



National Security Strategies, Emergent Powers and 'Sustaining Peace'

Andrew Neal, Luc Wilson, Roy Gardner



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Key findings

- ▶ Textual analysis of national security strategy and defence white paper documents reveals different patterns of discursive investment in peace-related practices.
- ▶ Countries ranked "partly free", and "not free" by Freedom House use more peace terminology than countries ranked "free". This may be because the reduced transparency of their political systems increases the importance of signalling peaceful intentions to an international audience.
- ▶ Traditional UN peacekeeping has greater discursive investment from larger contributing countries, including China.
- ▶ More recently developed UN peacebuilding practices have greater support from smaller Western European countries.
- ▶ Russia is not discursively invested in any UN-centred peace practice.
- ▶ There are regional clusters of similarity in security and defence documents, with geographical proximity having more of an effect than political similarity.
- ▶ Within substantive mentions of "peacebuilding", there are Western/non-Western and Global North/Global South splits.
- ▶ There is a negative correlation between ODA (Official Development Assistance) status and public security/defence document production: the poorer a country is, the less likely it is to produce a document.
- ▶ Using Freedom House rankings, "free" countries are more likely to produce public security/defence documents than "partly free" and "not free" countries.
- ▶ The range of peace terminology in these documents is huge, with 249 different pairings of "peace" with others terms identified.

Introduction

This report analyses the ninety-three countries we know of that produce a public National Security Strategy (NSS) document or Defence White Paper. Additionally, it analyses the content of these documents from seventy-four countries, using manual and automated methods to establish patterns and trends in using peace terminologies. We look at differences between liberal/non-liberal states, ODA (Official Development Assistance)/non-ODA states, and UN-centred/non-UN-centred peace terminologies. We are developing the use of security and defence documents for international political analysis as a new and experimental approach: this report is a product of that approach.

This research is experimental. We aim to establish a proof of concept that the analysis of top-level state security and defence documents alone (with some basic country information) can offer insightful findings. Since nearly all such documents were published in the past twenty years, and most in the past ten, this type of analysis was not possible until recently. Methodologically, it means that instead of making assumptions about strategic state aims or assembling specialised knowledge about individual countries, we can analyse the claims that governments make about their security and defence at face value. Of course, such claims could be inaccurate, aspirational, deceptive, or serve hidden political purposes, but our aim is not to uncover these. Instead, we aim to show that what is both present and absent in these documents can reveal the commitments and purposes that countries wish to signal.

Document corpus

Having previously conducted a comprehensive survey of all 249 "countries" under the ISO 3166 Country Code standard, we are confident that as of 2021, ninety-three have produced either an NSS, Defence White Paper, or both. The ISO country-code includes non-UN-member territories such as Bermuda (a British Overseas Territory), Aruba (a constituent country of the Netherlands), and Taiwan (claimed by China), all of which have produced NSS documents. However, only eighty-nine states' documents are publicly available, and some of those states do not have documents in English or reliable translation. Our content analysis results cover seventy-four current documents. "Current" here means the most recent iteration, although this is up to twenty-two years old for some countries' documents. Other countries may produce internal or classified security documents, but we do not account for these here. Our complete historical corpus includes approximately thirty documents, with previous document iterations dating back to 1998. We could use this to analyse changes over time but have not done so here due to time and resource constraints.

Our corpus includes documents for four key countries included in our parent study: China, Ethiopia, Russia, and Turkey. Qatar (the fifth) is absent, as few Middle Eastern countries produce public security or defence documents. We pay particular attention to these four countries in our analysis. Some caveats about them are needed at the outset. China's document is a Defence White Paper produced in English, and thus the most reliable of the four. We use an English translation of Russia's national security strategy created by the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs, which we consider reliable. Ethiopia's national security strategy dates from 2002 and should be seen in the context of the 1998-2000 Ethiopia-Eritrea war (a peace agreement was not reached until 2018) and the political strife of the intervening years. Turkey's document dates from 2000, before the Erdoğan era, and for this reason, we have excluded it from our content analysis.

