arbitrating the outcome of inter-state confict.

Further marginalizing this waning role are the elusive threats to international security emerging from the same dynamics of globalization. Globalization allows increasingly lethal technologies to propagate around the world – spreading even to insular states like North Korea (recipient of nuclear technology transfers), failing states like Libya (recipient of nuclear transfers before imploding during the Arab Spring) and sub-state groups like Hamas (recipient of technologies for building rockets with sufficient range to assault Tel Aviv). The world is bracing for even worse: the inevitable acquisition of truly deadly biological pathogens or nuclear weapons by non-state actors, enabling even small groups of individuals to cause mass casualties.

The world’s nuclear stockpile offers scant defense against the spread and use of virulent weapons by imploding states and fanatical terrorists. It also offers scant political or military leverage over nuclear proliferation, cyber warfare threats, or nuclear, chemical, and biological terrorism. In many respects the world’s 16,000 nuclear weapons create the problem, not the solution to these global ills. They do not solve the problem of loose nukes falling into the hands of terrorists, for example. In fact the world’s far-flung global stockpile creates the opportunity for diversion, theft, and capture in the first place. The 1,800 out of the 16,000 poised for prompt launch do not deter anonymous cyber strikes, but they do offer a tempting target for cyber warriors bent on infiltrating the launch circuits and playing havoc.

Although globalization has diminished the role of nuclear weapons in conflict prevention and resolution, the risk of the outbreak of nuclear conflict has not decreased proportionally. Globalization has not so much lowered the risk as raised the stakes if nations with entangled economies and peoples fall victim to nuclear attack. The use of even a small number of weapons – tens to hundreds out of the 16,000 in the world arsenal – would cause massive damage across the globe as well as in the belligerent countries. It would produce more widespread and longer-term devastation in a shorter period of time than ever before in history. Billions of lives hang in the balance. And although the dire economic, environmental, health and other humanitarian consequences of such conflict create powerful incentives to avoid it, the centrifugal forces of an anarchic international system could still overpower the centripetal forces of restraint.

Mutual assured destruction on a multinational scale may substantially subdue the temptations of many potential aggressors, but it cannot guarantee their non-use. Threatening severe punitive retaliation to attack erects only psychological barriers to nation-state aggression (as long as rational nuclear authorities remain in firm control, a herculean assumption in some situations). It does not physically block it. Certainly non-state actors, such as terrorists on suicide bombing missions, will not be deterred and little stands in the way of detonating a nuclear weapon that fell into their hands. As long as nuclear weapons exist, their use simply cannot be ruled out, even among nation states.

A crisis pitting the nuclear powers against each other in dangerous brinksmanship could flare up at any time in any number of hotspots around the world. Nuclear crisis management being an imperfect science and the powers being inexperienced in this arena, a crisis today could rapidly become unmanageable and escalate. In the fog of conflict, the use of nuclear weapons by accident or design becomes more likely.

V. ESCALATION: GENERAL RISK FACTORS

Of the countries that have the dubious distinction today of possessing nuclear arsenals and planning for their use, a number of them or their close allies are at loggerheads on a regular basis. Although many are bound by common interests, they often also share a history of belligerence, clashing over borders, land, adjacent seas, religion, ethnicity, and ideology. Their leaders are not above stoking the enmity with nationalistic rhetoric, often for cynical domestic reasons. Economic interests at the heart of globalization drive nations together, and sometimes apart. Competition for scarce natural resources is spawning acrimony and shadowboxing over access to and ownership of oil and mineral deposits.9 In today’s multi-polar world, keeping a lid on these smoldering hostilities is harder than it used to be in the bipolar world of the Cold War, when two powerful blocs placed high value on stability.

A. THE NUCLEAR DEFAULT BIND

The potential for nuclear escalation stems in part from a shortage of tools for ending a crisis through diplomacy, and for securing a truce on conventional conflict. Nations may be tempted to reach for nuclear weapons for want of alternatives. Put differently, there are too few good options for filling two critical gaps in the spectrum of hostilities between opposing states: (i) the gap between crisis diplomacy and conventional conflict, and (ii) the gap between conventional and nuclear conflict. A confrontation could quickly exhaust diplomatic options and escalate to conventional military operations, and then it could quickly exhaust conventional options, leaving decision-makers in a bind: concede or escalate. If their national sovereignty is in jeopardy, and facing a paucity of non-nuclear tools, the nuclear option may be hard to resist. It could be the only remaining choice, however excruciating its election may be.

### 2NC---T/Case

Advantage 1

1---disease---

2---food---

3---critical infrastructure---

Advantage 2

Economy---

### 2NC---Link T/C

#### Link alone turns the case---unions securing restrictions on FDI require concessions that undermine their overall bargaining power

Owen 15 [Erica Owen, Ph.D. in political science from the University of Minnesota, Assistant Professor at Texas A&M University (2011-2018), “The Political Power of Organized Labor and the Politics of Foreign Direct Investment in Developed Democracies,” Comparative Political Studies Journal, Vol. 48, Issue 13, SagePub via MSU libraries]

Conclusion

This article examines the ability of organized labor to influence formal restrictions on inward FDI. I argue that labor in the aggregate is likely to be protectionist and therefore will favor restrictions on inward FDI. However, to influence policy in its preferred direction, labor must not only have effective political weight relative to other actors but also a unified policy position. Thus, the share of the labor force that is unionized and also the structure of union membership shape the political influence of organized labor on FDI policy.

I find that the effect of union density on formal restrictions is positive and increasing across the level of union concentration. An increase in union density leads to higher restrictions on investment at high levels of union concentration, in analyses at both the country and sector level. In addition, I find a similar pattern in the analysis of de facto openness: Controlling for the level of formal restrictions, the marginal effect of union density is negative and statistically significant at high levels of concentration, suggesting that organized labor is able to directly influence actual FDI flows by decreasing openness.

This article addresses two weaknesses in the existing literature. First, the theory of distributional consequences offers an explanation for protectionist labor sentiments toward the activity of foreign multinationals that cannot be explained by existing theories. Second, by examining how organized labor determines the influence of labor interests on policy outcomes, the findings suggest that organized labor is an important determinant of the political power of labor and its influence on policy outcomes.

Multinationals are increasingly important actors in the international system. The ability of multinationals to relocate production overseas likely has negative implications for the bargaining power of labor in the econ omy, and the political influence of labor in the political arena. Cases of concession bargaining in the EU and elsewhere suggest that mobile firms are able to extract concessions from labor unions in exchange for a promise not to relocate. Further research should examine how and whether labor is able to restrict outward FDI and the ability of multinationals to relocate production.

### 2NC---Link

#### CBRs generate political and statutory momentum for future protection, creating a doom loop for FDI

Messerschmidt et al. 23 [Luca Messerschmidt, Economic Researcher at the Technical University of Munich; and Nicole Janz, independent researcher, “Unravelling the ‘Race to the Bottom’ Argument: Foreign Direct Investment and Different Types of Labour Rights,” World Development, vol. 161]

In contrast, governments might be less inclined to protect other labour rights. Due to a lack of data, we know little about FDI and working conditions such as working time, overtime pay, annual leave, fair contracts or dismissal protections. Economists have described such standards as ‘cash’ standards to highlight that they “directly affect labour costs” (Elliott & Freeman, 2003, 13) and thus, also potentially affect a country’s competitiveness for trade and FDI. When governments legally protect these rights, they might impose immediate and direct costs for foreign investors, who now face a less flexible business environment. It is not up to employees themselves to bargain or strike for these rights, although they can if implementation is lax, but the government sets clear regulation that affects all businesses. The labour rights literature has therefore labelled working conditions as ‘outcome’ rights because they dictate how much employers must invest into their workers to create certain outcomes (even if employees themselves are unable or unwilling to fight for these rights).

Let’s consider one type of outcome labour rights: adequate working time. Governments can set limit for workers’ daily and weekly working hours, require that businesses allow adequate breaks or pay annual holiday. Governments can also forbid excessive overtime hours to protect workers’ safety and health, and mandate adequate overtime premia (Davies & Voy, 2009, 97). Such working time regulations directly limit businesses’ flexibility and raise labour cost. Another example is the protection against unfair dismissal. Governments can regulate the length of the notice period, redundancy compensation, and impose other constraints on dismissal, which incurs costs for foreign investors as they cannot adjust their workforce quickly and flexibly. A third outcome right is the regulation of contracts. This sounds like a technicality, but regulating workers’ contracts and the rights of full and part-time employees as well as occasional temporary workers has direct effects on labour cost for firms. ‘Typical’ working contracts are defined as full-time contracts, where workers are employed with a single employer and enjoy full employee rights such as maternity leave or sick pay in a country (which cost money). A well-known loophole to evade labour law has been the use of ‘atypical’ workers. It is an increasingly widespread practice of governments to allow flexible, zero–hour or temporary contracts which limit the benefits and rights of workers, such as sick pay or maternity leave. Governments that want to keep labour cost low can allow firms to maintain a large and flexible portion of their workforce on never-ending, cheap atypical contracts, which has been criticised by labour activists in the past (Davies & Voy, 2009, 83). It is not surprising that developing and especially least developed countries (LDCs) which heavily depend on foreign capital hesitate to improve regulation for outcome labour rights (Elliott & Freeman, 2003, 9).

