Global Hegemon: Chinese Foreign Policy Shifts and Elevated UNPKO Involvement

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Abstract

A common question being asked in many circles is whether China will emerge as a potential rival to the U.S. as a global superpower? If the answer to this question is "yes" many ask how China will accomplish this. Research suggests that China will obtain superpower status through increased global presence and more cooperation in international organizations, specifically United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). The literature examines Chinese policy changes that allow for more contributions and activity in UNPKOs and also what missions China can now participate in from which it would have formerly abstained. The preliminary results have shown massive increases in UNPKO involvement since the 1990s and into 2000s, in the amount of personnel that China has been contributing to UNPKOs. This preliminary data has also shown macro regional concentrations of missions that may illustrate some of the reason behind China's increased involvement in UNPKO. If the data continues to support this theory, it would show the success of the transition in Chinese foreign policy from being Asian focused to being focused on international activity that has aimed toward elevated international importance.

Introduction

The United Nations has been a key part of international law and peacekeeping since it was founded in 1945 when a meeting of fifty countries, including China led to the creation of the United Nations Charter. Due to the structure of the UN, China has been in a very advantageous situation. As one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), along with the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom and France, China has had the opportunity to have an ever present voice in the Security Council in comparison to the ten non-permanent members who serve on the Security Council in two year rotating terms. In addition to being able to take advantage of a permanent seat, permanent members can exercise their veto power (History of the United Nations, 2014), which can block proposals from passing through the Security Council should the permanent member's delegation believe that a proposal could negatively impact their country, or interests abroad. Although this position can be very advantageous, it will not be as effective if the foreign policy of the country in question prohibits participation in most organizations that participate internationally.

For the first few decades of China's participation in the UN their foreign policy did not allow them to partake in any sort of operation that would pose a concern to another country's sovereignty; this led to China abstaining from peacekeeping operation in other countries, on only a select few occasions did China send personnel, and then only in a supervision capacity. This view of international cooperation and participation changed in 1982 when China entered its reform era where the focus became maximizing economic growth, and increasing interdependence. This arose from the use of pragmatic diplomacy which led to their foreign policy being more practical and goal orientated, instead of ideological and dogmatic. This meant

that China would pursue any activity that would help their goals of maximizing economic growth and increasing interdependence, China no longer relied solely on the narrow political and theoretical ideals that it previously did, which allowed the country to increase participation in a lot of different organizations which it's earlier foreign policy guidelines prohibited. While the traditional values of Chinese foreign policy were still important, like maintaining a country's sovereignty, it became clear that more flexibility regarding what the country could participate in was needed in order to become internationally competitive and prosperous. This rise in pragmatism and reduced dogmatic emphasis led to the pursuit of greater economic growth and has led to China becoming the largest exporter in the world. It is because of these policy changes that China is able to participate in a wider range of international operations, missions, and economic forums; where previously China was restricted to only collaborating and engaging with countries that shared a similar ideology (Chung J. H., 2011). This change in China's foreign policy has helped change the way China interacts with the rest of the world and is a major reason why China is in its current position regarding international politics and economic status.

One possible counter explanation for the increase in international participation is the increase in gross domestic product (GDP) which has allowed it to do more because of their increased buying power. As a result, this large economy has continued to have steady growth over the last decade and has surpassed the U.S. as the largest economy which has given it much attention. The increase in international cooperation has seen China engage in international economic forums like the G-20, and the creation of a development bank for the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) that looks to rival the IMF and World Bank. This development bank has been the effort of Xi Jinping, China's president, who has been a reformer in China; attempting to crackdown on corruption within China and institute changes that

President Xi hopes will be an example for the rest of the world to follow and help contribute to the elimination of corruption. Along with the increase in international leadership President Xi has been maintaining and even strengthening the already strong regional influence that China holds in the Asian continent through organizations like the East Asia Summit and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Economy, 2014). It is possible that this general increase in participation has been a result of the enormous economy but Eastin 2013 and other scholars propose that there are other factors at work than just an enormous economy and increased amounts GDP.