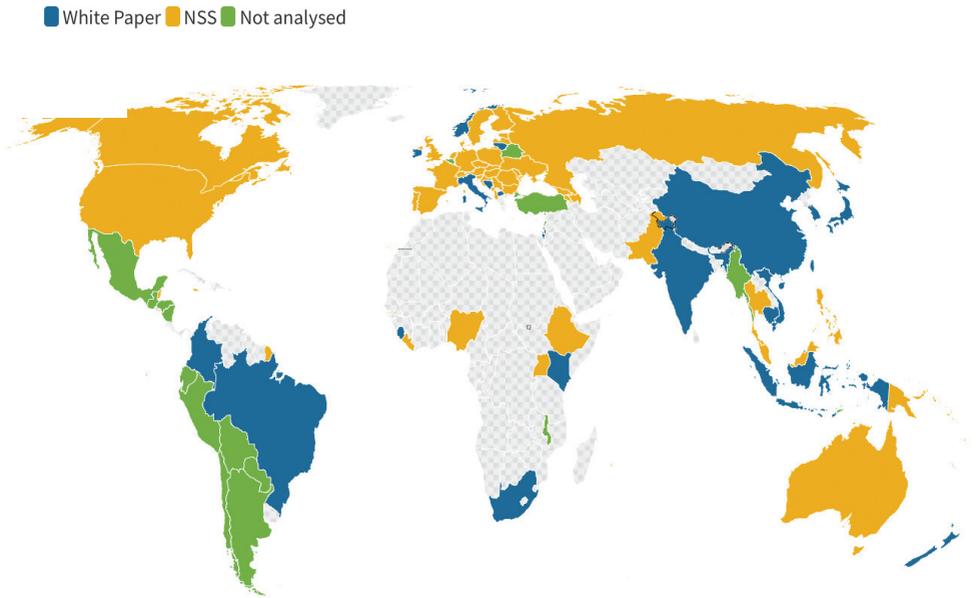


Figure 1: Countries that publish a Security Document as of November 2021

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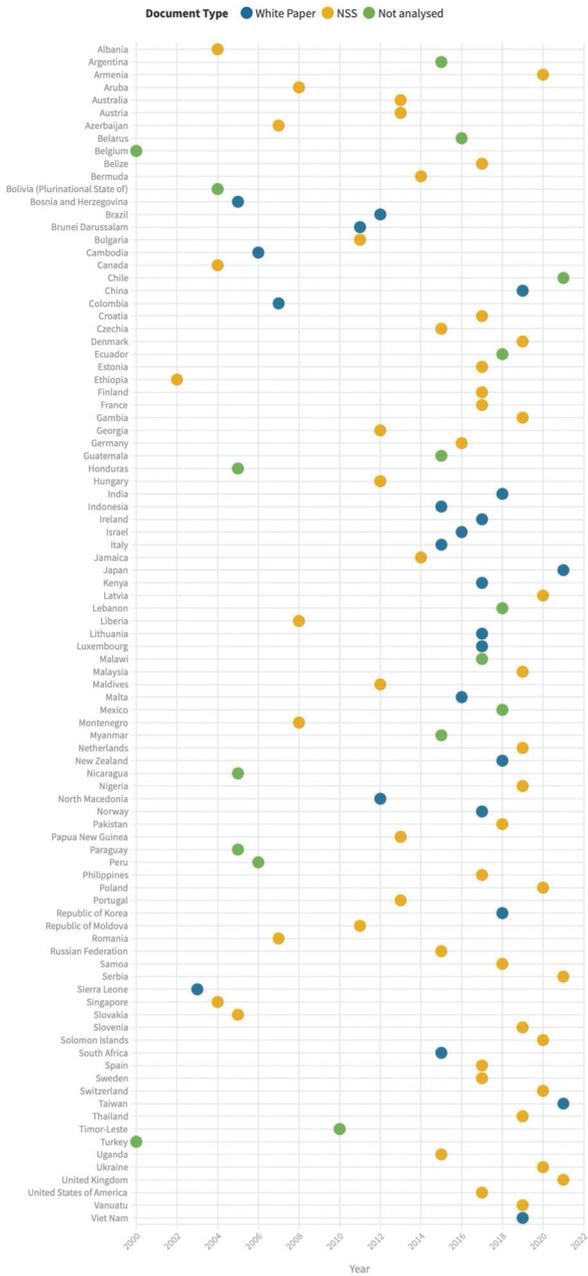


Figure 2: Scatter graph showing the publication year of current documents

Background to public security documents

National security has long been associated with state secrecy and elite decision making at the highest levels. In this light, the openness represented by publishing a national security or defence policy document is a historical novelty. The US was the first country to publish a National Security Strategy in 1987 (the President was mandated to do so by Congress with the Goldwater-Nichols Act). From the late 1990s onwards, other states began to publish similar documents.

The public security documents produced by states take a variety of formats and serve a range of purposes. Some documents seem designed primarily as signalling tools for internal government and domestic audiences, setting the direction of policy and serving to coordinate government departments and agencies. These also provide a democratic accountability function. Others seem designed for international consumption, for example, signalling strategic intentions to allies and opponents, or good governance commitments to donor states and agencies. For example, Central and Eastern European NATO-accession states represent an early cluster of publications, having used NSSs to signal security sector reform and the meeting of NATO accession criteria, such as democratic control of the armed forces. Why some states publish documents and others do not remains something of a mystery, although as this report will show, there are positive correlations with liberal democracy and national income.

Methods

The format and content of the documents in our corpus vary. They can be loosely sorted into two categories: (1) National Security Strategies and (2) Defence White Papers. NSSs are usually produced by central coordinating government offices such as those of the President, Prime Minister or Cabinet. NSSs offer a broader approach to security than Defence White Papers. The latter are usually produced by defence ministries and focus on military arrangements. Defence White Papers have an older history than NSSs, with the UK, for example, publishing them as far back as the 1950s. NSSs are generally published in English for an international audience, where-as Defence White Papers are more often published in local languages for domestic audiences. In practice, not all documents fit neatly into these categories. Some straddle them (such as those of France). Other states (such as the UK) publish documents in both categories. Some documents are produced by intelligence agencies (Switzerland) or specific security forces and have a narrower scope (Lebanon, Israel); for example, they may provide a strategic outlook but no policy positions. The fact that Defence White Papers are increasingly published in English means they come to serve the international purposes of NSSs. This analysis takes the most recent, broadest document available for each country, favouring NSSs over Defence White Papers where possible. We only analyse English language documents and have not translated any our-selves. This has led to the exclusion of seven Central and South American Defence White Papers, which we hope to revisit in future.

The documents vary in other ways. Their length ranges from nine pages (Ukraine: National Security Strategy 2020) to 512 ([Japan: Defence of Japan 2021](#)). They range from pure military documents covering budgets, procurement, and force structures, to genuine "whole-of-government" and societal approaches to security. Between these poles is a broad spectrum of width and depth. Some states publish hierarchies of multiple strategy and policy documents (in which case we take the "highest" document in the hierarchy), while others publish standalone documents. NSS documents offer "wide" conceptions of security, identifying threats, risks, and issues beyond traditional military concerns. Common security issues include food, health, critical infrastructure protection, emergency response, and cyber security. Others include gender, corruption, education, energy, resources, serious crime, and drugs. We have parallel research projects underway to explore these areas. The function and construction of these documents are subject to a nascent academic debate, and we do not engage with this debate here. Our purpose is to provide primary data analysis of the documents themselves, not the process or politics behind them.

We used Manual Content Analysis and Natural Language Processing (NLP) to examine and test a range of research questions, all relating to the language of peace in security and defence documents and whether this reveals distinctions in dynamics of "peace". Primarily, we examined the frequency and context of terminology and the similarity of sentences across documents.

Our manual content analysis involved using "ctrl-F" to find instances of the term "peace" in our corpus, producing 2,124 results. We found 249 unique sets of co-occurring words (n-grams) such as "peace agreement" or "peace and security". As described in more detail in the results, we recorded the surrounding sentences for the most common and project-relevant n-grams, giving 1,228 results. We also searched for other relevant terms such as "UN"/"United Nations".

Our NLP system finds the semantic similarity between sentences, paragraphs, and documents in our corpus. It returns probable similarity scores for a pair of text segments or documents ranging from 1 for identical to 0 for total dissimilarity. Our form of NLP is a Google Universal Sentence Encoder trained on large English-language corpora (rather than on our document corpus). This means we did not have to train the system or establish parameters. Universal Sentence Encoders outperform other algorithms in semantic similarity tasks ([Cer et al. 2018](#)).

As described below, we repeated much of our analyses with both methods for validation, producing similar but not identical results.

Research questions

These are our main four research questions. Sub-questions and disaggregation are detailed in the sections.

