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# Finland, Sweden and Operation Unified Protector: The impact of strategic culture

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## ABSTRACT

This article investigates the Swedish decision to participate in Operation Unified Protector in Libya and the Finnish decision to refrain from the same operation. It takes as its theoretical point of departure the concept of strategic culture and argues that differences in the strategic culture of the two countries contributed to the differences in behavior toward the Libya intervention. The Finnish and Swedish strategic cultures differ with respect to the core tasks of the armed forces, willingness to use force, and with respect to what types of operations and organizational frameworks Finland and Sweden find it appropriate to participate in.

## Introduction

When the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) initiated Operation Unified Protector (OUP) to implement United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 1970 and 1973 concerning the Libyan civil war in March 2011, the Finnish and Swedish governments reacted in different ways.<sup>1</sup> While the Swedish government decided on March 29 that it would take part in OUP by dispatching fighter jets to enforce the no-fly zone, the Finnish government decided to not participate at all in the military operation. In spite of sharing many similarities in foreign policy, such as being two military nonaligned small states located in northern Europe, members of the European Union (EU), nonmembers of NATO, but collaborating closely with the alliance, and adhering to a strong tradition of participating in UNSC-mandated operations, Finland and Sweden choose different paths in managing the Libyan crisis. The diverging responses to OUP become even more surprising considering that Finland and Sweden often follow each other in international crisis management, and that the two usually participate in the same operations.<sup>2</sup> In recent years, bilateral defense cooperation between Finland and Sweden has also intensified, aimed at improving mutual use of the two countries' defense capabilities.

However, there are also differences. Former Finnish President Tarja Halonen, for instance, described Finland and Sweden as “sisters but not twins.”<sup>3</sup> According to Max Jakobson, the different geographical locations, with Finland bordering on Russia, have still an impact on the two countries' strategic thinking: “At the higher level Finland and Sweden are closer together than ever before but at the deeper level the geopolitical boundary has not vanished. Finland is still a border country, Sweden's buffer toward the East.”<sup>4</sup> The historical experiences are also different. While Finland was involved in two wars against the Soviet Union during the Second World War, Sweden has been at peace with its neighbors for over 200 years. In the words of Krister Wahlbäck, Finland has been the “threatened country,” while Sweden has been the “protected” one.<sup>5</sup> According to the literature on strategic culture, geography and historical experiences are conceivably the two most important factors in the shaping of a country's strategic culture.<sup>6</sup>

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The aim of this article is to demonstrate how differences in strategic culture between Finland and Sweden contributed to the differences in outcome between the two countries with regard to OUP.<sup>7</sup> Strategic culture is in this article defined as an ideational environment, which structures what options are considered to be appropriate, effective, and productive by a specific actor in decisions to participate in international military operations (see also below). The Finnish and Swedish strategic cultures differ with respect to the core tasks of the armed forces, willingness to use force, and with respect to what types of operations and organizational frameworks Finland and Sweden find it appropriate to participate in. These differences in strategic culture predisposed Finnish and Swedish decision-makers toward different options regarding the Libya intervention. This means that perspectives based on material factors, such as the availability of military resources or the inclination of small states to strengthen their relations to a great power, cannot provide complete explanations of the differences in outcome.<sup>8</sup>

The article intends to make two overall contributions. First, on the basis of the concept of strategic culture, it intends to conduct an in-depth empirical investigation of the decision making in Finland and Sweden concerning OUP. The Finnish and Swedish decision-making processes on OUP have not been investigated in previous research. In addition, the majority of earlier strategic culture research has concentrated on single case studies of specific great powers.<sup>9</sup> Second, by using a comparative approach, which includes two cases with different outcomes, the way in which strategic culture impacts on foreign policy can be better assessed. In previous research, such endeavors are rare.<sup>10</sup>

The remainder of the article is divided into three sections. In the first, the concept of strategic culture is defined and operationalized, delimiting it to four particular aspects which are relevant for the study of participation in military operations. In the second section, the Swedish and Finnish responses to the Libyan crisis and to the initiation of OUP are analyzed on the basis of these four aspects of strategic culture. In the final section, the empirical findings are summarized, establishing the basis for a discussion on further research.

