Utilizing the COW and ICOW Data Sets

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Outline of Talk

- I. Overview of armed conflict data sets
- II. Overview of ICOW issue data sets
- III. Example: armed conflict over territory since the Cold War

I. Armed Conflict Data Sets

- Useful for identifying & learning from past patterns (causes, solutions)
- Widely used data sets:
    - Correlates of War (COW) war data
    - Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) data
    - PRIO/Uppsala Armed Conflict Data

Comparing the Data Sets

- Differences:
  - Time frames
  - Types of actors
  - Minimum severity threshold
  - Additional details (issue, outcome, severity)
- Advice:
  - Most appropriate for your needs
  - But easy to run robustness checks

II. ICOW Issue Data Sets

- Conflict only one part of a larger process
- Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) project:
  - *Explicit* contention over *specific* territory by *official* govt representatives
  - Current status (1816-2001):
    - W. Hemisphere, W. Europe: 191 claims
    - Middle East: approximately 45 claims
    - Rest of world: approximately 300 claims

What is Collected?

- Claim salience:
  - *Tangible:* resources, strategic, inhabited
  - *Intangible:* homeland, identity concerns, historical sovereignty
- Armed conflict: adapted from MID data
  - Around half of all claims have 1+ MID
- Negotiations, mediation, arbitration...
  - Much more common than MIDs

III. Application: Armed Conflict over Territory since the Cold War

- General Procedure:
  - Study influences on conflict (so far)
  - Make projections for ongoing cases
  - Study how worst cases can be managed
- Territory: most conflictual issue
  - 144 claims active between 1990-2008
  - 20 had fatal conflict (39 more non-fatal)

Results

- Fatal territorial conflict:
  - Salience: salience index (+ conflict)
    - Strategic, identity (+)
    - History of sovereignty by both (weak +)
    - Resource, inhabited, noncolonial N.S.
  - Controls:
    - Recent fatal conflict (+), greater disparity (-)

Projections: Most Likely Future Territorial Conflict

- Use results to predict probability of fatal conflict for ongoing claims
- Above-avg predicted risk (.016/yr):
  - Asia [11]: Durand Line (.198), Korea (.175), Karabakh (.157), Kashmir (.132)
  - Other [8]: Cyprus (.048), Golan (.036), Badme (.026)

Next Step: How to Manage/Settle These Problems?

- Suggestions from other ICOW work:
  - Greater salience reduces effectiveness
  - Past conflict (esp. fatal) reduces chances, but may increase compliance
  - Arbitration/adjudication very successful, esp. by IOs, but requires agreement
  - Mixed record for non-binding (mediation); similar to bilateral

The End