1. How similar are different countries' documents?
2. How frequently is "peace" used in the documents?
3. How is "peace" paired with other terms, and what do these n-grams reveal about "peace"?
4. Do the documents signal "closeness" to the UN peace system?

Liberal democracy, national income, and NSS/defence document publication

NSS publication is a post-Cold War phenomenon. It is loosely correlated with a shift towards more open, liberal, democratic, and accountable government. This includes established democracies liberalising their security sectors, as was the case with the UK in the 1990s. We use the Freedom House "global freedom status" index as a proxy for the "liberal democratic-ness" of states. Freedom House claims it is "an independent watchdog organization dedicated to the expansion of freedom and democracy around the world... notable for its nonpartisan character", and that its annual Freedom in the World Report "analyses the electoral process, political pluralism and participation, the functioning of the government, freedom of expression and of belief, associational and organizational rights, the rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights" ([Freedom House 2022](#)). It produces a numerical rating for 210 countries and territories, organised into three categories, as demonstrated in Figure 3. The politics, funding, and methods of Freedom House have rightly come under political and academic scrutiny (Steiner 2016; Przeworski 2003; Bush 2017; Bollen and Paxton 2000). Our use of Freedom House rankings should not be interpreted as support. Freedom House does not rank Bermuda or Aruba, but both produce NSSs. Hence there are ninety-one Freedom House-ranked document-publishing countries, but ninety-three document-publishing countries in total. It is worth noting that if countries' Freedom House rankings have changed over time, the current rankings we used may not correlate with their ranking in the year of security document publication.

We found a positive correlation between “freedom” and NSS publication:

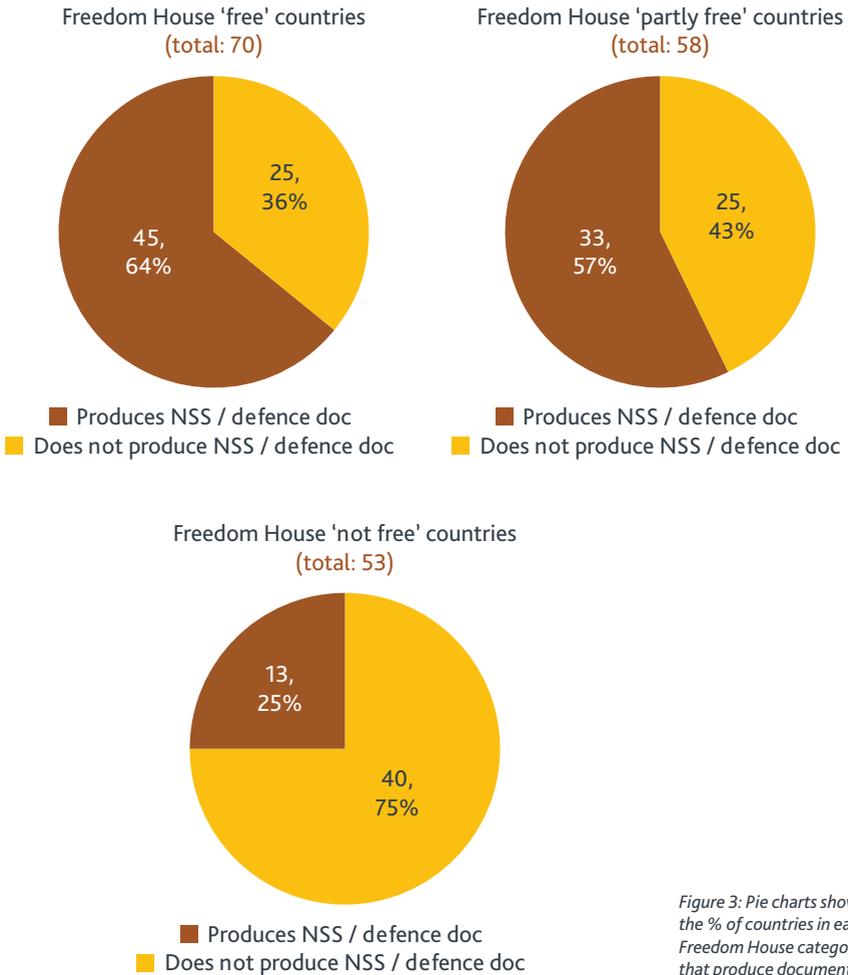


Figure 3: Pie charts showing the % of countries in each Freedom House category that produce documents

Some of the "not free" countries that publish documents are focal countries of this project (Non-Western dynamics of peace and transition management), namely China, Russia, and Ethiopia. Turkey, another focal country, is currently ranked by Freedom House as "not free". However, its document dates from 2000, before the Erdoğan era, when it was ranked "partly free".

Freedom House "not free" countries that produce NSS or Defence White Paper

Country	NSS Y/N	Defence white paper Y/N	Available Y/N
Azerbaijan	Y	Y	Y
Belarus	N	Y	N
Brunei Darussalam	N	Y	Y
Cambodia	N	Y	Y
China	N	Y	Y
Ethiopia	Y	Y	Y
Myanmar	N	Y	N
Nicaragua	N	Y	Y (<i>Spanish only</i>)
Russian Federation	Y	Y	Y
Thailand	Y	Y	Y
Turkey	N	Y	Y
Uganda	N	Y	Y
Vietnam	N	Y	Y
13			

ODA status

80% (thirty-six out of forty-five) of the "free" countries that publish a security document are non-ODA recipient countries (Official Development Assistance). 77% (ten out thirteen) of the "not free" document-producing countries are ODA countries. When "partly free" countries are factored in, more ODA countries produce a document overall. However, if we disaggregate the ODA countries into LDC (Least Developed Countries), LMIC (Lower Middle Income Countries), and UMIC (Upper Middle Income Countries), we see a positive correlation between gross national income (GNI) and security-document production. Our ODA set includes 195 countries, excluding dependent territories.

