

Proxy Wars and Rebel Alliances: Indirect Intervention in Modern Conflicts

Wednesday, 21 June 2023 16:45 (1h 30m)

From Ukraine to Libya, Syria and Yemen, modern wars are infused with significant levels of indirect intervention from third parties. This panel explores how principals and agents interact in these conflicts and assesses the impact this has on conflict conduct and outcome. Such proxy wars will be framed in different lights across the five papers on this panel. Stark & Rauta explore how the engagement of third parties in civil wars can internationalise them to such an extent that the intra-state conflict evolves into an inter-state one. Karlen and Rauta focus on the operational relationship between proxies and their sponsors by examining the mechanisms through which foreign states control armed groups. Spatafora concentrates on the underexplored yet fundamental question of when and why an initial proxy intervention may develop into a direct intervention and the implications this has on our understanding of escalation in proxy war studies. Using a large data set covering half a century of conflicts across Africa, Tamm offers a mixed method investigation into armed support for rebel groups in revolutionary wars. Finally, Mumford puts alliance theory and proxy war studies into dialogue with each other to explain co-ordinated indirect intervention in a conflict by formal alliances using the Ukraine war as a case study.

Membership

Track Classification: War Studies Working Group