Continuing the increase in international cooperation through the UN and UNSC China will be able to greatly influence global politics and is now being examined by Eastin as a potential emerging global hegemon, should this trend of increased economic growth and cooperation be sustained, as well as other methods of legitimation being used. What now arises is the question of whether China is ready to become a global hegemon and does it possess the necessary characteristics to maintain this position if it is obtained. Eastin looks at the likelihood of China getting to this position, how the current hegemon is getting delegitimized, and what effect China's legitimacy efforts have had through the application of a series of frameworks used to evaluate a country's necessary characteristics and identify the shortfalls of the potential successors to U.S. hegemony. This in depth analysis of China's activity in the UN and UNPKO and the factors affecting China's participation in these organizations will illustrate the effect that UNPKO have on legitimacy efforts for potential hegemons.

China's Potential as a Global Hegemon

Eastin and Legitimacy Deficit Framework

Hegemonic status comes from a number of characteristics that help create a legitimacy claim that is accepted or imposed on other countries. Legitimacy gives the hegemon the right to rule or dominate and can be obtained by emerging powers in two distinct ways; the wide acceptance of the emerging power's ideology and the production of global goods that makes the emerging power in question essential to other states. Eastin uses Rapkin's (Rapkin, 1990) legitimacy deficit framework to evaluate China's status as an emerging power and specifically focuses on China's leadership in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the UNSC. Hegemonic status is the recognition of a country as an exerciser of authority and power, who establishes precedent and demands support and compliance (Eastin, 2013). In addition to acquiring legitimacy the current hegemon must be delegitimized in order for the emerging powers to stake a claim of legitimacy. The methods of delegitimizing a current hegemon include the incorporation of competing values into the global system by the emerging power, voting against the current hegemon in international organizations, gradually building a competing ideology, or undermining the hegemon through different avenues while temporarily accepting the current hegemon. These methods of delegitimation were examined in a case study conducted by (Schweller & Pu, 2011) as ways of delegitimizing a current hegemon without directly going to war against them. These methods work in conjunction with the methods of legitimation in order for an emerging power to stake a claim of legitimation which has to happen at a period of hegemonic decline, which happens over a long period of time.

When the legitimacy deficit framework is applied to China Eastin finds that China shows several signs of having a legitimacy deficit. One of the indicators of having a legitimacy deficit is being a primarily regional power and due to China's extensive work in regional organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and contributing to the formation of development banks, these activities are significant and important to developing the Asian region but they are not effective boosting China's legitimacy. Another indicator of a legitimacy deficit is the absence of future plans and resolutions through the UNGA and the UNSC, the reform era policy changes have allowed China to engage in more activity through the Security Council as well as participation in UNPKO but China has not offered any significant legislation through these bodies and has shown a lack of agenda setting to demonstrate what it's international goals are. Eastin also examines the negotiations between the countries involved in UNGA resolutions and found that the interactions on China's part are mainly defensive in nature, arguing against many resolutions that could affect Chinese interests rather than being proactive in their approach and bringing forward new resolutions. Since the policy changes in the Chinese reform era in 1982 that advocated for more international cooperation and economic openness, China has steadily increased their activity in the UN and has been contributing more to the UNGA budget as well as greater contributions to UNPKO which is an area that Eastin believes should be examined in greater detail, to see if it may have a greater effect on a state's legitimation efforts that are not accounted for in Rapkin's legitimacy framework (Eastin, 2013).

