



Article

Why is the Proliferation Security Initiative a Problematic Solution?

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Abstract

Informal institutions such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) have increasingly been at the forefront of global efforts to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Yet a number of countries with strong non-proliferation credentials and incentives to stop likely proliferators have hesitated to join it. We use insights from alliance theory to explain this counterintuitive situation, and frame the decisions of states that are considering joining the PSI as maximizing between security, autonomy, and influence. We argue that while the PSI and similar institutions are comparatively flexible and less rigid in nature, they also exert a lesser constraint on the more powerful states than do international organizations (IO) which reduce uncertainty by freezing the existing hierarchies in place. We then look at a collection of states that vary in their positions on American hegemony, and find that security interests are predominantly decisive among hegemonic and supporter states and nuclear capable states, which are in favour of supporting the PSI, while counter-hegemonic motivations are largely decisive among states that reject the PSI. Consequently, the perceived lack of legitimacy of informal frameworks by states that are sceptical of US hegemony not only undermines the long-term effectiveness of such frameworks, but also reinforces scepticism of US hegemony. The desirability of increasing informalization of security arrangements should therefore be reappraised in the light of systemic stability.

Introduction

The existing nuclear non-proliferation regime is under pressure on two fronts: discontent with its efficacy on the part of established states that support it, and criticism of the regime's legitimacy by new powers predominantly from the Global South.¹ While established states of

1 Graham Allison, 'Nuclear Disorder: Surveying Atomic Threats', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 1 (2010), pp. 74–85; Alexander Kmentt, 'How Divergent Views on Nuclear Disarmament

the international community have a score of formal frameworks in place to deal with the growing challenges of non-proliferation, these are perceived as having become inadequate and cumbersome. One could argue that, given the need to act quickly against states that are about to acquire or improve their nuclear capabilities and delivery systems, efficiency has become the key concern. A group of states, therefore, has opted for a solution in the form of an informal institution—the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The PSI was established in 2003 by a group of 11 countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Japan, and Australia—and has since expanded to today's 105 'endorsing states'.² It is important to note that the Statement has no legal force and is not a legally binding document as such, and that although the PSI effectively exercises extensive intrusions on state sovereignty through inspections, by endorsing the Statement, states do not agree to be subject to such inspections.³

In contrast, the PSI also presents states with a different problem, as it risks underestimating the long-term legitimacy of established and formalized non-proliferation efforts. The PSI fits the pattern of increasing informalization of global governance that has emerged since the late 1990s, so contradicting the tendency towards legalization of world politics.⁴ While the phenomenon is not new, we witness a seeming acceleration of the trend. Informalization need not take place through communities of practice,⁵ although shared understanding of common goals is necessary. In that way, informalization leads to the emergence of standalone groupings where countries are bound together by virtue of their joint effort to achieve a certain goal.

They are not, however, bound by legal arrangements (at least not immediately and directly), but through expectations based on shared norms. In such way, they are building on an informal character of law.⁶ Powerful and not-so-powerful states alike have sought out a

Threaten the NPT', *Arms Control Today*, 2013, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2013_12/How-Divergent-Views-on-Nuclear-Disarmament-Threaten-the-NPT; Camille Grand, *The Non-Proliferation Treaty in an Era of Proliferation Crises* (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2010).

- 2 A state becomes an 'endorsing' state by endorsing the PSI's Statement of Interdiction Principles, the programmatic document drafted by the original 11 countries. For a complete overview, see Mark J. Valencia, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative: A Glass Half-Full', *Arms Control Today*, 2007, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007_06/Valencia.
- 3 Daniel Joyner, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative: Nonproliferation, Counterproliferation, and International Law', *Yale Journal of International Law*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2005), pp. 507–48. Daniel Joyner, *International Law and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). As Joyner explains, some endorsing states signed bilateral agreements with the United States, but the Statement as such does not constitute an agreement to a state's own ships being boarded.
- 4 Kenneth W. Abbott, et al., 'The Concept of Legalization', *International Organization*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (2000), pp. 401–19.
- 5 Emanuel Adler, 'The Spread of Security Communities: Communities of Practice, Self-Restraint, and NATO's Post—Cold War Transformation', *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (2008), pp. 195–230.
- 6 Martha Finnemore and Stephen J. Toope, 'Alternatives to "Legalization": Richer Views of Law and Politics', *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (2001), pp. 743–58; Stephen J. Toope, *Formality and Informality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

variety of ad hoc and flexible solutions to manage short-term crises and long-term international affairs. One need not look far for examples: the 'G' groupings—G7, G20, G77, and so on—have become increasingly important mediums for policymakers to meet and discuss the governance of issues to do with the global economic system, rather than seek out the more appropriate formal organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Trade Organization (WTO). Similarly, discussions on issues of political-military security—ostensibly reserved for settlement in the UN Security Council⁷—are more and more pursued in an informal manner, within settings such as the P5+1 group of states to deal with Iran's nuclear programme, and the Six Party Talks to negotiate the North Korean nuclear programme.

The most obvious and striking example of informalization was arguably the George W. Bush Administration's 2003 decision to bypass resistance by France, China, and Russia in the UN Security Council by resorting to a 'coalition of the willing' for its actions in Iraq.⁸ Yet, it was not only the superpower that chafed at the restraints of formal internationalism.⁹ Ironically, in the decade that followed Iraq, France itself was not immune to impatience with its partners, as its security policy increasingly turned towards multilateralism *a la carte* in ad hoc coalitions with the United States and the UK (see Mali and Libya, or bilateral defence cooperation with the UK through the 2010 Lancaster House agreement).¹⁰ This shift towards informalization by the three states that championed the formal frameworks in the wake of World War II could be seen as the proverbial canary in the coalmine for the future of formal arrangements in global governance.

Yet, our article is not about why states choose informality or about informalization writ large, or dissecting long-term trends. The argument here is not that informal international organizations are crowding out their formal counterparts (indeed, some informal arrangements eventually become more legalized), or that informalization is bad *per se*, but rather that this is not a trivial phenomenon, especially as power in the international system is in the process of being redistributed. We aim instead to explain which types of states prefer informal arrangements over more formal arrangements, and under what circumstances. Specifically, when it comes to the governance of international security, the tendency towards informalization reveals clear distinctions between states which are not always obvious at first glance. It is not the case that states that normally champion formalized multilateralism oppose the PSI, and nor is the initiative supported by states that are most threatened by proliferation. Rather, we see states settling between contradicting motives.

But the PSI is not a group of America's friends. During the Cold War, the American and Soviet superpowers used bribes and threats to coerce other, non-nuclear states to accede

7 Felicity Vabulas and Duncan Snidal, 'Organization without Delegation: Informal Intergovernmental Organizations (IIGOs) and the Spectrum of Intergovernmental Arrangements', *The Review of International Organizations*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2013), pp. 193–220.

8 Bruno Tertrais, 'The Changing Nature of Military Alliances', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2004), pp. 133–50.

9 Throughout the article we use the terms formal internationalism and formal multilateralism to denote the same phenomenon and vary them for stylistic reasons.

10 Jolyon Howorth, 'La France, la Libye, la PSDC et l' OTAN', *Annuaire français de relations internationales*, Vol. 12 (2012), pp. 271–84; Luis Simón, 'Setting the Tone', *The RUSI Journal*, Vol. 158, No. 4 (2013), pp. 38–44.

to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT),¹¹ and their allies have used non-proliferation as a tool to gain concessions (side-payments) from the US and the USSR.¹² Even research on contemporary political issues shows that such geostrategic ties matter—Central European allies of the United States have been leveraging the tie against the United States¹³ and, similarly, US allies have been shown more likely to promote coercive policies towards Iran that are much the same as those of the United States.¹⁴

Yet, the PSI includes participants from 105 countries, of which around only one-third live under the US nuclear umbrella, or enjoy an alliance with the United States. Key participating European countries, such as France and Germany, entered the PSI at precisely the time that they were highly critical of other aspects of US unilateralism, as exemplified by the 2003 Iraq invasion and its flexible ‘coalition of the willing’. The prominent and continued participation of Russia is especially telling, as it could hardly be considered to have been an American friend over the past decade. Therefore, one cannot simplistically argue that the PSI is a group of US friends; a more thorough explanation that takes combinations of motives into account is needed.