## Defining and operationalizing strategic culture

In general terms, the concept of strategic culture is intended to capture an actor's identity in foreign, security, and defense policy matters.<sup>11</sup> Originating in the 1970s, the concept aimed at challenging theories which were based on the idea that the behavior of states is largely determined by material factors.<sup>12</sup> In 1977, Jack Snyder developed the concept in order to analyze Soviet military strategy<sup>13</sup> and, in 1981, Colin Gray proposed that different national styles, with "deep roots within a particular stream of historical experience," represent an enduring explanation of states' external behavior.<sup>14</sup> Studies of Germany's strategic culture, for example, have demonstrated the importance of its anti-militarist culture in shaping foreign policy behavior.<sup>15</sup> According to John Duffield, German strategic culture includes elements such as skepticism about the appropriateness of military force and a strong dislike for assuming a leadership role in international security politics.<sup>16</sup> However, in spite of several contributions, a well-recognized definition of strategic culture does not exist. At its core, strategic culture can nonetheless be said to deal with an actor's beliefs and assumptions that frame that actor's choices in foreign policy.

The concept of strategic culture has mainly been used in three ways. While some see it as an independent variable, which causes a specific behavior,<sup>17</sup> others see it as an intermediate variable, which acts as a filter through which other factors pass.<sup>18</sup> For others strategic culture means a constructivist approach, "in which a distinction between dependent and independent variables is impossible to make."<sup>19</sup> This article follows the constructivist understanding of the concept, focusing on so-called regulatory norms, which define what is considered appropriate behavior. More specifically, strategic culture is defined as an ideational environment, which structures what options are considered to be appropriate, effective, and productive by a specific actor in decisions to participate in international military operations, thereby influencing, but not determining, the actor's behavior. In the words of John Duffield:

The overall effect of [strategic] culture is to predispose collectivities toward certain actions and policies over others. Some options will simply not be imagined. Of those that are contemplated, some are more likely to be rejected as inappropriate, ineffective, or counterproductive than others.<sup>20</sup>

This article also follows the traditional emphasis of the strategic-culture literature, which is on political elites, that is, the key strategic decision-makers in a country. For Finland and Sweden, these are the prime minister, the minister for foreign affairs, and the minister of defense. Since the president of Finland conducts foreign policy in cooperation with the cabinet, the Finnish president is also part of the strategic leadership in Finland, as it is conceived here.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the article builds on the notion that there may be multiple cultures at play in each country; however, at any given time one of them is likely to dominate strategic thinking.<sup>22</sup> The article is also delimited to certain aspects of a country's strategic culture, namely those aspects which can be assumed to have the greatest impact on decisions to participate in military operations:

**Core task(s) of the armed forces:** What are the core task(s) of the armed forces? Should the armed forces prioritize the task of territorial defense, or should the participation in international operations be considered equally important to, or even be ranked above, territorial defense?

**Operational mandate(s):** When the state does engage in international operations, which types of operations (civilian, peacekeeping and/or peace enforcement operations) are viewed as the most appropriate, effective, and productive to participate in?

**Willingness to use force:** For what purposes is the state willing to use armed force? Should force be used in self-defense only, or also for offensive purposes? Does the state impose any (moral) obligations upon itself to use force in humanitarian military interventions?