Document Producing Countries

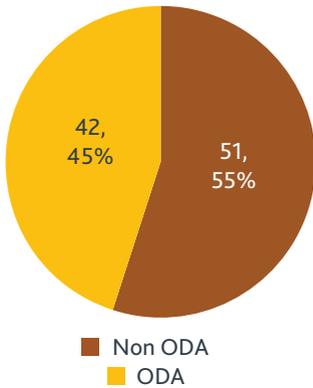


Figure 4: ODA status of public security/defence document-producing countries (total: ninety-three)

ODA Recipient Countries

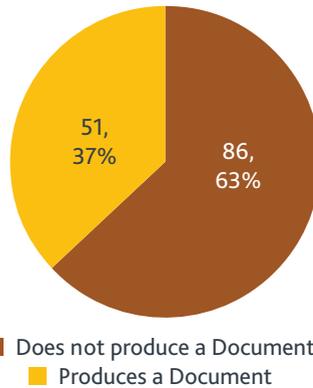
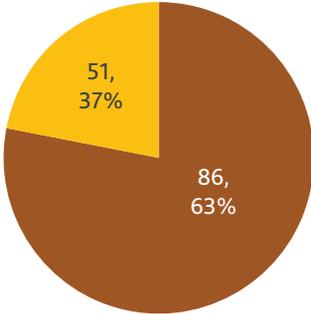


Figure 5: % of ODA recipient states to produce a public security/defence document, total 137

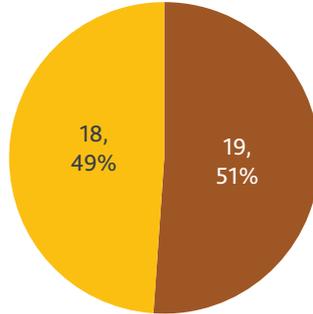
Least Developed Countries



■ Does not produce a Document
■ Produces a Document

Figure 6: % of Least Developed Countries (LDC) to produce a public security/defence document, total forty-six

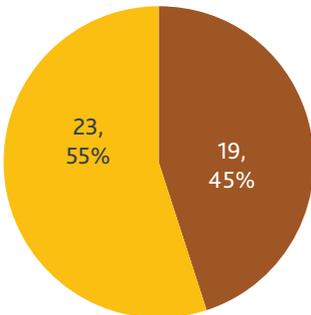
Lower Middle Income Countries



■ Does not produce a Document
■ Produces a Document

Figure 7: % of Lower Middle Income Countries (LMIC) to produce a public security/defence document, total thirty-seven

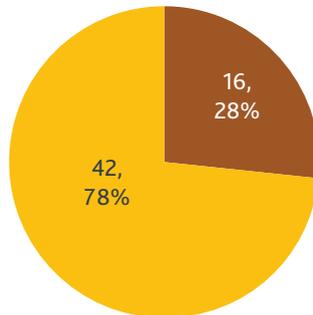
Upper Middle Income Countries



■ Does not produce a Document
■ Produces a Document

Figure 8: % of Upper Middle Income Countries (UMIC) to produce a public security/defence document, total fifty-two

Non ODA States



■ Does not produce a Document
■ Produces a Document

Figure 9: % of non-ODA countries to produce a public security/defence document, total fifty-eight

Summary: freedom, prosperity, and NSS/defence document publication

Overall, there is a correlation between liberal democracy (indicated by Freedom House rankings), national income (indicated by ODA status), and NSS or Defence White Paper publication. Publishing an NSS or defence document is a norm established and mainly followed by liberal democratic, prosperous countries. Documents from non-liberal, less prosperous countries are exceptions to this norm. Although our “freedom” and “ODA” indicators are stepped scales rather than binary distinctions, the correlation with liberal democracy and prosperity holds. Freedom House rankings serve as a proxy for “Western” and “non-Western” in our analysis.

1) How similar are different countries' documents?

As a first test, we examined how similar the documents are to each other. Using NLP, we tested for document-level similarity. We filtered the results by an 0.8 similarity and above. This revealed some apparent clustering effects between countries. In many cases, similar documents came from similar countries, usually geographically and sometimes politically.

The most apparent clustering effect was among Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs). For example, Hungary had nine matches with other CEECs, Poland seven, Moldova nine, Romania eleven, Serbia nine, Slovakia eight, Albania ten, Czech seven, and Estonia five. A robust explanation is that most CEEC states have strategically aligned with NATO and the EU in the period covered by our corpus and have used NSS documents to signal this.

China had 0.8+ similarity with Japan and ROK but no other countries, suggesting a substantial regional influence despite political differences; these three countries' documents also discuss the UN frequently, as discussed below.

The UK has 0.8+ similarity with the US, Australia, and Nigeria; the first two reveal well-known geopolitical alignments. Western European countries have fewer high similarity matches than CEECs, but where they do appear they are primarily with other Western European countries. Asian and Oceanian countries frequently match with each other. African countries have more disparate matches, although it is not clear why. Russia's most similar document is Ukraine (followed by Poland); this may reflect shared (but opposing) concerns about the region and its various actors. Interestingly, although we have a small East-African cluster of documents ([Uganda: 2015 NSS](#), [Kenya: 2017 White Paper](#), [Ethiopia: 2002 NSS](#)), similarity scores below our 0.8 threshold (between 0.72 and 0.77), indicate that geography varies in its influence on similarity.

2) How frequently is "peace" used in the documents?

"Peace" appeared 2,124 times in the corpus and in every document except one ("Switzerland's Security 2020", which is produced by an intelligence agency and has a narrower scope). Mentions of "peace" alone is a crude measure, in part because when linked with other terms, it has many different meanings (see the next section). Furthermore, our figure of 2,214 included mentions in titles, headings, indexes, and appendices. We logged 1,228 mentions of "peace" that we considered significant, following categories we developed inductively.

Notwithstanding these caveats, we still made some interesting observations here. The three longest documents have the most references to "peace": Japan, Republic of Korea (ROK), and South Africa. A longer document allows for detailed discussion of contributions to peace management, such as participation in peacekeeping missions and military tasking. Adjusting for length, we examined the ratio of "peace" references to pages, expressed as a percentage; we coded the results by Freedom House ranking and produced the following chart:

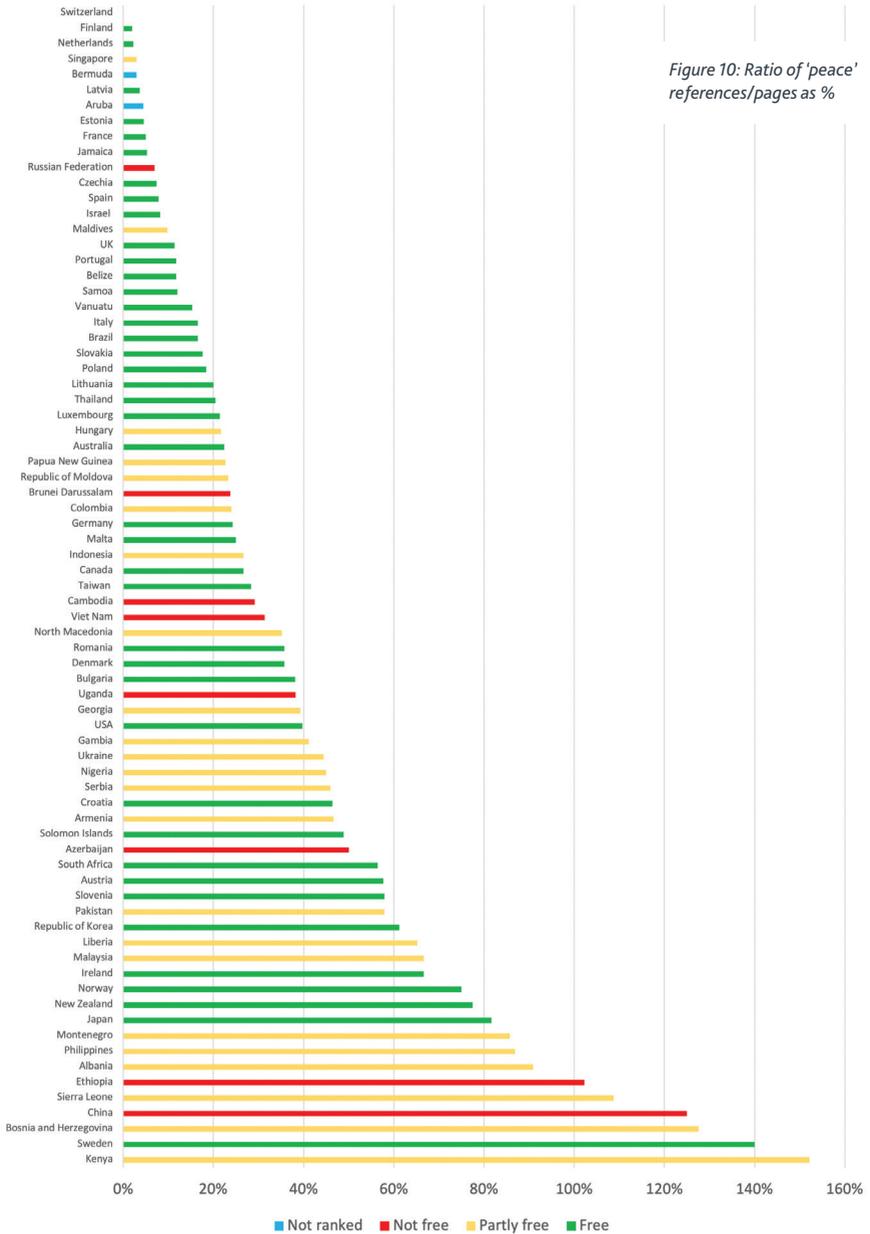


Figure 10: Ratio of 'peace' references/pages as %

Although this only expresses a loose pattern, this chart does appear to show that "partly free" countries mention "peace" more frequently than "free" countries. This may suggest that most of these "partly free" countries have been involved in regional, local, or internal conflict in the past two decades, ensuring that the maintenance of "peace" is a more salient concern in their security and defence documents.

Eight "not free" countries (excluding Turkey) are distributed across the chart. Only one of the top ten is "free" (Sweden). It should be noted that two focal states of this project appear in the top ten (China, Ethiopia), while another, Russia, is near the bottom. As large non-Western actors with regional and/or international interests, this may signal differing discursive investment in peace-related language, and in turn, in peace-related practices. The fifth focal state, Qatar, is not listed as it does not produce a document.

One way to think about the frequency of "peace" in the documents of "not free" and "partly free" countries is through the concept of "signalling". The reduced transparency of "not free" and "partly free" political systems may increase the importance of signalling peaceful intentions to an international audience. We may also consider that countries like China have a reduced toolkit for signalling peaceful international intentions because of the domestic prominence of nationalism as a strategy of regime legitimation. Domestic foreign affairs and leadership discourses may prioritise nationalistic over pacific sentiments. Public security and defence documents produced in English for an international audience may offer an opportunity to take a more conciliatory and passive tone with less domestic political "cost". This divergence between the domestic and the international can be considered a simple "two-level game" ([Putnam 1988](#)).



Figure 11: Average ratio of peace references to pages grouped by Freedom House categorisation

3) How is 'peace' paired with other terms, and what do these n-grams reveal about peace?

Our manual search found 249 unique sets of co-occurring words (n-grams). We collected the sentences in which these n-grams appeared. We also automated the search for n-grams in sentences segmented by our NLP system for a parallel data collection form. The methods returned similar results with minor differences.

Some of the n-grams are more interesting to this project than others. The most frequently occurring are quite generic and relate more to general conditions and discourses of international relations than to peace-related policies or practices.

NLP N-gram frequency ranged from 318 ("peace and security") to single occurrences. Four n-grams had occurrences in the hundreds:

Peace and security	318
Peacekeeping	261
Peace and stability	260
(Inter)national peace	252

Apart from "peacekeeping", the other three n-grams above lack interest because they are generic. The most frequent – "peace and security" – functions as a referent object in the documents and has little to do with peace-related policies or practices. It is a background condition that is desired, maintained, or potentially perturbed in international politics. "Peace and stability" functions similarly but refers more often to specific countries and regions. "(Inter)national peace" is also used as something that states contribute to or threaten. In contrast, "Peacekeeping" (together with "peacekeepers") is a useful indicator of involvement with the UN that we examine in more detail below.

Using NLP, a further fourteen n-grams had occurrences above twenty:

Peace support	49
Global peace	32
Peace zone	32
Peace operations	32
Promote peace	28
Maritime peace	27
Permanent peace	27
Sustainable peace	27
Maritime peace zone	26
Restore peace	26
Peace process	25
Peacebuilding	23
Preserve peace	23
Peace and democracy	20
Maintaining peace	20

To make analysis more manageable and better include infrequently occurring n-grams, we grouped all n-grams into twenty-seven categories of related meanings for an NLP search. This was a best-effort interpretive exercise and remains open to debate. Descriptions of categories are given for those with more than ten occurrences.