In this article, we advance the argument that this differentiation can be explained by the unequal distribution of power within informal institutions, specifically in the variation in attitudes towards American hegemony. Attitudes towards American power vary across the world.¹⁵ Structural realists have trouble accounting for the absence of balancing behaviour against the US and the concomitant absence of perception of threat among most major players in the international system.¹⁶ Attitudes to American power vary also among the European allies of the United States.¹⁷ Varying responses to hegemony, however, are not the defining feature of American hegemony—as scholarship has shown, secondary powers may choose to support, follow, or challenge hegemons in all eras and geographies.¹⁸

- 11 Daniel Verdier, ‘Multilateralism, Bilateralism, and Exclusion in the Nuclear Proliferation Regime’, *International Organization*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (2008), pp. 439–76.
- 12 Jennifer Erickson and Christopher Way, *Membership Has Its Privileges: Conventional Arms and Influence within the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty* (New York: Routledge, 2011).
- 13 Liviu Horowitz, ‘Why Do They Want American Nukes? Central and Eastern European Positions regarding US Nonstrategic Nuclear Weapons’, *European Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2013), pp. 73–89.
- 14 Michal Onderco, ‘Money Can’t Buy You Love: the European Union Member States and Iranian Nuclear Programme 2002-2009’, *European Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2015), pp. 56–76.
- 15 G. John Ikenberry, ‘Strategic Reactions to American Preeminence: Great Power Politics in the Age of Unipolarity’, *Paper for National Intelligence Council*, 2003; Elke Krahmann, ‘American Hegemony or Global Governance? Competing Visions of International Security’, *International Studies Review*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (2005), pp. 531–45.
- 16 Krahmann, ‘American Hegemony or Global Governance?’.
- 17 Caroline Fehrl, *Living with a Reluctant Hegemon: Explaining European Responses to US Unilateralism* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2012); Barry R Posen, ‘European Union Security and Defence Policy: Response to Unipolarity?’, *Security Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (2006), pp. 149–86.
- 18 D. Flesmes and S. E. Lobell, ‘Special Issue: Regional Contestation to Rising Powers’, *International Politics*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (2015) pp. 139–268; Kristen P. Williams, et al., *Beyond Great Powers and Hegemons: Why Secondary States Support, Follow or Challenge* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

Formal institutions, through their fixed decision-making structures, mitigate uncertainty and regularize power. They allow less powerful countries to augment their power, and partially bind the power of great powers.¹⁹ Informal institutions do not possess these features to the same extent. Instead, they are structured according to existing international hierarchies that they consequently replicate and strengthen.²⁰ We argue that policymakers face a trilemma when assessing participation in informal institutions—whether to pursue security, influence, or autonomy. The trilemma is the driving force behind their considerations. Ideally, policymakers seek to maximize all three aspects.

This, however, is impossible for most states, and certainly so in the case of transnational challenges such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). What trade-offs policymakers are willing to make depend on how pressing they perceive the security considerations to be, how much influence there is to be gained or lost, and how much autonomy policymakers are comfortable about surrendering to achieve other goals (such as security). Apart from security and autonomy, participation in institutions can—under certain conditions—also give the participating state greater influence in shaping the preferences of the policymakers of other states. Yet, these trade-offs are shaped by the differences in power between them, and what their attitudes are towards American power.

The PSI is the best example through which to illustrate these informalization trade-offs. A large number of states participate in it, and it pursues non-proliferation of WMDs—an uncontroversial, though not universally embraced, policy goal. Taken at face value, the PSI could possibly provide a highly efficient and little-recognized mechanism to stem the actual flows of WMDs.²¹ We argue that it is precisely the stress it places on the policy autonomy of states that makes their policymakers uneasy about participation in the PSI. Finally, it is already a favourite example of scholars working on informalization,²² and we draw on this example too to make our point about the varying impact of informalization per policy domain.

Our article proceeds as follows. In the next section we outline the theoretical argument about informal institutions and the importance of power disparities and considerations. In

19 Anand Menon, 'Power, Institutions and the CSDP: The Promise of Institutionalist Theory', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (2011), pp. 83–100.

20 David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

21 As Davis rightly states, due to the PSI's operational secrecy by design, evaluating its actual efficiency is difficult. See Ian Davis, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative: Effective Multilateralism or "Smoke and Mirrors"?', in Christopher Daase and Oliver Meier, eds., *Arms Control in the 21st Century: Between Coercion and Cooperation* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

22 'The PSI is designed to promote a broader shift in the multilateral non-proliferation infrastructure, changing UNCLOS practices rather than its principles. PSI participants have found new ways to combat proliferation while acting in accordance with the law', write Morse and Keohane. See Julia C Morse and Robert O. Keohane, 'Contested Multilateralism', *The Review of International Organizations*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2014), pp. 385–412. Slaughter notes that '[o]ne value of informal organizations is that they can both get things done quickly and ensure that the United States continues to play a central role within them. [...] [I]nitiatives like the Proliferation Security Initiative fit this bill'. See Anne-Marie Slaughter, 'A Grand Strategy of Network Centrality', in Richard Fontaine and Kristin M. Lord, eds., *America's Path: Grand Strategy for the Next Administration* (Washington, DC: Centre for New American Security, 2012), p. 53.

the subsequent section, we present the Proliferation Security Initiative. In the fourth section, we present a set of hypotheses for why states should support or oppose participation in the PSI, and introduce cases that cover countries with different levels of direct threat but a general preference for formal multilateralism. The fifth section provides an empirical study of a selection of countries' (non)-participation in the PSI and the reasons for it. The sixth section provides a discussion and a conclusion.

Power and (In)formal Institutions

Before we discuss the specific implications of the PSI, it is worthwhile to consider the motives behind states' preference for informalization, and how this relates to their relative power. The fundamental motivation for informalization is flexibility, quick process, and avoidance of spotlight.²³ When states perceive formalized frameworks as no longer performing their functions, they have two fundamental choices—to seek outside options (whether leaving the institution or not), or to voice dissatisfaction internally and advocate change.²⁴ Vabulas and Snidal identify six trade-offs that generally apply when comparing formal and informal international organizations. These are: (i) greater flexibility versus a binding commitment; (ii) state autonomy versus collective oversight; (iii) closer control of information versus collective control of information; (iv) lower short-term transaction costs and speed versus long-term costs of implementation; (v) minimal bureaucracy and costs versus centralized bureaucratic capacity and stability; and (vi) management of high uncertainty (crisis) versus management of routine problems.²⁵

Formal institutions are increasingly seen as unable to work in a world shaped by rapidly increasing speed of communication and information, and the growing number and diversification of international actors (now including many non-state actors).²⁶ Indeed, the current 'proliferation of [informal institutions] suggests the increased value of alternative international institutional arrangements'.²⁷ The future for US foreign policy is therefore considered to be "networked", which in practice would closely resemble informal institutions.²⁸

Such claims may be overstated, as informal institutions are not a new phenomenon—indeed the paradigmatic 1983 volume by Krasner defines regimes as 'formal or informal'.²⁹ Yet, thus far, academics have perceived informal arrangements as either epiphenomenal—extremely limited in scope—or as preceding the eventual formalization of institutions. The record in fact shows that some arrangements remain informal.³⁰ However, we argue that what is missing in the discussion on informal institutions is that their informal nature strips them of the important properties of formal institutions which relate to power.

23 Charles Lipson, 'Why Are Some International Agreements Informal?', *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (1991), pp. 495–538.

24 Morse and Keohane, 'Contested Multilateralism'.

25 Vabulas and Snidal, 'Organization without Delegation'.

26 Christopher Daase, 'Coercion and the Informalization of Arms Control', in Daase and Meier, eds., *Arms Control in the 21st Century*.

27 Vabulas and Snidal, 'Organization without Delegation', p. 209.

28 Slaughter, 'A Grand Strategy of Network Centrality'.

29 Stephen D. Krasner, *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 2.

30 Stefan Engert, *Institutional Change and the Informalist Turn: The 'Proliferation Security Initiative' as an Example* (Berlin: Social Science Research Centre Berlin, 2012).

Concretely, formal international institutions have an under-appreciated benefit other than that simply of uncertainty reduction: owing to their transparency, their decisions are procedurally legitimate and therefore have the potential to last over the long-term. Procedural legitimacy decreases both domestic and international opposition to powerful states, and also dramatically reduces their transaction costs.³¹ Furthermore, it has a self-reinforcing effect: if states historically are prone to conducting certain policies in a formalized and multilateral manner, this is likely to strengthen the beliefs of policymakers in the importance of procedural legitimacy. In rational and liberal institutionalist arguments, the benefits of institutions are recognized to be those of freezing the distribution of power, abetting information asymmetries, and creating an environment conducive to future co-operation (whether by providing the 'shadow of the future' in the rationalist argument or socialization in liberal institutionalism).³² The preferences of states to seek solutions through formal institutions, therefore, are unlikely to change when circumstances do.³³

The stability of these arrangements is particularly relevant because the contemporary frameworks of formal international organizations were constructed under the condition of US power. Ikenberry³⁴ argues that the puzzling persistence of stable and cooperative relations among the industrial democracies after the Cold War was *inter alia* possible due to a combination of restraint on the part of the United States and of the institutions that created constraints on the United States, which reduced the long-term implications of asymmetries of power. In other words, supporters of US hegemony know that they can shape and influence US behaviour, and while this constrains the US, it also ensures that it does not have to deal with costly counterbalancing behaviour.³⁵ In this respect, informalization risks shifting power back to great powers.³⁶ Indeed, other states recognize it as such. The overtly unilateralist turn of the George W. Bush administration provoked 'soft balancing' behaviour of undoubtedly growing intensity,³⁷ and undermined the international support for other interventions in the Middle East.³⁸

- 31 Joseph M. Grieco, et al., 'Let's Get a Second Opinion: International Institutions and American Public Support for War', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (2011), pp. 563–83.
- 32 Barbara Koremenos, et al., 'The Rational Design of International Institutions', *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (2001), pp. 761–99; G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Treating International Institutions as Social Environments', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (2001), pp. 487–515.
- 33 Neta Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization, and Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- 34 G. John Ikenberry, 'American Grand Strategy in the Age of Terror', *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (2001), pp. 19–34.
- 35 Lisa L. Martin, 'Interests, Power, and Multilateralism', *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 4, 1992, pp. 765–92.
- 36 This aspect is even more relevant if one thinks about informal institutions as networks. While we do not explore this dimension in this article, it is well known that networks are even more prone to influence by powerful actors who can steer the whole networks to follow their interests.
- 37 Robert A Pape, 'Soft Balancing against the United States', *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2005), pp. 7–45.
- 38 Grieco, et al., 'Let's Get a Second Opinion'.

