



Realism and the Quest for Security

- Realism
- Alliances
- Balance of Power
- Arms agreements





The Realist International Environment

- Primary global condition:
- Probability of change:
- Principal actors:
- Principal actors goals:
- Predominant interaction:
- Pervasive concern:
- Prime priority:
- Popular practice:





The Realist International Environment

- **Primary global condition:**
 - Probability of change:
 - Principal actors:
 - Principal actors goals:
 - Predominant interaction:
 - Pervasive concern:
 - Prime priority:
 - Popular practice:
- **Anarchy**, the absence of authoritative governing institutions





The Realist International Environment

- Primary global condition: ● Anarchy
- **Probability of change:** ● **Low**
- Principal actors:
- Principal actors goals:
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- Pervasive concern:
- Prime priority:
- Popular practice:





The Realist International Environment

- Primary global condition:
 - Probability of change:
 - **Principal actors:**
 - Principal actors goals:
 - Predominant interaction:
 - Pervasive concern:
 - Prime priority:
 - Popular practice:
- Anarchy
 - Low
 - **States**, especially great powers





The Realist International Environment

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 - **Principal actors goals:**
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 - Popular practice:
- Anarchy
 - Low
 - States, great powers
 - **Power over others, self-preservation, security**





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- Anarchy
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 - States, great powers
 - Power, self-preservation
 - **Competition and conflict**





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 - Competition and conflict
 - **National security**





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 - Competition & conflict
 - National security
 - **Acquire military capability**





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 - **Popular practice:**
- Anarchy
 - Low
 - States, great powers
 - Power, self-preservation
 - Competition & conflict
 - National security
 - Acquire military capability
 - **Use of armed forces, coercive diplomacy**





Realist Policy Prescriptions

- Prepare for war:
- Remain vigilant
- Avoid moralism
- Remain involved
- Protect with arms
- Preserve balance:
- Prevent harmful arms races:





Realist Policy Prescriptions

- **Prepare for war:**
 - Remain vigilant
 - Avoid moralism
 - Remain involved
 - Protect with arms
 - Preserve balance:
 - Prevent harmful arms races:
- **Because "if you want peace prepare for war"**





Realist Policy Prescriptions

- Prepare for war:
- **Remain vigilant:**
- Avoid moralism:
- Remain involved:
- Protect with arms:
- Preserve balance:
- Prevent harmful arms races:
- If you want peace prepare for war
- **Because no state is to be trusted beyond its own national interest**





Realist Policy Prescriptions

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- **Avoid moralism:**
- Remain involved:
- Protect with arms:
- Preserve balance:
- Prevent harmful arms races:
- If you want peace prepare for war
- No state is to be trusted
- **Because standards of right and wrong apply to individuals not states**





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- **Remain involved:**
- Protect with arms:
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- Prevent harmful arms races:
- If you want peace prepare for war
- No state is to be trusted
- Standards do not apply to states
- **Because isolationism can undermine security**





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- Prepare for war:
- Remain vigilant:
- Avoid moralism:
- Remain involved:
- **Protect with arms:**
- Preserve balance:
- Prevent harmful arms races:
- If you want peace prepare for war
- No state is to be trusted
- Standards do not apply to states
- Isolationism undermines security
- **Because it is better to fight than submit**





Realist Policy Prescriptions

- Prepare for war:
- Remain vigilant:
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- Remain involved:
- Protect with arms:
- **Preserve balance:**
- Prevent harmful arms races:
- If you want peace prepare for war
- No state is to be trusted
- Standards do not apply to states
- Isolationism undermines security
- Fight rather than submit
- **Because no state or coalition should become predominant**





Realist Policy Prescriptions

- Prepare for war:
- Remain vigilant:
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- Remain involved:
- Protect with arms:
- Preserve balance:
- **Prevent harmful arms races:**
- If you want peace prepare for war
- No state is to be trusted
- Standards do not apply to states
- Isolationism undermines security
- Fight rather than submit
- Prevent predominance
- **Because negotiating arms agreements is better than inferiority**





Alliances

- Formal agreement designed to
 - Enhance military capabilities
 - Coordinate behavior
 - Increase deterrence





Alliances

- Formal agreement designed to
 - Enhance military capabilities
 - Coordinate behavior
 - Increase deterrence
- Types of alliance commitments
 - Mutual defense
 - Nonaggression or neutrality
 - May be bilateral (e.g., US-Japan) or multilateral (e.g., NATO)





Realist Critique of Alliances

- Can increase capabilities of aggressive states
 - Was Austria-Hungary emboldened by its alliance with Germany in the Triple Alliance?





Realist Critique of Alliances

- Can increase capabilities of aggressive states
- Can provoke formation of counter-alliances
 - Triple Entente (UK, France, Russia) formed to counter Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy)
 - Warsaw Pact formed to counter NATO





Realist Critique of Alliances

- Can increase capabilities of aggressive states
- Can provoke formation of counter-alliances
- Can draw in otherwise neutral states
 - UK entry into WWI?





Realist Critique of Alliances

- Can increase capabilities of aggressive states
- Can provoke formation of counter-alliances
- Can draw in otherwise neutral states
- Requires control of behavior of allies
 - Must deter defection by allies (Russia in WWI, Germany against USSR in WWII Barbarossa)
 - Must subdue reckless aggression by allies
 - Transaction costs of coordination





Realist Critique of Alliances

- Can increase capabilities of aggressive states
- Can provoke formation of counter-alliances
- Can draw in otherwise neutral states
- Requires control of behavior of allies
- Today's ally may be tomorrow's enemy
 - Italy defected from Triple Alliance prior to WWI





Realist Critique of Alliances

- Can increase capabilities of aggressive states
- Can provoke formation of counter-alliances
- Can draw in otherwise neutral states
- Requires control of behavior of allies
- Today's ally may be tomorrow's enemy
- Foreclose options
 - Today's commitments may be disadvantageous tomorrow





Balance of Power

- Peace most likely to be maintained when military power is distributed so that no single power or bloc can dominate





Balance of Power

- Peace most likely when military power is distributed
- Alignments form to counter an aggressor or predominant power
 - Alignments are informal coalitions
 - Alignments may become formal alliances





Balance of Power

- Peace most likely when military power is distributed
- Alignments form to counter an aggressor
- "Long peace" among great powers
 - 1815-1848
 - 1871-1914
 - Cold War "Balance of Terror"





Balance of Power

- Multipolarity
 - 19th century Europe
 - 1991-2001





Balance of Power

- Multipolarity
 - 19th century Europe
 - 1991-2001
- Bipolarity
 - 1949-1991





Balance of Power

- Multipolarity
 - 19th century Europe
 - 1991-2001
- Bipolarity
 - 1949-1991
- Unipolarity
 - US, 1945-1949
 - US, 2001-?