<<TEXT CONDENSED, NONE OMITTED>>

There is little cross-country evidence about FDI’s effects on these labour rights due to a lack of comparable data. However, there is ample anecdotal evidence that governments, if they were to decrease regulation on labour rights, they are likely to hit more expensive outcome rights first. For example, Murillo (2005) points out that the deregulatory reforms in Latin American countries in the 1980s and 1990s mostly affected the laws that protected working conditions, while deregulation of collective labour rights was far less common. Murillo found this to be “consistent with economic pressures because the former has a more direct impact on labour costs than the latter” Murillo (2005) p. 12. Out of this general trend, three countries showed remarkable changes in their labour standards: Colombia and Guatemala (in the early 1990s), and Panama (in the late 1990s), introduced better collective labour rights protection while, during the exact same period, deregulating the protection of workers’ conditions. Murillo (2005) concluded that, when faced with economic pressures, working conditions in Latin America seemed to be the first to suffer from the ’race to the bottom’ because they were more costly for businesses. We therefore propose that the ‘race to the bottom’ theory applies in particular to outcome labour rights such as the regulation of working conditions, rather than to collective rights. Hypothesis 2: FDI is connected to worse protection of outcome labour standards such as working hours, dismissal rights, and fair contracts. It should be noted that in our theory emphasize de jure labour standards, i.e. laws and regulations, rather than rights protection in practice, as we investigate the regulatory race to the bottom argument. Labour regulations are a crucial component in businesses’ decisions about investment locations as they indicate the legal context and business environment in which firms operate (Berliner et al., 2015). 3. Data and methods 3.1. Dependent variable We measure the legal protection of a range of labour rights categories, distinguishing between collective labour standards (worker representation and industrial action rights) versus outcome standards (working hours, dismissal rights, and fair contracts). Our analysis includes annual observations from up to 75 developing countries between 1982 and 2010. To construct our dependent variable, we use the Labour Regulation Index (LRI) database from the Centre for Business Research at Cambridge University (Adams et al., 2017).3 The database provides detailed information on the legal protection of labour standards around the world. It originally consists of 40 separate indicators, each reflecting an aspect of labour law per country and year.4 The database is increasingly used in legal studies and economics, e.g. to assess the impact of employment protection legislation on economic outcomes (Adams et al., 2019, Ferreiro and Gomez, 2019, Blanton and Peksen, 2019). We use the 40 indicators to create a labour standards measure on three levels of aggregation (see Table 1). First, we grouped the 40 raw items into five separate categories to create the following variables: (1) fair working contracts, (2) adequate working time, (3) dismissal protections, (4) collective worker representation, or (5) industrial action rights (see Level 3 in Table 1). Each of these categories was built from between seven and nine original items that relate to particular aspects of labour rights. Following the recommendation from the Centre for Business Research, we took the average rather than creating an additive measure, because some of the variables contain more items than others. A full list of the 40 items, and how we grouped them into our variables, can be found in the Appendix (Table A.2). Second, since we are particularly interested in collective versus outcome rights, we use these five variables to build two overarching variables –collective rights versus outcome rights – which allow us to examine if there is an overall difference between these different types of rights as proposed in Hypothesis 1and 2. The collective rights variable is the average of collective worker representation and industrial action rights. The outcome rights variable is the average of fair working contracts, adequate working time, and dismissal protections (see Level 2 in Table 1). Third, we combine all categories into one overall labour standards index, again by taking the average, which allows us to assess overall effects and compare these with other studies on labour rights (see Level 1 in Table 1). We will enter our labour rights measure as dependent variables into our models at the three levels of aggregation separately. Since the five categories have not been examined separately in the FDI and labour rights literature, we describe here what each of them captures and which weights we applied (see also Table A.2 in the Appendix). Each of our labour standards variables is, as are the original indicators, scored between 0 and 1, whereby 1 denotes full protection; 0 no protection; and intermediate values in between 0 and 1 reflect differences in the strength of the respective laws per country-year. The variable working contracts captures if part-time, flexible and agency workers have the right to equal treatment similar to ‘typical’ workers with a permanent contract. The variable also includes the extent to which governments limit the use of fixed-term contracts in the first place, e.g. if fixed-term contracts are only allowed for work that is actually temporary by nature (e.g. maternity replacement), and if there is a maximum duration of fixed-term contracts before the employment is deemed to be permanent. The category working time measures different dimensions that regulate working time, such as the strength of the legal protection of annual leave and public holiday entitlements; the duration of the normal working week and day; limits to overtime and weekend working hours; and the payment of overtime premia.5 Fair dismissal includes the length and regulation of notice periods given to workers; redundancy compensation; and if there are any constraints on dismissal that hold employers to account if the dismissal was unjust. It also captures if there are rules for redundancy selection (e.g. if the employer must follow priority rules based on number of dependants of an employee). Collective worker representation includes the legal right to unionisation, the right to collective bargaining, and if employers have the legal duty to bargain with workers. It also captures if the law extends collective agreements to third parties, e.g. non-union members and if the law permits closed shops, gives unions or workers the right to nominate board-level directors in companies, and if works councils or enterprise committees have legal powers of co-decision making. Following a similar procedure conducted by Mosley & Uno (2007), we have weighted two of the seven raw indicators within this variable - the right to unionisation and the right to collective bargaining - with a factor of 2.5 to account for the relative importance governments granting these particular rights in the first place. 6 Industrial action rights contain the right to industrial action in general, and more specifically what types of strikes are allowed. For example, if the government grants the right to unofficial industrial action (e.g. ’wildcat’ strikes) or if it allows strikes over political issues. The variable also captures legal restrictions on running strikes, such as a notification period or compulsory arbitration before strikes can start, if lockouts are forbidden, or if employers are permitted to hire replacement workers during strikes. The variable consists of nine averaged indicators, out of which we weighted the general right to industrial action with a factor of 2.5 to account for its importance. As mentioned above, each of our labour standards variables is, as are the original indicators, scored between 0 and 1, whereby 1 denotes full protection; 0 no protection; and intermediate values in between 0 and 1 reflect differences in the strength of the respective laws per country-year. For comparability, we normalised the weighted variables between the 0 to 1 range. More details of our index construction are in the Appendix, Table A.2. Our labour standards variables are an important improvement over existing measures because they allows us to distinguish between different types of rights. Our measure is distinct from the existing index of collective worker rights by Mosley & Uno (2007) and the worker rights variable by Cingranelli and Richards (2010), which contains a range of labour rights only in one aggregated index.7 Instead, we measure each labour standard separately, which allows a comparison of FDI’s effects on different rights, in particular, the commonly neglected outcome rights. As mentioned before in the theory section, we focus on de jure rights. As well as being a good fit for our theory, measuring regulations has also the advantage that such data tends to be more reliable than hand-coding of de facto rights violations from NGO or government reports, which might carry bias (Berliner et al., 2015) or suffer from under-reporting (Mosley, 2010, 100). Fig. 1 provides an overview over our measure by region, labour right, and across time for 75 developing countries. On the whole, labour rights are best protected in Europe, Central Asia and Latin America. The Sub-Saharan African and East Asian Pacific regions improved the legal protection of labour rights in the mid-1990s but still lag behind. We also see that the protection of outcome standards (middle left) as well as collective standards (middle right) has improved over time in many regions, although there are still differences, and our analysis will examine which role FDI plays in this. Finally, the protection of our five categories of labour standards, averaged over all developing nations, has improved over time, but at different levels. For example, we see that collective worker representation in the form of unions is relatively well protected, but industrial action rights, which aim to utilize collective bargaining powers, lag behind. Work time and dismissal rights are better protected by the law if we take the average over all developing nations; it will be interesting to assess how FDI and GDP growth, which vary considerably across countries, influence these trends. Further, our correlation matrix (Table A.3 in the Appendix) shows that the respective types of labour standards are mostly positively correlated with each other. Moreover, a scatterplot of collective and outcome rights against each other, averaged by year, shows a positive relationship between both sub-measurements (see Fig. 3 in the Appendix). Fig. 1. Labour standards protection in developing countries over time (1980–2010). Labour right development over time. Top: Average over all labour standards by region. Middle: Average protection of outcome standards such as fair contracts, dismissal and work time (left) versus collective worker rights (right) per region. Bottom: Five categories of labour standards separately, average over all developing nations. Regions as defined by the World Bank: East-Asian Pacific (EAP), Europe & Central Asia (ECA), Latin America (LAC), Middle East & North Africa (MNA), South Asia (SAS), Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Higher values indicate better protection. 3.2. Independent variables The key independent variables of interest are logged FDI stock and FDI flow, which we take from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2019). FDI stock reflects the lasting impact of investment accumulated in a country over time, indicating the leverage of foreign investors over governments in shaping public policy (Neumayer & de Soysa, 2006). FDI flow captures new investment and tells us more about annual, immediate influences on labor rights policy, so that we expect the impact of FDI flow to be more pronounced (Mosley & Uno, 2007). The previous literature has used both measures in the past (Blanton & Blanton, 2012, Blanton & Peksen, 2016, Greenhill et al., 2009, Mosley and Uno, 2007, Neumayer and de Soysa, 2006, Peksen and Blanton, 2017, Wang, 2018), and we therefore employ both versions here. We also run robustness tests with logged FDI per capita as well as logged FDI per GDP in order to make sure results do not differ based on the transformation of our dependent variable.8 Following previous studies (see e.g., Blanton & Blanton, 2012, Mosley and Uno, 2007, Neumayer & de Soysa, 2005, Neumayer and de Soysa, 2006), we employ control variables for trade, democracy, GDP growth, conflict, population size and region dummies. Trade is measured by the sum of a country’s total trade (import and export) relative to GDP. Together with FDI, trade is often used as a proxy for economic globalization. It captures the effects on labour rights protection via a reduction of tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers. The trade variable is taken from the World Bank Indicators database and logged (The World Bank, 2019). Trade has shown to produce mixed results in previous studies on collective labour rights protection (Kim and Trumbore, 2010, Mosley and Uno, 2007, Peksen and Blanton, 2017). The democracy variable indicates whether a country has established democratic institutions, rule of law and a good governance structure. It has been shown that democratic countries protect rights better (Lim et al., 2015, Mosley and Uno, 2007, Neumayer and de Soysa, 2006, Vadlamannati, 2015). The variable captures larger differences in political regimes and reflects the general ability of workers to demand protection (Mosley & Uno, 2007). The democracy variable is taken from the Polity IV measure of democracy and ranges from −10 (most autocratic regime) to 10 (most democratic) (Marshall et al., 2002). Economic growth is measured by the annual growth of GDP per capita (logged). It is often argued that level of labour standards and human rights protection improve with higher economic growth of a country because rich countries can afford to grant such rights (Elliott and Freeman, 2003, Lim et al., 2015); also, in wealthier countries workers might have greater opportunities for political participation (Mosley & Uno, 2007). We measure the annual change of GDP per capita taken from the World Bank Indicators database (The World Bank, 2019). The conflict variable measures whether a country was involved in a domestic or international conflict during a given year (1 = occurrence of domestic or international conflict, 0 = no conflict). The variable is taken from the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset (2014). Although the protection of worker rights has been shown to decline during conflict periods (Mosley & Uno, 2007), we would expect a smaller effect or no effect when it comes to our de jure measurement, as it is unlikely that government policies towards legal protection of workers suddenly change during conflict time. Population contains the number of people living in a country. Countries with a larger population have been shown to exhibit a decline in rights protection (Blanton & Peksen, 2016, Greenhill et al., 2009, Kim and Trumbore, 2010, Mosley and Uno, 2007, Poe et al., 1999). The population variable is taken from the World Bank Indicators database and logged (The World Bank, 2019). Following Biglaiser and Lee, 2019, Neumayer and de Soysa, 2006, and Mosley & Uno (2007), we include region dummies to control for regional characteristics in labour rights standards. Labor rights have historically been worse in some regions such as in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America Caribbean, and the Middle East and North Africa (Biglaiser & Lee, 2019), and there might be peer effects where labour standards diffuse within neighboring countries (Davies & Vadlamannati, 2013). We include dummies for East Asia, Europa and Central Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Table A.4 in the Appendix provides a descriptive summary of the dependent and independent variables. An overview over all variables and their sources is in Table A.1 in the Appendix. 3.3. Models To examine the hypotheses, we apply a panel data including 75 countries (see a list of all countries in the Appendix, Table A18) from 1982 to 2010. We estimate: (1) ∊ Wherein, are our outcome variable of different labour rights indices, is our key explanatory variable FDI (stock or flow), are control variables as listed above, is time dummies, regional dummy and ∊ the panel-corrected error term. The main models are estimated using a time fixed effects panel regression with regional dummies and panel-corrected standard errors clustered by country (Beck & Katz, 1995).9 Following convention, we include a one-year lag between the dependent variables and the predictors to allow the effects of FDI stock and FDI flow to spread, and we extend the lag in our robustness section. Three main sets of models are estimated: the first set of models includes our overall labour rights measure as a dependent variable; second, we distinguish between outcome versus collective worker rights; third, we disaggregate our labour rights measure into the five categories. For all these models we employ FDI stock versus FDI flow respectively to capture potential differences between long-term accumulated investment (stock) versus recent annual investment in a country (flow). 4. Results For FDI stock we find a positive and significant relationship between FDI and overall labour standards, while FDI flow remains insignificant (see Table 2, columns 1 and 4). This corresponds to much of the existing literature, the majority of which supports the ‘climb to the top’ theory (e.g., Lim et al., 2015, Mosley and Uno, 2007). Since our overall measure includes a range of outcome and collective labour rights, it might well be that the positive coefficient is driven by the collective labour rights component in the overall index. Therefore, we next distinguish between outcome versus collective rights as our outcome variables. Table 2. FDI stock and flow, overall labour standards and ‘outcome’ versus ‘collective’ rights (1982–2010) for developing nations, time fixed effects panel regression with regional dummies and panel-corrected standard errors.