One of the deficit areas that Eastin talks about is the nature of the negotiations that China participates in when debating resolutions in the UNGA. Eastin writes that China has done very little from 2006-2012 in terms of agenda setting and nearly every statement that China has made has been in reaction to UNGA agenda items and these statements have been defending Chinese

interests that are conflicting with the agenda item. According to Rapkin's legitimacy deficit framework, the lack of agenda setting and an individual or regional focus is a sign that the country is ill prepared for legitimacy claims. With China being seemingly more focused on regional influence rather than international relevance or leadership it seems that China would be a poor candidate to consider when looking at potential successors to the United States hegemon status, but when examining where China has come from in participating in UNPKO and the UNGA since 1949 China has come a long way since then. Previously China refused to participate in any sort of action that would question a nation's sovereignty and remained relatively isolated concerning international activity. Since the 1990s, however, China has shown an increase in activity and these concerns about China's legitimacy may wane in the coming years, as China works on becoming an international leader in areas that it has previously been quiet this can be achieved by increasing its UNGA budget contributions, and showing support for nuclear arms proliferation a sign of this was stated in Angel or Dragon? China and the *United Nations* "Beijing's willingness to support a unanimous Security Council resolution condemning the provocative missile launches in July (2006) was, therefore particularly promising" (Fullilove, 2006). This may show that while China is currently more nationally and regionally concerned, it may be transitioning more towards general UN goals and objectives. Both Eastin and Fullilove write about certain actions China participates in, within the UNSC like UNPKO participation that currently have very little consideration in evaluating legitimacy efforts and should be examined in greater detail.

UNPKO Involvement

UNPKO are an essential part of attempting to bring peace to conflict areas in the world and are often used to monitor situations through the use of military observers, civilian police, and

other personnel to assist transitional governments in getting established, as well as negotiating treaties with parties in conflict. For the majority of China's time in the United Nations it refrained from participating in any sort of UNPKO that would potentially infringe on a nation's sovereignty. The question to this foreign policy philosophy is whether China was opposed to infringing on a country's sovereignty because it truly values the ability of a country to govern itself, or was China's leadership afraid that it may have its own sovereignty questioned or infringed upon through UNPKO involvement. Since 1971 China has opened up relations internationally through IGOs and is continuing these relations today. As political landscapes have changed so have the needs of UNPKO and the work of other IGOs that operate in certain areas. To address these changes UNPKO have had to change their focus to the nontraditional as detailed in China's Attitude toward U.N. Peacekeeping Since 1989 by M. Taylor Fravel who looks at UNPKO by grouping them into two types; Traditional and nontraditional. The traditional operations adhere to the three principals of minimal force, which are "the consent of all conflicting parties to the activities of the mission; the impartiality of the peacekeepers in their relationship with the conflicting parties; and the minimum use of force, only as a last resort and only in self- defense" (Stahle, 2008, p. 634). The nontraditional operations use more forceful means of peacekeeping in order to maintain and fulfill its mandate. The conservative nature of Chinese voting in the UNSC is characterized as pragmatic as it reflects its belief that force is not an effective tool in keeping peace. Fravel then goes on to ask the question of why China does not want the sovereignty of a country to be brought into question, and looks at the possible answers of whether or not China truly values the sovereignty of other nations, or is it because China is concerned with its own sovereignty being brought into question at some point (Fravel, 1996).

China and the United Nations attempts to fill in the gaps in Fravel's research and looks at the shifting Chinese attitude towards the different kinds of UNPKO missions over time, as well as China's attitude shifts within the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The nature of UNPKO has changed over the decades, since the first operation in 1956. (Stahle, 2008) uses a combination of categories introduced by different scholars to analyze China's attitude towards the different types of UNPKO. The five categories of UNPKO are traditional peacekeeping, transition management, wider peacekeeping operations, peace enforcement and peace support operations. These categories are not concrete; some missions can overlap the categories but provide a good basis for the classification of UNPKO. The traditional and transitional management forms of peacekeeping operations strictly adhere to the three principals of minimum force, and the wider peacekeeping operations have had to reinterpret the three principals of minimum force due to increasingly hostile environments as well as having to use force in order to fulfill their mandate. At the beginning of China's time in the UN it was completely against the idea of UNPKO and continued to oppose the operations by abstaining from the voting until 1981 when China began to participate in UNPKO insofar as they adhere to the three principals of minimal force. China maintained this opposition to wider peacekeeping operations lasted until the 1990s when there were operations in Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and Bosnia; as western powers looked to address humanitarian issues arising in these states, China attempted to maintain its respect for the three principals while still contributing to the operations (Stahle, 2008). This change in the Chinese foreign policy view has brought about a greater participation in these kinds of missions and as a result has affected the perception of China in international relations.

