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South–South security cooperation and the (re)making of global security governance

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Abstract

This article introduces the Special Issue 'South–South Security Cooperation and the (Re)making of Global Security Governance'. The contributions explore security-driven South–South interactions across the globe, assessing empirical, theoretical, and normative aspects. Our aim is to decentre debates on global security governance, traditionally focused on Northern-led cooperation, and to move beyond simplistic and simplifying assessments of South–South engagements. The Special Issue particularly highlights the ambiguities of South–South security cooperation, including varying degrees of global North involvement and differing interpretations of 'security' and 'South–South' among the involved actors. The contributions examine the practical outlook, normative consequences, and embeddedness of these cooperations within global hierarchies, and their implications for global security governance. This article sets the stage for this endeavor. Unpacking the categories 'South', 'security', and 'cooperation', we first provide a working definition of South–South security cooperation. Next, we offer a historical perspective, emphasising the role of legacy effects, institutional structures, geopolitical junctures, and international hierarchies in shaping South–South security cooperation. The concluding section presents the contributions to the special issue and discusses the implications of South–South security cooperation for understanding contemporary changes in global security governance.

Keywords: global South; international security; South–South cooperation

Introduction

On 2 October 2023, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 2699. Responding to escalating gang violence in Haiti, the resolution authorised the deployment of 'a Multinational Security Support (MSS) mission with a lead country, in close cooperation and coordination with the Government of Haiti'. Seeking to 'support the efforts of the Haitian National Police to re-establish security in Haiti and build security conditions conducive to holding free and fair elections', Kenya, 'at the invitation of Haiti and in response to the appeal by the UN Secretary-General', was put in the driver's seat of the MSS.[1] Hernán Pérez Lose, the UN Representative of Ecuador, the country that co-sponsored the resolution with the United States, which also foots most of the bill, described the undertaking as 'a clear example of *South–South cooperation*'.[2]

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[1]UNSC, Resolution 2699, 2 October 2023, pp. 2–3, emphasis added.

[2]United Nations Meeting Coverage, 'Security Council authorizes multinational security support mission for Haiti for initial period of one year, by Vote of 13 in favour with 2 abstentions' (2 October 2023), available at: {https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15432.doc.htm}.

US support includes 100 million USD for the mission combined with an equal amount of 'in kind' support by the US Department of Defense. See Department of State Press release, 'Acting Deputy Secretary of State and Under

This episode, in a paradigmatic way, reflects the growing relevance of new forms of South–South engagements and a general increase in significance of Global South actors more widely, within ongoing transformations of the global order, prominently enveloping the domain of security governance.

Regularly depicted as an alternative to, if not contestation of, the norms and practices underpinning the liberal global order, 'organized around economic openness, multilateral institutions, security cooperation and democratic solidarity', including its underlying power relations grounded in US hegemony supported by Western Europe and Japan,[3] the 'rise of the Global South' is often presented as veritable game changer in international affairs. And South–South cooperation is one of the clearest expressions of this development.[4]

For many observers, the growing presence and power of Global South countries in world affairs signals the emergence of a 'postcolonial international community of interest that advances the objectives of equality, freedom and mutuality in the form of a new ethos of power'. All of this is said to positively set the Global South, and South–South cooperation more generally, apart from the Global North.[5]

However, the ways in which South–South interactions make 'a difference' and thereby challenge the dominance of the Global North in world politics, including the liberal make-up of our contemporary world order, remain under-researched, under-conceptualised, and under-theorised.[6] This gap is particularly evident within the domain of global security governance, despite the fact that security holds an important place in South–South interactions, and the observable growing relevance of Southern solutions to Southern security problems, as exemplified, for instance, by the UN-backed MSS endeavour mentioned earlier.[7]

In fact, the empirically observable rise of South–South cooperation in domains such as doctrine development, security sector reform, international peacekeeping, the provision of security-related infrastructure (e.g. military bases, roads, ports), and cooperation in the development of military technologies as well as the securitisation of development assistance, has attracted comparatively little scholarly interest.[8]

Secretary for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland and Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs Brian Nichols after the Addressing the Urgent Security Situation in Haiti UN General Assembly side event' (22 September 2023), available at: {https://2021-2025.state.gov/acting-deputy-secretary-of-state-and-under-secretary-for-political-affairs-victoria-nuland-and-assistant-secretary-for-western-hemisphere-affairs-brian-nichols-after-the-addressing-the-urgent-security/}.

[3] Gilford John Ikenberry, 'The end of liberal international order?', *International Affairs*, 94:1 (2018), pp. 7–23 (p. 7), available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix241}.

[4] Kevin Gray and Barry K. Gills, 'South–South cooperation and the rise of the global South', *Third World Quarterly*, 37:4 (2016), pp. 557–74, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1128817}.

[5] Siba Grovogu, 'A revolution nonetheless: The global South in international relations', *The Global South*, 5:1 (2011), pp. 175–90 (p. 175), available at: {https://doi.org/10.2979/globalsouth.5.1.175}. See also Amitav Acharya, *Constructing Global Order: Agency and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Andrew Hurrell, 'Beyond the BRICS: Power, pluralism, and the future of global order', *Ethics & International Affairs*, 32:1 (2018), pp. 89–101, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S0892679418000126}.

[6] But see Isaline Bergamaschi, Phoebe Moore, and Arlene B. Tickner (eds), *South–South Cooperation beyond the Myths* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Peter Kragelund, *South–South Development* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

[7] Isaline Bergamaschi and Arlene B. Tickner, 'Introduction: South–South cooperation beyond the myths. A critical analysis', in Isaline Bergamaschi, Phoebe Moore, and Arlene B. Tickner (eds), *South–South Cooperation beyond the Myths* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 1–28.

[8] But see Ilaria Carrozza and Nicholas J. Marsh, 'Great power competition and China's security assistance to Africa: Arms, training, and influence', *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 7:4 (2022), pp. 1–22; Tiago de Bortoli and Rafaella Pelliccioli, 'South–South cooperation and technological development in defense: The case of the missile A-Darter', *Brazilian Journal of African Studies*, 4:7 (2019), pp. 51–81; Connor O'Reilly, 'Branding Rio de Janeiro's pacification model: A silver bullet for the "planet of slums"?', in Connor O'Reilly (ed.), *Colonial Policing and the Transnational Legacy: The Global Dynamics of Policing across the Lusophone Community* (New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 227–52; Zeenia Shaukat, 'A win for whom? Widening inequalities under the Belt and Road Initiative's China–Pakistan corridor', *The Reality of Aid: Asia Pacific* (2022), available at: {https://realityofaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Deep-Dives-BRI.pdf}; Nebahat Tanrıverdi Yaşar, 'Unpacking Turkey's

This Special Issue addresses this gap. It brings together a set of articles that engage with experiences of security-driven South–South interactions in different settings around the globe, from the Americas to Africa to Southeast Asia. The contributors explore the (re)making of contemporary global security governance from, with, and through the Global South by assessing key empirical, theoretical, and normative aspects of these modes of cooperation. Our overall aim is to decentre debates on global security governance that are marked by a dominant focus on Northern-led forms of security cooperation and their impact on the shaping of global security architectures, while moving beyond for-and-against assessments of South–South engagements in this domain.

Instead, the Special Issue highlights the ambiguities of South–South security cooperation, including varying degrees of Global North involvement, as well as competing understandings of what 'security' and 'South–South' imply for the actors involved. On that basis, the contributions point towards the varieties of South–South security cooperation concerning its practical outlook, normative consequences, and embeddedness within wider global hierarchies, as well as the resulting implications for our understanding of global security governance.

In so doing, the Special Issue engages with and expands previous work that has addressed larger questions of inclusion and exclusions within security studies,[9] by, in the now-classic words of Acharya, putting 'the periphery at the core' of our understanding of global security dynamics.[10] Periphery here not only connotes a geographic location. It also encapsulates a political and epistemological placement of actors and processes at the alleged margins of global security dynamics, which is ill fitted to capture transformations of contemporary world politics and their corresponding security implications.

Our effort of recentring the periphery by analysing various instances of South–South security cooperation, accordingly, has epistemological implications. By taking South–South security cooperation as a privileged analytical vantage point to reassess the meaning of *global* security governance, the Special Issue proposes a relational analytical perspective. Following Muppidi, we understand the 'production of the global' as an inherently 'systemic phenomenon that necessarily has a mutually constitutive relationship with the situated practices of social actors', and which 'is constantly reproduced or transformed through their identities, meanings, and practices'.[11]

Emphasising relationality and mutual constitution, in turn, implies placing South–South security cooperation within wider international hierarchies that cut across both binary North–South divides and homogenising images of *the* Global South. Stated differently, our perspective on security-driven South–South cooperation emphasises the shaping power of Global North actors and institutions, the 'heterogeneous unity' of words and actions of their Southern counterparts, and multiple interrelations spanning the North–South spectrum, in defining the ideational, material, and practical parameters of these undertakings, as well as their global repercussions.[12]

Against this backdrop, the Special Issue makes several contributions to the existing scholarship on South–South cooperation in security matters. While several studies have addressed

security footprint in Africa: Trends and implications for the EU', *SWP Comment*, 42 (2022), available at: {https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2022C42_Turkey_Security_Africa.pdf}.