<<PARAGRAPH BREAKS RESUME>>

We now disaggregate our labour rights measures further into the five categories: representation, industrial action, contracts, work time and dismissal protection. The results are generally consistent with our hypotheses (see Table 3, Table 4). The coefficients for FDI stock and FDI flow and two types of collective standards, i.e. representation and industrial action, are generally positive and significant (Table 3 column 1, Table 4, columns 1–2), with the exception that FDI stock is not significantly related to industrial action rights (column 2 in Table 3). This is in line with our hypothesis 1 and the literature on collective labour rights. Turning to the three outcome rights, higher FDI stock is significantly connected to lower protections of working time (Table 3 column 4), while the coefficient remains insignificant for contract rights and dismissal protections (Table 3 columns 3 and 5). The results for FDI flow are more pronounced than for stock, as it is negatively and significantly connected to all three outcome rights: contract regulation, working time, and dismissal (Table 4 columns 3–5), clearly indicating that annual investment flows are related to lower de jure rights protection as we expected in hypothesis 2. The coefficients are further visualised with 90 and 95 percent confidence intervals in Fig. 2.

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The majority of the control variables show the expected results. Growth as well as democracy are connected to better labour standards. Trade is negatively connected to labour standards in our models as expected by Mosley & Uno (2007). Population size shows volatile coefficients across our models. Conflict surprisingly has a positive coefficient, even though much of the human rights literature finds that conflict is related to a decline in human rights. It could well be that conflict-ridden countries still maintain their levels of labour rights protection de jure, while the situation looks different for de facto protection (which we do not measure). 4.1. Robustness We conducted a range of robustness checks to (1) include two-sided fixed effects, (2) alter the operationalization of FDI, (3) include different time lags, (4) address variation in our labour rights variable, (5) use an unweighted version of our labour standards measure, (6) address the potential interrelationship between collective rights and outcome standards, (7) employ a fractional logit regression, (8) replace FDI flow with a dummy indicating if FDI entered a country or not, (9) use non-OECD countries instead of developing nations. The results remain largely the same. First,we included both time and country dummies (two-way fixed effects), which does not substantially change our results (see Table A.5, Table A.6). The inclusion of fixed effects has been seen critical because many independent variables remain relatively similar over time so that “the inclusion of fixed effects would greatly dilute the implied importance of these variables” (Mosley & Uno, 2007, 936). We therefore decided to follow the convention in the literature and present region dummies instead of country fixed effects in our main models (see Biglaiser and Lee, 2019, Mosley and Uno, 2007, Neumayer and de Soysa, 2006). Nonetheless, the robustness against the application of two way fixed effects models is especially promising and speak for our findings (see Appendix Table A.5). Second, we changed the operationalization of FDI stock and flow. Instead of taking the logarithm of FDI stock and flow, we ran the main models with the logarithm of FDI per capita as well FDI per GDP, which does generally not affect the results in the year fixed effects as well as the two-sided fixed effects models (see Appendix Table A.7, Table A.8, Table A.9, Table A.10). Third, we extended the one-year lag of the main model and applied two and three year-lags. Although a one-year lag between independent and dependent variable seems reasonable for governments to react on changes in FDI (see Kim & Trumbore, 2010), the effects might differ when more time has passed. We find that most results and the model fit remain stable across one-, two-, and three-year lags (see Appendix Table A.11, Table A.12). Fourth, following Neumayer & de Soysa (2006), we transformed our dependent and independent variables into three-year averages because de jure labour rights display limited annual variation. The results show no substantial changes to the main findings (see Appendix Table A.13, Table A.14). Fifth, we removed the weights included in the construction of our labour rights index, finding generally similar effects (see Appendix Table A.15).

<<PARAGRAPH BREAKS RESUME>>

Sixth, it has been argued that the protection of collective standards might influences future regulation of outcome standards, and vice versa (Berliner et al., 2015). This interrelationship argument has not been tested in the literature due to a lack of systematic data. While this is not our focus, we have addressed this in a preliminary analysis. For the models using outcome standards as dependent variable we now included collective rights as control; and for models with collective standards we included outcome rights. The results for FDI flow and FDI stock remain generally similar. We also find that both types of rights seem to positively reinforce each other, displaying positive and significant associations (see Appendix A.16).

### 2NC---Link---AT: Plan = Small

#### They cannot say the plans a drop in the bucket.

#### They made the spillover argument for us---1AC Trivedi says it “impedes effective collective bargaining for the entire facility” AND “one violation can thwart an entire union movement” We’ll add some highlighting too.

<<FOR REFERENCE>>

Rita Trivedi 18 – attorney at the NLRB, LLM from Columbia Law School, JD from Duke University School of Law. “Restoring a Willingness to Act: Identifying and Remedying the Harm to Authorized Employees Ignored under Hoffman Plastics,” Winter 2018, University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform 51(2), pp. 357-408.

Kati Griffith makes similar observations regarding the divisions between authorized and unauthorized employees created under Hoffman. Under current law, even if an employee is unauthorized to work, he may still share a community of interest in the workplace with authorized employees sufficient to be included in the same union. 129 But if, as Hoffman requires, unauthorized workers have different remedial rights under the NLRA, divisions are likely to form that can ultimately harm the ability of authorized workers to act regarding their conditions of employment. In contrast, focusing on the collective nature of the statute can foster a sense of common cause, becoming a "legitimacy-builder that unifies documented and undocumented workers around their mutual interests as workers."130 Griffith focuses on the possibilities of unity in support of broad advocacy,13' but the point is equally applicable on the micro level of the workplace. Without attention to the effects of focusing on the unauthorized worker's possible IRCA violation and the relative minimization of the employer's NLRA violations, the shared identity and willingness to join together for the collective bargaining so central to the labor statute is at risk for authorized workers.1 32

I join Dannin and Griffith in affirming the focus on the collective. The NLRA was enacted to protect workers as a group, not as isolated individuals.133 A collective focus creates a stable long term relationship between workers and management developed through bargaining that goes beyond a one-on-one affinity/dislike.13 4 Existing law already recognizes that authorized and unauthorized workers can share a community of interest sufficient to place them in the same bargaining unit under the NLRA; erosion of the group based on Hoffman outcomes threatens that community and effectiveness of concerted action.135 But the current remedial structure not only creates a subclass of employees that lack a stake in the goals of their authorized co-workers, but also erodes the willingness and ability of authorized employees to exercise their rights and impedes effective collective bargaining for the entire facility.136

Recognizing the importance of a shared employee identity to the operation of the NLRA, some unions have begun organizing attempts involving unauthorized workers. 37 This Article takes no position on whether such attempts to secure additional rights or remedies for this group are desirable, either as a social or political matter. Yet should a union begin an organizing campaign and meet with a positive employee reaction, it may press further-and learn that some employees are unauthorized to work. It is conceivable that, at least in some cases, the union will then back away from organizing to avoid unwanted publicity. Outside organizers can quickly realize that the employer may be immunized against consequences for unfair labor practices against those unauthorized employees and that union pressure might result in heightened scrutiny for the authorized employees with whom they work. The possibility for unionization is further weakened when one realizes that unauthorized employees without protection from unlawful discharge on the basis of their union activity are less likely to vote for union representation because they do not have a comparable stake in the collective goals of their authorized co-workers or share their confidence in the union's ability to support their goals. As a result, the opportunity for authorized employees to exercise their right under the NLRA to choose union representation is undermined.

Should a facility with both unauthorized and authorized workers manage to organize a union, 38 an unscrupulous employer may be motivated to use the strained relationship between the NLRA and the IRCA to oust the chosen representatives of its lawful, authorized employees. Under the NLRA, if an employer commits an egregious violation and refuses to bargain with a union, it may face an unfair labor practice charge ultimately resulting in an order to bargaineven if there are unauthorized employees in the unit.' 39 But in this context, it is highly probable that the status of its unauthorized employees will already have been exposed, and those employees may now face immigration violations or deportation.1401 Without the full unit, the employer might try to claim that the union lacks majority support from the remaining authorized employees. Whether or not this argument is successful, 4 1 it is unlikely that those authorized employees will try to exercise their rights again, knowing that they risk another backlash from their employer.

B. Terms and Conditions of Employment

Wages and other terms and conditions of employment for authorized employees are also at risk when employers face fewer consequences for violations of the NLRA. When "unscrupulous employers can exploit some low-wage workers with impunity, all lowwage workers suffer compromised employment protections and economic security." 42 The NLRA's collective nature contemplates that workers gain in strength when they join in mutual aid withrespect to the terms and conditions of their employment. But when authorized employees are constrained in their ability to effectively act because violations against part of the workforce carry a different risk than against another, they are unable to work together towards change in their mutual terms and conditions of employment.

