**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

**RISK FACTOR TITLES / DESCRIPTIONS:**

- **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