**Organizational framework(s):** When the state does engage in international operations, what types of international organizations, EU, NATO, and/or the UN, are perceived as the most appropriate to participate in?<sup>23</sup>

The subsequent empirical study is based on a multitude of different sources, including government bills and reports, speeches and remarks made by key strategic decision-makers, parliamentary records, media coverage, blog entries, secondary sources, as well as semi-structured interviews. Twelve interviews have been conducted for each country. The respondents are politicians, civil servants from the Foreign and Defense Ministries, military officers, and researchers.<sup>24</sup>

In order to establish an empirical relationship between strategic culture and Finnish and Swedish responses to OUP, we should find differences between Finnish and Swedish sources regarding the core tasks of the country's armed forces, willingness to use force, and preferred operational mandates and organizational frameworks. In addition, contemporary statements from politicians and retrospective accounts from the respondents should explicitly link their country's Libya decision to key phrases/words such as "our foreign policy tradition," "culture," "way of doing things," "previous experiences," "role," "profile," etc. Examples of this are provided in the form of quotations throughout the empirical section. Furthermore, evidence of this kind should be found in multiple sources from different contexts, for instance, both in contemporary sources and interview data. If these analytical conditions are met, it can be argued that an empirical relationship between strategic culture and Finnish and Swedish policies regarding OUP has been established.

## Finland, Sweden, and the Libya intervention

Gaddafi's use of military force against noncombatant civilians from mid-February 2011 was strongly condemned by both the Finnish and the Swedish government.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, both governments perceived that the humanitarian situation in Libya was very alarming, and that they should send humanitarian aid to the region.<sup>26</sup> The Finns and the Swedes also gave their political support to UNSC Resolution 1973 of March 17, which authorized the no-fly zone.<sup>27</sup> However, after that, Finland and Sweden diverged in their responses to the Libyan civil war.

### Swedish strategic culture and OUP

On March 19, the military intervention in Libya commenced as a coalition of the willing, led by Britain, Canada, France, and the USA. While neighbors Denmark and Norway joined the USA-led Operation Odyssey Dawn, Swedish decision-makers perceived that participation in a coalition of the willing was not in line with Swedish strategic culture. As noted by a senior civil servant at the Ministry for Foreign

Affairs: “We do not want to participate in a coalition of the willing. It is not in our tradition. Compared to Denmark and Norway, we have other instincts.”<sup>28</sup>

For the Swedish strategic leadership, it was important that the mission was executed and coordinated by a strong military actor, which could provide the operation with a clear leadership structure, that is, NATO (see also below).<sup>29</sup> Confirmation from NATO that it would, within a few days, assume responsibility for the no-fly zone came on March 24. When this happened, Swedish decision-makers became more positively oriented toward a military contribution, and intensive discussions between Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt and the Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, were initiated.<sup>30</sup> During these discussions, Bildt and Rasmussen agreed informally that Sweden would participate in the no-fly operation.<sup>31</sup>

On March 27, NATO assumed full responsibility for the no-fly zone and all other military aspects of Resolution 1973. The following day, Bildt noted on his blog that “it is important that we participate [in OUP] in one way or the other.”<sup>32</sup> On the early morning of March 29, the Swedish Foreign Ministry received a formal request from NATO, welcoming a Swedish contribution to the operation, and shortly thereafter the government and the political opposition could agree that Sweden would participate in OUP with eight *JAS 39 Gripen* planes.<sup>33</sup> The agreement between the government and the opposition implied that the planes would only maintain the no-fly zone through tactical air reconnaissance, while not engaging in combat actions against targets on the ground.<sup>34</sup> Although several representatives of the governing center-right parties accused the opposition, especially Social Democratic Party Leader Håkan Juholt, for the inclusion of “no ground attacks” caveat, it seems that the key strategic decision-makers within government found the mandate of the operation acceptable.<sup>35</sup>

The Swedish deployment was formally approved by a broad parliamentary consensus on April 1, excluding only the nationalist Sweden Democrats.<sup>36</sup> Because the air crafts were on standby within the EU Nordic Battle Group (NBG), the Swedish military unit could leave for Libya already the next day.<sup>37</sup> This was the first use of fighter jets by Sweden in a peace operation since the 1963 UN mission in the Congo.