[9]Tarak Barkawi, 'Decolonising war', *European Journal of International Security*, 1:2 (2016), pp. 199–214, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2016.7}; Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'The postcolonial moment in security studies', *Review of International Studies*, 32:2 (2006), pp. 329–52, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210506007054}; Sarah Bertrand, 'Can the subaltern securitize? Postcolonial perspectives on securitization theory and its critics', *European Journal of International Security*, 3:3 (2018), pp. 281–99, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2018.3}; Jonna Nyman, 'Towards a global security studies: What can looking at China tell us about the concept of security?', *European Journal of International Relations*, 29:3 (2023), pp. 673–97, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/13540661231176990}.

[10]Amitav Acharya, 'The periphery at the core: The Third World and security studies', in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (eds.), *Critical Security Studies* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 299–327.

[11]Himadeep Muppidi, *The Politics of the Global* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), p. 28. See also Pinar Bilgin, 'Unpacking the global', in Jana Hönke and Markus-Michael Müller (eds), *The Global Making of Policing: Postcolonial Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 167–77; Yaqing Qin, *A Relational Theory of World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[12]On the 'heterogeneous unity' of the Global South, see Kragelund, *South–South Development*, pp. 4–7.

specific issues of South–South security cooperation,[13] assessed the role of 'rising powers' as security providers or regional hegemons heavily involved in the transformation of regional security architectures,[14] or focused on individual cases,[15] no comprehensive analyses of the empirically observable diversity of South–South security cooperation, its embeddedness within global power hierarchies, and varying impacts on global security architectures exist today. The resulting practical, and normative, implications have largely fallen out of the picture, and many of the existing studies remain descriptive, exhibiting a strong reliance on secondary sources and/or government documents. Under-theorisation and weak empirical grounding follow from this, including a lack of attention paid to the role of wider international hierarchies in affecting South–South security cooperation.

This Special Issue brings together contributions that analyse various configurations of South–South security cooperation to address these gaps. The articles assess South–South security cooperation in the 'war on guns' in Latin America and the Caribbean, Chinese security cooperation in the Mekong region to contain trans-border criminal activities, the role of regional organisations in South–South security cooperation in Africa, Colombia's efforts to export military expertise throughout Latin America, and the impact of limited state capacities on Thailand's South–South security cooperation. Through these perspectives, the articles enhance our understanding of South–South security cooperation. They expand upon and contribute to existing scholarship that has examined the role of the Global South in key debates within the field of security studies. These include international peacekeeping[16] and post-conflict reconstructions,[17]

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[13]Rita Abrahamsen and Adam Sandor, 'The global South and international security', in Alexandra Gheciu and William C. Wohlforth (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 382–96; Paul Amar, 'Global South to the rescue: Emerging humanitarian superpowers and globalizing rescue industries', *Globalizations*, 9:1 (2012), pp. 1–13, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2012.657408}.

[14]Charles T. Call and Cedric deConing (eds), *Rising Powers and Peacebuilding: Breaking the Mold?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Jun Yan Chang and Nicole Jenne, 'Velvet fists: The paradox of defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia', *European Journal of International Security*, 5:3 (2020), pp. 332–49, available at: {https:doi.org/10.1017/eis.2020.16}; Anna Longhini and Erin Zimmerman, 'Regional security dialogues in Europe and in Asia: The role of Track 1.5 forums in the practice of international security', *European Journal of International Security*, 4 (2021), pp. 481–502, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2021.14}.

[15]Yonique Campbell, 'Security cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean: Threats, institutions and challenges', in Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Patricia Daley (eds), *Routledge Handbook of South–South Relations* (London: Routledge, 2018), pp. 309–19; Louise Wiuff Moe and Markus-Michael Müller, 'Counterinsurgency, knowledge production and the traveling of coercive realpolitik between Colombia and Somalia', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 53:2 (2018), pp. 193–215, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836718768641}; Adam Sandor, 'Border security and drug trafficking in Senegal: AIRCOP and global security assemblages', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 10:4 (2016), pp. 490–512, {https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2016.1240425}; Eva Magdalena Stambøl and Tobias Berger, 'Transnationally entangled (in)securities: The UAE, Turkey, and the Saharan political economy of danger', *Security Dialogue*, 54:5 (2023), pp. 493–514, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/09670106231186942}. See also n. 7 above.

[16]Elise Féron and Keith Krause, 'Power/resistance: External actors, local agency, and the Burundian peacebuilding project', *European Journal of International Security*, 7:4 (2022), pp. 508–30, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2022.2}; Christoph Harig and Nicole Jenne, 'Whose rules? Whose power? The Global South and the possibility to shape international peacekeeping norms through leadership appointments', *Review of International Studies*, 48:4 (2022), pp. 646–67, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210522000262}; Lou Pingeot, 'United Nations peace operations as international practices: Revisiting the UN mission's armed raids against gangs in Haiti', *European Journal of International Security*, 3:3 (2018), pp. 364–81, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2018.4}; Lesley J. Pruitt, 'A Global South state's challenge to gendered global cultures of peacekeeping', in Swati Parashar, Judith Ann Tickner, and Jacqui True (eds), *Revisiting Gendered States: Feminist Imaginings of the State in International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 122–37.

[17]Eka Ikpe, 'Developmental post-conflict reconstruction in postindependence Nigeria: Lessons from Asian developmental states', *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 16:3 (2021), pp. 318–35, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/1542316620969660}; Elisa Randazzo, 'Post-conflict reconstruction, the local, and the indigenous', in Nicolas Lemay-Hébert (ed.), *Handbook on Intervention and Statebuilding* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2019), pp. 30–40; Mohamed Sesay, 'Hijacking the rule of law in postconflict environments', *European Journal of International Security*, 4:1 (2019), pp. 41–60, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2018.6}.

the role of regional organisations in security governance,[18] security-sector reform,[19] arms exports,[20] counterterrorism and counter-insurgency.[21]

Our special issue adds to this scholarship a theoretically plural, methodologically rigorous and empirically grounded understanding of the transformation of contemporary global security dynamics across a number of different sites and fields witnessing increased South–South engagements. By mapping different forms of South–South security cooperation, the Special Issue seeks to connect isolated debates focusing on specific issue areas or individual regions within security studies. The comparative perspective that emerges from the respective contributions makes an original contribution to a better understanding of an emerging, and increasingly important, domain of global security governance, laying out the contours of a new research programme for analysing and explaining the dynamic causes and consequences of this form of cooperation for the ways in which security is governed globally.

In the remainder of this introduction, we will first unpack the categories 'South', 'security', and 'cooperation' and provide a working definition of South–South security cooperation. Against this backdrop, we offer a historicisation of South–South security cooperation. Highlighting particularly the importance of legacy effects, institutional structures, geopolitical junctures, international hierarchies, and the plurality of the actor constellations involved in these engagements, we outline a historically grounded analytical roadmap for grasping the contours of contemporary forms of South–South security cooperation. Moving on to place South–South security cooperation in wider transformative trends of the global order, the concluding section presents the contributions to the Special Issue and provides insights into the implications of South–South security cooperation for understanding ongoing changes in global security governance.

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[18]Louise Wiuff Moe and Anna Geis, 'Hybridity and friction in organizational politics: New perspectives on the African security regime complex', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 14:2 (2020), pp. 148–70, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2020.1729618}; Maria J. Debre, 'The dark side of regionalism: How regional organizations help authoritarian regimes to boost survival', *Democratization*, 28:2 (2021), pp. 394–413, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2020.1823970}; Kilian Spandler, 'UNAMID and the legitimation of global–regional peacekeeping cooperation: Partnership and friction in UN–AU relations', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 14:2 (2020), pp. 187–203, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2020.1725729}.

[19]Thorsten Bonacker, 'Security practices and the production of center–periphery figurations in statebuilding', *Alternatives*, 43:4 (2018), pp. 190–206, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/0304375418821479}; Philipp Lottholz, *Post-Liberal Statebuilding in Central Asia: Imaginaries, Discourses and Practices of Social Ordering* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2019); Ursula C. Schroeder and Fairlie Chappuis, 'New perspectives on security sector reform: The role of local agency and domestic politics', *International Peacekeeping*, 21:2 (2014), pp. 133–48, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2014.910401}.