In this article we expand on the argument on (in)formal international organizations and power relations by drawing from the literature on alliance building that most explicitly deals with the question of trade-offs between ends, such as security, autonomy, and influence. Of particular use to the distinction between formal and informal is the notion of signalling commitment, found in the different literatures on alliances. As the work on entanglement and abandonment shows,³⁹ should commitment be signalled too strongly, states lose policy autonomy; should it be signalled too weakly, states risk failure of the institution. Crucially, powerful and weaker states interpret the need to show commitment differently: the weaker member(s) will worry that the alliance will not work, while the stronger ally/allies will worry that the alliance will work, in effect, only too well.⁴⁰ Yet, for the weaker states autonomy is in any case difficult to achieve—isolation or neutralism are not always available or risk-free options. States may further consider membership of an alliance an opportunity to shape the preferences of the other states, or to bind them,⁴¹ and weaker states may find the loss of autonomy acceptable in order to gain influence.

Participation in formal institutions, therefore, does more than affect the relative security and autonomy of states; it also affects the influence they can wield. When a state achieves security and influence through entry into formal institutions, it is at the cost of autonomy and room to manoeuvre in national policymaking. When a state achieves autonomy and influence—an option open only to powerful states—it diminishes its security because it increases the uncertainty of other states towards it. Powerful states will—in principle—always lose relatively more autonomy than weaker states when they join an institution—yet weaker states, by definition already having less autonomy—themselves benefit from appearing benign through allowing constraint.

We argue here that similar dynamics apply in the debates on proliferation as in other arenas of global governance, but that the additional and unique dynamics at play bring it more in line with organizations for ‘hard’ security, like alliances. States similarly try to maximize between security, autonomy, and influence, and the level of formalization of institutions has impact on how they can do so. Formalization of non-proliferation will constrain powerful nuclear states in their attempts to use their power to prevent any competition with their nuclear status. Without such formalization, weaker states may assume that the actions of the powerful states present a risk to them. The more believable the commitment of the powerful state and the constraints it allows, the greater the extent to which weaker states are put at ease. This makes the calculations of policymakers, when considering informal institutions such as the PSI versus more formal institutions such as the NPT, reflect the logic inherent in alliance choices.

- 39 Michael Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Revolution: International Politics before and after Hiroshima* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Glenn H Snyder, ‘The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics’, *World Politics*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (1984), pp. 461–95.
- 40 Michael Mandelbaum, *The Fate of Nations: the Search for National Security in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
- 41 For different takes on this idea, see David M. Edelstein, ‘Managing Uncertainty: Beliefs about Intentions and the Rise of Great Powers’, *Security Studies*, Vol. 12, No.1 (2002), pp. 1–40; Celeste A. Wallander, ‘Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO After the Cold War’, *International Organization*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (2000), pp. 705–35; Patricia A. Weitsman, ‘Intimate Enemies: The Politics of Peacetime Alliances’, *Security Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1997), pp. 156–93.

By stressing informalization through the PSI the more powerful state sends the signal that it is shrugging off the chains that constrain its power, and weaker states will interpret this action in light of existing perceptions of the powerful state. The attitude towards formalization, therefore, has clearly different implications for states with different attitudes towards the most powerful, hegemonic state. Informality is therefore unproblematic when the norm is fairly formal and full of trust. However, while we may have become used to stability of alliances and other formal institutions, it should be noted that informality and weak commitment is historically the norm until the post-World War II era.

Such thinking is in line with the argument advanced by Wallander and Keohane.⁴² Their typology of security institutions divides such institutions on the basis of whether the threat they face is internal or external, and whether their institutionalization is high or low. According to Wallander and Keohane, alliances are the prime example of highly-institutionalized settings directed against an external threat. We argue that the likes of the PSI resemble what Wallander and Keohane call 'alignments'. The only difference between alliances and alignments, in the typology of Wallander and Keohane, is in their levels of institutionalization. This makes alliance theory particularly useful to gain insights into the functioning of informal institutions such as the PSI.

The Proliferation Security Initiative

The PSI was announced by US President George W. Bush in 2003, and joined initially by a group of 11 like-minded states—the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Japan, and Australia, also called as the 'core group'—to combat the illicit spread of WMDs. The bulk of PSI activities focus on pre-emptive interdiction, at sea, land and air, of WMD-related cargo. The core group was responsible for drafting the Statement of Interdiction Principles, the document at the heart of the PSI. Endorsement of this non-binding document makes countries become an 'endorsing state' of the PSI, which as of today, 105 states have done.⁴³ The goal of the PSI is 'to stop proliferation related trade in WMDs, related materials and delivery systems' and it is open to 'every state, regardless of size or location, concerned about the spread of WMD'.

The 'core group' was disbanded in 2005 and transformed into a group of 21 leading countries, called the 'Operational Experts Group'. In addition to the endorsing countries, the United States signed ship-boarding agreements with 11 flag-of-convenience states representing the bulk of global shipping, so allowing the US to board, inspect, and possibly also detain cargo on board of ships flying the flag of these countries.⁴⁴

Curiously, after a fairly conspicuous, if not controversial, start the PSI has become less discussed. Indeed, a cursory search of the Lexis Nexis newspaper archive shows that, after an initial wave of reporting from 2003 to 2006, it only incidentally appears in the near-decade that follows. This decline in attention might reflect its in transparent nature, or perhaps that it is secretly successful. Yet, the diminished attention understates the revolutionary nature of the initiative.

42 Celeste A. Wallander and Robert O. Keohane, 'Risk, Threat and Security Institutions, in Helga Haftendorn, et al., eds., *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

43 Appendix 1 lists the members of the PSI.

44 Mark J. Valencia, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative: A Glass Half-Full', *Arms Control Today*, 2007, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007_06/Valencia.

The PSI has been criticized for being too intransparent in its decision-making and activities, as neither of the two is public or even reported.⁴⁵ Indeed, the PSI's intransparent nature is a deliberate part of its design—in his interview with *Arms Control Today*, John Bolton, the PSI's chief architect, argued that 'the public should not expect to hear about ... seizures. [...] there have been successful interdictions since the initiative's launch but that they have not been made public, nor will they be'. Bolton warned that too much publicity could impair the initiative.⁴⁶ Similarly, the PSI is until today deliberately ambiguous—the Statements of Interdiction Principles do not specify or provide legal basis for PSI interdiction and ship-boarding on high-seas, their very purpose.⁴⁷

Nor has the US ever considered eventually formalizing the PSI. The explicit goal was to make the PSI 'an activity not an organization'.⁴⁸ The PSI might have been expected to reflect what was considered to be the unilateralist turn in US foreign policy during the George W. Bush years. Indeed, in his 2009 speech in Prague, Barack Obama argued that 'efforts such as the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism should be turned into durable international institutions'.⁴⁹ However, soon thereafter, US diplomats assured their counterparts in private that 'the President's reference to "institutionalizing" PSI and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (CICNT) does not mean the United States proposes to establish a secretariat or other similar body, but rather to secure multilateral buy-in'.⁵⁰

For many countries the cost-benefit calculation is more complex than the argument that the PSI is good because WMD proliferation is bad. In the next section, we will hypothesize what considerations can drive countries' decision-making, making them either more or less likely to support the PSI. We organize these considerations into consequences for the security, influence, and autonomy of states, and thereby generate a series of hypotheses that we can test through our cases.

Why Either Support or Actively Abstain from the PSI?⁵¹

In this section we deduce a series of expectations from the goods and risks that the PSI should offer states that either support or oppose it, according to their variation on the

- 45 Aaron Dunne, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative: Legal Considerations and Operational Realities', *SIPRI Policy Paper 36*, 2013, <http://books.sipri.org/files/PP/SIPRI36.pdf>; Mincai Yu, 'China's Position on the Proliferation Security Initiative and Its Reappraisal', *Journal of East Asia and International Law*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2010), pp. 49–66.
- 46 Wade Boese, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative: An Interview With John Bolton', *Arms Control Today*, 2003, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_12/PSI.
- 47 Dunne, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative'.
- 48 US Department of State, 'Proliferation Security Initiative: Chairman's Conclusions at the Fourth Meeting', 2003, <http://www.state.gov/t/isn/115305.htm>.
- 49 Barack H. Obama, 'Remarks by President Barack Obama at Hradcany Square', 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-President-Barack-Obama-In-Prague-As-Delivered.
- 50 WikiLeaks, 'US-EU Nonproliferation Consultation', 2014 [2009], <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2009/08/09STATE83574.html>.
- 51 By support we mean participate in. By abstain, we mean both withdrawing support and active opposition.

following dimensions: vulnerability to the threat of regional proliferators; access to (extended) deterrence; relative power; and attitude towards American power.

Support the PSI

Security

States confronted with a regional security threat whose aim is to attain or expand its nuclear weapons (and their means of delivery)—or that is on the verge of doing so—should be more likely to strongly support counter-proliferation measures. This pressure will also apply in the case of a direct regional competitor, which is not an imminent threat. The pressure exists regardless of whether or not the state is a nuclear weapon state, as the introduction of nuclear weapons changes the strategic calculations in any region. Such expectation is in line with what we know about the great power non-proliferation policy—that great powers are likely to strongly oppose proliferation when this impedes their own power projection capabilities.⁵² This applies even more so to states which are close to those most likely to be currently pursuing nuclear weapons—North Korea and Iran—and that have had pre-existing conflicts with these states. Even when states are not directly threatened, the general risk of non-proliferation, stemming from the nuclear weapons' undermining of collective security, should generally make states support counter-proliferation efforts.⁵³

Influence

States that already possess nuclear weapons—or that possess the technology that would allow them rapidly to do so—should be more likely to support counter-proliferation measures, as this allows them to monopolize one of the major means to status and political influence. Nuclear weapons are trump cards in any escalation of conflicts.⁵⁴ Similarly, existing hegemony and their supporters have incentive to prevent changes in the regional or global distribution of power which could be the result of emergence of new nuclear powers. Nuclear weapons also allow weaker states to employ asymmetric strategies in conflicts of interest with more powerful states.