This inability may result in wages and working conditions below the industry standard. When an employer is incentivized to hire unauthorized workers (in violation of the IRCA) and can create a sufficient business rationalization for committing unfair labor practices against them (in violation of the NLRA), lawful employees face a race-to-the-bottom to remain competitive.143 The Board itself has recognized this danger, as expressed in then-Chairman Liebman and Member Pearce's concurrence in Mezonos Maven Bakery:

[Although] Congress sought through IRCA to protect the interests of U.S. citizens and authorized-alien workers . . undocumented immigrants, fearing detection and deportation, will work long hours, accept low wages, and tolerate substandard conditions. Thus, they possess a competitive edge in the labor market[,] particularly in the market for unskilled labor [,] over U.S. citizens and other authorized workers unwilling to submit to such exploitation. Also, undocumented immigrants' availability in a labor market tends to depress wages and working conditions for others in the same market. By deterring employers from hiring undocumented immigrants, IRCA seeks to counteract these forces. To the extent that precluding backpay awards encourages employers to hire undocumented immigrants, it is at cross-purposes with IRCA and injures the welfare of citizen and authorized-alien workers.1 44

Yet, as will be discussed below, there is an even greater danger to the working conditions of authorized workers: the impact on their willingness to freely exercise their rights under the NLRA as a result of the current inadequacy of remedies. This chill makes employees reluctant to freely share views on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment. It also keeps them from acquiring the information they need to join together for mutual aid and protection regarding those terms, which depresses working conditions and suppresses rights of even authorized employees.

C. Decreased Mental Confidence Due to Inadequately Remedied Violations

The same reverse incentive structure that fails to effectively deter employers from violating the NLRA also diminishes the fundamental rights of authorized employees when they self-censor.1 45 Authorized workers may limit communications in front of unauthorized coworkers, thereby also limiting opportunities to talk to each other.'4 6 They may under-report other violations, lose some of their collective power, or even choose not to report at all, deeming it a futile exercise without more support.1 47 When, as with the NLRA, a law depends so heavily on employees acting as "private attorneys general who will pull the workplace law fire alarm when necessary," this kind of intimidation undermines the entire system of operations.1 48

The Office of the General Counsel has recognized that "no worker in his right mind would participate in a union campaign in [a] plant after having observed that other workers had previously attempted to exercise rights protected by the Act have been discharged and must wait for three years to have their rights vindicated."1 4 9 This observation is equally applicable to other forms of collective action when, under Hoffman, the employer escapes two of the most common remedies (backpay and reinstatement) for violations of the NLRA if the targeted employee is unauthorized. Just one violation can thwart an entire union movement when workers are vulnerable and create a "legacy of coercion" for the remaining authorized workers.15 0 Authorized employees will not always know whether a coworker is unauthorized or not. Once they become aware of the termination of the unauthorized employee, they may think twice before engaging in protected activity with their co-workers out of fear the employer will then target them. 151 Because of the paucity of demonstrable remedies for their colleagues, they may conclude that they too are unprotected.' 5 2 As the employer's unlawful actions become part of the lore of the shop, employees' mental confidence in the legal system as well as in the meaning of their rights under the Act is shaken; traditional remedies under the NLRA often do little to address this erosion of the so-called status quo. "Indeed, rather than removing harm to employee collective action and union support caused by employer illegal action, coworkers may become afraid of the consequences of asserting their legal rights to organize, support one another, or bargain collectively."15 3

#### Union demands spillover to non-union workplaces – threat effects and modeling

Navarro & Rosenfeld 17 [Claire Navarro, editor and producer of Hold That Thought by WashU, interview with Jake Rosenfeld, associate professor of sociology at Washington University, Ph.D. from Princeton University, 3-8-2017 https://artsci.washu.edu/ampersand/right-work-unions-income-inequality]

CN: You probably think of unions as organizations that fight for better pay, benefits, and working conditions for union members. That’s true, Rosenfeld says, but historically, organized labor has actually done much more than that. In his book What Unions No Longer Do, he lays out how, in past decades, strong unions created better conditions for all workers, not just for members. There are few main ways that these spillover effects came about.

JR: One is just simply going through the standard union role of servicing their members. That oftentimes would influence nonunion workplaces to raise their wages and to improve their benefit packages because they were worried about a union coming in through their doors. So they're watching what the neighboring firm's doing. If it happens to be organized, they say 'OK, well we don't want a union here. So we better match what they're doing.' These are what are referred to as threat effects in the literature.

CN: In other cases, non-union workplaces matched union wages not out of fear, but because higher wages became the norm. This would happen when industry leaders used organized labor.

JR: We know from surveys of employers, when you ask them, 'Well, how do you set wages and benefit packages at your workplace?' they say, 'We oftentimes look to what the leaders are doing.' So if that leader happens to be organized, you're going to match their pay and benefits scales, even if you have no labor union at your own place of business.

#### Policy success in one sector causes spillover to others

Madland 21 [David Madland, Senior Fellow and Strategic Director of the American Worker Project at the Center for American Progress, author of Hollowed Out, "Re-Union: How Bold Labor Reforms Can Repair, Revitalize, and Reunite the United States," ILR Press, an imprint of Cornell University Press, 2021]

All told, the path to passing major labor reform is quite narrow. A number of factors must continue to evolve favorably. On-the-ground worker activity will need to increase in intensity. The public will have to elect a supermajority of pro-union policy makers to Congress. The labor movement will need to more fully embrace bold reforms. State and local experimentation will need to provide additional policy successes to build on. Most importantly, the intellectual environment must continue evolving toward recognizing the importance of a new labor system in solving the country’s economic and political problems.

The window of success may be wider for an incremental approach that seeks labor reform first in occupations or sectors where the National Labor Relations Act does not apply, such as for domestic workers or independent contractors, or in industries where the government is already heavily involved, such as health care or education. That is, the path to a new labor system may come through experimentation in quasi-public industries or in sectors that have been excluded from traditional labor and employment law. Even passing a single experiment at the federal level would be quite difficult, but it might not require quite as large political majorities to be enacted. The incremental approach may even help create a track record that helps foster a more supportive intellectual environment. Still, the more incremental approach could mean giving up an opportunity to get more at one time, and it would not avoid the need to eventually reach critical levels of support on the ground, in Congress, with the labor movement, and in the idea environment.

### 2NC---UQ---AT: Thumpers

#### US FDI is high and growing now---it’s the top economy for inward and outward FDI with more room to grow---that’s Barraza.

#### You can’t win analytical thumper without global uniqueness ev for “FDI low”---our evidence prices tariffs and economic uncertain in

#### Link shapes the direction of uniqueness---FDI will continue to grow because of a favorable investment environment---protectionist union demands undermine that---that’s Owen.

#### Trump doesn’t thump---trade agreements and pro-investor policies ensure a bullish FDI environment

Samford 25 [Jonathan Samford, president and CEO of the Global Business Alliance, interviewed by Kelly Barraza, “FDI IN AMERICA: How Does the U.S. Stack Up in FDI?,” Site Selection, 11/05/2025, https://siteselection.com/fdi-in-america-how-does-the-u-s-stack-up-in-fdi/]

FDI: Asked & Answered

In this Q&A, Jonathan Samford, president and CEO of the Global Business Alliance, offers insight on the direction of foreign investment in the United States and what site selectors are considering when making decisions to sign on the dotted line.

What are some key factors that site selectors look at when considering locations for FDI?

Jonathan Samford: Proximity to customers is consistently the most important factor when companies are deciding where to expand. Between similar locations, however, large employers evaluate their ready access to a high-skilled workforce and the predictability of the jurisdiction’s regulatory and policy landscape.

Do you have any recommendations to companies who are considering bringing their business to the States?

Samford: The U.S. continues to be a welcoming environment where international companies can find long-term success. But perhaps more so than in the past, investors should keep a close eye on policymaking to differentiate policy cues from political clatter.

How are companies managing differences in culture and operations when it comes to the integration of foreign investments in the U.S.?

Samford: International companies strengthen every corner of the U.S. economy. They not only bring the capital they need to grow, but they also import world-class know-how, which benefits the millions of Americans they employ. Overwhelmingly, international companies depend on American workers to succeed. And workers at international companies typically earn 7% higher wages and benefits than the economy-wide average. That’s a win-win situation.

How does FDI improve the communities that are being invested in?

Samford: Global investment delivers real impact: good-paying jobs, resources for innovation, world-class workforce development and a strong commitment to be part of the communities where they operate. That’s why policymakers from hometown mayors to the President of the United States are actively encouraging international companies to invest and create jobs here.

What are some trends you have noticed when it comes to FDI projects in the U.S. in the past few years, and how have they informed operations at your organization?

Samford: Over the past decade, more of the FDI flowing into the United States is coming from reinvested earnings, where a company pours its profits back into its U.S. operations. It’s a sign that existing investors remain bullish, while would-be investors have hit pause on their investments. Representing some of the most well-known brands in the world, our focus is on making sure U.S. policymakers don’t take these companies for granted — or worse, try to extract concessions from other nations by making them political collateral. America benefits when international companies invest here.

How have policies from the current presidential administration impacted FDI projects in the U.S.?

Samford: It’s clear that companies value the certainty that the recently announced trade agreements have provided. Investment in the second quarter surged by 137% over the previous period. President Trump has made it clear that he wants more international companies to invest in America. His “America First Investment Policy,” the Investment Accelerator, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, lower energy costs and regulatory cuts incentivize global firms to grow their U.S. operations.

Which sectors are foreign investments primarily going toward in the U.S.?

Samford: Manufacturing leads the way. Thanks to international companies, nearly 3 million Americans are making things right here at home. Investment in this sector makes up 42% of all global investment in the U.S.

Are there areas or sectors in the U.S. that are being left behind by foreign business interests?

Samford: Some industries, like banking and real estate, aren’t seeing the same level of growth as others.

How is the recent U.S. immigration enforcement at the Hyundai plant in southern Georgia affecting investment decisions in America by foreign companies?

Samford: More than 8 million Americans are employed by companies that made a deliberate decision to invest and create jobs in the United States. I’m unaware of any company that has changed its investment strategy in light of the administration’s immigration policy.

“Proximity to customers is consistently the most important factor when companies are deciding where to expand.”

— Jonathan Samford, President & CEO, Global Business Alliance

The White House indicated there would be a $100,000 fee for those seeking H-1B visas. What impact do you see this policy having on workforce development and interest from foreign companies seeking to make FDI choices in the U.S.?

Samford: Again, the vast majority of international companies employ American workers. In fact, 2.8 million U.S. manufacturing workers are employed at one of these companies, and today, 12% of America’s private-sector research and development is conducted by American scientists at international companies.