How can Swedish strategic culture regarding participation in international military operations be characterized? First, with regard to the *core tasks of the armed forces*, Sweden ranks participation in international operations above territorial defense.<sup>38</sup> In early 2011, Sweden was in the middle of a series of defense reforms, aimed at reorienting its armed forces toward international operations. This process started slowly and gradually after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and intensified around the millennium shift, based on the idea that threats of terrorism and intrastate conflicts had superseded the threat of conventional military attack.<sup>39</sup> The territorial defense system was replaced by an international and flexible defense policy, which would prioritize participation in international operations. In the 2009 defense reform conscription was abolished and replaced by voluntary service, with personnel strength limited to 50,000 servicemen.<sup>40</sup> Thus, at the time of OUP, Swedish strategic thinking placed significant emphasis on participation in international operations, which most likely made Swedish decision-makers positively oriented toward participation in OUP already from the start. According to several of the respondents, the restructuring of Sweden’s national defense should be seen as one important background factor to the Swedish Libya decision.<sup>41</sup>

The Swedish government also perceived that the *operational mandate* of OUP, that is, the enforcement of resolutions 1970 and 1973, was appropriate, under the condition that the Swedish fighter jets were not involved in combat actions.<sup>42</sup> In addition, during the parliamentary debate on April 1, members of all political parties, except the Sweden Democrats, noted that participation in OUP was in line with Sweden’s foreign policy tradition.<sup>43</sup> As stated by the foreign policy spokesperson for the Left Party, Hans Linde, in a retrospective account: “We perceived that this operation had many similarities with previous operations, such as Kosovo. We did not see OUP as a change of praxis.”<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, in contrast with Sweden’s involvement in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, Sweden’s participation in OUP was less controversial in terms of the operational mandate. In Afghanistan, Sweden contributed about 500 troops and led a provincial reconstruction team (PRT) in the sensitive northern location of Mazar-i-Sharif from 2006 to 2014.<sup>45</sup> Swedish soldiers were on several occasions involved in shooting operations and five Swedish soldiers lost their lives in Afghanistan.<sup>46</sup>

Swedish decision-makers also perceived that participation in OUP would be productive and effective. In a parliamentary debate on March 29, a few hours after the government had agreed to send its fighter jets, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt stated that “now it is time for Sweden to move from words to deeds and do what we can to promote international peace. The UN operation is very important for the protection of the civil population.”<sup>47</sup> According to Foreign Minister Bildt: “Sweden’s decision to contribute eight *Gripen* planes was received positively by the different [participating] countries. In addition to the military value, the political value of Sweden’s contribution was highly credited.”<sup>48</sup>

This is the first time since the early 1960s that Swedish fighter jets participate in an international operation. The well informed are likely to recall that our efforts in the air campaign at that time—with the J29 Flying Barrel—focused on attacks against ground targets. These efforts also became important for the UN mission in its entirety.<sup>49</sup>

These statements are indicators of that both the prime and foreign ministers perceived that Sweden would be able to make a difference in OUP. As summed up by a civil servant at the Foreign Ministry: “We perceived that we could do something useful and good.”<sup>50</sup> According to Linde, OUP corresponded to the Swedish self-image of focusing on operations which use advanced technology and modern defense resources: “It is in such operations that Sweden can provide some added value.”<sup>51</sup> Thus, the decision makers perceived that the operational mandate of Sweden’s participation in OUP was appropriate, effective, productive, and in line with strategic culture. As demonstrated below, participation in peace enforcement is less sensitive in Sweden, compared to Finland.