Autonomy

States that perceive themselves as constrained by formal frameworks from effectively acting against proliferation and other risks should be more likely to support these informal institutions. This applies to all powerful states, most specifically those with conventional military and nuclear capabilities. The PSI—which allows interdiction upon suspicion—provides the most effective tool to counter proliferation in the short term.

These three motives are likely to complement one another: existing nuclear states are more likely also to be the most powerful, with a broader conception of their national interest, and so more likely to be constrained by formal institutions. However, as the three motives for opposing or abstaining from the PSI suggest, there is no perfect match between these different motives, so making their nuances worthy of exploration.

52 Matthew Kroenig, 'Force or Friendship? Explaining Great Power Nonproliferation Policy', *Security Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (2014), pp. 1–32.

53 Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York: Norton, 2003).

54 Todd S. Sechser and Matthew Fuhrmann, 'Crisis Bargaining and Nuclear Blackmail', *International Organization*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (2013), pp. 173–95.

Actively Abstain From (or Oppose) the PSI

Security

States that perceive a direct threat to their security from within or outside their particular region which they believe could be deterred through nuclear weapons are likely to oppose any counter-proliferation strategies, because these restrict their room to manoeuvre in attaining national security. Specifically, this applies to those states without nuclear weapons (or without the ability to rapidly acquire them indigenously) that either border on—or have a history of confrontation with—a nuclear state. Similar considerations apply to countries that face a regional competitor not armed with nuclear weapons. Importantly, this consideration is unlikely to apply to existing nuclear powers.

Influence

States that benefit from the existing and highly formalized multilateral frameworks, because they deescalate conflict-prone power asymmetries, should oppose the current drift towards informalization. This applies to states that are in highly unequal (and dependent) relationships with the US, since such frameworks contain American preponderance. Policymakers with an eye towards preventing future proliferation will also oppose informalization efforts, as they risk undermining the long-term legitimacy of the existing non-proliferation frameworks through the shift of power to individual states.⁵⁵ American policymakers might themselves feel apprehension (but to a lesser degree), as informalization increases the risk of counterbalancing behaviour by other states. States may seek to challenge the creeping influence of unrestrained American power that the PSI represents, because it intrudes on their own symbolic base of legitimacy. This will particularly be the case in states where non-alignment or outright ideological opposition to the West generally, and the US specifically, is important.

Autonomy

States that are in competition with the US (and with the states that support American hegemony), or those that would prefer a more multipolar regional or global order are more likely to oppose the informalization of governance, and the PSI specifically, because informalization gives a strong advantage to the existing powers and a great deal of leeway to intrude on national sovereignty. It therefore diminishes the policy autonomy of other states.

Empirical Analysis

To explore these hypotheses, we present a set of small case studies that consist of influential states, which vary between supporting and abstaining from PSI, ordered from typical to non-typical. We have ensured that there is variance in the extent to which these states generally expressed preferences for formal institutional solutions, where the puzzle of the states that strongly support them (the so-called ‘good citizens’) signing up for an initiative such as the PSI is one of the initial motivations for this article.

Moreover, we have ensured that variation existed in terms of the level of direct threat these states experienced from nuclear states, either from within or outside their region. We

55 Asli Ü. Bâli, ‘Legality and Legitimacy in the Global Order: The Changing Landscape of Nuclear Non-Proliferation’, in Richard A. Falk, et al., eds., *Legality and Legitimacy in Global Affairs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

focus on a group of countries that are in the position either to support or undermine the PSI's mission, and thereby also representative of the greater population of states affected by the PSI. We acknowledge that our cases are limited and that many of them correlate in multiple dimensions. This means that it is difficult to assign a single cause as a driver of state behaviour regarding the PSI. However, this will be a problem for any selection of states that takes these dimensions into account. As we work through the distinct cases, we are confident that we can infer plausible national hierarchies of strategic preferences and exclude certain motivations, by leveraging cases that share certain characteristics against each other.

One final remark: we do not carry out in-depth investigations of causal mechanisms in individual cases—the nature of policy processes, and the extent to which policymakers are articulate about the choices, do not concern us here. We are also not interested in analysing the shapes and forms of the narratives of counter-hegemony—we take them at face value. In our discussion of these three broad groups of motives to support or oppose (or abstain from) the PSI, we take for granted that to some degree states will pursue security, influence, and autonomy. Assuming that all three are important to them, however, we also assume that we can infer from their choices concerning specific policies exactly which motives seem to have been more decisive. After this discussion of the cases, we offer an alternative and simpler explanation centred on US allies that we ultimately reject based on the evidence.

United States

Before we discuss the responses of other states to the American-initiated PSI, we illustrate these arguments through the US, and how it relates to the trade-offs between security, autonomy, and influence. To begin with, in terms of US security, PSI measures are likely to impede the access of 'rogue states'. The suspected linkages between these states and extremist non-state actors were most explicitly expressed in speeches and texts by members of the George W. Bush administration, but in fact were and are also present in statements of the Clinton and Obama administrations.

Previous policies are considered unlikely to deter these actors, because, as the 2002 NSS put it, the US is no longer facing 'a generally status quo, risk-averse adversary', where 'deterrence was an effective defence'.⁵⁶ Nor was this simply an expression of the more unilateralist and pre-emptive leanings of the George W. Bush administration: the 2010 NSS strategy of the Obama administration similarly argued that 'violent extremists' may not be deterred by American nuclear weapons.⁵⁷ The point is that, as the premier nuclear power, to maintain its influence the US has every incentive to prevent new states accessing weapons. Even though the security of the US is itself arguably not directly threatened by proliferation of nuclear weapons to states such as North Korea and Iran, there are broader perceived US national interests in East Asia and the Persian Gulf.

The PSI allows the US the option of using its preponderance to counter proliferation without the constraints of the more institutionalized non-proliferation frameworks. The desire for flexibility was signalled in the policy documents of the George W. Bush administration. As the 2002 NSS expresses it, more flexible, more 'effective', and less constraining 'coalitions of the willing' 'can augment these permanent institutions', although the latter should be 'taken seriously' and are 'not to be undertaken symbolically to rally support for an ideal without furthering its attainment'.⁵⁸ Yet, the 2010 NSS, published by the Obama

56 White House, *The National Security Strategy 2002*, p.15.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 25.

administration, is similarly filled with references to the inadequacies of an international architecture that risks becoming out-dated, and suggests seizing 'new opportunities',⁵⁹ and the 2015 NSS reiterates 'keeping nuclear materials from terrorists and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons remains a high priority'.⁶⁰ Such statements are unsurprising: as the most powerful state, the formal multilateral frameworks in the short term primarily impede the US's room to manoeuvre. In short, US support for the PSI seems fairly self-explanatory.

What is noteworthy, however, is that by choosing such informal approaches, the US risks undermining long-term acceptance of US power. In short, the same logic of costs and risks that institutions hold to in signalling intent to other states is present for the US.

Support for the PSI

United Kingdom

The UK is the most typical case of a supporter of the PSI: the UK benefits from the PSI—both its security and its influence as a nuclear state—while its relationship with the US diminishes the risks of US preponderance. The PSI improves British security as it impedes the access of rogue states and extremist organizations to nuclear weapons, and thereby diminishes the risk of proliferation in the Middle East (that might be accelerated by an Iranian nuclear programme). Proliferation certainly has impact on the UK's perceived national interests in the greater Middle Eastern region. It also assists with long publically stated preferences for a nuclear-free world. Less charitably, the prevention of nuclear proliferation underlines British membership of the select club of nuclear powers, even though nuclear weapons may have been de-emphasized in British security policy over past decades.⁶¹ The Blair government's policy was to have a 'minimum deterrent', and 'to see a safer world in which there is no place for nuclear weapons'.⁶² The deterrent receives more attention in more recent texts, although they reiterate the minimalist approach.⁶³ Insofar as the UK is a supporter of American hegemony, support for the PSI is complementary to supporting American preferences and strengthening its hegemonic position in regions which are less accessible to British power.

The PSI also offers greater effectiveness, and fits a broader trend in British foreign and defence policy towards more effective and less institutionalized solutions to both short-term and long-term crises. The 2003 White Paper expressed similar impatience with the UN as that found in American texts in the aftermath of the Iraq crisis.⁶⁴ However, support for the PSI limits British autonomy vis-à-vis the US to a certain extent (due to the power differential between them), and British support for the PSI, therefore, suggests support for American hegemony.

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

61 Michael Clarke, 'Does My Bomb Look Big in This? Britain's Nuclear Choices after Trident', *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, No. 1 (2004), pp. 49–62.

62 In fact, in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review the deterrent receives only one passing reference until the fourth chapter. See Ministry of Defence, *The Strategic Defence Review* (London: The Stationery Office, 1998).

63 Cabinet Office, *The National Security Strategy: A Strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainty* (London: The Stationery Office, 2010).

