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Perspectives on Security (Force) Assistance: Principals, Agents, Continuity and Change

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Training other states' security forces has been described as a means of power projection on the cheap. Recent analyses have variously characterised the practice as a form 'vicarious' or 'remote' warfare, in which the risks and costs of military activity are transferred from interventionist to local proxies and civilian populations. However, such descriptions concomitantly threaten to obscure the independent political agency of recipient security forces during international training missions, and with it, the complicated principal-agent relationships that frequently shape the dynamics of training, control, effectiveness, and intervention. This panel charts the principal-agent politics of security (force) assistance through a series of historical and contemporary case studies, contextualising recent trends in the provision of military and intelligence aid.

Track Classification: War Studies Working Group