Category	Occurrences
Areas of peace (18 n-grams, geographical: local, regional, global)	373
Peace and security (peace and security/national security/ international security)	302
Peacekeepers (2 n-grams with 'peacekeeping')	251
Threats to Peace (18 n-grams)	140
Preserve and protect established peace (25 n-grams, inc. "ensure", "sustain", "defend")	112
Peace advancement (29 n-grams along the lines of "promoting peace", "fostering peace")	93
UN peace-making terminology (6 n-grams inc. "...building", "... enforcement")	89
Solid peace (13 n-grams inc. "enduring peace", "lasting peace")	73
Peace support (4 n-grams inc. "peace operations", "peace missions")	45
Peace process (7 n-grams, mostly refer to specific peace processes)	37
Peace agreements (6 n-grams)	32
Peace and positive aims (18 n-grams, inc. peace and "justice", "freedom", "integrity" etc.)	23
Abstract peace terms/framings (12 n-grams inc. "culture of peace", "peace loving")	22
Peace and economic/development (7 n-grams relating to work, welfare, development)	18
Peace dialogues (5 n-grams)	16
State of peace (11 n-grams referring to the current state of peace)	14

Category	Occurrences
Aspirational peace (10 n-grams, inc. "aim", "seek", "search")	13
Peace plans (6 n-grams, inc. "peace programmes" and "initiatives")	10
Peace and cooperation	8
War and peace	6
Peace and stability	5
Peace and democratic processes	5
Conditions for peace	4
Peace actors	4
Others	4
The merging of war and peace	3
Achieving peace	3

Below are the manual search results of the same categories, broken down by Freedom House country categorisations. Not all the same terms were included or found, so the results differ slightly, but generally follow similar patterns. Figure 12 displays some of these, which we explore in more detail in the next section. "Free" countries appear more discursively invested in the first and most common category – "peace and security" – than 'not free' countries, with an average occurrence of 3.98 per document vs 2.25, perhaps because this is a status quo category. "Peace and stability" is similar to "peace and security" as a category, except it more often refers to particular regions or territories; this has a considerably higher average occurrence in "not free" country documents (4.5) than "free" (2.69) or "partly free" (1.71), perhaps because these countries are more likely to be in regional disputes. "UN peace making", which is a category for more developed peace practices than traditional peacekeeping, has notably higher discursive investment for "free" countries (0.98) than "partly free" (0.42) and "not free" (0.25).

Peace categories	Occurrences in corpus	Occurrences as % of total	Occurrences 'Free'	Occurrences as % of total	Average # occurrences per document
Peace and security	244	19.87%	167	68.44%	3.98
Peacekeeping/peacekeepers	239	19.46%	161	67.36%	3.83
Peace and stability	190	15.47%	113	59.47%	2.69
Peace support	173	14.09%	117	67.63%	2.79
Preserve/protect established peace	73	5.94%	37	50.68%	0.88
Peace advancement	67	5.46%	36	53.73%	0.86
UN peace making terms	53	4.32%	41	77.36%	0.98
Peace and cooperation	48	3.91%	44	91.67%	1.05
Peace process	48	3.91%	27	56.25%	0.64
Solid peace	34	2.77%	11	32.35%	0.26
Threats to peace	26	2.12%	14	53.85%	0.33
Peace agreements	25	2.04%	14	56.00%	0.33
Social Peace	8	0.65%	6	75.00%	0.14

Peace Terms

Peace Terms % of total

Countries analysed

% of total countries

Mean average # pages

1228

100%

788

64%

42

57%

88

Peace categories	Occurrences 'Partly Free'	Occurrences as % of total	Average # occurrences per document	Occurrences 'Not Free'	Occurrences as % of total	Average # occurrences per document
Peace and security	59	24.18%	2.46	18	7.38%	2.25
Peacekeeping/peacekeepers	44	18.41%	1.83	34	14.23%	4.25
Peace and stability	41	18.41%	1.71	36	18.95%	4.50
Peace support	46	26.59%	1.92	10	5.78%	1.25
Preserve/protect established peace	23	31.51%	0.96	13	17.81%	1.63
Peace advancement	22	32.84%	0.92	9	13.43%	1.13
UN peace making terms	10	18.87%	0.42	2	3.77%	0.25
Peace and cooperation	3	6.25%	0.13	1	2.08%	0.13
Peace process	20	41.67%	0.83	1	2.08%	0.13
Solid peace	16	47.06%	0.67	7	20.59%	0.88
Threats to peace	8	30.77%	0.33	4	15.38%	0.50
Peace agreements	9	36.00%	0.38	2	8.00%	0.25
Social Peace	2	25.00%	0.08	0	0.00%	
Peace Terms	303			137		
Peace Terms % of total	25%			11%		
Countries analysed	24			8		
% of total countries	32%			11%		
Mean average # pages	57			66		

Figure 12 : Manual search results of peace n-gram categories, broken down by Freedom House country categorisations

4) Do the documents signal 'closeness' to the UN peace system?

a) UN and non-UN based peace terminology

We used some of the results above, combined with NLP searches, to examine country commitments to different approaches to peace. We selected specific categories to investigate whether we could discern UN-based and non-UN based approaches to peace.

i) *Peacekeepers/peacekeeping*

The "peacekeepers/peacekeeping" category represents the traditional peace-related activity of the UN. NLP returns forty countries with mentions, with ROK, Brazil, Japan the highest with forty-six, forty-one, and thirty-four respectively (again, this correlates to the longest documents). Three other countries have ten mentions or more: Vietnam (seventeen), China (ten), Nigeria (ten). A manual count returns forty-three countries; the top results are similar, although South Africa ranks fourth with seventeen mentions. By either method, Russia only makes three mentions.



Figure 13: Top 10 engagers with 'Peacekeepers/ Peacekeeping' NLP.

ii) UN

For validation, we compared "peacekeepers/peacekeeping" returns to mentions of the UN by manual search. Given that peacekeeping is a UN practice, we might expect similar results for both counts, which is what we found. Seventy-two countries mention the UN; thirty-three of them mention the UN ten times or more (evidently, the UN is mentioned in contexts other than peacekeeping). At the top of the scale, we get loosely similar results to "peacekeepers/peacekeeping", with the top seven consisting of Japan, ROK, South Africa, Brazil, Norway, France, and China. Russia again only displays three mentions. Nigeria and Vietnam appear fifteenth and sixteenth in the list, which is still relatively high.

We also categorised findings by Freedom House categorisations, noting more mentions among "free" countries. We interpret "peacekeeping" and "UN" results to indicate country investment in the UN peace system. Focusing on "emerging powers" (a poorly defined term, but nevertheless excluding Japan and ROK), it is significant that China, Brazil, Nigeria, and South Africa rank among the top for mentions of peacekeeping and the UN, while Russia ranks very low.