64 Ministry of Defence, *Delivering Security in a Changing World* (London: The Stationery Office, 2003).

Japan

Japan is a reasonably typical case for PSI support, as it clearly benefits from the PSI in several important ways. Like Germany, however, there are several facets of the informal nature of the PSI that are problematic, in view of Japan's preference for formal international frameworks. Japan benefits from the PSI for security reasons: the measures inherent in the PSI are designed to counter precisely the kind of proliferation that most directly threatens Japanese territory—namely the access of North Korea to improved nuclear technology and the means to effectively deliver it. The 2013 National Security Strategy is explicit about the 'threat posed by progress in nuclear and missile development by North Korea', as well as 'mindful of future trends in the balance of nuclear forces in the Asia-Pacific region together with the rapid advancement of military technologies'.⁶⁵ Beyond direct threats to Japanese security, increased North Korean access to nuclear weapons risks upsetting the larger regional stability, changing the status of South Korea, and perhaps changing the overall calculations of the US in terms of the risks it is willing to take in protecting Japan.

Japan is not a nuclear state, although is protected by the extended deterrence of the US.⁶⁶ Moreover, it is generally considered to be the state with the shortest time horizon towards achieving nuclear status, and the least latent of the possible new nuclear states.⁶⁷ The established Japanese cultural taboo against nuclear weapons—its historical status as the only state that has experienced their use⁶⁸—applies here in two ways: it undermines the development of a Japanese nuclear weapon—though that might be changing⁶⁹—but it also gives Japan a strong general non-proliferation stance.⁷⁰ This stance in turn makes the increased effectiveness of the PSI measures much more attractive. Japan's traditional support of US hegemony ensures that the PSI is complementary to its broader policies.

The PSI is problematic for Japan for other reasons, to do with its strong preference for formal institutions, which has become embedded in its strategic culture.⁷¹ Formal

65 Cabinet National Security Office, *National Security Strategy* (Tokyo: Cabinet Office, 2013), http://japan.kantei.go.jp/96_abe/documents/2013/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2013/12/17/NSS.pdf, pp. 29–30.

66 *Ibid.*

67 Federation of American Scientists, 'Japan: Nuclear Weapons Program', 2012, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/japan/nuke/>; Carey Sublette, 'Nuclear Weapons Frequently Asked Questions—Other Nuclear Capable States', 2001, <http://nuclearweaponarchive.org/Nwfaq/Nfaq7-5.html>.

68 The 2013 NSS states that 'as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings in war, Japan has consistently engaged in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, playing a leading role in international initiatives to realize "a world free of nuclear weapons"'. Japan National Security Council (NSC), *National Security Strategy 2013*, pp. 3–4.

69 See Danielle Demetriou, 'Japan Should Develop Nuclear Weapons to Counter North Korea Threat', 20 April, 2009, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/japan/5187269/Japan-should-develop-nuclear-weapons-to-counter-North-Korea-threat.html>; Sakamaki, Sachiko. 'North Korean Atomic Tests Lift Lid on Japan's Nuclear "Taboo"', Bloomberg, 28 May, 2009.

70 Maria Rost Rublee, *Nonproliferation Norms: Why States Choose Nuclear Restraint* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009).

71 Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

institutions have strengthened Japan's position in light of the constraints on more traditional and assertive uses of its power, and this specifically applies to its crucial relationship with the US. Moreover, formalization strengthens the ability of Japan to contain the rising power of China, and allows Japan to bind the US closer to it and its interests. Though Japan probably has the most convincing case for support of the PSI, as it meets nearly all the criteria established above, that support still forces Japanese policymakers to make troubling and complex trade-offs.

France

France is a less typical case of a supporter of the PSI, considering its past resistance to US preponderance, although it benefits from the PSI in several ways. To begin with, the PSI accomplishes several French security objectives: it impedes the access of 'regional powers' to nuclear weapons, specifically Iran.⁷² The 2013 White Paper argues that the 'lessons of the 1990s'⁷³ show the need for a PSI that supplements the other tools available to the international community.

Nuclear weapons might not threaten France directly, but would certainly change the strategic calculations in the Middle East, where French policymakers perceive significant national interests. Deterrence is still central to the French stated strategy⁷⁴ as 'the ultimate guarantee of national security and independence'.⁷⁵ Precisely because of the continued centrality of nuclear weapons to French grand strategy, French policymakers should perceive greater benefits of belonging to a selective club of nuclear powers, and the prestige and political room to manoeuvre this provides. It should therefore seek to maintain this selectiveness.

The PSI fits the general French drift towards more flexible and less formalized solutions to problems, and impatience with the current reticence on the part of its European neighbours in favour of the US and UK, the other ambitious western powers.⁷⁶ Examples of this French shift include the Anglo-French defence cooperation in the 2010 Lancaster House accords, joint action in Libya, a shared aircraft carrier, and the option of shared nuclear submarine patrols. The 2003 French programming law, in fact, supports the flexibility that the 2002 US National Security Strategy (NSS) argues in favour of, emphasizing the need 'to identify and prevent threats as soon as possible' and that consequently 'possible pre-emptive action is not out of the question, where an explicit and confirmed threat has been recognized'.⁷⁷

However, France's support of the PSI is complex in other ways, specifically its relation to the US and the timing of the PSI's establishment in 2003, at the height of transatlantic tensions over the Iraq invasion. France was one of PSI's core states, hosting the 3rd plenary meeting on 3 and 4 September 2003, at which States and Parties agreed on the Statement of Interdiction Principles (known as the Paris Principles) setting out the aims of the PSI and States' commitments to achieving those aims, and further hosting a meeting of the

72 *Défense et sécurité nationale: le livre blanc* (Paris: Ministère de la Défense, 2008), pp. 30, 37.

73 *Le Livre blanc sur la défense et la sécurité nationale* (Paris: Ministère de la Défense, 2013), p. 77.

74 Robert Gildea, *France since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Maurice Vaïsse, *La puissance ou l'influence? La France dans le monde depuis 1958* (Paris: Fayard, 2009).

75 *Défense et sécurité nationale: le livre blanc* (Paris: Ministère de la Défense, 2008), p. 2.

76 Simón, 'Setting the Tone'.

77 *Assemblée Nationale, Loi de Programmation Militaire 2003–2008* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 2003).

Operational Experts Group (OEG) in September 2008.⁷⁸ The PSI arguably validated the American drift towards unilateralism and informalization.

Historically, France cannot be considered a straightforward supporter of American hegemony, having designed most of its security policies according to an 'allied, but not aligned' paradigm.⁷⁹ From General De Gaulle onwards, French policymakers have consistently sought a more multipolar global order and the formal multilateral means to constrain US power;⁸⁰ giving the US more room to manoeuvre by removing the constraints of the formalized frameworks seems to contradict these policies. Yet, at the time of the PSI's creation, French-American relations were at a nadir over Iraq.

France has arguably maintained a relatively hands-off approach to the US up to the present, the return to the NATO integrated structures and military cooperation with the US notwithstanding. If the non-proliferation measures are designed specifically with Iran and North Korea in mind, it is remarkable that, in contrast to the Americans and the British, French policymakers do seem to believe that its nuclear weapons can deter most actors from preventing 'state-originated aggression against the vital interests of the country, from whatever direction and in whatever form'.⁸¹ French support for the PSI instead seems to be shaped by the desire to keep the nuclear club selective, and that these motives override traditional formalized international preferences.

Germany

Germany is a reasonably typical case of a supporter for the PSI although, like Japan, this contradicts its support for formal institutional frameworks, but then its security interests are less at stake. Germany largely shared the threat perceptions of its allies, but to a lesser degree. Similar to those of the other Western states, the German texts after September 11 stress the threat of state and non-state actors seeking to acquire WMDs and the means to deliver these. However, the 2003 and 2006 documents consider non-proliferation institutions as the most effective instruments to prevent and contain the threat⁸² and, crucially, consider that 'credible deterrence, backed up by defence, policing, and intelligence measures to prevent proliferation, plus effective control of exports, remain important elements for containing this risk', especially when backed by 'arms control, disarmament, and contractual agreements on the non-proliferation of WMD'.⁸³ Germany has so far displayed

78 France has organized and hosted a number of multinational interception exercises, both at sea (Basilic 2003 in the Mediterranean and GUISTIR 2008 in the Gulf of Aden) and in the air (ASPE 2004 and HADES 2006 in France), and regularly participates in exercises mounted by its partners (Leading Edge, Eastern Endeavour). Ministère des Affaires étrangères, *The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)*, 2014, <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy-1/disarmament-and-non-proliferation/france-and-non-proliferation-of-7768/article/the-proliferation-security>.

79 Jolyon Howorth, 'The Euro-Atlantic Security Dilemma: France, Britain, and the ESDP', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2005), pp. 39–54.

80 Gildea, *France since 1945*; Maurice Vaïsse, *La puissance ou l'influence? La France dans le monde depuis 1958*.

81 *Défense et sécurité nationale: le livre blanc 2008*, p. 64.

82 Federal Ministry of Defence, *Defence Policy Guidelines*, Berlin, 2003, p. 6.

83 Federal Ministry of Defence, *German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr*, Berlin, 2006, p. 14.

little to no ambitions outside of Europe (if even within Europe). Consequently, policymakers do not emphasize how German interests could be threatened by a changing balance of power in the Middle East, or at least do so to a much lesser degree than British and French policymakers.⁸⁴ With regard to diminishing influence due to proliferation, Germany is not a nuclear power but it should be considered as having a latent capability to become one.⁸⁵ Furthermore, Germany is protected by the extended deterrence that American, British, and French nuclear weapons offer.

