

*Promoting Peace with Information: Transparency as a Tool of Security Regimes.* By Dan Lindley. (Princeton University Press, 2007.)

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Uncertainty is at the root of conflicts throughout the globe. Wars erupt through the miscalculation of capabilities, misunderstanding of intentions, and the inability of contending parties to trust one another, undermining their ability to credibly commit

to agreements that might resolve the issues under dispute. If parties had perfect information, they could know, without firing a shot, the outcome of any potential conflict between them, creating incentives to produce a mutually beneficial agreement between them. With perfect information, parties could understand the intentions of their adversaries, allowing them to distinguish between those who will cheat on an agreement from those that will abide by it.

If uncertainty is inherent to the occurrence of conflict, then key to overcoming this obstacle to peace is to increase the level of transparency between conflicting parties. In *Promoting Peace with Information*, Lindley examines the role that security regimes play in providing the information that is vital to improving transparency within the conflicts they address. In this well-researched volume, Lindley defines security regimes broadly, examining regimes ranging from the nineteenth-century Concert of Europe to twenty-first-century peacekeeping. The book focuses upon two fundamental questions: (1) what role do security regimes play in increasing transparency between conflict participants? and, (2) what impact does increased transparency exert upon the prospects for peace?

The book's analysis centers upon a series of five rich case studies that trace the role that security regimes play in increasing transparency and the degree to which transparency translates into more peaceful outcomes. Including an analysis of the performance of the Concert of Europe across five crises alongside twenty-first-century UN peacekeeping missions might at first seem curious. Yet, a deeper consideration of security regimes underscores the wisdom of this research design. The Concert of Europe provides examples of transparency exclusively through a diplomatic forum, with no accompanying peacekeeping mission. The Cyprus and Golan Heights cases provide examples that move beyond diplomacy alone to include a traditional monitoring peacekeeping force. Finally, the Namibian and Cambodian cases represent the most extensive third-party efforts to manage conflict: multidimensional peacekeeping missions that include military, diplomatic, and civil reconstruction components. This research design allows Lindley to examine the performance of security regimes as promoters of transparency across the range of conflict management approaches.

Lindley's analysis is rigorously fair, describing in detail both the ways in which the cases fit and depart from theoretical expectations. In the Concert of Europe cases, for example, Lindley notes examples of transparency both preventing and promoting conflict,

even within the same crisis, suggesting a more complicated relationship between transparency and peace. In general, however, Lindley finds that security regimes play an important role in increasing transparency among conflicting parties and, on balance, this transparency improves prospects for peace. The case studies show a clear tendency for transparency to reduce unwarranted fears as well as reduce cheating among disputing parties.

In many respects, the book's most intriguing findings highlight the link between the ability of a security regime to provide information and promote transparency to the context in which the regime takes place. In information-rich environments in which both contending parties have more information than the peacekeepers, the ability of security regimes to make an appreciable contribution to transparency is limited, as was the case for the UNDOF mission in the Golan Heights. Even more problematically, competition with other information providers can undermine the ability of a security regime to improve information and promote transparency. The peacekeeping missions in Cambodia and Namibia confronted an environment with few media sources, high levels of illiteracy, and low levels of education. Although this is an environment in which the need for information to promote transparency is especially acute, it is also an environment in which there are fewer competing voices to undermine information provided by the UN force. By contrast, disputants in more developed regions have access to greater amounts of information by themselves, and there are more challenging information outlets able to drown out information provided by a peacekeeping force. This suggests an important and low-cost means by which peacekeepers can promote peace in what are often seen as the most challenging security environments.

The contribution of the book to our understanding of the role that security regimes play in increasing transparency and encouraging peace makes this an essential text. The book raises a number of interesting questions that should stimulate further research. For example, Lindley observes that security regimes appear to both promote peace and undermine it, suggesting the presence of a switching mechanism that influences the impact a regime exerts upon a conflict. This mechanism might, for example, be tied to the type of uncertainty the security regime mitigates. Lindley observes in some of the case studies actors conducting diplomacy simultaneously inside and outside the security regime. During the Belgian crisis, while diplomatic activity occurred within the Concert of Europe, the most important negotiations took place

between Britain and France away from the Concert. Given the utility of security regimes as information providers, why did Britain and France negotiate bilaterally? Lindley's analysis suggests the importance of looking at how actors use security regimes and the way in which these regimes are linked to other conflict management approaches. Indeed, one limitation of Lindley's study is that it pays little attention to the important linkage between the two roles typically played by peacekeepers as both information and security providers. Given that peacekeepers tend to provide both information and security, it would be useful to better understand the ways in which these two mandates reinforce one another.

*Promoting Peace with Information* is an important contribution to the literature that provides valuable insights for both scholars and policymakers alike. Lindley's text provides useful reading not only to those interested in security regimes, but more broadly to those interested in peacekeeping, bargaining, and mediation.

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