China has used its participation in UNPKO to its advantage when it comes to Africa.

During a period of little American investment in the continent the Chinese have increased

contributions, diplomatic strength, and corporate interests in the region. With this increased activity has come a lot of speculation about where China's true interests lie. Besides the outside non- UNPKO involvement that China has brought into over forty African countries it is also the largest contributor to UNPKO in Africa, and has stated that it will support operations that aim to solve regional conflicts in the African continent. This shows that there is a Chinese interest in Africa and China may be utilizing and advocating for UNPKO that will bolster its relations with the countries of Africa. (Rogers, 2007) Describes the seven different missions that were taking place in Africa (as of 2007) and the missions that had concluded, to show how China has used its UNPKO contributions to boost its relations with Africa and protect its interests. China has 1,316 personnel participating in the UNPKO in Africa and this outweighs its total contributions to peacekeeping operations in all other countries which are at 545. the strategic value of peacekeeping in Africa according to Rogers is that it reinforces its role as a responsible stakeholder in the international community and this gives it more global influence as well as the land deals and other commodities that are essential to China, Rogers concludes that China is creating a long term interest in the success and stability of Africa and a continued presence in the future of Africa should be expected (Rogers, 2007).

Rogers states in the article that the large presence of Chinese businesses and peacekeeping personnel may be coincidental but it is highly unlikely. *China's Africa Strategy* details the policies and the diplomatic strategies that China has been engaged in that have increased its relations and influence in the African continent. The authors write about how China has been winning friends in Africa by investing in its infrastructure and trying to pull more resources and international aid to Africa, which has gained a lot of influence and in return China has been able to buy massive quantities of land, resources and oil from sub Saharan Africa. This

has also damaged the efforts of other international organizations as well as the United Nations who are trying to isolate and coerce several of these countries into changing their views on humanitarian crises, and the genocides that have taken place in these areas. This article warns that the Chinese influence will end up damaging Africa due to their lack of good governance and letting the allied countries get away with things that the UN is trying to put an end to. The article finishes with a call to leaders in Washington to take stock in what is currently happening in Africa (Eisenman & Kurlantzick, 2006).

With the rise in economic growth and the policy shifts that have made this increased participation in the United Nations and UNPKO possible, China has been able have a much larger role on the world stage. A major part of establishing China's international significance has been these peacekeeping operations. With the mandate from the UN, the countries that agree to get involved with these operations have shown a proactive approach in influencing how the world addresses global conflict and have advocated for peace in the new world power structure. From truce supervisions to the formation of new transitional governments UNPKO has played a big role in trying to calm international conflicts since the 1940s, and while China had maintained a position of abstention for a considerable time, China eventually began to participate in these operations and have shown a more international influence; which is in contrast to its very strong regional influence that has played an important role in Asia, but is not as important in global politics and interactions. With the considerable increase in Chinese contributions now going to UNPKO and with the foreign policy of China shifting to allow Chinese participation in UNPKO it seems that this activity is an under represented portion of the literature and has not been examined very thoroughly in Rapkin's legitimacy deficit framework, and could be examined in greater detail to determine if UNPKO have a positive effect on hegemonic legitimacy claims and

if these missions will provide a significant source of legitimacy that has been absent from the examination of emerging hegemonic powers.

