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978-0-521-76318-9 - Military Threats: The Costs of Coercion and the Price of Peace

Branislav L. Slantchev

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## Military Threats

Is military power central in determining which states get their voice heard? Must states run a high risk of war to communicate credible intent? Slantchev shows that states can often obtain concessions without incurring higher risks when they use military threats. Unlike diplomatic forms of communication, physical military moves improve a state's expected performance in war. If the opponent believes the threat, it will be more likely to back down. Military moves are also inherently costly, so only resolved states are willing to pay these costs. Slantchev argues that powerful states can secure better peaceful outcomes and lower the risk of war, but the likelihood of war depends on the extent to which a state is prepared to use military threats to deter challenges to peace and compel concessions without fighting. The price of peace may therefore be large: states invest in military forces that are both costly and unused.

BRANISLAV L. SLANTCHEV is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, San Diego. He specializes in the use of game theory to study international conflict, negotiations, and the political economy of war finance.

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*На дядовците ми, Георги и Петър.*

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have been. How much so? Let's just say that for a while this book circulated under the title *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Military Threats*, which unfortunately the publisher would not permit me to use. Copyright issues no doubt.

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