Together, these factors put Germany, though uncomfortable with nuclear weapons, among the powers that should prefer the group of nuclear powers to remain as selective and limited as it now is. In fact, stated German policy has been strongly anti-nuclear for decades, and there is a strong societal push towards seeking the general abolishment of nuclear weapons.⁸⁶ Germany has also generally been one of the strongest supporters of American hegemony, and stated policy towards the transatlantic relationship is that it is the most central relationship in the German foreign policy outlook, despite lingering resentment over Iraq and the PRISM spying scandal.⁸⁷

However, there are certain theoretical problems to do with German support for the PSI. That most important is the manner in which informalization of non-proliferation measures undermines the preference for formalized multilateral institutions, which has been the bedrock of German policy since World War II.⁸⁸ This is not merely a question of idealism or strategic culture on the part of German policymakers, though these are important tendencies;⁸⁹ formal frameworks have given Germany the means to legitimately use its economic power while forsaking more traditional means of asserting itself—meaning military capabilities, including nuclear weapons. Germany has not built up the resources or shown ambition to take a more autonomous and assertive course,⁹⁰ and this puts it at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the US and its nuclear empowered neighbours in Europe. German policy should

84 Interviews by one of the authors with German policymakers, November 2012.

85 'Capability versus Intent: The Latent Threat of Nuclear Proliferation', *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 2007, <http://thebulletin.org/capability-versus-intent-latent-threat-nuclear-proliferation-0>; 'Der Spiegel Überraschender Vorstoß: Sarkozy bot Deutschland Atomwaffen an', *Der Spiegel*, 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/ueberraschender-vorstoß-sarkozy-bot-deutschland-atomwaffen-an-a-505887.html>; Der Tagesspiegel, 'Ex-Minister: Atomwaffen für Deutschland', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 2006, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/ex-minister-atomwaffen-fuer-deutschland/678760.html>.

86 Julian Borger, 'Five NATO States to Urge Removal of US Nuclear Arms in Europe', *The Guardian*, 2010, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/feb/22/nato-states-us-nuclear-arms-europe>.

87 PRISM is a surveillance program operated by the United States National Security Agency German Marshall Fund, *Transatlantic Trends 2014*, http://trends.gmfus.org/files/2012/09/Trends_2014_complete.pdf.

88 Joachim Krause, 'Multilateralism: Behind European Views', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2004), pp. 43–59.

89 Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*; John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy after Unification* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

90 In fact, it can be argued that German policy has taken a more inward looking turn over the past decade - see Libya, Mali, and Ukraine.

prevent the undermining of constraints on US power. This suggests that German preferences are strongly shaped by a strong general non-proliferation stance and/or a great dependence on US power and trust in the benign nature of its intentions.⁹¹

Russia

Although Russia supports the PSI, it is an atypical and puzzling case due to its explicit stance against US hegemony. Russia became a PSI participant in 2004, but decided to keep a low profile. While Russia did not participate in any PSI exercises, the PSI themes became salient in other frameworks, such as the NATO–Russia Council.⁹² Outwardly, the PSI meets several Russian interests. Foremost, proliferation of nuclear weapons undermines Russia's position as a great power, given the particular importance to Russia of nuclear weapons. Russia continues to consider itself a 21st century power, but it has a narrow power base, certainly as compared to the economic and demographic advantages of China and the other Asian powers. Nuclear weapons and membership of the nuclear club thus remain important status symbols for Russia,⁹³ rather than perceived threats originating in proliferation. The most prominent non-proliferation cases have indeed left it cold: concerns about alienating the North Korea in fact constituted a relevant reason for Russia to abstain early on from the PSI,⁹⁴ and Russia has also not been at the forefront of confronting Iran. There again, Iran's possible nuclear bomb would not suit Russian regional interests, particularly in Central Asia. Likewise, escalation of the situation in North Korea is not in Russia's interests either, as any conflict in East Asia would likely upset the regional balance to the disadvantage of Russia.

The case of Russia is therefore puzzling, considering the timing of its participation, and contrasted with China and India's behaviour. Regarding the timing: Russian participation in the PSI 2003 came just as it was opposing the American intervention in Iraq in the UN Security Council, amid the rumbles of the 2003 and 2004 Colour Revolutions in Georgia and the Ukraine, the coming 2004 Big Bang of NATO expansion, and in the wake of the 1999 Kosovo intervention by NATO and the Bush government's 2002 cancellation of the ABM Treaty—hardly an environment conducive to Russian acquiescence of US unilateralism. Moreover, in the post-Cold War period Russia has consistently presented itself as a counter-hegemonic power and sided with China, Iran, and other states opposing US predominance in

91 Other cases of smaller European countries confirm a similar contradictory nature of PSI endorsement. Netherlands, Sweden, or Austria all strongly endorsed PSI and actively participated in it, despite their traditional commitment to formal internationalism. Sweden and Austria frequently take up positions directly challenging the US nuclear weapons policy. Traditionally, these countries have been strong supporters of institutionalized and formalized multilateralism. Therefore, the slow impingement on the long-term legitimacy of established frameworks only makes sense if policymakers perceive a significantly high threat from proliferation and/or if they perceive a significant dependence on US power, and if they trust in the benign nature of American hegemony.

92 Alexandre Kaliadine, 'Russia in the PSI: The Modalities of Russian Participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative', *The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission Paper*, No. 29, 2005, <http://www.un.org/disarmament/education/wmdcommission/files/No29.pdf>.

93 Nikolai N. Sokov, 'The Evolving Role of Nuclear Weapons in Russia's Security Policy', in Cristina Hansell and William C. Potter, eds., *Engaging China and Russia on Nuclear Disarmament* (Monterey: James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, 2009).

94 Kaliadine, 'Russia in the PSI'.

international affairs. Asserting Russian influence, and constraining US ascendance, should be symbolically important for Russian policymakers. Russian military doctrine remains similarly focused on NATO,⁹⁵ and its military exercises on fighting NATO forces in the European theatre. It has also been wary of entering institutions that could encroach on national sovereignty, and Russian policymakers have repeatedly criticized the willingness of the US and other Western states to intervene in the sovereign affairs of other states.

On the other hand, the PSI is unlikely to challenge any of Russia's strategic interests, and Russia's participation remains a low-cost, low-risk activity. Participation suggests that Russia is intently focused on maintaining its relative advantage in military and nuclear issues, the only sphere of international politics in which it can still compete. Further testimony to this conclusion is the fact that the country continues to participate in the PSI despite tensions with the West over Ukraine. Russia sent experts to the most recent PSI Operational Experts Group meeting in Canada, but the Canadian government refused to issue them with visas. In response, Russia labelled the Canadian government's decision as a 'hostile action' and referred to itself as 'a key partner in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and a full member of the PSI'.⁹⁶

Abstention from the PSI

Brazil

Brazilian abstention from the PSI is hardly surprising, considering its relative security and stance on the US power. Brazil is not directly affected by the access of 'rogue states' and terrorists to nuclear weapons. It is only recently that Brazilian policymakers have started seeing strategic interests in the Middle East, and so far see few in Asia.⁹⁷ Access by Iran and North Korea to nuclear materials, therefore, is not a major issue for Brazil. However, Brazil has been playing a more pronounced role in global non-proliferation debates, and Brazilian governments have made sure their voices are heard on a number of issues related to either the Iranian nuclear programme or the future of global nuclear supply.⁹⁸ In interviews with one of the authors, Brazilian officials expressed that Brazil's participation would be politically beneficial to the PSI, but that the country's preference for formal non-proliferation mechanisms inhibits the possibility of participating in the PSI.

Under President Lula, Brazil's voice on the international stage has become more explicitly counter-hegemonic, focused on limiting the influence of the United States in global governance, especially in the Western Hemisphere.⁹⁹ One of the main goals of Brazil's non-

95 Security Council of the Russian Federation, *Natsional'naya Strategiya Bezopasnosti Rossii, do 2020 Goda*, 2009.

96 The Embassy of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 'Commentary by the Information and Press Department Concerning Canada's Refusal of Entry to Russian Delegation for PSI Working Group Meeting', 2015, <http://www.rusemb.org.uk/foreignpolicy/3158>.

97 Gunther Maihold, 'Too Big a World? Lula, Brazil and the Middle East', *Real Instituto Elcano*, 2010, http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/latin+america/ari62-2010.

98 Mark Hibbs, *The Future of the Nuclear Suppliers Group* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011).

99 Sean W. Burges, 'Auto-Estima in Brazil: The Logic of Lula's South-South Foreign Policy', *International Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (2005), pp. 1133–51.

proliferation policy has been to develop an independent profile and avoid any associations with the US, a factor also remarked upon by US diplomats.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Brazil has incentive, at minimum, not to accept any further limitations on its own possible access to nuclear weapons, even though at the moment there is no desire to acquire them.

South Africa

South Africa, similarly, is an obvious case for abstention from the PSI: like Brazil it is relatively isolated from security threats resulting from proliferation, and it has an uneasy attitude towards US power. South Africa's behaviour is puzzling if one accepts the narrative of South Africa as a non-proliferation norm promoter and 'a poster child',¹⁰¹ long on the forefront of non-proliferation efforts. Moreover, South Africa is the single example of a state that has voluntarily given up its own nuclear weapons programme.

However, South African non-proliferation policies have recently been strongly tainted with anti-American anti-imperialism, which was the driving force behind the country's nuclear policy.¹⁰² Constraining US influence and its ability to incur on the sovereignty of other states fits the post-apartheid South African predilection for asserting its own symbolic legitimacy within the Global South. While expressing concern in their rhetoric at the risks of nuclear proliferation, in recent years South African policymakers became more associated with nuclear disarmament and the rights of states to access nuclear materials.¹⁰³ The dominant self-perception of South Africa is that of a rising power at the forefront of a major global governance shift giving more power to countries in the Global South.¹⁰⁴ The decision-making process of the PSI, dominated by the US and nations friendly to it, remains a major obstacle for South Africa, and explains its otherwise puzzling behaviour.