Regarding the *willingness to use force*, there is a relatively strong moralistic element in Swedish strategic culture, which is based on the notion that Sweden, under certain conditions, has a moral obligation to respond to crimes against humanity being committed in other states, if necessary, with military force. As stated by Foreign Minister Bildt a few hours before the UNSC agreed on Resolution 1973:

We want to stop tanks, artillery and massacres [in Libya]. That demands a clear UN mandate, and we hope to get it, the sooner the better. We hope to help people in need and we want to support the UN.<sup>52</sup>

As noted by Prime Minister Reinfeldt: “I think we have a moral obligation to act when international society is united around an operation.”<sup>53</sup> In the words of Defense Minister Sten Tolgfors: “Sweden helps others...because it is the right thing to do.”<sup>54</sup> As summed up by a high-level civil servant: “The government joined the operation, among other things, because there was an urgent need for humanitarian intervention and because the government felt an obligation to help.”<sup>55</sup> Another civil servant added that: “One important driving force [for the Swedish decision] was that there were two clearly opposing sides in the conflict, that is, one good and one evil.”<sup>56</sup> That Swedish strategic culture is based on a moral duty to participate in military operations to stop crimes against humanity and that the protection of civilians was a strong incentive in Sweden’s OUP decision were also pointed out by other respondents.<sup>57</sup> Thus, under certain conditions, such as support from the UN and strong leadership provided by NATO, Sweden finds it appropriate to use armed force for humanitarian purposes, and, in the case of Libya, moral arguments weighed heavily in the decision making.

With regard to preferred *organizational frameworks*, Swedish strategic culture does not distinguish between EU, NATO, and UN operations, under the condition that they are authorized by international law.<sup>58</sup> The Swedes have thus “abandoned the notion that NATO in itself is a problem with regard to crisis management. NATO coordination is something that we have accepted.”<sup>59</sup> In the words of Linde: “What matters to us is that there is a UN mandate. The practical implementation is less important.”<sup>60</sup> In the case of OUP, NATO was even seen as a facilitating condition for Swedish participation in the military operation. NATO could, in contrast to a coalition of the willing, provide the operation with a strong and clear leadership structure.<sup>61</sup> Without such a leadership structure, it becomes difficult for the Swedish government to acquire political influence within the operation and to guarantee that Swedish military units conduct the “right” assignments.<sup>62</sup> As noted by Defense Minister Tolgfors on March 29:

To have a clear leadership structure is necessary for the efficiency of the operation. Where will our fighter jets be stationed? What sectors of the air space will our planes monitor? When NATO this weekend decided to take control of the operation the pieces of the puzzle came together.<sup>63</sup>



To participate in NATO operations is also important for other reasons. The Reinfeldt government explicitly referred to its “partnership with NATO” as a “central basis for Swedish foreign, security and defense policy.”<sup>64</sup> One way of maintaining this partnership was (and still is) to contribute to NATO operations. By doing so, Sweden proves its worth without being a formal member. As noted by one high-level civil servant, by participating in NATO operations, the government demonstrates that Sweden, after decades of formal nonalignment, belongs to the Western community, and, thereby, the likelihood that NATO will help Sweden in the future increases.<sup>65</sup> Participation in NATO operations is also one way of acquiring political influence: “The participation increases our credibility, which is useful for us in several different areas within our partnership with NATO.”<sup>66</sup> In addition, for the Swedish government, it is important to sit at those tables where the most important decisions on European security are made.<sup>67</sup> “Based on our experiences from participating in Afghanistan, we know that participation in NATO operations can increase our influence.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, the organizational framework of OUP did not comprise any barriers to Swedish participation. Rather NATO was seen as a facilitating condition for the Swedish participation, clearly in line with strategic culture.

To sum up the argument so far, strategic culture seems to have predisposed Swedish decision-makers toward the option of participating in OUP, by ranking participation in international operations above the task of territorial defense; by perceiving peace enforcement operations such as OUP as appropriate, effective, and productive; by imposing a moral obligation upon Sweden to contribute to humanitarian interventions, and by recognizing NATO as an appropriate organizational framework for OUP.