Indicators of New Chinese Globalism

The data used to demonstrate an increase in UNPKO personnel comes from the multilateral peace operations database from the Swedish International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). This database has logged the different UNPKO based on objective, acronym, location and the different types of personnel that each state has contributed to each mission. By analyzing this database and evaluating the motives behind the actions of these peacekeeping operations and African influences I will attempt to contribute more to the literature that examines the importance of UNPKO in the formation of a legitimacy claim by an emerging power. The missions that are included in the data are the missions that China actively participates in and contributes to which is limited up until the 1980s due to the ideology of China that did not allow China to get involved in operations that would question a nation's sovereignty. The data is analyzed to test whether there is an increase in the number of troops, civilian police, military observers and civilian staff over the years since 1986. If this would help support the idea that by increasing contributions and presence in UNPKO and other peacekeeping organizations it would help and positively impact legitimacy claims by emerging powers that would fit into the category of having a legitimacy deficit.

By analyzing the dates when UNPKO participation increases it shows that the ideology of China was a strong force in not allowing them to contribute to any sort of peacekeeping operation except in the most basic capacity which took the form of truce supervision personnel from 1948 up until 1978 when China contributed troops to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon.

This would have been very close to the reform era of Chinese foreign policy which changed how China interacted internationally. The decision to get involved in this particular mission may have been due to pressure from other members of the Security Council in order to bring the Lebanese government back to power. The amount of military observers that China has contributed to UNPKO has gone down, which may be due to China taking a more proactive role in UNPKO which would mean contributed personnel may have been reallocated to a different category of peacekeeper personnel like troops, civilian staff or civilian police as in Figure 1.

(Figure 1 about here)

Since the first Chinese contributed troops were deployed in 1978, the number has gone gradually up which supports the idea that there is an increase in cooperation. This could be caused by China adopting a more international stance on UN issues like human rights and the assisting in transitional governments which require more troops than other missions like truce supervisions or assisting in elections (Figure 2). These missions that involve a state's government or transitioning during a period of political unrest would typically question a state's sovereignty so this change in China's attitude toward these kinds of missions may be due to China adopting a more UN approved stance. A different reason that may be behind the increased participation in UNPKO has to deal with the preservation or extension of national interests abroad. The majority of the missions contributed to were in Africa which has greatly helped China's influence on the continent. By contributing more personnel to these missions that align with China's regional development interests they are able to directly affect the countries where these missions are located that may be the sites for either infrastructure projects or land owned by Chinese companies or citizens which would be in China's interest to protect (Rogers, 2007). China also contributed troops to more missions than it did in previous decades by a large

number, but what is interesting in this case is the disparity in the number of deployments that China contributed troops to in Africa in comparison to other world regions.

(Figure 2 about here)

When examining the distribution of deployments of personnel per region (Europe, Middle East, Central and South Asia, Americas, And East Asia and the Pacific) (Figure 3) the number of deployments and participation by China changes drastically when looking at the individual regions. In Europe, China only contributed to 4% of the total number of deployments. The Middle East, Central and South Asia, and the Americas regions saw a range of 21%-30% Chinese involvement which is a great improvement from the Europe involvement percentage, but there is a very clear difference in the percentage of deployments that China participates in when looking at the African continent. China is involved in 44% of the deployments that get sent to Africa which supports the hypothesis that China is taking a vested interest in the African missions in order to protect their infrastructure and resource projects.

(Figure 3 about here)

What is shown in this analysis of UNPKO missions is an overall increase in the number of personnel that China contributes and that China has reduced the number of limited capacity personnel along with increasing the number of troops it sends. While this is generally a good thing because it shows that China is engaging in a wider range of operations that it previously would have abstained from, it creates the question as to the motives for this increase in personnel. By looking at the concentrations of deployments of Chinese deployments it shows that it may be focusing more on developing regional power in Africa, so while UNPKO have played a role in boosting China's presence and has given it more legitimacy because it has been able to act as an advocate for African nations that are in need of infrastructure by creating a

development plan (Eisenman & Kurlantzick, 2006). For the reasons of developing regional power in Africa it would seem that the legitimacy claim is not being helped, but the overall contributions to the UNPKO have helped in solidifying China's legitimacy claim by adopting the current UN stances on human rights and good governance.