[20]Rodrigo Fracalossi de Moraes, 'Weapons from the South: Democratization, civil society, and Brazil's arms exports', *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 6:4 (2021), ogab002, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogab002}; Elena Grassiani and Frank Müller, 'Brazil–Israel relations and the marketing of urban security expertise', *Latin American Perspectives*, 46:3 (2019), pp. 114–30, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X19831442}; Alex Neads, 'Rival principals and shrewd agents: Military assistance and the diffusion of warfare', *European Journal of International Security*, 6:2 (2021), pp. 233–55, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2021.1}; Daniel Salisbury, 'Exploring the use of "third countries" in proliferation networks: The case of Malaysia', *European Journal of International Security*, 4:1 (2019), pp. 101–22, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2018.11}.

[21]Jan Bachmann and Jana Hönke, '"Peace and security" as counterterrorism? The political effects of liberal interventions in Kenya', *African Affairs*, 109:434 (2010), pp. 97–114, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adp069}; Laleh Khalili, 'The location of Palestine in global counterinsurgencies', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 43:3 (2010), pp. 413–33, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743810000425}; Rhys Machold, 'India's counterinsurgency knowledge: Theorizing global position in wars on terror', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 33:4–5 (2022), pp. 796–818, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2022.2034352}; Raosaheb Bawaskar and Utkarsha Mahajan, 'Emerging counterterrorism alliances in the Global South: BRICS as a case study', in Rajendra Baikady, S. M. Sajid, Jaroslaw Przeperski, et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Social Problems* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), pp. 1–12, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68127-2_269-1}.

Towards an understanding of South–South security cooperation

Using notions such as 'South' or 'Global South' often comes at the price of lacking analytical clarity and explanatory power.[22] Given the often normatively driven usages of these terms as 'symbolic designation[s] with political implications,'[23] for the purpose of our endeavour, it makes sense to first unpack what we mean by 'the (Global) South', how we understand 'security', and what processes (whether institutionalised or not) we take to constitute instances of cooperation. We discuss these three in turn.

The notion of 'The Global South' has recently gained prominence in both academic discourse and among security practitioners (especially in the Global North).[24] At the same time, its precise meaning and conceptual contours have remained conspicuously vague. Often used as a shorthand for states and societies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the 'Global South' is the latest enunciation of long-standing styles of thinking that divide the world into North and South, East and West, developed and developing, or what Partha Chatterjee has famously called 'most of the world'.[25]

Contemporary South–South cooperation therefore unfolds in a long historical trajectory, both as set of practices (see below) as well as in terms of terminology and epistemology. The notion of 'the South' that is a constitutive part of South–South security cooperation entered the vocabulary of international politics through the report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues (the so-called Brandt Report), published in 1980. Foregrounding questions of global redistribution, by highlighting global inequalities setting a 'developed' North apart from, and ahead of, an 'underdeveloped' South (referring to countries located between the 28th and 33rd parallels), the Brandt Report echoed demands of recently decolonised states for a New International Economic Order.[26] 'The South', in this reading, emerged as an explicitly political project aimed at deep-seated transformations of the power hierarchies and resulting economic inequalities of the Cold War global order.[27]

The political project was intimately linked with anti-colonial struggles and their transnational entanglements, processes of decolonisation, and non-alignment. Intellectually pioneered at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung in 1955, the political project that has subsequently come to be known as non-alignment or the 'Third World' was, from the outset, characterised by deep internal plurality and contradictions, casting doubt on the variability of the project as much as on the varying terminologies in which it was cast.[28] Nonetheless, common experiences of colonial domination, their reverberations in the present, the persistence of deep-seated global hierarchies, and the aspiration to overcome them underpinned the project of 'Third Worldism' during the (early) Cold War.

The contestation of global hierarchies in the name of South–South relations was not only directed at material inequalities. but also had an epistemic component.[29] It encompassed forms of worldmaking that explicitly thought to reinvent the conceptual infrastructures of global politics

[22]Kragelund, *South–South Development*, pp. 5–6.

[23]Grovogu, 'A revolution nonetheless', p. 175.

[24]Sebastian Haug, Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner, and Günther Maihold, 'The "Global South" in the study of world politics: Examining a meta category', *Third World Quarterly*, 42:9 (2021), pp. 1923–44, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2021.1948831}.

[25]Partha Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). See also Jochen Kleinschmidt, 'Differentiation theory and the Global South as a metageography of international relations', *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 43:2 (2018), pp. 59–80, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/0304375418811191}; Kragelund, *South–South Development*.

[26]Nicholas Lees, 'The Brandt Line after forty years: The more North–South relations change, the more they stay the same?', *Review of International Studies*, 47:1 (2020), pp. 85–106, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S026021052000039X}.

[27]Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2008).

[28]Luis Eslava, Michael Fakhri, and Vasuki Nesiah (eds), *Bandung, Global History, and International Law* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[29]Tobias Berger, 'The "Global South" as a relational category: Global hierarchies in the production of law and legal pluralism', *Third World Quarterly*, 42:9 (2021), pp. 2001–17, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2020.1827948}.

and thereby overcome their colonial inflections.[30] Colonial styles of thinking evolve around onto-logical distinctions between Global North and Global South (or related notions) and are frequently cast in temporal registers in which the Global North serves as tacit yardstick for social, political, economic, and cultural development, whereas the Global South is designated as 'the waiting room of history' and remains in the 'not yet'.[31] Such patterns of thinking ran through (and continue to run through)[32] legislative and administrative discourses as much as through the public imagination;[33] they also underpin academic scholarship, global security, and intervention politics, as post-colonial scholarship has demonstrated.[34]

Approached from this perspective, South–South cooperation is characterised by (a) the interaction of two or more actors that find themselves in historically marginalised positions within global hierarchies and that (b) challenge these hierarchies either explicitly (through open contestation) or implicitly (through specific practices), and by (c) forms of cooperation that at least superficially self-fashion themselves as normative projects and instances of solidarity. This understanding links back to notions of the Third World and the Global South as political projects.

Assuming that these projects generally come with 'great potential in consolidating and empow-ering the various social actors that consider themselves to be in sub-altern(ized) positionalities of global networks and in fostering South–South relations', such understandings often tend to reify the emancipatory potentials inherent in these endeavours.[35] In so doing, they run the risk of romanticising the Global South and obscuring important hierarchies and rifts within this macro-category.

Against this romanticisation, we do not limit our understanding of South–South security coop-eration to the aspects sketched above, but turn it into an *empirical question* by asking how notions of 'South–South security cooperation' are imagined and performed by specific actors and to what practical and normative effects.

Recent scholarship has shown how early invocation of Third Worldism, for example in the case of India, was articulated primarily for domestic audiences, serving to project a moral image of the nation while deflecting from the violent domestic processes of post-colonial state forma-tion.[36] Similarly, Cezne and Hönke have shown how invocations of South–South dynamics by representatives of Brazilian mining companies and specific elites in Mozambique were aimed at the consolidation of existing hierarchies. As they argue, 'claims to more equal and developmen-tal South–South relations [were] used by key Mozambican elites – as gatekeepers – to produce and sustain political power, while also leading to specific meanings in use of the "South–South".[37] And Randeria has highlighted how 'cunning' states, such as India, seek to leverage their perceived

[30]Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019).

[31]Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[32]See Branwen Gruffydd-Jones, '"Good governance" and "state failure": The pseudo-science of statesmen in our times', in Alexander Anievas, Nivi Manchanda, and Robbie Shilliam (eds), *Race and Racism in International Relations: Confronting the Global Colour Line* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), pp. 62–80.

[33]Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

[34]Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'The postcolonial moment in security studies', *Review of International Studies*, 32:2 (2006), pp. 329–52, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210506007054}; Fabian Namberger, Gerdis Wischnath, and Sven Chojnacki, 'Geo-graphing violence: Postcolonial perspectives, space and the cartographic imaginaries of peace and conflict studies', *Geopolitics*, 26:4 (2021), pp. 1196–223, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2019.1676237}; Meera Sabaratnam, *Decolonising Intervention: International Statebuilding in Mozambique* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017).

[35]Sinah Theres Kloß, 'The Global South as subversive practice: Challenges and potentials of a heuristic concept', *The Global South*, 11:2 (2017), pp. 1–17 (p. 5), available at: {https://doi.org/10.2979/globalsouth.11.2.01}.