South Africa was one of the main locations of AQ Khan's production, and South African authorities were instrumental in bringing the network down. Yet, the local culprits received only very light sentences, or immunity in exchange for providing information about the network.¹⁰⁵ South Africa continues to be a staunch supporter of Iran in international

100 WikiLeaks, 'Screensetter for the June 18-22 Visit of Secretary Chertoff', 2014, <http://www.cablegatesearch.net/cable.php?id=08BRASILIA823>.

101 Rian Leith and Joelen Pretorius, 'Eroding the Middle Ground: The Shift in Foreign Policy Underpinning South African Nuclear Diplomacy', *Politikon*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (2009), pp. 345–61; Ian Taylor, *South Africa and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

102 Michal Onderco, 'South Africa's Iran Policy: "Poster Child" Meets Renegade', *South African Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (2012), pp. 299–318.

103 Jo-Ansie Karina Van Wyk, *South Africa's nuclear diplomacy, 1990-2010: Securing a Niche Role through Norm Construction and State Identity* (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 2013); Carmen Wunderlich, et al., 'Non-Aligned Reformers and Revolutionaries: Egypt, South Africa, Iran and North Korea', in Harald Müller and Carmen Wunderlich, eds., *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control: Interests, Conflicts, and Justice* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013).

104 'Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu', *White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy (Final Draft)*, 2011, http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/foreignpolicy_0.pdf.

105 Catherine Collins and Douglas Frantz, 'Fallout from the AQ Khan Network and the Clash of National Interests', paper submitted to the 2010 IAEA Safeguards Symposium, 2010, <http://>

forums.¹⁰⁶ Separately, South African domestic security apparatus appeared not overly concerned with terrorism threats, even amid rumours that South Africa is becoming an important security-risk nexus.¹⁰⁷

India

In contrast to Brazil and South Africa, India is a counterintuitive case of abstention from the PSI, considering its own nuclear status and the security risks in its region. Although India participated as an observer in some PSI exercises, it did not endorse the Principles. Indian non-participation is puzzling, because India is located in a highly insecure strategic environment in flux, where nuclear weapons continue to be a grave concern.¹⁰⁸ The PSI could also be instrumental to addressing another of India's worries, namely the possibility of non-state actors' access to nuclear weapons.¹⁰⁹ Specifically in light of its continuing rivalry with Pakistan, India stands to gain from strict and effective control of the spread of nuclear weapons to terrorist organizations. In terms of its larger regional concerns, India has also made clear that it wishes there to be 'no new nuclear powers' in the region, a very strong hint to Iran, another PSI target.¹¹⁰

As a nuclear state, India benefits from keeping the group of nuclear states selective, though it has resisted such pressures in its own past. While India has been historically opposed to the NPT and the current non-proliferation order, considering it a tool of established (if not Western) powers, it has recently moved away from outright opposition to the NPT.¹¹¹ Indeed, Indian government has come out in support of the abolition of nuclear weapons. Moreover, the PSI could theoretically fit India's new 'predilection for global

www.iaea.org/safeguards/Symposium/2010/Documents/PapersRepository/2012749789382198030766.pdf.

106 'A Search for Allies in a Hostile World', *The Economist*, 4 February, 2010.

107 Hussein Solomon, 'Playing Ostrich: Lessons Learned from South Africa's Response to Terrorism', *Africa Security Brief* No. 9 (2011), <http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/pdf/Africa-Security-Brief/ASB-9.pdf>; Hussein Solomon, *Jihad: A South African Perspective* (Bloemfontein: SUN Press, 2013); 'Clinton warned South Africa of Al-Shabaab recruitments', *The Herald*, 2013, <http://www.herald.co.zw/clinton-warned-south-africa-warned-of-al-shabaab-recruitments/>.

108 Krishnappa Venkhatshamy and Princy George, *Grand Strategy for India: 2020 and beyond* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2012).

109 Kanti Bajpai, 'The Global Commons and India's National Security Strategy', in Venkhatshamy and George, eds., *Grand Strategy for India*; N. S. Sisodia, 'Strategic Challenges and Risks in a Globalising World: An Indian Perspective', in Venkhatshamy and George, eds., *Grand Strategy for India*.

110 'India's Shameful Vote against Iran', <http://www.hindu.com/2005/09/26/stories/2005092606071000.htm>; BBC Monitoring South Asia, *India Does not Support Iran's Nuclear Weapon Ambitions-PM*, ProQuest, 2008; Indrani Bagchi, 'Iran Unlikely to Give up Nuclear Programme, Feels India', *The Times of India*, 2008, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-11-17/middle-east/30409782_1_weaponization-nuclear-programme-iran.

111 C. Raja Mohan, *India's Nuclear Diplomacy and the Global Order* (New Delhi: Academic Foundation, 2009).

governance by oligarchy',¹¹² and diminishing preference for formalized institutions. All these factors should make India a poster child supporter of the PSI.

However, worries persist among Indian policymakers that the PSI could be used against the country should a major policy shift take place in the US, despite US assurances that WMD-related cargo to India (along with Pakistan and Israel) will not be targeted by the PSI.¹¹³ One way to do so would be through the little-known Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention), wherein the 2005 Protocol prohibits transport of nuclear materials not under safeguards pursuant to an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, which India (as an NPT-non-party) does not have.¹¹⁴

More importantly, engagement in the PSI is seen by many Indian officials as entangling India in American policies, bringing it closer to an alliance. In light of India's historically strong position on non-alignment and anti-imperialism, Indian policymakers are apprehensive that such a move would amount to domestic political suicide. Existing formal frameworks—including the NPT—are seen as disproportionately benefitting US power. Last but not least, India believes that ship-boarding by third countries in the Indian Ocean encroaches on Indian primacy therein, which is a core Indian strategic interest.¹¹⁵ The available evidence suggests that distrust in the US—if not outright resistance to US hegemony—and the broader desire to maintain autonomy drive Indian priorities towards rejecting cooperation with the PSI as long as this is perceived as implying an unequal relationship.¹¹⁶

China

The lack of support from China for the PSI is similarly puzzling, as the PSI would benefit Chinese security and status goals. China, similar to India, was long opposed to the existing non-proliferation regime, and only later came to appreciate and embrace it, although it never precluded China from expansion and modernization of its own arsenal.¹¹⁷ It is true that China's regional rivals are all either nuclear powers (India), latent powers (Japan), or under the US nuclear umbrella (South Korea and Taiwan), which makes them unlikely to be targeted by the PSI. On the other hand, China's interests would not be served in the event of escalation of the situation

112 David Malone, *Does the Elephant Dance? Contemporary Indian Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 250.

113 Wade Boese, 'The Proliferation Security Initiative: An Interview With John Bolton,' *Arms Control Today*, 2003, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_12/PSI.

114 C. Raja Mohan, 'India and the Nonproliferation Institutions: Addressing the 'Expectations Gap', A Report of the CSIS South Asia Program and the Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2010, http://csis.org/files/publication/101208_Mohan_IndiaNonprolifInsts_Web.pdf; A. Vinod Kumar, 'India's Participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative: Issues in Perspective', *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 33, No. 5 (2009), pp. 686–700.

115 James R. Holmes, 'India Looks Seaward: The Case of the Proliferation Security Initiative', *Virginia Review of Asian Studies*, Vol. 11 (2008), pp. 151–64.

116 Indian officials declared that they were willing to join the Proliferation Security Initiative, but only as an equal partner. They indicated that they would either join the core group or join as an equal member once the core group had been disbanded. WikiLeaks, 'Australia-India Bilaterals: India's UNSC Bid and Deepening Economic Ties with China', 2014, https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/05CANBERRA576_a.html.

117 Maihold, 'Too Big a World?'; Burges, 'Auto-Estima in Brazil'.

in North Korea—a prime PSI target—or in the Middle East, if Iran acquired a nuclear device.¹¹⁸ The escalation of North Korean policies in particular would risk necessitating Chinese involvement, thereby undermining the cautious manner in which China has risen and attempted to build up and modernize its armed forces. The PSI could hence be considered a tool to curb its irresponsible ally, without directly intervening in its affairs. Moreover, as an existing nuclear weapon power, China benefits in terms of its status as member of a closed and select nuclear club.