### ***Finnish strategic culture and OUP***

The Finns were lukewarm on sending fighter jets already from the start. As stated by Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb on March 22: “I would exclude the possibility that Finland’s fighter jets participate in the no-fly operation.”<sup>69</sup> One official explanation for the Finnish nonparticipation was the absence of an explicit request from NATO for Finnish military support.<sup>70</sup> However, this was most likely a rationalization, as the Finns probably could have been given such a request if they had expressed a desire to participate.<sup>71</sup> In addition, none of the interview respondents emphasized absence of a NATO request as an explanatory factor. Former Defense Minister Elisabeth Rehn said that: “Of course Finland did not receive an invitation, because Finland declared at an early stage that it was not willing to take part in any military operation.”<sup>72</sup> Rehn was one of the toughest critics of the Finnish “no,” saying resignedly: “I thought it was for being able to participate in operations like this I suffered all the trouble,” referring to her decision in 1992 to buy F/A-18 Hornets from the USA.<sup>73</sup>

Another official explanation for the Finnish nonparticipation was that the Hornet planes could not contribute with anything of military significance to OUP.<sup>74</sup> One problem was that the Finnish planes were structured to air-to-air combat and not to air-to-ground combat. However, according to several experts, the planes could have taken part in the monitoring of the no-fly zone by conducting surveillance tasks, like Sweden did.<sup>75</sup> For this kind of mission, the interoperability of the Hornets was equal to that of the Swedish *Gripen*.<sup>76</sup> According to Colonel Juha-Pekka Keränen, the Finnish Rapid Deployment Force Fighter Squadron of six F/A-18 was in 2009 evaluated for air policing tasks by NATO and could have coped with the task of securing the no-fly zone.<sup>77</sup> A senior civil servant at the Foreign Ministry said that the Finnish military “wanted to participate [in OUP] and were confident that Finland had the capability. It did not come down to the lack of capabilities or lack of belief in our capabilities.”<sup>78</sup> Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that, in order to avoid making a military commitment to OUP, the government made its decision a technical issue.<sup>79</sup>

A more reasonable explanation is found in Finnish strategic culture, which in terms of its *core tasks of the armed forces* places primary emphasis on territorial defense. Finnish culture is built on the idea that the armed forces should be kept as fully operational within Finnish borders, while their presence in foreign operations is a second priority.<sup>80</sup> In contrast to Sweden, Finland has maintained a relatively strong territorial defense capability, based on conscription. Furthermore, participation in foreign operations should not occur at the expense of national defense, and when Finland does take part in such operations, the main objective is to strengthen its own position.<sup>81</sup> Although Finland has been very active in UN peace operations since the 1950s, measured by per capita contributions on a global level,<sup>82</sup> Sweden

and the other Nordic states are way ahead of Finland, in absolute as well as relative terms.<sup>83</sup> Thus, the prioritization of territorial defense over international operations made Finnish decision-makers uncertain about national involvement in OUP, however, it did not completely rule out participation in OUP. The participation in military operations is an important factor in Finnish national defense and Finns recognize that participation in foreign operations can increase national security. “Some operations, however, which are somehow felt sensitive in international politics, have been, and might become, exceptions to this general approach.”<sup>84</sup>

The *operational mandate* of OUP, that is, the enforcement of peace by means of offensive weaponry, was perceived as an obstacle for Finnish participation. As noted by one observer: “Finland’s profile in international defense cooperation is different from Sweden’s. When it comes to demanding military operations, the Finns become cautious.”<sup>85</sup> Finland finds it more appropriate to participate in civilian and peacekeeping operations.<sup>86</sup> For example, the Finnish contribution of approximately 100 personnel to ISAF was considerably smaller than the Swedish, and the Finnish troops operated in the Swedish-led PRT. A lesson is that in maintaining Finnish security, political instruments should be prioritized over military means, and this thinking also applies to Finnish participation in peace operations.<sup>87</sup> Thus, conflict prevention through development aid and traditional peacekeeping, in which the conflicting parties have agreed on stopping the hostilities and have accepted the operation, are the appropriate ways to act, according to Finnish strategic culture.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, a Finnish tendency to perceive itself as a great power in peace mediation has been developed, mirroring the success of former Finnish President and Nobel Prize winner Martti Ahtisaari for his prominent role in resolving many conflicts.<sup>89</sup>

