

## RISK FACTOR TITLES / DESCRIPTIONS:

### *Neighbors*

Countries are more likely to fight neighbors than non-neighbors.

- Unresolved official boundary lines
- Neighbors disturbed by internal instability
- Conflict expanding to contiguous states

### *Territory*

Countries fight over land, often for resources or some perceived benefit.

- Disputed territory
- Competition over strategically vital areas
- Controversy over culturally meaningful land
- Competition over desirable resources
- Internal political groups demand territory be taken or defended

### *Mismatch*

Formal borders of countries don't match where different cultural groups actually live, leading to overlapping claims.

- Presence of nations without states of their own
- Dehumanized others
- Nearby conflicts involving same ethnonational or religious groups
- Strong nationalist movements

### *Turmoil*

If a country is in turmoil, its leaders may seek war to unite its own citizens, or it may be seen as an easy target by other countries.

- Creation of revolutionary states
- Outsiders intervening in civil wars
- Perception of political vulnerability by elites

### *Democracy*

One or more sides in a dispute are not democratic.

- Presumption of bad intent
- Predatory states hoping to expand
- Misperception of another's political system leading to errors in judgment
- Presumption that conflicts cannot be settled peacefully

### *Equals*

Pairs of "equal" states both believe they can "win" and are unlikely to back down when threatened or challenged.

- Tendency to believe only one side can win

- Deterrence failure

- Mutual hostility leads to lack of trust

### *Rivalry*

A history of rivalry increases distrust and the willingness to use force in future disputes with the rival.

- Leaders with hawkish/hardline views
- Repeated crises
- Glorification of war and propaganda
- Perceptions of threat
- Insult to national pride and calls for revenge

### *Coercion*

Coercion leads to conflict escalation, dangerous conflict spirals, militarization of disputes, and tends to be reciprocated.

- Arms races
- Brinkmanship
- Formation of alliances
- Threats and demonstrations of force, ultimatums, and sanctions
- No global norm of non-violence nor effective institutions for conflict resolution

### *Power Shifts*

Sudden changes (perceived or real) in the global, regional, or bi-lateral balances of power increase uncertainty, insecurity, fear, and increase the likeliness of risky behavior.

- Perceptions of extreme weakness
- Uneven rates of economic and military growth
- Offenses are perceived superior to defenses

### *Leaders*

The personal psychology and character of leaders may determine whether or not war will occur.

- World views that emphasize the use of force and greater power to increase security
- Misperception of situation
- Wishful thinking, over-optimism, and assumption of easy victory
- Rigid beliefs and black and white world views
- Emotions and stress disrupting rational decision-making
- Limited or ambiguous information
- Reliance on stereotypes and improper lessons of history
- Leaders with risk-acceptant personalities