Currently, what are the main risks non-U.S. companies are considering when making investments in the States?

Samford: At the end of the day, investors want stability and predictability so they can grow with confidence. While President Trump is clearly renegotiating our trading relationships with other nations, his administration remains supportive of welcoming international companies that are interested in investing and creating jobs in the United States. Not participating in America’s dynamic, innovative economy may be the biggest risk facing would-be investors, followed by not having sufficient resources to help explain and understand the administration’s actions.

### 2NC---AT: L/T

### 2NC---AT: Resilient

#### Even losing a few FDI projects can stifle overall FDI

Devesa et al. 25 [Tiago Devesa, Senior Fellow at the McKinsey Global Institute; Jeongmin Seong, partner at the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI), McKinsey & Company’s business and economics research arm; Olivia White, senior partner at McKinsey & Company and a director of the McKinsey Global Institute; Nick Leung, director of the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI). He was McKinsey’s Greater China Chairman from 2010 to 2022; Michael Birshan, senior partner in London and also serves as the managing partner of McKinsey UK, Ireland, and Israel. He was elected by his fellow partners to serve on McKinsey’s Shareholders Council, which functions as the firm’s global board of directors; Jan Mischke, partner at the McKinsey Global Institute; Camillo Lamanna, Fellow at McKinsey Global Institute; and Masud Ally, knowledge expert based in the London office, “The FDI shake-up: How foreign direct investment today may shape industry and trade tomorrow,” 9-22-2025, <https://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/our-research/the-fdi-shake-up-how-foreign-direct-investment-today-may-shape-industry-and-trade-tomorrow>]

The transformative potential of FDI can hinge on a few key investors

Many emerging economies rely on just a small number of MNCs for their inward investment. Specifically, in about 100 predominantly small economies, three or fewer investors accounted for more than half of announced FDI inflows since 2022. In about 65 economies, they accounted for more than 80 percent (Exhibit 19).

In other words, while just a few large greenfield FDI announcements may transform an economy when things are going well, growth could just as easily be hindered if the project runs into problems or if the MNC isn’t fully committed to it.

Nor is this dynamic limited to small economies. Even in many large and midsize economies, three MNCs accounted for between 20 and 50 percent of the total annual value across FDI announcements since 2022. In the United States, for instance, TSMC and Samsung accounted for about 20 percent and 4 percent, respectively, of total announced investment. Similarly, France’s two largest foreign investors, both focused on data centers, represented roughly 40 percent of the country’s total announced greenfield FDI.

### 2NC---AT: “UQ”

#### FDI is high but reversible

Devesa et al. 25 [Tiago Devesa, Senior Fellow at the McKinsey Global Institute; Jeongmin Seong, partner at the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI), McKinsey & Company’s business and economics research arm; Olivia White, senior partner at McKinsey & Company and a director of the McKinsey Global Institute; Nick Leung, director of the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI). He was McKinsey’s Greater China Chairman from 2010 to 2022; Michael Birshan, senior partner in London and also serves as the managing partner of McKinsey UK, Ireland, and Israel. He was elected by his fellow partners to serve on McKinsey’s Shareholders Council, which functions as the firm’s global board of directors; Jan Mischke, partner at the McKinsey Global Institute; Camillo Lamanna, Fellow at McKinsey Global Institute; and Masud Ally, knowledge expert based in the London office, “The FDI shake-up: How foreign direct investment today may shape industry and trade tomorrow,” 9-22-2025, https://www.mckinsey.com/mgi/our-research/the-fdi-shake-up-how-foreign-direct-investment-today-may-shape-industry-and-trade-tomorrow]

This shift reflects the structure of these sectors: They are winner-takes-most, technologically advanced, and capital intensive, so only a handful of global firms have the capabilities to compete. At the same time, governments, eager to host them and reduce reliance on geopolitically distant partners, are deploying powerful carrots and sticks. The result is a surge of announced megadeals (exceeding $1 billion) that drive most FDI growth and shape the global economy.

In contrast, annual announced investments in conventional industries have dropped by more than 30 percent. This category includes a wide range of basic manufacturing sectors—including consumer products, food and beverages, and textiles—as well as operational and professional services, a broad category that spans construction, real estate, logistics, and financial services.

This year has brought fresh uncertainty. International trade surged into the public spotlight in April 2025, when the United States unveiled large tariffs. Since then, the United States has announced trade deals with multiple countries. Some include pledges of future investment into the United States; details remain pending. Still, uncertainty persists globally, and firms may be waiting to act in hopes of more clarity down the road.

Against this backdrop, so far in 2025, the overall rate of FDI announcements has leveled off amid an even greater global focus on future-shaping industries. Announcements in these areas are on pace to reach $840 billion, versus the $490 billion average annual level between 2022 and 2024, driven entirely by increases in data centers globally and in semiconductor fabs, particularly in the United States. In other major investment areas across advanced manufacturing, resources, and conventional industries, announcements are down, and FDI announcement rates have fallen to 20-year lows across all of China, emerging Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and sub-Saharan Africa (see sidebar “2025 announcements have focused on data centers and semiconductors”).

Announcements are, of course, not firm commitments, and not every potential project sees the light of day. Still, past studies have found that FDI announcements reliably predicted capacity creation on the ground, with realization rates between 60 and 80 percent. Our analysis finds that, since 2022, more than half of the largest announced projects in future-shaping industries are under construction or already operational. Among those that have not yet started construction, about half were announced after the beginning of 2025.9 As a general matter, it is too soon to gauge feasibility and progress of announcements made this year.

### 2NC---AT: Africa War !/D

#### Yes Africa war---the only warrant the 2AC read was about having enough hydrocarbons, which is not our trigger

#### Conflict over resources in Africa ensures food insecurity, instability, and terror recruitment---extinction

Sova 23 [Chase Sova, Senior Associate in the Global Food Security Program; and Eilish Zembilci, Adjunct Fellow at the Global Food Security Program, “Dangerously Hungry: The Link between Food Insecurity and Conflict,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, 04-21-23, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/dangerously-hungry-link-between-food-insecurity-and-conflict>]

But it is also true that hunger and food insecurity can lead to instability. There is a vicious feedback loop between conflict and hunger currently at play in dozens of countries around the world. War drives hunger and hunger drives war.

In 2017, the World Food Program USA (WFP USA) produced a report titled Winning the Peace: Hunger and Instability. It was a comprehensive review of the literature on “food-related instability”—or the ways that hunger drives conflict. At the time, U.S. lawmakers knew anecdotally that this relationship existed. Former Senate Agriculture Committee chair Pat Roberts (D-KS) said in a 2015 speech, “Show me a nation that cannot feed itself, and I’ll show you a nation in chaos.” Others, like Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC), frequently warned that providing humanitarian assistance in some of the world’s most complex emergencies was necessary to avoid more costly—in both blood and treasure—engagements.

Winning the Peace provided a snapshot of what the academic community knew about the relationship between food insecurity and conflict. With Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, the lingering economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and a rise in extreme climate events around the world, 2022 was a year of unprecedented global hunger. Predictably, global instability rose in tandem. At least 12,500 protests occurred last year in countries facing rapid food and fuel price increases.

Academic literature on food-related instability has grown significantly in the last half decade. In fact, almost 50 percent of all the research to be published on food-related instability over the past 20 years has been produced in the last five years alone. A new report by WFP USA, launched in April of 2023, aims to capture this latest thinking in a review of 60 peer-reviewed academic studies produced between 2017 and 2022. Dangerously Hungry is a study of studies. This commentary is a literature review of such studies and discusses specific drivers and motivators of food-related instability, and how to create an improved framework for understanding of the complex relationship between food insecurity and conflict.

Drivers of Food-Related Instability

This review finds that food-related instability has three main drivers: climate change, conflict over natural resources, and economic shocks.

Almost half of all studies reviewed in Dangerously Hungry investigate food-related instability through the lens of climate change: precipitation change, drought, temperature spikes, desertification, and other adverse climate events. This trend reflects tremendous growth in climate security literature in recent years. Many of these studies focus on food systems, often the first sector to feel the impacts of climate change. One study from Kyung Hee University in South Korea, for example, shows that high temperatures during corn growing seasons in sub-Saharan Africa reduced yields and led to a rise in civil conflict. The author suggests that with continued warming, civil conflict in the region is expected to increase by over 30 percent in the coming decade. Meanwhile, another Harvard University study finds that below-average rainfall can increase the likelihood of civil war in Africa by as much as 2.3 percent. In Somalia specifically, a country plagued by long-term droughts, decreases in annual precipitation across the country were associated with an increase in domestic terrorist attacks between 1991 and 2019. The impact of climate change on food systems is driving conflict around the world.

A second driver of food-related instability is competition over natural resources. Conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in the African Sahel are among the most studied examples of food-related instability in this space. Farmer-herder conflict or “pastoralist violence” has increased greatly in the last decade in West and Central Africa, particularly in Nigeria, central Mali and northern Burkina Faso. This includes cattle raids, communal or ethnic violence over land and water resources, and conflict driven by association with violent extremist movements. These trends are exacerbated by fast-spreading desertification and multi-year droughts across the African Sahel. According to the African Center for Strategic Studies, more than 15,000 people have been killed in farmer-herder related conflicts in the last decade alone.

Dangerously Hungry also sheds new light on the ways that agricultural abundance has also been linked to violence. For example, in studying the impacts of wheat and corn production across Africa, Ore Koren of Indiana University suggests that “contrary to previous expectations, conflict is driven by higher yields, on average, and not by scarcity.” In these situations of abundance, rebel groups are more likely to use violence to secure access to food resources. Indeed, he shows that the probability of rebel attacks increased significantly in areas with high agricultural potential. This is commonly referred to as “strategic conflict.” What the author is referring to in this case, however, is best considered “relative abundance”—conflict over pockets of agricultural productivity in otherwise scarce settings.

Finally, food-related instability is driven by economic shocks. The 2007–2008 global food price crisis led to social unrest in at least 40 low- and middle-income countries in what has been termed the “silent tsunami;” it was the subject of significant attention in the Winning the Peace report. The food price crisis of 2022 bears remarkable similarities to 2008. According to analysis from the International Food Policy Research Institute, food prices were on the rise due to “uneven recovery from the COVID-19 crisis from surges in global demand and supply disruptions from transport and logistics.” This confluence of stressors resulted in a global market that was unprepared for the wheat, maize, oilseed, fuel, and fertilizer supply disruptions caused by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. By the summer of 2022, more than 20 countries were facing protests and riots related, at least in part, to high food prices.