Despite these benefits as regards security and influence, China opposes the PSI because it views it as a raw and unconstrained assertion of American power. China is most explicitly concerned about the transparency and consequences of interdiction procedures at the heart of the PSI, which could impede the passage of Chinese ships in the territorial waters of PSI-endorsing states.¹¹⁹ But the PSI is considered a broader impingement on Chinese sovereignty and great power status. The 2003 Chinese white paper on non-proliferation maintained that ‘either the improvement of the existing regime or the establishment of a new regime should be based on the universal participation of all countries and on their decisions made through a democratic process’.¹²⁰ China adopted similar language at the 2005 NPT Review Conference: ‘Unilateralism and double standard practice on non-proliferation issues should be discarded. [...] Issues of proliferation concern should be addressed through dialogue and cooperation on equal basis rather than confrontation and exerting pressure.’¹²¹ This language is in direct opposition to the PSI spirit, which was at that time driven by a hard core of 11

- 118 International Crisis Group, ‘The Iran Nuclear Issue: The View from Beijing’, *Asia Briefing N° 100*, 2010, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/north-east-asia/b100%20The%20Iran%20Nuclear%20Issue%20The%20View%20from%20Beijing.pdf>; Alan Tidwell, *Anti-Americanism in the Philippines* (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007).
- 119 Charles Wolf, et al., *Enhancement by Enlargement: The Proliferation Security Initiative* (Santa Monica: RAND National Defence Research Institute, 2008). Other Asian cases offer similarly contradictory behaviour. For example, Indonesia is not an endorsing state, while Malaysia is (since 2014). Indonesia and Malaysia are located in the same increasingly volatile region. Both countries have a strong non-proliferation stance in their respective foreign policies, in spite of generally low WMD threat perception within the ASEAN countries, see Stephanie Lieggi, ‘The Nonproliferation Tiger: Indonesia’s Impact on Nonproliferation in Asia and Beyond’, *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, 2012, <http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/nonproliferation-tiger-indonesias-impact-nonproliferation-asia-and-beyond/>; David Santoro and Shahrman Lockman, ‘The Proliferation Security Initiative in ASEAN: A Glass Half Full or Half Empty?’, *Pacific Forum CSIS PacNet*, No. 8 (2013), <http://csis.org/files/publication/Pac138.pdf>. These could suggest that they should be generally supportive of the PSI’s goals. On the other hand, both countries, as members of the non-aligned movement (NAM), attach great importance to foreign policy autonomy. However, the attitude of Indonesian and Malaysian policymakers towards the United States strongly differs - whereas Indonesian nationalism carries an anti-American blend; Malaysian nationalism is pro-American— and this goes a long way in explaining Malaysian participation and the Indonesian lack thereof. See Alan Tidwell, *Anti-Americanism in the Philippines*; Wolf, et al., *Enhancement by Enlargement*.
- 120 ‘China’s Non-Proliferation Policy and Measures’, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2003/Dec/81312.htm>.
- 121 ‘Statement by Mr. Zhang Van, Head of the Chinese Delegation in the General Debate at the 2005 NPT Review Conference’, <http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/statements/npt03china.pdf>

Table 1. Summarizing the Case Studies

Country	Nuclear power	Latent nuclear power	Protected extended deterrence	Attitude towards US hegemony	Multi-lateralist*	Perceived direct threat	Threat to national interests
US	Yes	NA	NA	NA	Yes, but ↓	Yes	Yes
UK	Yes	NA	NA	Support	Yes, but ↓	Ambivalent	Yes
FR	Yes	NA	NA	Support (with ambivalence)	Yes, but ↓	Ambivalent	Yes
DE	No	Yes	Yes	Support	Yes	No	Ambivalent
JP	No	Yes	Yes	Support	Yes	Yes	Yes
CN	Yes	NA	NA	Sceptic	Yes	Yes	Yes
IN	Yes	NA	NA	Sceptic	Yes	Yes	Yes
RU	Yes	NA	NA	Sceptic	Ambivalent	Yes	Yes
SA	No	No	No	Sceptic	Yes	No	No
BR	No	Yes	No	Sceptic	Yes	No	No

* by multilateralist we understand here countries that traditionally support formalized internationalism

countries, and is until today dominated by the Operational Experts Group. Support for the PSI therefore risks undermining the constraints currently placed on the United States.

Conclusion

In these brief case descriptions we have structured what we think are the main motives for supporting or abstaining from the PSI. Our findings are summarized in Table 1. We propose that, on a fundamental level, states should be predisposed to support the PSI as another tool in the box to halt proliferation and improve security. Alternatively, states should simultaneously worry about weakening the legitimacy of established formal frameworks. However, we argue that states take a more complex set of calculations between motives into account. We have found that a number of clear patterns emerge, in spite of the often contradictory behaviour of several of the states towards the PSI.

To begin with, nuclear or nuclear-capable states are, unsurprisingly, likelier to support the PSI, as are states protected by the extended deterrence of their allies. These states intuitively seek to limit the nuclear club and maintain the status quo, and China and India, therefore, are clear and striking exceptions. Similarly, states that feel threatened by states—especially regional threats—seeking access to nuclear weapons are more likely to seek the short-term effective approach to curbing proliferation. However, this second motivation is strongly shaped by these, and diminishing constraints on it. It is the interaction between these two elements that reveals the relative priorities in the calculations of policymakers. What is most remarkable is that support for the PSI—or lack thereof—seems totally unrelated to whether states strongly support formal institutions as a matter of course.

In short, security and status are decisive if policymakers feel under no threat of losing their policymaking autonomy to American power, and believe that cooperation with the US would increase their influence over it—predominantly the Western states. The reverse largely seems to hold for those that want to maintain autonomy, and are consequently willing to sacrifice security, or if they have a strong non-proliferation stance.

The cases examined in this article show these, often at first glance, counterintuitive logics at work. The UK and Japan each offer convincing cases for support of the PSI. Mainly,

each has direct interests at stake if proliferation takes place, either in the Middle East or East Asia. These include direct threats to security—in the case of Japan—or damage to broader national interests perceived to be at stake—in the case of the UK. This seems a fairly straightforward explanation for their support, though it would contradict Japan's leanings towards formal institutions. France offers a similarly convincing case—a state so dependent on its nuclear status would understandably prefer this club to remain selective—albeit with some strong qualifications, namely a historically complex relationship with US preponderance and European dependence on it.

Germany is a more complex case, with a strong commitment to formalized international institutions, specifically to formally institutionalized non-proliferation. Germany has fewer direct interests at stake if proliferation takes place in the Middle East or East Asia. Yet, arguably, it is Germany's strong trust in—and support for—US leadership that allows it to accept the informalization that PSI represents. Russia presents the most puzzling case of a supporter of PSI, because it is clearly an opponent of American hegemony. Russian support is all the more remarkable if we consider that formal organizations generally benefit declining powers—which Russia is—by offering them the opportunity to lock into the rules of the game to their benefit.

However, it is the states that withhold support for or oppose the PSI that are most puzzling. This is particularly true of the Chinese opposition to the PSI. China would benefit at least to some extent from these measures, as proliferation to its unpredictable North Korean ally presents a security risk for China, and it is itself a member of the selective club of nuclear states. Instead, Chinese policymakers consider the PSI an unacceptable expansion of US hegemony. In the same vein, India has a great deal to lose if proliferation continues in its region, but has nevertheless also rejected PSI. Although the rise of China means that India can no longer afford to remain non-aligned to the extent it was during the Cold War, direct support of American policies remains problematic for Indian policymakers. Moreover, informal organizations generally benefit rising powers, which can rely on increasing future means to change these rules.

However, it is precisely the qualities specific to the domain of nuclear weapons that invert this logic. If we consider the extent to which Russia, as a declining power, stands to lose if proliferation makes the nuclear club less selective, we can understand why China and India—as two rising powers that have economic and demographic trends on their side for the foreseeable future—are more willing to accept proliferation. The other abstainers offer similar patterns and contradictions, though not as surprising: South Africa is on record as strongly opposing proliferation and its resistance is again largely explained by its non-aligned nature. Brazil is also strongly sceptical about American power, but also aspires to regional hegemony and therefore would like to keep the door to possible acquisition of nuclear weapons open.

The interpretation of the above cases leads to another overarching conclusion that seems specifically relevant, considering the contemporary changes in power distribution in the international system, namely, that policymakers are keenly aware of the implications of the formal and informal nature of international organizations, and how the specific qualities of formalization or informalization vary per policy domain. We, therefore, expect that states are likely more and more to use existing international frameworks of cooperation as strategic tools to shape the global order.¹²² While that is not in itself a revelation, it strongly

122 Paul van Hooft, 'Multipolarity, Multilateralism, and Strategic Competition', *GR: EEN-GEM Doctoral Working Paper*, 2012, http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/csgr/green/papers/workingpapers/gem/no._6_van_hooft.pdf.

suggests that the order will be less stabilized by international organizations than it was in previous decades, under the then-prevailing conditions of bipolarity and unipolarity. No longer will the 'shadow of the future' contain the dynamics of international competition, thereby undermining a long sustained period of institutionalization and stabilization. The PSI might, therefore, represent an unwelcome shape of things to come.

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Appendix 1

List of PSI Endorsing States

Afghanistan	Estonia	Marshall Islands
Albania	Fiji	Moldova
Andorra	Finland	Mongolia
Angola	France	Montenegro
Antigua and Barbuda	Georgia	Morocco
Argentina	Germany	The Netherlands
Armenia	Greece	New Zealand
Australia	Holy See	Norway
Austria	Honduras	Oman
Azerbaijan	Hungary	Panama
Bahamas, The	Iceland	Papua New Guinea
Bahrain	Iraq	Paraguay
Belarus	Ireland	Philippines
Belgium	Israel	Poland
Belize	Italy	Portugal
Bosnia	Japan	Qatar
Brunei Darussalam	Jordan	Romania
Bulgaria	Kazakhstan	Russia
Cambodia	Korea, Republic of	Samoa
Canada	Kyrgyzstan	Saudi Arabia
Chile	Kuwait	San Marino
Colombia	Latvia	Serbia
Croatia	Liberia	Singapore
Cyprus	Libya	Slovakia
Czech Republic	Liechtenstein	Slovenia
Denmark	Lithuania	Spain
Djibouti	Luxembourg	Sri Lanka
Dominica	Macedonia	St. Lucia
Dominican Republic	Malaysia	St. Vincent and the
El Salvador	Malta	Grenadines

Sweden	Turkey	Uzbekistan
Switzerland	Turkmenistan	Vanuatu
Tajikistan	Ukraine	Vietnam
Thailand	United Arab Emirates	Yemen
Trinidad and Tobago	United Kingdom	
Tunisia	United States	