Figure 14: Average ratio of UN references to pages grouped by Freedom House categorisation

iii) UN peace-making

We created a “UN peace-making terminology” category that includes “peace making”, “peacebuilding”, “peace enforcement”, “peace fund”, “conflict prevention”, “conflict mediation”, and some grammatically related terms. We aimed to look at more recently developed and codified UN-centred peace practices that go beyond the limited aims of traditional peacekeeping. NLP returned eighty-nine sentences from twenty-seven countries. The content of these sentences generally confirmed our understanding of UN peace-making as a relatively recent development. There were also mentions of the OSCE and AU.

The countries returned here are different to those for “peacekeeping”. They are generally smaller and more European, perhaps reflecting that they cannot make large contributions to traditional peacekeeping forces but do have the diplomatic capacity to invest in “peace making” symbolically. The top three countries here were Austria (ten mentions), Norway (nine mentions), and Estonia (nine mentions). Germany was fourth with five mentions, while Canada and Luxembourg had three. Nigeria and Uganda also had three mentions each, but these related to local and AU efforts rather than the UN. The remaining nineteen countries had only one or two mentions. China was notably absent from these returns, suggesting that although heavily invested in UN peacekeeping, it is not invested in more advanced UN “peace making”. We might interpret this to indicate that China supports traditional peacekeeping to stabilise conflicts, but does not actively support more political or interventionist “peace building”, at least not through the UN.

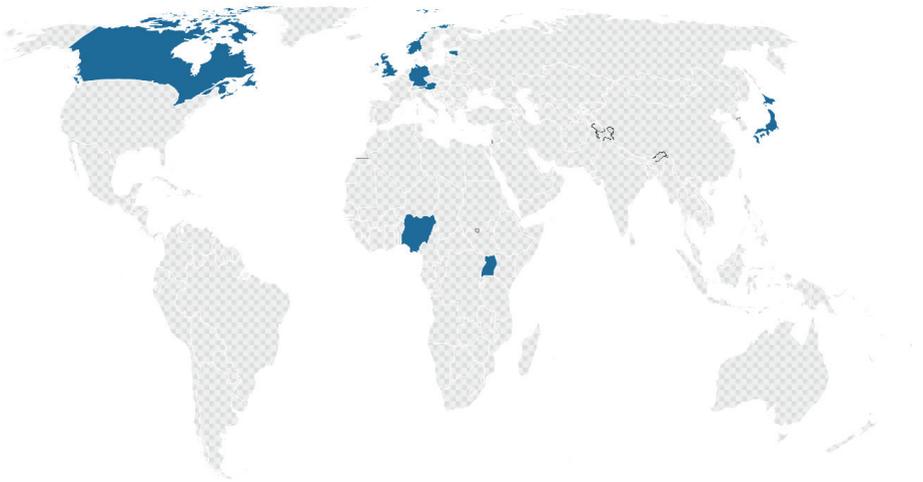


Figure 15: Top 10 engagers with 'UN Engagers' NLP

iv) Peacebuilding

Parallel to our NLP search for "UN peace making", we conducted a manual search for the n-gram "peace building", which returned eighteen countries. Within the substantive (rather than passing) mentions of "peace building", a Western/non-Western split was observable. There was a Western grouping of Austria, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Norway, and Sweden, all of which refer to overseas actions; this corresponds to findings for the "UN peace making" category above. There was a Global North, non-Western grouping of Japan and the Republic of Korea. There was also a Global South grouping in Africa of Liberia, Gambia, Nigeria, and South Africa, the first three of which referred to internal conflict or post-conflict peacebuilding. South Africa discusses a regional peacebuilding role for itself. Finally, Pakistan's discussion of "peace building" mainly relates to Afghanistan (dating from before the Western withdrawal). Although the results are slightly different to the broader NLP "UN peace making" category, the findings support each other.

v) Peace advancement

We examined whether alternative peace terminologies (those not suggesting UN involvement) returned different results. If so, this could indicate the existence of alternative peace approaches that circumvent the traditional UN peace system. Using NLP, the category "peace advancement" has ninety-three mentions in our corpus. Only four of the surrounding sentences mention the UN or peacekeeping, so this is a good category to test. Twenty-six mentions in the "peace advancement" category are by ROK, and primarily relate to the role of alliances (e.g. ROK-US) and regional defence cooperation to promote peace on the Korean peninsula. Japan makes eight mentions in this category, mostly about Indo-Pacific cooperation to promote peace. Six are by Pakistan, most of which discuss promoting peace through socio-economic development. Other country returns are too small to be interesting. These three main results represent alternative forms of peace promotion, namely through alliances, regional cooperation, and development.

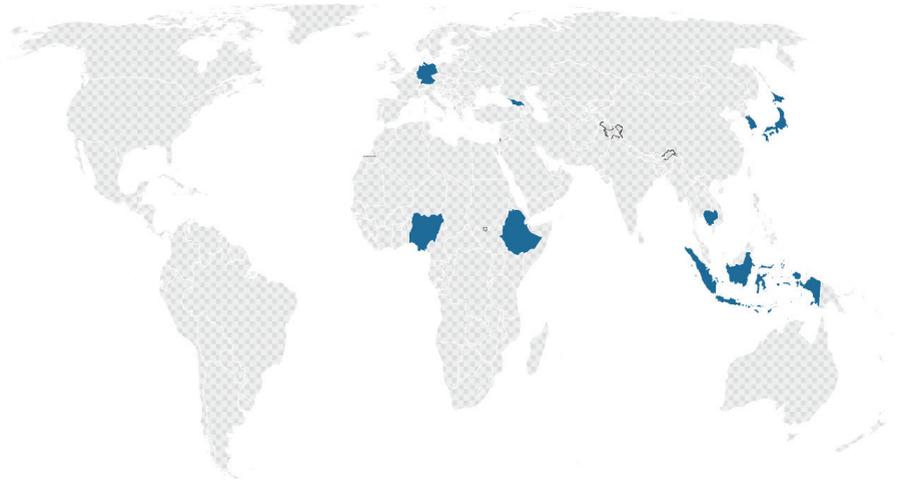


Figure 16: Top 10 engagers with 'Peace Advancement' NLP

vi) Peace support

We tested whether the category "peace support" would return results not relating to the UN. According to NLP, the term is used by thirteen countries, including five out of eight of the African countries in our corpus, all of whom are members of the African Union (AU). This is likely related to the AU Peace Support Operations Division (although not directly mentioned), which runs peace support operations (which is the AU version of peacekeeping, although without upholding the same UN principles of impartiality and limited use of force).