[36]Vineet Thakur, *Postscripts on Independence: Foreign Policy Ideas, Identity, and Institutions in India and South Africa* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[37]Eric Cezne and Jana Hönke, 'The multiple meanings and uses of South–South relations in extraction: The Brazilian mining company Vale in Mozambique', *World Development*, 151 (2022), 105756 (p. 5), available at: {https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105756}.

legal and bureaucratic incapacities, attributable to their Global South positionality, to 'capitalize on their perceived weakness in order to render themselves unaccountable both to their citizens and to international institutions', by selectively enforcing certain laws and policies while neglecting others.[38]

Focusing on the specific meanings that emerge in discrete interactions between 'Southern' actors operating within a world of multiple hierarchies – domestic as well as international – helps to de-ontologise the notion of 'the Global South' and South–South cooperation. Rather than starting from seemingly ontological properties of Southern actors and actions, a number of contributions in this special issue focus on the 'meaning-in-use'[39] of South–South security cooperation and thereby zoom in on the performativity of the concept of the Global South. In so doing, they ask what the deployment of the notion of South–South cooperation does and critically investigate the self-fashioning efforts of some actors as distinctly 'Southern'.

Security

Like the notion of the Global South, 'security' is an essentially contested concept. Initially closely tied to the state and measured primarily in material capabilities, notions of security have significantly widened over the past three decades. People-centred accounts of 'human security', as well as security concerns emerging from environmental change or global health, have become recognised research foci within the field of international security.[40] Yet, the broadened understandings of security have also remained largely centred on the Global North. While often cast as universal, self-evident, and not bound by the specifics of time and place, conceptualisations of security in International Relations frequently – and often implicitly – point to the historical experience of Western Europe and North America, leaving out those conceptualisations grounded in the histories of 'most of the world'. As Barkawi and Laffey have argued in their agenda-setting call for a 'post-colonial moment in security studies', the 'taken-for-granted historical geographies that underpin security studies systematically understate and misrepresent the role of what we now call the Global South in security relations'.[41]

The resultant Westerncentrism that underpins dominant notions of security within International Relations has been forcefully criticised by a rapidly growing body of scholarship. At the same time, alternative conceptualisations of security in the Global South have received less attention, although notable exceptions do exist. In his account of 'peripheral realism', Ayoob inverts the constitutive distinction for International Relations between domestic hierarchy and international anarchy for Third World states, arguing that domestic hierarchies are often precarious while the international is deeply hierarchical.[42] The specific security concerns emerging from this constellation for post-colonial elites escape the analytical vocabulary of canonical

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[38]Shalini Randeria, 'Cunning states and unaccountable international institutions: Legal plurality, social movements and rights of local communities to common property resources', *European Journal of Sociology*, 44:1 (2003), pp. 27–60 (p. 28), available at: {https://www.doi:10.1017/S0003975603001188}.

[39]Cezne and Hönke, 'The multiple meanings'; Anna Holzscheiter, 'Between communicative interaction and structures of signification: Discourse theory and analysis in international relations', *International Studies Perspectives*, 15:2 (2014), pp. 142–62, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1111/insp.12005}; Antje Wiener, 'Enacting meaning-in-use: Qualitative research on norms and international relations', *Review of International Studies*, 35:1 (2009), pp. 175–93, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210509008377}.

[40]E.g. Ygnacio Flores, 'Human security', in Anthony J. Masys (ed.), *Handbook of Security Science* (Cham: Springer, 2022), pp. 341–59, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91875-4_45}; Simon Rushton, 'Global health security: Security for whom? Security from what?', *Political Studies*, 59:4 (2011), pp. 779–96, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467–9248.2011.00919.x}; Louise Wiuff Moe and Markus-Michael Müller, 'Knowledge production at the environment-security nexus: Between orthodoxy and transformation', *Environmental Science & Policy*, 151 (2024), 103597, available at: available at: {https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2023.103597}.

[41]Barkawi and Laffey, 'Postcolonial moment', p. 330.

[42]Mohammed Ayoob, 'Inequality and theorizing in international relations: The case for subaltern realism', *International Studies Review*, 4:3 (2002), pp. 27–48, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00263}.

international security studies. Similarly, focusing on a single case, Nyman has reconstructed the specificities of Chinese security discourses since the mid-20th century.[43] As she shows, evolving official Chinese security discourse prioritises the security of the party over the state, blurs established distinctions between inside and outside in international relations, and expands over time to include ever more aspects of everyday life. Similarly, Latin American political elites, as Kacowicz and Mares point out, have historically regarded economic and development issues as more important security concerns than what from a Westerncentric perspective would appear as key 'traditional' security issues, namely war or interstate security.[44] And recent work on Africa has highlighted the intrinsic contextual and environmental meaning of security, as well as its broader connection to (de)colonisation, including externally-imposed violence and epistemological othering as articulated through Westerncentric understandings of what security should actually be.[45]

While these studies point towards the need to provincialise Westerncentric conceptualisations of security, they tend to focus on isolated case studies, or sets of cases, but pay less attention to the deep entanglements of security across different actors within the Global South. South–South cooperation as a relational phenomenon thus remains under-researched. This includes assessments of how the previously mentioned understandings of security, as well as resulting ways of doing security, impact upon Southern cooperation efforts, as well as the influence of international hierarchies and power relations on such undertakings. Often, both dimensions are inherently braided and ambiguous.

Take the case of the predecessor of the Kenya-led MMS, the United Nations Stabilization Mission to Haiti (MINUSTAH 2014–17). MINUSTAH emerged out of a geopolitical convergence of interest between Haiti's former colonial powers, France and the United States, in stabilising the country in the face of mounting civil strife while avoiding putting Western boots on the ground that, back then, were urgently needed on the battlefields of the Global War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq. These interests aligned with Brazil's goal of carving out a more prominent space in the international system by branding the country as a culturally attuned, emancipatory, post-colonial security provider engaging with Haiti on the basis of shared bonds of history and solidarity. Brazil's post-colonial rhetoric, however, stood in remarkable contrast to the on-the-ground outcomes of the mission, which produced strikingly similar results as previous US and French interventions in terms of the counter-insurgency-driven violence inflicted upon those at the margins of Haitian society.[46]

The MINUSTAH episode highlights that security cooperation, due to the intrinsic connection to coercion as *the* key resource for exercising, imposing, and/or upholding political power, is often an inherently elite-driven endeavour of transnational quality.[47] Recognising this inbuilt

[43]Nyman, 'Towards a global security studies'.

[44]Arie M. Kacowicz and David R. Mares, 'Security studies and security in Latin America: The first 200 years', in David R. Mares and Arie M. Kacowicz (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Latin American Security* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 11–29 (p. 19).

[45]Diana Sfetlana Stoica, 'Foundations of African perceptions on security and violence: Overlapping the need for peace with the narratives of struggle', *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai: Studia Europaea*, 68:2 (2023), pp. 105–24.

[46]Markus-Michael Müller and Andrea Steinke, 'The geopolitics of Brazilian peacekeeping and the United Nations' turn towards stabilisation in Haiti', *Peacebuilding*, 8:1 (2021), pp. 54–77, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2018.1491277}; Markus-Michael Müller and Izadora Xavier do Monte, 'Better than the "liberal peace"? Brazilian peacekeeping between post-colonial branding and violent order-making', in Tanja A. Börzel, Johannes Gerschewski, and Michael Zürn (eds), *The Liberal Script at the Beginning of the 21st Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024), pp. 336–56; Moritz Schuberth, 'Brazilian peacekeeping? Counterinsurgency and police reform in Port-au-Prince and Rio de Janeiro', *International Peacekeeping*, 26:4 (2019), pp. 487–510, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/13533312.2019.1623675}; Arturo Sotomayor, *The Myth of the Democratic Peacekeeper. Civil–Military Relations and the United Nations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

[47]Laleh Khalili, *Time in the Shadows. Confinement in Counterinsurgencies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), p. 9; Stuart Schrader, *Badges without Borders: How Global Counterinsurgency Transformed American Policing* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), p. 52.

elite bias in South–South security cooperation cautions against ontologising emancipatory potentials of Southern interactions by pointing towards the 'dark side' of Southern agency. Moe and Müller, for instance, have highlighted how a growing international appetite for 'local' knowledge in and on international interventions to address challenges of Western-led interventional undertakings has triggered the rise of increasingly 'assertive Global South voices and agenda-setters' concerning intervention-related knowledge production. Far from presenting empowering alternatives, these Southern voices instead have become key in 'aligning the interests of powerful strata of Global South and Global North elites while offering solutions to the "crisis" of international interventionism', regularly at the expense of those intervened-upon in the Global South.[48]

The above should not be read as a homogenising portrayal depicting all sorts of South–South security cooperation as elite-driven means for transnational power preservation/extensions. Rather, these observations should be regarded as a cautionary counterpoint that challenges the more romanticising, and still dominant, views of South–South cooperation by calling for moving the extent to which South–South security cooperation can make a 'difference' from the terrain of normative pre-assumptions to the field of empirical inquiry.

Cooperation

The final term to unpack is 'cooperation', a notion that looms large in the lexicon of classic debates in International Relations.[49] As a thorough engagement with these debates is beyond the scope of this article, we will instead zoom in on the related debates within the field of security and South–South cooperation.