Peer-reviewed research on the 2022 global food price crisis is still forthcoming, but several authors have already estimated the downstream effects it has had, and will continue to have, on conflict. Tufts University economist Eoin McGuirk and deputy director of Stanford’s Center on Food Security and the Environment, Marshall Burke, for example, have studied the impact of Russia’s war on Ukraine on producer and consumer price indexes, and the effect of these indexes on violence in Africa. They estimate that “the weighted average effect of the Russian invasion to be an increase in intergroup conflict in Africa of 5.3%.” That is after considering the conflict-reducing effects of increased prices for farmers across the continent; the economic impacts in the agricultural sector are, after all, two-sided. It continues to be the case that, generally, increased food prices lead to reduced conflict in food-producing areas and increased conflict in food consuming areas.

Motivators of Food-Related Instability

Modern conflicts are almost never driven by a single cause. Food insecurity is often referred to as “the straw that breaks the camel’s back” or a “threat multiplier” in conflict events. It is true that food insecurity alone is often not enough to produce conflict; it must also be met with external motivators that cause people to resort to violence, and is strongly determined by the underlying social, political, and economic context. Those motivators can be captured in three interrelated concepts: desperation, grievance, and governance.

Often, the strongest motivator for participation in conflict is economics. This is sometimes referred to as the opportunity cost thesis, which states that when incomes are low and expected returns from fighting outweigh the benefits of traditional economic activity, one’s motivation to join a militia or rebellion increases. Researchers refer to this motivator as greed, a reference to the material benefits—even extreme wealth—often anticipated by groups staging rebellion. In the case of recruitment of food insecure populations to extremist movements, though, it is not one’s desire for wealth but one’s inability to meet their basic needs that is exploited. This is not greed, but desperation.

In interviews with former al Shabaab fighters in Somalia, socioeconomic conditions were the most common motivator for joining. The authors of that study, Anneli Botha and Mahdi Abdile, spoke to one fighter who explained that he and his friends were lured with promises of a mobile phone and $50 a month upon joining. Other terrorist organizations have employed similar recruitment tactics. The Islamic State, for example, offered refugees food and cash payments of up to $1,000 to join, and Boko Haram has been shown to provide meals and loans to prospective recruits. In many settings, violent extremist organizations are also known to capture the means of food production or agricultural resources in order to fuel their rebellion. Food insecurity can raise the cost of mounting an insurgency, leading to the victimization of people who produce and hold food. Violence against civilians, in other words, can be a resource mobilization strategy.

The second category of motivation is grievance. One major criticism of the opportunity cost framework (i.e., individual greed or desperation) is its inattention to the collective action required for widespread rebellion. Although it is true that individuals are motivated to engage in violence due to unemployment, wage losses, and rising costs of living (including food costs), collective agency—or a force that brings people together—is also required for higher levels of violence. Food price riots are a good example of this grievance-based phenomenon, with high food prices (especially for foods of cultural importance) fueling frustration and mistrust that cuts across class and ethnic groups. Grievance, of course, can also be divisive. In grievance-motived instability involving food, food insecurity is often the straw that breaks the camel’s back and causes societies to cleave along preestablished lines over perceived or real inequalities or discrimination.

Finally, food-related instability is made more likely through poor governance. The inability of a government to ensure an adequate food supply for its people can lead to questions over a government’s legitimacy and ability to fulfill its people’s most basic needs. In a 2017 report by the UN Development Program, the authors note that 71 percent of voluntary recruits (to extremist groups) identified government action as the final trigger that motivated them to join the organization. Limited government capacity to provide services or policing can create a “vacuum effect,” which is a dynamic that provides an opening for rebel groups to offer an alternative and suggest that they themselves could provide those basic services to people.

Conclusion

Modern conflicts are not confined by political borders, and hunger emergencies must be addressed before they metastasize into large-scale security threats. U.S. lawmakers and officials are also becoming more cognizant of the fact that food insecurity is of consequence to national security. In October 2022, the Biden administration released its U.S. National Security Strategy. At the time of its writing, the world had reached record levels of food insecurity—349 million people across 79 countries faced crisis levels of hunger and almost one million people in Somalia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Haiti, South Sudan and Yemen were experiencing famine-like conditions. The 2022 U.S. National Security Strategy cited food on 30 occasions, more than double the highest-ever number of references in a strategy document and more than 10 times the number of references than the previous strategy. In late 2022 the U.S. Senate and Congress passed resolutions—S.Res.669 and H.Res.922—condemning the use of food as a weapon of war and bringing new resources to bear on the problem of food-related instability.

The United States has long led the effort to fight global hunger, not only because it is a moral imperative, but because it is economically and strategically smart. It was clear in 2017, and it is even more obvious now: one of the surest pathways to instability is failing to feed someone who cannot feed themselves or their families.

#### African instability exacerbates numerous existential threats

Ray 22 [Maj. Charles Ray, US Army (ret.), chair of the Africa Program of the Foreign Policy Research Institute, retired US Foreign Service officer who served as ambassador to Cambodia and Zimbabwe and was deputy assistant secretary of defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs, “America, You Better Believe That Africa Matters,” https://americandiplomacy.web.unc.edu/2022/05/america-you-better-believe-that-africa-matters/]

In the minds of most Americans and Europeans, the continent of Africa has long been seen as peripheral to world affairs, looked at either as a source of natural resources ripe for extraction or a place of poverty and violence requiring massive amounts of aid. This is a shortsighted and distorted view of a diverse continent and is long overdue for a reset.

The truth is that Africa is home to some of the planet’s most strategic minerals and other resources, and that natural and manmade disasters plague the continent. It is far more diverse and dynamic than popular culture, mainstream media, and even many foreign policy makers portray it. For a lot of reasons, some of them existential, it is far from peripheral; it matters.

Rich in Resources, but Mired in Poverty

Africa’s resources, its strategic minerals such as gold, copper, diamonds, cobalt, and oil, as well as its human resources during the height of the global slave trade, have always been as much a curse as a blessing to the continent. With a significant percentage of global reserves of some of the world’s most strategic minerals, Africa has often been, and in some places still is, a pawn in the struggles between powerful nations out to gain access to and/or control over minerals that are vital to modern industry. To name just two examples, Africa is thought to have 21 percent of the world’s total gold reserves and 85 percent of its platinum.

The competition to obtain these minerals is often waged with complete disregard to the impact it has on the countries or upon the lives of the average Africans who get little or no benefit from their extraction.

While living standards and wages vary from country to country, and often from region to region within individual countries, the average salary across the continent is less than US $400 per month; one in three Africans (more than 400 million people) subsist on less than US $2 per day, representing 70 percent of the world’s poorest people.

Troubles—Natural and Man-made

Across the continent, but particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, climate change causes significant environmental problems. In addition, overfishing, deforestation, mining, and intense climate-unfriendly agriculture compound an already serious situation. Addressing Africa’s climate problems is hampered by lack of resources, poor governance, corruption, and lack of respect for the rule of law by the governing elites. All this combines to exacerbate a dire situation. While the lion’s share of the blame for this dire situation rests with Africa’s rulers, the devastating impact of European exploitive colonization, the Atlantic slave trade, and the US-USSR Cold War competition that used African surrogates against each other’s interests must not be ignored.

In 2020, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of State provided $8.5 billion of assistance to 47 countries and 8 regional programs in sub-Saharan Africa. And yet, far too many foreign assistance programs, as well meaning as they are, create dependence on foreign aid, prop up autocratic rulers, and feed into corruption, failing to alleviate the pervasive poverty. Despite US and European efforts to put conditions on use of assistance, funds are still misused; unrestricted aid from countries like China and Russia, to name but two, contributes to abuse. Corruption and poor governance are often considered the leading causes of poverty in Africa, and despite decades and millions of foreign aid, it often seems that little has changed.

Africa is a Continent not a Country

When the aforementioned problems are considered, along with the increasing number of military coups and attempted coups, it’s understandable, though incorrect, that many outsiders think this represents the entire continent. Too often, Africa is perceived and presented as a global basket case that comes to our notice only when the next disaster strikes.

Africa, however, is not a monolith. It is as diverse as any other continent, more diverse than some. With 54 countries it is the second largest and second most populous continent with 1.3 billion inhabitants, over 1,500 languages and is home to every major religion and hundreds of different ethnic groups. By 2050, the population of the continent is expected to nearly double to 2.4 billion and will account for nearly fifty percent of the world’s population growth. In addition, Africa is on average a young continent. Approximately 40 percent of its populations is under 15, and in some countries over half the populations is under 25.

The Numbers Matter

The demographics outlined in the previous paragraphs should be enough to cause the world to reevaluate its views on the African continent. Africa’s growing young population will have an impact on the world —whether good or bad depends on how Africans and the world act in the present.

Because wars have destroyed so much of the colonial infrastructure, many young Africans have, for instance, never experienced analog telephones. They’ve grown up entirely in the digital age and represent a huge potential market for technological products and services as well as an immense work force. On the other hand, if their economic needs are not met, they represent a large potential source of recruits for extremist movements.

The African continent is also urbanizing at a breakneck pace. In 1960, 80 percent of Africa’s people lived in rural areas. That number is currently 60 percent and by 2050 will drop to 40 percent. Urbanization has been caused by underperforming economies in rural areas, wars, and climate-fueled crises. The move from countryside to city, which in many places leads to people being lifted out of poverty, has not had that effect in much of Africa. Africa’s large cities are not designed or equipped to deal with the negative impacts of climate change, and many of the rural migrants, in fact 70 percent of Africa’s urban population, live in slum conditions without access to economic opportunity, health care, or education. Slums are prone to flooding; because of the construction materials used in the slum housing, during the hot season they became urban heat islands leading to illness and death from heat.

While Africa has about 17 percent of the world’s population, it only accounts for a single-digit percentage of global greenhouse gas emissions. It nonetheless suffers more from climate change than any other populated continent, with droughts, floods, climate-caused storms and heat waves that reduce food production, increase health problems, and contribute to population displacement.

While this alone should be of concern to the rest of the world, of equal concern is the impact that Africa has on climate change, notwithstanding its low level of carbon emissions. The Congo rainforest is the world’s second largest carbon sink after the Amazon rainforest. With the degradation of the Amazon rainforest, which now emits more CO2 than it absorbs, it is vitally important to stemming the rise of global warming caused by excess carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The Congo rainforest, though, is currently also under threat from deforestation caused mainly by local agricultural practices.

The Congo basin could also be the origin of the world’s next pandemic. With human populations increasingly encroaching on wildlife habitats, the chance of animal-to-human transmission of dangerous viruses is increased; one shudders to imagine a viral disease that is an infectious as Covid-19 but as deadly as Ebola. Absent a concerted African and international effort to identify and isolate the zoonotic diseases of the region, such a scenario is just a matter of time.