Thus, instead of participating in a peace enforcement operation in Libya, Finnish strategic culture predisposed the decision makers toward efforts such as political support, economic sanctions, humanitarian aid and possibly, in a later phase, the provision of peacekeeping forces or the participation in an EU-led force (see below). As noted by senior civil servant Janne Jokinen:

I think it was basically a question of division of labor. Because when you look at our involvements with Libya and the kind of support we gave, it is quite a lot. And it began with humanitarian assistance, which increased rapidly, but then expanded to political support and, of course, the UN resolution and the sanctions decisions, and then to civilian crisis management, especially to the EU. And we were also ready to participate in a UN peacekeeping mission. That was quite a lot in addition to the possibility of joining the NATO operation.<sup>90</sup>

One key reason for the Finnish focus on political, humanitarian, and civilian efforts was that decision makers perceived that such tasks suited Finland better and were more appropriate on the basis of Finland’s foreign-policy tradition.<sup>91</sup> The Finnish President, Tarja Halonen, noted that the Finnish OUP decision is “a logical continuation from what we have done previously in international politics. We have our own profile and role.”<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, “if we want to specialize and be involved, I believe it is best to be involved in those areas which we have experience in.”<sup>93</sup> In response to critiques claiming that Finland was passive regarding Libya, Foreign Minister Stubb said: “The fact that we are not sending two Hornets to maintain the no-fly zone does not make us passive. Each part has its own role to play in an operation like this.”<sup>94</sup> Prime Minister Mari Kiviniemi said:

We have been consistent in our foreign policy. We supported an UN-sanctioned operation and we have taken part in it through the provision of humanitarian assistance. That we are not participating in the no-fly zone is in line with our long-standing foreign policy posture.<sup>95</sup>

The view that the Finnish “no” was in line with the country’s “foreign policy tradition” was shared among several key politicians, including Social Democratic Member of Parliament Erkki Tuomioja (former foreign minister): “Finland is prepared to increase its commitments in a post-war situation. In such a situation, peacekeepers from countries, which have not participated in the battles, are more appropriate.”<sup>96</sup> Tuomioja also noted that participation in OUP would not be compatible with Finland’s role as an independent peace mediator in world politics.<sup>97</sup>

In addition, Finnish decision-makers stated on several occasions that it was unclear what role the Finnish fighter jets would have in OUP and that it “felt unnatural” for Finland to participate in such an operation.<sup>98</sup> They were also convinced that Finnish participation would have been unproductive and



inefficient; that is, the Finnish airplanes would not have made any difference to the outcome of the military operation.<sup>99</sup> As noted by President Halonen: “We did not send any Hornets [to stop the massacre in Srebrenica] in 1995 either. I believe that it would not have helped the situation, rather the opposite.”<sup>100</sup> According to Jokinen, Finland would not have added any value to the operation: “Finnish participation in peacekeeping in general has mainly been with ground forces, where our capabilities can best be brought into bear. So that is where we can make an impact.”<sup>101</sup> Thus, as noted above, Finland could have sent its Hornets to Libya, and contributed to the surveillance element of OUP, but most Finnish decision-makers believed that such an enterprise would have been inappropriate, inefficient, and unproductive.