Regional Influences outside Africa

Chinese macro-regional international involvement that has created more potential for China is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. This organization is made up of the Central Asian States of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and the two main regional powers Russia and China; the organization spawned in the mid-19990s after the countries signed an agreement to deepen military trust in order to reduce tensions in the region and have led to mutual relations with the other countries involved. The organization represents a regional influence that has focused on economic cooperation, and creating a good climate for investment and trade. This organization represents a portion of the regional influence that China has over the Asian region, along with being the largest economic power, and boasting a large military. This organization is open to dealing with other countries and other regional organizations that are in the area, which has let the Shanghai Cooperation Organization maintain flexibility in fostering better relations in the Asian region. The organization also adheres to the principals of the United Nations Charter which calls for the respect of a state's sovereignty, independence and international integrity (Al-Qahtani, 2006). The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an example of the increased activity that the reform era has been able to influence in China and has allowed China to have a strong

With the massive expansion of China's economy and the territory disputes that are taking place in the South China Sea other international organizations have reacted to this rising

importance and territory claims in the region. The organization in question is ASEAN that is made up of middle powers in the South Asian region and has been a key part of maintaining economic relations within the countries involved since the ending of the cold war. While ASEAN has played an important role in the economic and regional relation issues, the institution has increasingly become more interdependent with China which has caused difficulties due to the potential of taking sides with China over the United States that could effectively polarize the region as well as alienate the United States from it. Along with this the ASEAN states are not sure as to how China dominance will affect the region, and therefore it would be more likely to side with the United States because it has helped shape a successful Southeast Asian Region. The interdependence between ASEAN and China has also proved costly due to the traditional military elements that have previously been used to deal with China (He, 2014), this has led to institutional instruments being implemented to help relations with China and to ensure that ASEAN remains relevant in the region during the period of Chinese regional dominance and military expansion and exertion.

Conclusion

Along with a strong Asian regional influence, China is also developing a strong African regional influence. This has been done through numerous deals with African countries that exchange land and resources for the creation of new infrastructure that will help the countries involved but has led to many Chinese nationals migrating to Africa to farm, or mine minerals after buying very large portions of land that are acquired through interactions with the state governments and not the people currently inhabiting the land. China has posed criticisms about the declining investment of Western countries in the African continent because the region is in

need of aid and infrastructure development. The question has been posed is China a force for good in the region or is it more concerned with the resources and land it has been able to acquire in the African continent (Okeowo, 2014). Examining the concentration of Chinese UNPKO involvement in the African region suggests that there may be attempts to develop and aid the African continent in order to promote Chinese-African relations which focus on the large land deals for China to cultivate and acquire resources and in return Africa gets some infrastructure development projects. this involvement which may show that China is protecting its own interests in Africa through both direct international trade and investment, as well as through international organizations, specifically the UN and is not primarily focused on the advancement of Africa like it has stated previously.

Through examinations of China's foreign policy and the increasing amounts of UNPKO personnel that are being contributed it can be concluded that while under the legitimacy deficit framework developed by Rapkin, China is experiencing a legitimacy deficit due to the highly concentrated regional activity that is occurring in Central Asia and Africa, and the ineffective dialogue and negotiations that China gets involved in in the UNGA and UNSC showing it's defensive nature towards some of the proposed resolutions. These courses of action are hurting China's legitimacy claims that are an essential part of acquiring hegemonic status. The regional power aspects of the legitimacy deficit framework assert that a very regional power will have difficulty with its legitimacy claims because the state is more concerned with maintaining its regional influences and is less concerned with the international spread of its ideology and global public goods which will help its legitimacy efforts. The increase of UNPKO participation has helped China in becoming more present in global politics and contributing to the goals of the United Nations, but the high concentration of UNPKO deployments in Africa that has gone to