Regarding South–South interactions, it is widely accepted that underlying forms of cooperation encompass 'political, military, economic, or cultural relationships; humanitarian assistance and technical cooperation between developing countries; the allocation of financial resources for development projects and regional integration as well as the constitution of blocks – a common position and agenda in multilateral negotiations'.[50] The Southern element in all of this is usually attributed to the involvement of 'developing' countries, which is also what sets South–South cooperation apart from North–South cooperation. Whereas the latter is seen as hierarchical, with Global North actors providing aid to Southern recipients lacking the capacity for independent development, South–South cooperation is grounded in the idea of equal exchanges of experiences between countries at similar developmental levels, creating a 'horizontal' relationship between the parties involved.[51]

Importantly, there is no commonly accepted academic definition of the term, the proliferation of South–South cooperation rhetoric, research, and policies notwithstanding. In fact, practitioners as well as policy observers have regularly pointed out that 'Each provider has a different understanding of its own contributions and a common definition of South–South cooperation does not

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[48]Moe and Müller, *Counterinsurgency*, pp. 197–8; Louise Wiuff Moe and Markus-Michael Müller, 'Introduction: Complexity, resilience, and the "local turn" in counterinsurgency', in Louise Wiuff Moe and Markus-Michael Müller (eds), *Reconfiguring Intervention: Complexity, Resilience and the 'Local Turn' in Counterinsurgent Warfare* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 1–27. See also Elisa Lopez-Lucia, 'A tale of regional transformation: From political community to security regions the politics of security and regionalism in West Africa', *Political Geography*, 82 (2020), 102256, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2020.102256}; Elisa Lopez-Lucia and María Martín de Almagro, 'Introduction: Transnational assemblages and the production of security knowledges. New perspectives on security governance in, and on, conflict and post-conflict contexts', *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 12:4 (2024), pp. 465–83, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2023.2271524}; Machold, 'India's counterinsurgency knowledge'.

[49]Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[50]Bergamaschi and Tickner, 'Introduction', p. 1.

[51]Javier Vadell, Giuseppe Lo Brutto, and Alexandre Cesar Cunha Leite, 'The Chinese South–South development cooperation: An assessment of its structural transformation', *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 63:2 (2020), e0001, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7329202000201}.

exist'.[52] This points towards the importance of considering the previously mentioned 'meaning in use' of the notion when analysing Southern security cooperation.

While the horizontal nature of these cooperative endeavours is often singled out as their signature feature, and a key point of differentiation compared to North–South interactions, it is also important to remember, as mentioned earlier, that the Global South is far from homogeneous. Consequently, questions of horizontality become matters of degree and empirical inquiry. For example, South–South cooperation led by Global South powerhouses, such as China or India, with other countries in the Global South, particularly in Africa, often involves significant power differentials. These differences also encompass practices of epistemological othering across South–South contexts, as well as the domestic boomerang effects of South–South cooperation, which often benefits certain segments of local elites in politically and economically weaker Southern 'partner' countries.[53]

These aspects are often occluded by academic and policy engagements with the topic, many of which adopt the United Nations Office of South–South Cooperation (UNOSSC) understanding of South–South cooperation. UNOSSC defines these undertakings as 'a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South, born out of shared experiences and sympathies, based on their common objectives and solidarity, and guided by, inter alia, the principles of respect for national sovereignty and ownership, free from any conditionalities'. In more practical terms, UNOSSC considers South–South cooperation as 'a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions.'[54]

While this definition lends itself to a romanticising portrayal of South–South cooperation, such normative visions notwithstanding, UNOSSC's perspective also points towards the interrelations between South–South cooperation and conventional North–South engagements. In fact, it is stated that 'South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North–South cooperation'. A key mechanism through which both forms of cooperation are aligned, and which embeds South–South cooperation in wider global hierarchies, is 'triangular cooperation', through which Northern countries support South–South interactions – and, in so doing, 'benefit by being able to take advantage of increased institutional capacity in the South and to increase the impact of their aid disbursements by leveraging the resources of multiple Southern partners'.[55]

Critical voices have pointed out that triangulated South–South cooperation serves as an important means of Northern actors to navigate the challenges of contemporary global geopolitical changes, as triangulation comes with the potential of a 're-Westernisation' of these engagements.[56]

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[52]Mariella Di Ciommo, 'Approaches to measuring and monitoring South–South cooperation', *Development Initiatives Discussion Paper* (2017), available at: {https://devinit.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Approaches-to-measuring-and-monitoring-South%E2%80%93South-cooperation.pdf}. For empirical examples from Latin America, see Enrique Oviedo (ed.), *Evaluating South–South Cooperation in Six Latin American and Caribbean Countries: Shared Challenges for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (Santiago de Chile: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2021).

[53]On these issues, see Ilaria Carrozza and Lina Benabdallah, 'South–South knowledge production and hegemony: Searching for Africa in Chinese theories of IR', *International Studies Review*, 24:1 (2022), viab063, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viab063}; Peter Kragelund and Padraig Carmody, 'Who is in charge: State power and agency in Sino-African relations', *Cornell International Law Journal*, 49:1 (2016), article 1; Meera Venkatachalam, Kenneth Bo Nielsen, and Renu Modi, 'The politics of gifts and reciprocity in South–South cooperation: The case of India's Covid-19 diplomacy', *Journal of International Development*, 35:4 (2023), pp. 600–13, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3705}.

[54]United Nations Office of South–South Cooperation, 'About South–South and triangular cooperation', available at: {https://unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/}.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Thomas Muhr, 'Reclaiming the politics of South–South cooperation', *Globalizations*, 20:3 (2022), pp. 347–64, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2022.2082132}.

Additionally, it has been highlighted that triangulation allows Northern actors to (re)gain a level of control over South–South cooperation and to 'avoid the outlays (in terms of legitimacy and efficiency) of direct involvement'.[57]

Within the domain of global security governance, such developments gained momentum within the so-called pragmatic turn in international interventions and the correlating interest in working 'by, with, and through' Global South actors to attain Northern security goals, by what Tickner aptly defined as the Global North 'leading from behind'.[58] This brings us to the issue of *security cooperation*.

Security cooperation is usually understood as a state-driven endeavour. Grounded in an understanding of 'states as security seekers', international security cooperation is considered a rational response by states dealing with globalisation-induced security interdependences and challenges. 'Competing interests' in the security domain, so the underlying reasoning holds, are mitigated by 'common interests' attained through cooperation.[59] Resulting forms of cooperation, depending on their degree of institutionalistion, structure, temporal outlook, and inclusivity, are discussed as 'alliances', 'clubs', 'coalitions', 'concerts', 'security regimes', or 'security communities'.[60]

Most of the related literature is inherently Western-centric, focusing either on forms of cooperation between countries in the Global North or on North–South cooperation.[61] Recognising this bias, Biersteker recently called for 'genuinely *global* perspectives' on the topic.[62] Answering this call from the vantage point of this Special Issue implies bringing in South–South security cooperation. In the absence of a widely accepted understanding of this mode of cooperation, and in light of the observations presented above, we propose the following working definition:

South–South security cooperation is a relational collaborative effort based on sharing experiences and resources to address security challenges. It is a power-laden form of international cooperation, situated within wider, multi-scalar, global hierarchies, involving, but not limited to, at least two actors that historically share a position of marginalisation in the global order and can therefore be classified as 'Southern'.

Understood along those lines, South–South security cooperation does not operate in a historical vacuum. Unpacking this history is analytically meaningful, as it enables us to generate insights

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[57]Bergamaschi and Tickner, 'Introduction', p. 17. See also Adriana Abdenour and Joao Moura Estevão Marques Da Fonseca, 'The North's growing role in South–South cooperation: Keeping the foothold', *Third World Quarterly*, 34:8 (2013), pp. 1475–91, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2013.831579}.

[58]Arlene B. Tickner, 'Associated-dependent security cooperation: Colombia and the United States', in Jana Hönke and Markus-Michael Müller (eds), *The Global Making of Policing: Postcolonial Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 96–113. On the 'pragmatic turn', see John Karlsrud, '"Pragmatic peacekeeping" in practice: Exit liberal peacekeeping, enter UN support missions?', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 17:3 (2023), pp. 258–72, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2023.2198285}; Louise Wiuff Moe and Finn Stepputat, 'Introduction: Peacebuilding in an era of pragmatism', *International Affairs*, 94:2 (2018), pp. 293–99, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiy035}.

[59]Harald Muller, 'International security cooperation', in Bertrand Badie, Dirk Berg-Schlosser, and Leonardo Morlino (eds), *International Encyclopedia of Political Science* (London: Sage, 2011), pp. 2384–9.

[60]Ibid.