While extremist and terrorist groups in Africa have not to date played a major role in global terrorism, most of the major international terrorist organizations, al-Qaeda and IS primarily, have a presence there and have established relationships with many of the continent’s domestic extremist groups. Terrorist activity has increased significantly in Africa over the past decade; if not dealt with it could become an international threat.

A Renewed Cold War, or a Continuation of the Old War?

The competition between the US and the USSR, which used African (and sometimes Cuban) forces as proxies for the two great powers in their struggle over influence in Africa, ostensibly ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia, though its presence was diminished, never completely abandoned the continent and now, with the deployment of the Wagner Group mercenaries across Africa, appears to be reviving its presence. In addition, the global competition between the US and China, though mainly economic and influence competition, seems like the Cold War redux.

China is now sub-Saharan Africa’s largest trading partner in mostly import-driven trade. China is also a major investor in Africa, with its firms dominating infrastructure projects. China has established a military presence in Africa, with a support base in Djibouti and reportedly has plans to establish a naval base in Equatorial Guinea on Africa’s Atlantic coast.

On the economic front, China’s largest import from Africa is oil, but it also imports a number of vital minerals to fuel its rapidly growing economy including iron ore and cobalt. In 2011, the Chinese imported almost all of Zimbabwe’s tobacco crop, undercutting American and European buyers who had previously been the main customers. Africa is also a growing market for cheap Chinese manufactured goods.

Chinese investments in Africa don’t come with the governance, rule of law, and human rights conditions of American and European government assistance, or the legal restrictions that come with American private investment,. Because of this, Chinese investment is popular with the ruling elites and has contributed to a degree to economic development in some countries. But China’s lack of governance conditions, its support for some of the continent’s most authoritarian leaders and the debt burden its loans have imposed on some of the world’s poorest countries has generated controversy both on the continent and internationally. With Chinese firms—some state-controlled and others ostensibly privately owned but still influenced by the government—becoming increasingly dominant in African economies, US and European policymakers view the situation with an understandable degree of concern.

The Good, the Bad, and the Inevitable

Africa will have a significant impact on the world over the coming decades in several areas. Whether that impact is positive or negative will depend in large part on the actions of Africans themselves. But the impact will also be affected by the policy choices of countries like China and the United States.

If Africa’s economies are structured to provide adequate wages and living standards, it will be a lucrative customer base, a profitable investment destination, and a source of a young, tech-savvy labor force. It could, if economic and governance conditions are improved, contribute to a solution of the supply chain issues that were highlighted during the Covid pandemic.

On the other hand, if conditions do not improve, Africa could become the world’s worst nightmare; a densely populated continent of disaffected young people who are ripe for recruitment by extremist movements and at a minimum become part of a massive population relocation to areas of greater economic opportunity.

If methods are not developed and deployed to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change, such as developing climate-friendly agriculture and building more resilient cities, food production will not keep pace with population growth, increasing Africa’s dependence on foreign assistance just to feed its people. This will perpetuate the cycle of poverty and suffering and further add to the destabilizing impact of population displacement. Relocation of populations caused by famine, war, or other disasters will put more pressure on already overburdened cities, with increased flows of people northward,. These flows will put increased pressure on southern Europe and the Mediterranean and ultimately impact the rest of western Europe and the United States.

Africa and the world, working collectively, must implement measures to protect and preserve the Congo rainforest. If it continues to degrade, it will lead to reduced rainfall, affecting agricultural production in regions where agriculture depends on it. The precipitous and dangerous rise in global temperatures that is likely to result will mean more frequent and violent tropical storms and rising sea levels. Destruction of wildlife habitats and increased human-animal contact could lead to the emergence of new viruses that could quickly become pandemic. These are not just African problems. They are global problems.

#### African instability risks US-China proxy wars that go nclear

Tierney 21 [Dominic Tierney, Associate professor of political science at Swarthmore College, Ph. D. in International Relations from Oxford University, “The Future of Sino-U.S. Proxy War,” Texas National Security Review, Spring, 2021, https://tnsr.org/2021/03/the-future-of-sino-u-s-proxy-war/]

In fact, the **U**nited **S**tates and **China** have a long history of using different kinds of **proxy actors** against each other. During the Cold War, the **U**nited **S**tates and China engaged in **proxy war** in a number of African countries, including the **Congo**.155 The Vietnam War was, in part, a proxy conflict between South Vietnam (backed by the United States) and North Vietnam (aided by China) — although Beijing also viewed Hanoi as a rival and ultimately went to war against Vietnam in 1979. China has even used commercial fishing vessels as proxies to challenge U.S. and other states’ access to maritime regions.156 Taiwan can be considered a U.S. state proxy as well.

For both the United States and **China**, indirect intervention may be **appealing** because of the perceived costs of alternative options. Nuclear weapons and economic interdependence largely foreclose pursuing direct hostilities. Meanwhile, rising **security competition** and fundamental **distrust** mean that the partnership model may not be seen as an adequate safeguard of each country’s interests. As alternative options are eliminated, backing local actors may be the **only viable means** of protecting interests without provoking a backlash. Beijing, for example, may conclude that **risking direct conflict** with the U.S. military is reckless, whereas **working indirectly** through surrogates offers significant gain at reduced risk. As former National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster has remarked, “There are two ways to fight the United States military: asymmetrically and stupid[ly].”157

The notion of a Sino-U.S. proxy war may evoke images of an intense and high-stakes military rivalry, in which local actors are mere puppets and the outcome of the civil war is primarily shaped by decisions made in Washington and Beijing. But in reality, a Sino-U.S. proxy war would likely be **subtle** and **deniable** and would **blur into “normal”** international politics. It would involve the use of **diplomacy**, **propaganda**, **cyber operations**, and “**weaponized interdependence**” or control of key hubs in **economic networks**.158 Surrogate actors may seek to influence the great powers, and local dynamics will usually be determinative in shaping the course of the conflict.

As an illustration, a Sino-U.S. proxy war could occur if Venezuela were to collapse into a civil war. In this case, the United States might aid rebel groups and China might support the regime through economic and military aid or diplomacy (at the United Nations or by pressuring regional actors not to cooperate with Washington).159 Such a scenario is quite plausible. The two great powers currently recognize different regimes in Venezuela. Beijing backs the Nicolás Maduro government, whereas Washington sees Juan Guaidó as the legitimate leader. In 2014, China elevated relations with Venezuela to a “comprehensive strategic partnership.”160 Beijing renegotiated loans to give Caracas some breathing room and sold significant amounts of military hardware and surveillance technology to Venezuela.161 In 2018, Pence said, “Within our own hemisphere, Beijing has extended a lifeline to the corrupt and incompetent Maduro regime in Venezuela that’s been oppressing its own people.”162 And in 2020, the United States indicted Maduro for narco-terrorism.163

Could a **Sino-U.S. Proxy War Escalate?**

Scholars often compare the **danger of interstate war** between the United States and China today to the Peloponnesian War in ancient Greece. Just as the rise of Athens in the fifth century BCE provoked fear in Sparta, triggering the Peloponnesian War, so too today, the economic and military growth of China could **spark alarm** in the United States and **heighten the risk of conflict** — what Graham Allison calls the “**Thucydides Trap**.”164 It’s notable that the Peloponnesian War began when outside powers meddled in a **foreign civil war**. In 435 BCE, according to Thucydides, the city-state of Epidamnus fell prey to “internal conflicts lasting many years.”165 Competing factions appealed to outside actors for aid, which ultimately transformed a local civil war into a broader conflict between Athens and Sparta. In turn, the campaign between democratic Athens and oligarchic Sparta deepened domestic schisms throughout the Greek world, sparking further brutal civil wars, the erosion of norms, and the desecration of religious sites.166 “Civil strife inflicted many a **terrible blow** on the cities,” wrote Thucydides, “as always does and always will happen while human nature remains what it is.”167

Could a **Sino-U.S. proxy war** intensify into a **larger conflict** — or even an **interstate war** like in ancient Greece**?**168 The barriers to interstate war between the United States and China will likely prevent a proxy conflict from escalating to a full-blown conventional showdown. For one thing, most foreign civil wars do not threaten the core interests of the great powers. In addition, indirect intervention is often deniable, such that one, or both, great powers may prefer to ignore the other side’s intervention precisely to control the risk of a crisis spiraling into a broader, unwanted war.169

Nevertheless, low-level proxy war could **potentially escalate** in **unexpected ways**. Scholars have found that **foreign backing** for rebels is correlated with a **heightened chance of militarized interstate disputes**.170 Patrons often end up providing more aid in foreign civil wars than initially planned because of **overconfidence** about the allied faction’s **capabilities**. What begins as a minor proxy war can **evolve** into a **much more dangerous situation** if one patron decides to **step up** its involvement and **intervene directly** with ground forces.

A powerful driver of escalation is simply an **aversion to losing**. Psychologists have found that “losing hurts twice as bad as winning feels good,” and in the face of potential loss, actors are willing to **gamble** with an **increased commitment** in the hope of getting back to even.171 The Vietnam War illustrates the potential for a small-scale proxy conflict to **intensify** when neither side is willing to accept **defeat**. Another example is Cuban involvement in Angola. In the 1960s and 1970s, Havana began giving aid to the communist-aligned People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in the form of a relatively small training mission. This escalated into a large-scale and direct intervention with tens of thousands of Cuban ground troops deployed to check South African intervention and ward off the potential defeat of the MPLA.172 In the context of a potential U.S.-Chinese proxy war, Washington and Beijing may originally envision modestly backing a friendly regime or rebel group. However, if either country’s surrogate faces defeat, the patron may **increase its support**, including sending in **ground** or **air forces** to avoid a strategic, moral, or reputational loss.173

Ignorance could also spur **unanticipated escalation**. In recent decades, the United States has **struggled** to manipulate foreign civil wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and elsewhere due to a **lack of knowledge** about local cultures, ethnic tensions, and languages. China is even more likely to blunder out of ignorance because Beijing’s diplomatic corps is not sufficiently trained for complex civil conflicts and China lacks a network of non-governmental organizations. China and the United States may end up stumbling in the fog of proxy war. Intervention in civil conflicts is often complex and covert, making it difficult to accurately perceive a patron’s degree of involvement, resolve, or influence over surrogates. This uncertainty can encourage a rival patron to engage in **worst-case-scenario thinking** and **misperceive** — and perhaps **overreact** to — the adversary’s involvement. In 2017, a U.S. jet shot down a Syrian aircraft that attacked the rebel Syrian Democratic Forces. Russia responded by suspending deconfliction protocols designed to avoid escalation, illustrating how intervention can evolve in unexpected and dangerous ways.174

In addition, surrogate forces may pursue an agenda that deviates from the patron’s preferences and potentially escalates the conflict.175 The Obama administration struggled to convince the Shia-dominated Nouri al Maliki government in Iraq to reach out to Iraqi Sunnis, worsening the Iraqi civil war.176 In such a situation, the local regime’s dependence on the United States does not translate into U.S. control because Washington cannot credibly threaten to end support: A collapse of the government would also be a loss for U.S. interests.177 Surrogates may also **escalate a civil war by mistake**, worsening an already tense situation or drawing global condemnation. In 2014, Ukrainian rebels shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, using a surface-to-air missile provided, and subsequently recovered, by Russia. Ukrainian rebels may have fired the missile in error, believing the target to be a military aircraft.178 Similar events in a Sino-U.S. proxy war could spur a **retaliatory response**, particularly given **loss aversion**, **cultural ignorance**, and the **fog of proxy war**.