protecting China's infrastructure development projects and its resource areas which have limited the positive effect of the UNPKO, because this concentration has made China a regional power in Africa, thus hurting its legitimacy claims; It appears that China has benefitted from the participation in UNPKO and this participation has helped its hegemonic legitimation claims, and has confirmed the success of the foreign policy shifts of the 1980s which has allowed China to participate in these operations, which has confirmed the hypothesis that participation in UNPKO does offer an effective avenue of hegemonic legitimacy, these avenues can have reduced effectiveness if the country in question maintains a strong regional influence, but the effects of the UNPKO are not completely negated by this activity.

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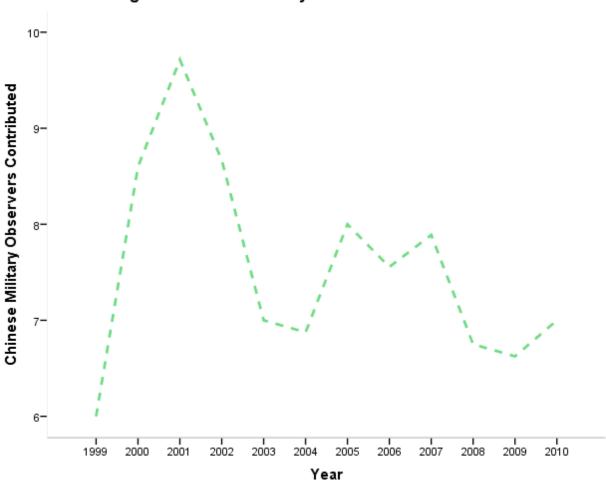


Figure 1: Chinese Military Observers Contributed

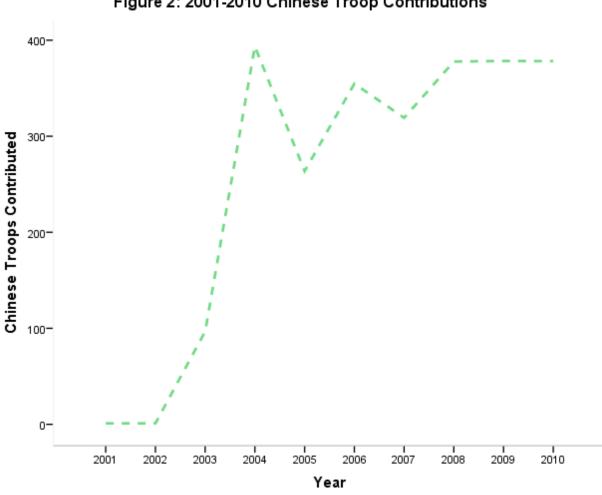
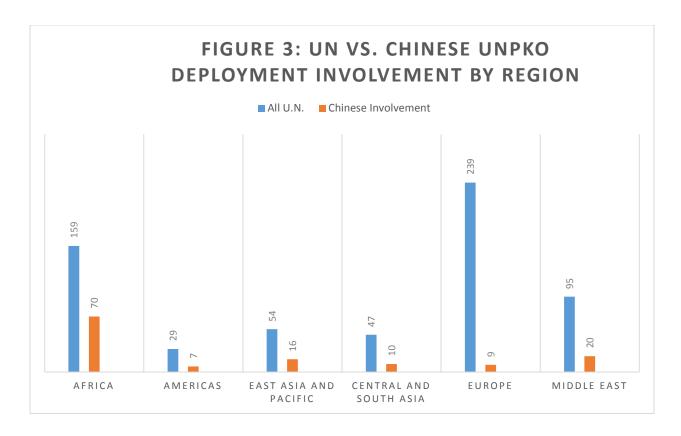


Figure 2: 2001-2010 Chinese Troop Contributions



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