[61]E.g. Sae Won Chung and Ben Tonra, 'EU–Korea security cooperation: A new normative partnership?', *Asia Europe Journal*, 21:4 (2023), pp. 507–25, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1007/s10308-023}; Robert J. Griffiths, *U.S. Security Cooperation with Africa: Political and Policy Challenges* (London: Routledge, 2016); Emil J. Kirchner and Han Dorussen, *EU–Japan Security Cooperation: Trends and Prospects* (London: Routledge, 2018); Christian Leuprecht and Todd Hataley, *Security, Cooperation, Governance: The Canada–United States Open Border Paradox* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2023); Olivier Lewis, *Security Cooperation between Western States: Openness, Security and Autonomy* (London: Routledge, 2020); Benjamin Martil and Monika Sus, 'Post-Brexit EU/UK security cooperation: NATO, CSDP +, or "French connection"?', *British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 20:4 (2018), pp. 846–63, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148118796979}; Tomohiko Satake and John Hemmings, 'Japan–Australia security cooperation in the bilateral and multilateral contexts', *International Affairs*, 94:4 (2018), pp. 815–34, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiy028}.

[62]Thomas Biersteker, 'Global perspectives on security, cooperation, international institutions, and international relations', *Global Perspectives*, 1:1 (2020), 11733, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1525/001c.11733}.

into the context-conditions, cooperation mechanisms, practical consequences, and legacy effects of such undertakings that are important to consider when assessing contemporary forms of South–South security cooperation.

Historicising the present: The trajectories of South–South security cooperation

Like the category of the 'South' itself, present-day manifestations of South–South security cooperation have a prehistory with a significant Cold War imprint. Cold War South–South security cooperation was an element integral to the competition between US- and Soviet-led 'regimes of global intervention' whose outcomes were key drivers behind 'the making of our times', as the subtitle of Westad's landmark study *The Global Cold War* puts it.[63] Consequently, South–South security cooperation's Cold War past is not 'distant'. Rather, contemporary expressions of South–South security cooperation often manifest themselves in ways and places that are connected to previous forms of South–South security engagements in time. Accordingly, they exhibit powerful legacy effects.

Take the case of Brazil's leading military role in MINUSTAH mentioned earlier. MINUSTAH was mostly a Latin American affair, with over half of the deployed troops coming from the region.[64] The Brazilian army, in charge of the mission's military component and provider all of MINUSTAH's Force Commanders, modelled important elements of its contribution to MINUSTAH, in logistical as well as operational terms, upon the Brazilian military dictatorship's participation in the Inter-American Peacekeeping Force (Força Interamericana de Paz, FIP). Established by the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1965, the FIP intervened in the Dominican Republic, Haiti's sister republic on Hispaniola, to quell the civil conflict that had erupted in the aftermath of the overthrow of (elected) president Juan Bosch.[65]

More than a mere illustration of the inspiration contemporary Global South actors take from their previous engagements in South–South security cooperation, Brazil's interventional experiences in the Caribbean also point towards the importance of international/regional institutions (in this case the OAS and the United Nations [UN]) as crucial sites in and through which such South–South undertakings take shape. And these institutions themselves have a history that influences their present-day role in South–South security cooperation. The African Union (AU) is a case in point.

The AU's predecessor, the Organization of African Unity, was founded in 1963 within the context of the wider decolonisation process sweeping the African continent. As a form of decolonial South–South cooperation, its African Liberation Committee provided material and diplomatic assistance ('all means at its disposal') to African liberation movements 'to help in the achievement of independence'.[66] In addition to this, the OAU also intervened, although on rare occasions, in African conflicts through Southern-led and -owned peacekeeping missions.[67] The AU's reluctance to engage in African conflicts on a broader scale was grounded in the sovereigntist underpinning of the OAU's security agenda, closely tied to the previously mentioned connection between post-independence conceptions of security and the experienced decolonisation. Ultimately, the underpinning 'insistence on the principle of non-interference in internal affairs'

[63]Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 407.

[64]Kai Michael Kenkel, 'Growing participation in peace operations and conflict resolution in Latin American countries', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (30 September 2019), available at: {https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-1714}; Sotomayor, *Myth of the Democratic Peacekeeper*.

[65]Müller and Xavier do Monte, 'Better than the "liberal peace"?', p. 346.

[66]Quoted in Hilmi S. Yousuf, 'The OAU and the African liberation movement', *Pakistan Horizon*, 38:4 (1985), pp. 55–67 (p. 55). For details, see Chris Saunders, 'SWAPO, Namibia's liberation struggle and the Organisation of African Unity's Liberation Committee', *South African Historical Journal*, 70:1 (2018), pp. 152–67, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2018.1430846}.

[67]Roy May and Simon Massey, 'The OAU interventions in Chad: Mission impossible or mission evaded?', *International Peacekeeping* 5:1 (1998), pp. 46–65, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/13533319808413707}; Terry M. Mays, *Africa's First Peacekeeping Operation: The OAU in Chad, 1981–1982* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002).

turned into a justification for disengaging from violent conflicts on the continent.[68] As internal violence and state repression increased in the years following the Cold War's end, with many independent states transitioning to one-party rule or military dictatorships, the 'OAU soon earned its title as a "club of dictators".[69] Post–Cold War developments exacerbated these problems.

Against the backdrop of the OAU's inability to address mounting security challenges and related human rights violations in post–Cold War Africa, prominently including the genocide in Rwanda, the AU was established in 2002, with the explicit intention to move African security cooperation from the principle of 'non-interference' towards 'non-indifference' regarding human rights violations stemming from internal conflicts.[70] The development culminated in the creation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in 2004. Grounded 'in the principle of the responsibility to protect (R2P), APSA was seen as a significant retooling of so-far prevailing understandings of African security matters and a genuine expression of "African solutions to African problems"';[71] a call bearing 'the post-colonial vision for self-determination'.[72]

The growing incorporation of Africa into the Global War on Terror and resulting international interventions impacted upon this process, leading to a realignment of African security prerogatives with sovereigntist security conceptions at the expense of human rights protection. Adaptations to broader normative, strategic, and operational shifts in intervention practices under the banner of 'stabilisation', prominently championed by Northern actors (such as the United States and France, but also the UN), fed into an 'ongoing redirection of APSA, away from emerging (if always contested) ideals of collective and holistic security … toward a (re)prioritisation centred on empowering states in providing narrowly military and sovereignty-boosting responses'.[73]

In this process, the AU's 'African solutions to African problems' agenda began to remarkably deviate from post-colonial conceptions of self-determination, due to the ways in which the above-mentioned resignification of security exacerbated power imbalances between local political elites and African citizens while simultaneously reinforcing ties of dependency on Northern actors and their resources.[74] Stated differently, recast conceptions of African security and sovereignty discursively grounded in Cold War decolonisation struggles have become a 'resource curse' that undermines decolonial ideals by de facto turning them into a means of protecting regime security.[75]

Against this backdrop, the history of institutionally coordinated South–South security cooperation in Africa underscores the importance of taking changing geopolitical context conditions (e.g. decolonisation, the Cold War, the Global War on Terror), actor constellations, and their temporal

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[68]Ulf Engel, 'The Organisation of African Unity in the 1960s: From euphoria to disenchantment', *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung*, 29:4 (2019), pp. 48–67 (p. 65), available at: {https://doi.org/10.26014/j.comp.2019.04.04}.

[69]Ibid.

[70]Paul D. Williams, 'From non-intervention to non-indifference: The origins and development of the African Union's security culture', *African Affairs*, 106:423 (2007), pp. 253–79, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adm001}.

[71]Jude A. Momodu and Saheed Babajide Owonikoko, 'Security challenges and African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)', in Ernest Toochi Aniche, Ikenna Mike Alumona, and Inocent Moyo (eds), *Regionalism, Security and Development in Africa* (London: Routledge, 2021), pp. 145–57.

[72]Edward Silvestre Kaweesi, 'The paradox of critical security and the African solutions to African problems', *European Journal of International Security*, 8:4 (2023), pp. 450–70 (p. 453), available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2023.20}.

[73]Louise Wiuff Moe and Anna Geis, 'From liberal interventionism to stabilisation: A new consensus on norm-downsizing in interventions in Africa', *Global Constitutionalism*, 9:2 (2020), pp. 387–412 (p. 408), available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S204538171900039X}.

[74]Kaweesi, 'The paradox of critical security', p. 454.

[75]Ibid., p. 464. On 'resource curses', see Pierre Engelbert, 'Sovereignty as a resource and curse in Africa', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics* (25 February 2019), available at: {https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-727}.

legacies into account when assessing the drivers of South–South security cooperation, including their impact upon the resulting practical and normative outlook.