Our manual analysis shows similar results, with ten countries mentioning non-UN peace support operations, including three African countries and a South-eastern European cluster of four (Bosnia, Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia). The returns mentioned the UN (11.3%) and other named regional organisations, including OSCE, EU, and NATO (12.7%) in about equal measure, usually simultaneously. 28.2% of returns mentioned peace support operations in conjunction with other alliances, partners, missions, and organisations.

Notably, none of the SE European cluster are EU or NATO members. They use the term "peace support" to signal a willingness to participate in operations with the UN, OSCE, EU and NATO. Their documents had significant references to supporting allies and partners, usually signalling their willingness and ability to support the peace-making aims of their larger NATO allies.

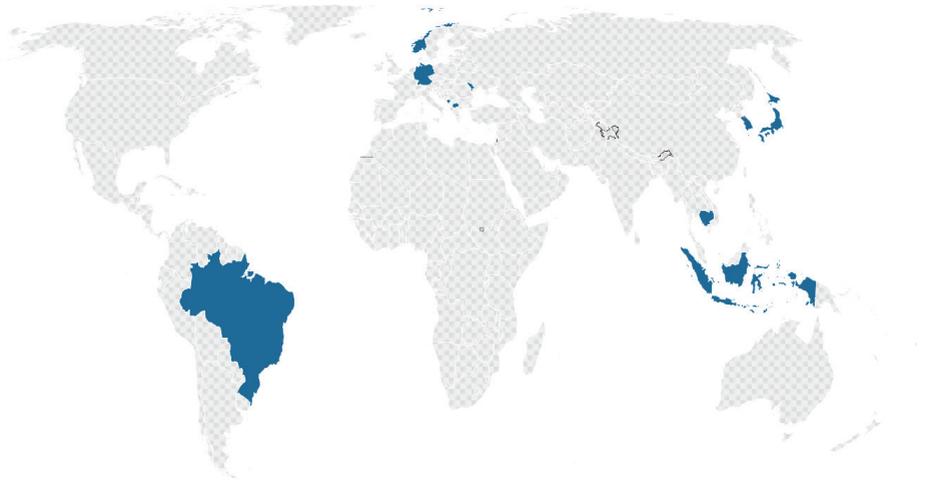


Figure 17: Top 10 engagers with 'Peace Support' NLP

b) Sentence similarity with 2008 UN peacekeeping document

Following our examination of UN and non-UN focused peace terminology, we used an alternative NLP analysis of sentence-level similarity to test further the “closeness” of documents to the UN. We selected a UN document to represent its peacekeeping terminology: a 2008 document entitled “United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines”. This document aims to capture the sixty years of experience and “largely unwritten body of principle” since peacekeeping began in 1948. We used NLP to return documents with sentence similarity scores of 0.7 and above, returning 200 results for thirty-nine countries. The nine countries with five or more similar sentences are ranked below. The left table shows absolute numbers; the right is weighted for document length. The findings roughly follow those above for closeness to the UN. China had three similar sentences while Russia had one.

Occurrences of similar sentences		Weighted for document length (occurrences/pages)	
Japan	35	Hungary	0.22
Republic of Korea	30	Norway	0.19
Brazil	23	Vietnam	0.13
Vietnam	17	New Zealand	0.13
Germany	12	Czechia	0.11
Norway	9	Georgia	0.11
Cambodia	5	China	0.09
New Zealand	5	Estonia	0.09
Hungary	5	Germany	0.08

c) Mentions of UN missions

We checked if the documents mention specific UN peace missions, finding that nine do (Brazil, China, France, Indonesia, Japan, North Macedonia, Republic of Korea, Serbia, and UK). Japan, ROK, Brazil, and China align with "UN closeness" findings above. However, these results do not reveal much. According to the UN, sixty-two of our seventy-four analysed countries contribute to an ongoing mission led by the Department of Peace Operations or Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. However, this contribution could be as small as a single case officer ([United Nations 2021](#)). (The twelve analysed countries that do not contribute to ongoing UN peace missions are Aruba, Belize, Bermuda, Georgia, Israel, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Maldives, Samoa, Solomons, Taiwan, and Vanuatu, although Aruba, Bermuda and Taiwan are not UN members.)

One note is that six out of nine of the documents that mention UN missions are Defence White Papers. This may indicate that mentions of specific peace missions are connected to the documentation of military contributions. The only NSS documents to mention specific peace missions are those of the UK, France, and Serbia. It is probable that this is simply because it is unusual for countries to mention specific UN missions in their top-level security and defence documents.

Conclusion

This report has presented findings from experimental research on national security strategy, Defence White Paper, and similar top-level public security documents. We have analysed the political and economic status of the ninety-three states that produce such documents and performed manual and automated content analysis on seventy-four of those documents.

At the level of basic country data, we have shown a positive correlation between liberal democracy, gross national income, and the likelihood of public security/defence document production.

In terms of "peace", we have shown that this is a widely used term. It has a wide range of meanings, especially when paired with other terms. Some of these are more relevant to peacekeeping, peace-making and peace-building practices than others. We found differential patterns of peace terminology use among countries ranked "free", "partly free", and "not free" by Freedom House. For example, "free" countries refer to the status quo term "peace and security" more than "partly free", and "not free" countries. In turn, "partly free", and "not free" refer more to "peace and stability" in the context of conflicts than affect them.

There is a distinction between countries that support traditional UN peacekeeping and more developed peace-making practices. Bigger, more populous countries make more reference to peacekeeping. This might be because they can contribute more money or troops to peacekeeping. Of the countries under focus in this wider project, China is notable in its references to peacekeeping and the UN. In contrast, China barely appears in returns for more developed UN peace-making/building practices or other non-UN-based peace practices. Russia makes scarcely any mention of any peace-related practices, UN or otherwise. More developed peace-making/building practices tend to be supported more by smaller Northern and Western European states. We also noted separate African "peace support" references, which reflect African Union initiatives.

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About Us

PeaceRep is a research consortium based at Edinburgh Law School. Our research is rethinking peace and transition processes in the light of changing conflict dynamics, changing demands of inclusion, and changes in patterns of global intervention in conflict and peace/mediation/transition management processes.

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