A **U.S.-Chinese proxy war** could also **deepen the intrastate conflict** itself. Scholars have found that external support tends to **exacerbate civil wars**.179 Take, for example, recent **proxy wars** in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, which have often **spilled across borders**. In Yemen, **direct Saudi intervention** and **indirect Iranian intervention** empowered the Houthis, provided **fertile terrain** for extremists like **al-Qaeda** in the Arabian Peninsula and triggered **catastrophic humanitarian consequences**.180

Conclusion

In 2007, Robert Gates said that unconventional wars were “the ones most likely to be fought in the years ahead.”181 This holds true for military competition between the **U**nited **S**tates and **China**. Strategic doctrine in both countries **downplays intervention** in foreign civil wars. And yet, **any future military rivalry** between China and America is likely to take the form of **proxy war** because of the systemwide dynamics that **inhibit interstate war**. The battlefield is more likely to be in Venezuela, Iran, North Korea, or Myanmar than in the South China Sea.

A **Sino-U.S. proxy war** may be **low-level**, **covert**, and **deniable**. Moreover, even as the **U**nited **S**tates and **China** seek to manipulate a particular civil war in contrary directions, they may cooperate in other internal conflicts to achieve shared goals like **combatting terrorism**. However, there is a significant danger that psychological dynamics, **ignorance of local culture**, and the **independence of local actors** could **unintentionally deepen the civil war** or cause a **proxy war to spiral into a larger conflict**.

#### DRC instability escalates and exacerbates terrorism risks

Mead 13 [Walter Mead, Professor of Foreign Affairs and Humanities at Bard College, Distinguished Fellow at Hudson Institute, “Peace in The Congo? Why the World Should Care,” The American Interest, 12/15/2013, https://www.the-american-interest.com/2013/12/15/peace-in-the-congo-why-the-world-should-care/]

One of the biggest questions of the 21st century is whether this destructive dynamic can be contained, or whether the demand for ethnic, cultural and/or religious homogeneity will continue to convulse world politics, drive new generations of conflict, and create millions more victims. The Congo conflict is a disturbing piece of evidence suggesting that, in Africa at least, there is potential for this kind of conflict. The Congo war (and the long Hutu-Tutsi conflict in neighboring countries) is not, unfortunately alone. The secession of South Sudan from Sudan proper, the wars in what remains of that unhappy country, the secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia and the rise of Christian-Muslim tension right across Africa (where religious conflict often is fed by and intensifies “tribal”—in Europe we would say “ethnic” or “national”—conflicts) are strong indications that the potential for huge and destructive conflict across Africa is very real.

But one must look beyond Africa. The Middle East of course is aflame in religious and ethnic conflict. The old British Raj including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma and Sri Lanka offers countless examples of ethnic and religious conflict that sometimes is contained, and sometimes boils to the surface in horrendous acts of violence.

Beyond that, rival nationalisms in East and Southeast Asia are keeping the world awake at night.

The Congo war should be a reminder to us all that the foundations of our world are dynamite, and that the potential for new conflicts on the scale of the horrific wars of the 20th century is very much with us today.

The second lesson from this conflict stems from the realization of how much patience and commitment from the international community (which in this case included the Atlantic democracies and a coalition of African states working as individual countries and through various international institutions) it has taken to get this far towards peace. Particularly at a time when many Americans want the US to turn inwards, there are people who make the argument that it is really none of America’s business to invest time and energy in the often thankless task of solving these conflicts.

That might be an ugly but defensible position if we didn’t live in such a tinderbox world. Someone could rationally say, yes, it’s terrible that a million plus people are being killed overseas in a horrific conflict, but the war is really very far away and America has urgent needs at home and we should husband the resources we have available for foreign policy on things that have more power to affect us directly.

The problem is that these wars spread. They may start in places that we don’t care much about (most Americans didn’t give a rat’s patootie about whether Germany controlled the Sudetenland in 1938 or Danzig in 1939) but they tend to spread to places that we do care very much about. This can be because a revisionist great power like Germany in 1938-39 needs to overturn the balance of power in Europe to achieve its goals, or it can be because instability in a very remote place triggers problems in places that we care about very much. Out of Afghanistan in 2001 came both 9/11 and the waves of insurgency and instability that threaten to rip nuclear-armed Pakistan apart or trigger wider conflict with India. Out of the mess in Syria a witches’ brew of terrorism and religious conflict looks set to complicate the security of our allies in Europe and the Middle East and even the security of the oil supply on which the world economy so profoundly depends.

Africa, and the potential for upheaval there, is of more importance to American security than many people may understand. The line between Africa and the Middle East is a soft one. The weak states that straddle the southern approaches of the Sahara are ideal petri dishes for Al Qaeda type groups to form and attract local support. There are networks of funding and religious contact that give groups in these countries potential access to funds, fighters, training and weapons from the Middle East. A war in the eastern Congo might not directly trigger these other conflicts, but it helps to create the swirling underworld of arms trading, money transfers, illegal commerce and the rise of a generation of young men who become experienced fighters—and know no other way to make a living. It destabilizes the environment for neighboring states (like Uganda and Kenya) that play much more direct role in potential crises of greater concern to us.

This is why the Clinton, Bush and Obama administrations (representing three very different kinds of American politics) have all been engaged in efforts like the peace keeping effort in the Congo. It is why, despite our budget problems at home and despite our often justifiable impatience with the complexities of dealing with international coalitions and the inadequacies of international institutions, we need to continue the slow and painstaking work that makes agreements like this one possible.

The world we live in is an explosive one. There are all kinds of things that can go horribly wrong, and what happens in one corner of the world doesn’t necessarily stay there. Reducing the danger requires an active, global American foreign policy whether we like it or not. The potential for new communal and religious wars that kill millions of people and endanger American security and world peace is very real. The world seems safer than the world of the 1930s and 1940s in part because the United States and many of our friends and allies are working quietly around the world to contain outbreaks of violence, address the issues that exacerbate hatred and distrust, and in the last analysis are willing to provide the security guarantees and deterrents that prevent mass mayhem.

#### CBRN attacks in MENA escalate globally

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The risk of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) incidents has increased worldwide over the last 30 years.1 Previous studies have indicated the tentative role of terrorist groups in weaponizing CBRN agents worldwide.2,3 For example, the Aum Shinrikyo group released sarin in a metro subway in Japan in 1995, resulting in more than 600 casualties suffering from acute neurogenic and respiratory symptoms.4 In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, terrorist groups have attempted to weaponize biological agents such as anthrax, ricin, and cyanide for use in metropolitan cities.3,5 Furthermore, CBRN incidents pose significant risks to the health sector and can lead to widespread public health emergencies if not adequately managed. CBRN incident planning is crucial for governments and the healthcare sector. Once an incident occurs, it has devastating consequences, including injury, illness, death, and widespread panic. Hence, effective preparedness involves identifying potential risks and vulnerabilities, developing preparedness and response strategies and protocols, and coordinating emergency services with other stakeholders to ensure a swift and effective response. Therefore, due to cross-border risks, collaboration across the MENA health sector is crucial to ensure appropriate assessment readiness for managing overwhelming numbers of victims with acute clinical presentations. Similar to other global experiences, such as in Europe,6,7 engaging MENA experts in expressing their opinions about MENA international cooperation through interviews can be a helpful measure to enhance perspectives on building a collaborative approach for CBRN threat health sector readiness.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a broad and evolving science widely used in medicine for educational purposes, clinical diagnoses, therapeutic decision-making, and innovative health research. It stimulates cognizable human functions and provides a detailed problem-solving view.8 Text mining (TM) is an AI technique that utilizes natural language processing and sentiment analysis techniques to extract meaningful insights by processing unstructured text data into a numeric form, exploring in-depth relationships between variables, and uncovering valuable insights and patterns in data that might be missed with manual analysis alone.9 At the Spiez Convergence biological arms control conference in 2021, researchers put AI, usually used to search for helpful drugs, into a ‘‘bad actor’’ mode to show how easily it could be abused.10 It took less than 6 hours for drug-developing AI to invent 40,000 potentially lethal molecules. All the researchers had to tweak their approach to seek out, rather than weed out, toxicity. The AI created thousands of new substances, some similar to the venomous agent X, the most potent nerve agent ever developed.11 Studies in healthcare have used TM and machine learning (ML) to explore public health information from patients’ free-text feedback, which has rarely been fully exploited while valuable information may be hidden.12,13 Other disaster preparedness and resilience studies have used TM for mental health research by analyzing sentiments beyond social media posts during unusual emergencies.14 Another study used TM to process newspaper articles about the emotional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the community.15 Overall, TM uses different approaches to help mitigate risks by building verbal input-based textual dictionaries that facilitate sentiment polarity assessment and ML algorithm modeling, enabling automated sentiment identification.16

Expert feedback is considered an invaluable source of information that contributes to determining robust ser vice delivery improvements in system problem-solving measures.17,18 Hence, using TM techniques could help produce an in-depth, objective analysis of experts’ free text feedback regarding the perspectives of MENA countries’ coordination and preparedness for CBRN threats, considering the variability of political and geographical challenges and health system readiness levels across the region.

The MENA countries account for 6% of the global population.19 They are strategically located between Asia, Africa, and Europe, which increases their risk of exposure to disasters, including deliberate and accidental CBRN incidents. The MENA region, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Council, is a global economic power with an important petroleum product hub. Over the past 20 years, the region has witnessed multiple conflicts involving chemical weapons,20 significantly increasing the risk of exposure to CBRN incidents. Few studies have explored MENA experts’ opinions on disaster preparedness levels in the region.21-23 To our knowledge, no previous study has used AI algorithms to explore experts’ opinions concerning the MENA healthcare system’s readiness to respond to CBRN incidents.