This also speaks to the historical backdrop of the point made earlier concerning the multi-relational dimension of South–South security cooperation, which includes engagements with structures, institutions, and actors related to the Global North – from colonial powers and overt Cold War patrons to post-9/11 triangulations of African solutions to African security problems with significant Global North security importance, for instance, by the US Africa Command (AFRICOM).[76]

In fact, Northern actors have historically exhibited a tendency to embrace Southern 'otherness' to further their security agendas by triangulating South–South security cooperation. The Vietnam War provides an illustrating example of this. Seeking to conquer the hearts and minds of the South Vietnamese population by providing medical care and agricultural advice, the US launched Operation Brotherhood, a 'public–private organization, capable of considerable expansion in socio-economic-medical-operations to support counterguerrilla actions', with 'a measure of CIA control', as its key architect, Edward G. Lansdale, puts it.[77] To support the US counterinsurgency, Operation Brotherhood did send Filipino volunteers to the Vietnamese countryside, as the CIA regarded the '"Asiatic-to-Asiatic" approach' to psychological warfare, because of the underlying cultural proximity, to be 'a winning formula'.[78] More than that, as Lansdale argued on another occasion, by proposing a different iteration of the Southern solutions to (allegedly) Southern problems narrative, enlisting ex-military personnel from allied Global South countries for training African officers would boost the capacities of such training endeavours, as 'some nationalities might prove more acceptable in Africa than would white Americans'. And as 'cold war problems' in other Global South insurgency hotspots would 'lend themselves to somewhat similar solution', Lansdale envisioned that 'by working on this African problem', the Department of Defense could 'open a whole area of endeavor with mutual advantages of Defense in some of its own problems and to foreign nations'.[79]

Obviously, not all Cold War manifestations of South–South security cooperation were the outcomes of superpower triangulation efforts seeking to boost the efficiency and legitimacy of their own security-driven engagements with the Global South. Moreover, many of these undertakings were contesting the Cold War variant of the liberal international order and its efforts of stabilising and extending Washington's 'semiglobal empire' and the correlating *Pax Americana*.[80]

Probably the most known example of more horizontal South–South security cooperation is the involvement of Cuba in the Angolan civil war. Between 1975 and 1991, Cuba deployed tens of thousands of soldiers in support of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in its fight against the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA). Cuban military aid, including resources and combat support, was decisive in the MPLA's victory over its internal rivals and their external supporters, the United States and South Africa, including a humiliating defeat of the South African Defense Forces by joint Cuban-Angolan troops in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale (1988), which was a decisive military turning point in the conflict.[81]

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[76]See Adam Branch, *Displacing Human Rights: War and Intervention in Northern Uganda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 216–37, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199782086.003.0007}.

[77]Edward G. Lansdale, 'Memorandum: "Resources for unconventional warfare in S.E. Asia"', in Neil Sheehan, Hedrick Smith, E. W. Kenworthy, and Fox Butterfield (eds), *The Pentagon Papers* (New York: Racehorse Publishing, 2017), pp. 135–43 (p. 141).

[78]Simeon Man, *Soldiering through Empire: Race and the Making of the Decolonizing Pacific* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), p. 52.

[79]Edward G. Lansdale, 'Memorandum for the DoD Collateral Activities Coordinating Group' (25 August 1960), box 1, Lansdale Papers, National Security Archive, Washington, DC.

[80]On the dynamics of this 'semiglobal empire', see Victor Bulmer-Thomas, *Empire in Retreat: The Past, Present, and Future of the United States* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), chapters 5–8.

[81]On these issues, see Edward George, *The Cuban Intervention in Angola, 1965–1991: From Che Guevara to Cuito Cuanavale* (London: Frank Cass, 2005); Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern*

Other South–South security engagements that actively contested the Cold War hegemony of the *Pax Americana* by supporting leftist insurrectional power-contenders included, for instance, North Vietnamese support for insurgencies and national liberation movements in Algeria and Latin America.[82] These movements were themselves engaged in revolutionary South–South cooperation efforts, linking North Africa to Latin America, as Paliekari has shown for the case of Chile.[83]

Cold War South–South security cooperation, however, was not only of the subversive kind in terms of its potential (and intentions) to contest the contemporary configuration of the liberal international order. It also took on more reactionary forms. During the Cold War's military endgame in the Central American conflicts of the 1980s, for example, Argentina's involvement in the civil wars spreading across the isthmus included the export of its domestic experience with state terrorism to support Latin American anti-communist allies by familiarising them with the nuts and bolts of the Argentinian so-called dirty war. Additionally, Costa Rica, Central America's democratic poster child, actively triangulated Northern security assistance, from West Germany and the United States, with security expertise from the military dictatorships of Chile and Brazil to beef up its own counter-insurgency capacities, aiming to prevent spillover effects of the Sandinista insurgency in neighbouring Nicaragua.[84]

The fact that Cold War South–South security cooperation was decisively shaped by local interests and actors, including both subversive and coercive local elites seeking to tap into wider flows of externally provided resources and expertise to foster their own interests and boost the legitimacy of their political projects, echoes an important finding of 'revisionist' scholarship on the role of the Global South, and Southern agency, in driving the security and (geo)political dynamics of the global Cold War. Often in deeply ambivalent ways.[85]

Taking multifaceted Southern power and interests, ambivalent outcomes, geopolitical dynamics, and legacy effects into account when thinking about South–South security cooperation calls for a less deterministic and romanticising lens when considering its present-day manifestations, including reflections on the implications of South–South security cooperation for contemporary global security dynamics. Turning to the contributions of this Special Issue, the next section will address this topic, highlighting the ongoing centrality and ambiguity of these cooperative efforts and their outcomes in driving present-day transformations of global security.

Impact on global security dynamics

From the above, it follows that much of the changing nature of South–South security cooperation is directly shaped by the dynamics of the international state system, including the hegemonic shifts and power rivalries that have historically impacted global security dynamics. The contributions to

Africa, 1976–1991 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Fernando Andresen Guimarães, *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War: Foreign Intervention and Warfare in Civil Wars* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

[82]Merle Pribbenow, 'Vietnam covertly supplied weapons to revolutionaries in Algeria and Latin America', Cold War International History Project, CWIHP e-Dossier 25, available at: {https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/vietnam-covertly-supplied-weapons-to-revolutionaries-in-algeria-and-latin-america}; Alina Sajed, 'Between Algeria and the world: Anticolonial connectivity, aporias of national liberation and postcolonial blues', *Postcolonial Studies*, 26:1 (2023), pp. 13–31, {https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2023.2127655}.

[83]Eugenia Palieraki, 'Chile, Algeria, and the Third World in the 1960s and 1970s: Revolutions entangled', in Thomas C. Field Jr., Stella Krepp, and Vanni Pettiná (eds), *Latin America and the Global Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020), pp. 274–300.

[84]Fabian Bennewitz and Markus-Michael Müller, 'Importing the "West German model": Transnationalizing counterinsurgency policing in Cold War Costa Rica', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 33:4–5 (2022), pp. 581–606, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2021.1961046}.

[85]The classic account is Westad, *Global Cold War*. See also Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes, 'Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis', *International Studies Quarterly*, 52:3 (2008), pp. 555–77, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468–2478.2008.00515.x}; Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Paul M. McGarr, *The Cold War in South Asia: Britain, the United States and the Indian Subcontinent, 1945–1965* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sue Onslow (ed.), *Cold War in Southern Africa* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009).

this Special Issue provide analytically meaningful snapshots of how current geopolitical changes in the international system, and their widely discussed implications for the normative and practical make-up of a rapidly reconfiguring world order, both contribute to and are driven by new forms of South–South engagements. Accordingly, our discussion of South–South security cooperation can serve as a prism for understanding these broader global shifts and their impact on security governance.[86]

While it is beyond the scope of this introduction (and our Special Issue) to fully engage with these debates, it is noteworthy that, in several ways, our contributions speak to perspectives that highlight the increasingly fragmented and plural character of our contemporary world order and global governance. Taken together, the individual contributions of this Special Issue underscore the plurality of patterns of South–South cooperation as well as their different impacts on global security dynamics in the current juncture. They delineate a wide spectrum of effects of patterns of South–South security cooperation on global security dynamics more broadly, ranging from the amplification of extant Northern-dominated security policies to their outright contestations. In the following, we briefly summarise the main contributions along this spectrum.

In their article, Markus Hochmüller and Markus-Michael Müller analyse the entanglements between contemporary patterns of South–South security cooperation and the US-sponsored 'war on drugs'.[87] Focusing on the case of Colombia, they show how, by drawing on lessons learned from their own internal conflicts, Colombian security actors have become key exporters of security expertise across the Global South, and Latin America in particular. Theorising the epistemological constructs that underpin Columbia's South–South security cooperation, they show how specific models and homologies that portray idiosyncratic (in)security features as shared attributes across contexts facilitate the global circulation of Colombian security expertise. In these circulations, Colombian actors succeed in both securing substantial (i.e. both material and ideational) support from the United States while simultaneously self-branding their expertise as uniquely 'Southern'. South–South cooperation in this case amplifies rather than challenges or even subvertes Northern-dominated security interventions. At the same time, as Hochmüller and Müller show, this also opens discrete spaces for agency for Southern actors within deeply entrenched global hierarchies.

