

When conquest would have paid : domestic mobilization and political constraints in the thai-cambodian border conflict 2008-2011

Jenne, N. (2018). When conquest would have paid: domestic mobilization and political constraints in the Thai-Cambodian border conflict 2008–2011. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 30(1), 17-36. <10.1080/14781158.2018.1438385> Accessed 20 Feb 2021.

Abstract

In recent decades, a lack of state capacity has been seen as a major threat to international security. This article disagrees by making a simple claim: states that lack the capacity to go to war compromise to avoid it. I develop the argument using insights from the discipline of International Relations and military studies and probe its plausibility with a single case study, the Thai-Cambodian border conflict during 2008–2011. Based on data from field research in the two countries, I use Peter Liberman's framework to argue that this is a case when conquest would have paid for Thailand. Yet, a lack of domestic capacity created trade-offs, fear of instability and reduced confidence in a military strategy, which together explain why large-scale armed conflict was avoided by both sides. The findings have potential implications for how we think about international security today..

Keywords

Border dispute state capacity | Interstate conflict, Cambodia, Thailand.