The overarching problematique of Southern agency is also addressed in the contribution of Adam Sandor, Philippe M. Frowd, and Jana Hönke.[88] Criticising reductionist accounts that embrace the superficial dictum of 'African solutions to African problems', they turn to the complexities of military ad hoc coalitions in the Sahel. Based on interviews in several Sahelian and European cities over the past couple of years, the contribution shows how ad hoc military coalitions like the G5 Sahel, the Accra Initiative, and the Alliance of Sahel States, do not primarily respond to and solve functional imperatives. Instead, they operate much more as experimental spaces and 'security laboratories' in which novel forms of action and political strategies are developed against the backdrop of deeply entrenched global hierarchies. As the authors demonstrate, in the consecutive ad hoc military coalitions in the Sahel, African security actors are neither the bare executioners of security strategies developed by powerful actors in the North Atlantic nor substantially unconstrained agents with comprehensive 'ownership' over the military coalitions they are

[86]See, for example, Amitav Acharya, *The End of American World Order*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018); Francesco M. Bongiovanni, *The Return of Geopolitics and Imperial Conflict: Understanding the New World Disorder* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024); Trine Flockhart, 'The coming multi-order world', *Contemporary Security Policy*, 37:1 (2016), pp. 3–30, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2016.1150053}; G. John Ikenberry, 'The end of liberal international order?', *International Affairs*, 94:1 (2018), pp. 7–23, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix241}; David A. Lake, Lisa L. Martin, and Thomas Risse, 'Challenges to the liberal order: Reflections on international organization', *International Organization*, 75:2 (2021), pp. 225–57, available at: {https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818320000636}.

[87]Markus Hochmüller and Markus-Michael Müller, 'Homologies and modelling in Colombian South–South security cooperation', *European Journal of International Security* (this issue).

[88]Adam Sandor, Philippe M. Frowd, and Jana Hönke, 'Productive failure, African agency, and security cooperation in West Africa: The case of the G5 Sahel', *European Journal of International Security* (this issue).

part of. Instead, they become embedded in a complex landscape of 'zombified' security institutions that do not realise their self-proclaimed aspirations but nonetheless open spaces for debate and disagreement over the meaning of security, development, and stabilisation.

As in the Sahel, patterns of South–South security cooperation often unfold within regional settings. This is also a central focus of the contribution by Enze Han and Sirada Khemanitthathai, who focus on the ways in which the interplay between geographical proximity and weak state structures poses distinct challenges for South–South security cooperation.[89] While porous borders and high levels of cross-border exchange often enhance the need for cooperation to address non-traditional security challenges, weak state capacities make such cooperation more difficult. Analysing patterns of security cooperation between Myanmar and Thailand, they show how, although the 2021 military coup in Myanmar escalated imperatives to cooperate in the fields of migration, public health, drug trafficking, and environmental degradation, existing cooperation fora actually weakened. This created a dilemma for the Thai government: on the one hand, strongly institutionalised principles of sovereignty and non-interference in ASEAN pushed towards engagement with the military junta, which was increasingly unable to exercise meaningful control within its territory. On the other hand, this compelled the government to engage more closely with armed non-state actors along the border (a time-tested pattern), thereby undermining formal patterns of state-to-state cooperation. Building on the in-depth analysis of this case, Han and Khemanitthathai point towards the deeper problematique of the relationship between state and armed non-state actors in processes of South–South cooperation.

Whereas Han and Khemanitthathai ask *who* cooperates, the contribution by Xue Gong attends to the myriad contestations of *what* is (and what is not) security cooperation in South–South relations.[90] Analysing the interactions between the Chinese Communist Party and actors in South-East Asia, she shows the divergent patterns of securitisation and desecuritisation that underpin Chinese engagement. Whereas Chinese actors seek to desecuritise concerns over the political and ecological implications of large-scale infrastructure projects, they do seek to securitise specific patterns of transnational crime that are considered to have detrimental effects on Chinese citizens both in China and abroad. With regards to the former, Xue focuses on the contested issue of transboundary water governance and the ways in which infrastructure projects both within China and in the wider Mekong region are increasingly viewed in terms of challenges to (water) security in Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Where Chinese officials seek to move infrastructure projects in these regions into the realm of economic cooperation, they simultaneously securitise certain patterns of transnational crime, for example by creating Integrated Law Enforcement and Security Cooperation Centers in the region. In other words, China's security–development nexus is therefore 'flexible and responsive to changing circumstances. China adapts its strategy by shifting between "developmentalising" security issues and "securitising" development issues, depending on evolving priorities.'[91] As the contribution shows, the boundary between South–South security cooperation and other forms of cooperation between Southern actors is itself contested and subject to political processes of delineation.

While the contributions of Gong and Han and Khemanitthathai problematise dominant notions of 'security', the article by Nebahat Tanrıverdi Yaşar foregrounds the inherent ambiguity in the term of 'the (Global) South'. Focusing on Turkey's security engagement with African states, she introduces the notion of 'security isomorphism' to theorise Turkey's ambivalent position between Global South and Global North. A long-standing member of NATO and historically firmly integrated into the North Atlantic security architecture, the past two decades have seen an increasing

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[89]Enze Han and Sirada Khemanitthathai, 'Political crisis and dilemma of security Cooperation between Myanmar and Thailand', *European Journal of International Security* (this issue).

[90]Xue Gong, 'Ponder the path of thy feet: How China's security–development nexus works in the Mekong region', *European Journal of International Security* (this issue).

[91]Ibid.

turn of Turkish foreign and security policies towards closer cooperation with countries in the Global South, and especially in Africa. This includes the opening of military training bases in Somalia and Libya, as well as expanding an extensive network of security cooperation across the continent and rapidly increasing arms exports to Africa. Combining a relational approach to South–South security cooperation with insights from the debate on 'security isomorphism', the contribution shows how the unique blend of Turkey's experiences of being part of NATO, as well as the country's own responses to internal security challenges, have translated into a hybrid model of security cooperation with African states that both replicates and challenges extant Northern security practices.

Turning to South–South security cooperation between Mexico and the Caribbean, the contribution by Yonique Campbell, Anthony Harriott, Felicia A. Grey, and Damion Blake analyses efforts to push back against the US-imposed 'war on drugs' and shift security cooperation in the Caribbean towards addressing the region's own security needs, particularly focusing on an emerging 'war on guns'.[92] This shift, the authors show, is centred on Caribbean countries joining Mexico's lawsuit against US gun manufacturers, representing a new form of South–South security cooperation within the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM). The authors highlight that the alliance between Mexico and the Caribbean to address pressing domestic security threats posed by firearm-related homicides, through legal action against US gun manufacturers, demonstrates the potential of Southern actors to challenge hegemonic Global North powers by engaging in more assertive models of security cooperation. This, they show, comes with an inbuilt potential to challenge the traditional power hierarchies between the Global North and South.

In his concluding article, Peter Kragelund brings the Special Issue's focus on South–South security cooperation into a dialogue with the wider scholarship on South–South cooperation, highlighting how these two bodies of literature complement and enhance each other.[93] In this regard, Kragelund underscores the importance of taking into account the realities of a 'two-speed global South', where larger and geopolitically more powerful countries assist and/or intervene in smaller, less powerful states, with all the power asymmetries that follow from this, often including the involvement of Northern actors. Other important factors influencing South–South security cooperation, Kragelund highlights, include geopolitical shifts and the renegotiation of Southern agency, both via-à-vis Southern and Northern actors, as well as the, often-related, performativity of South–South interactions. While many of these aspects are also present in other fields of South–South cooperation, Kragelund notes that South–South security cooperation differs with regard to the importance of domestic politics, and geographical as well as cultural proximity. These factors are often more critical to South–South security cooperation than to other forms of South–South engagements because, unlike other forms, security cooperation has immediate effects on the 'life and death' of people in the involved countries. Accordingly, the specific domestic political contexts, geographical closeness, and cultural ties (or their absence) directly impact upon whether and how South–South security cooperation is pursued – and to what effect.

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[92]Yonique Campbell, Anthony Harriott, Felicia A. Grey, and Damion Blake, 'From the "war on drugs" to the "war on guns": South–South cooperation between Mexico and the Caribbean', *European Journal of International Security* (this issue).

[93]Peter Kragelund, 'South–South cooperation: What can we learn from South–South security cooperation?', *European Journal of International Security* (this issue).

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