Furthermore, the Finnish *willingness to use force* is delimited to defensive purposes only, “because the historical lesson is that defensive but not offensive fighting pays off. Yet, the historical lesson is also that in providing for one’s security, political measures should be prioritized over military ones.”<sup>102</sup> The old phrase of President Urho Kekkonen, that Finland should be a “physician rather than a judge,” is still maintained in collective memory.<sup>103</sup> In the case of OUP, the Finnish reluctance toward the use of force was mainly symbolized by President Halonen, who stated that the use of force to stop violence “is always a strong medicine ... But it also has strong side effects, since sooner or later people start discussing whether there were civilian victims and whether too much or too little force was used.”<sup>104</sup> In contrast with the situation in Sweden, there is no strong pressure on Finnish politicians to participate in humanitarian interventions for moralistic reasons.<sup>105</sup> The moralistic argument is, thus, weaker in Finland, and the liberal-internationalist school of thought, advocating humanitarian interventions, is not as prominent in Finland.<sup>106</sup>

The *organizational framework* of OUP was another obstacle, because Finland prefers to participate in operations led by the EU or UN.<sup>107</sup> One reason for this is that Finland is a full member in the EU and that it, therefore, makes more sense to participate in EU operations.<sup>108</sup> As noted by one civil servant: “NATO is not our playing field to the same extent as the EU.”<sup>109</sup> Thus, when a consensus on OUP was missing at the EU level, and European states had their own individual approaches, Finland became a bit puzzled about what to do, whom to follow, contributing to its decision to refrain from OUP.<sup>110</sup>

There was also reluctance toward the fact that NATO would coordinate OUP, because of Finland’s policy of military nonalignment and Finland’s experiences from participating in ISAF.<sup>111</sup> According to Stefan Wallin: “I think that the role of the USA and NATO, and the offensive character of OUP, and the risk for Finland being perceived as participant in an offensive against Libya worried the foreign policy leadership.”<sup>112</sup> President Halonen, in particular, was negatively oriented toward participation in a NATO-led peace enforcement operation, in which the USA played a central role.<sup>113</sup> Instead of participating in the NATO-led OUP, the Finnish government decided on April 5 that it would take part in the planning and preparations for the EUFOR Libya, the name of the EU’s military-humanitarian mission, which was announced on April 1.<sup>114</sup> According to Jokinen, “this is where it makes sense for us to put our resources and, therefore, we do not have to be involved in the NATO operation.”<sup>115</sup> However, the EU mission was never launched, since it was dependent on a request from the UN’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which never came.

However, the Finnish “no” to OUP was “contested” and was “far from a no-brainer.”<sup>116</sup> The pro-OUP voices could mainly be found within the military and the Ministry of Defense.<sup>117</sup> The strongest arguments for participation seems to have been the UN mandate, Sweden’s participation, the link between OUP and the Responsibility to Protect, which Finland always has been supportive of, as well as demands for testing Finnish interoperability with NATO.<sup>118</sup> However, the president, the prime minister, and the defense minister were clearly against Finnish participation in OUP. Among the key strategic decision-makers, only Foreign Minister Stubb was in favor.<sup>119</sup> Looking back at the decision making, Paavo Väyrynen remembered that:

It was quite clear from the beginning that we were not going to participate. Here you can see the tradition of Finnish foreign and security policy. We have been very reluctant to interfere militarily outside our borders. Of course, if there is a UN mandate it is possible, but we are still very hesitant in that respect.<sup>120</sup>

As noted by another respondent: “We are really careful in our thinking when we are making decisions to get involved in crises which are outside our own borders. That is part of our tradition.”<sup>121</sup> Thus,

**Table 1.** Strategic cultures regarding participation in international operations.

Issue area	Finnish culture	Swedish culture
Core task(s) of the armed forces	Ranks territorial defense above international operations	Ranks international operations above territorial defense
Operational mandate(s)	Prefers civilian and peacekeeping operations. Strong reluctance toward peace enforcement	Prefers civilian and peacekeeping operations, but is open to peace enforcement
Willingness to use force	For defensive purposes only	For defensive and humanitarian purposes, based on moral obligation
Organizational framework(s)	Prefers EU and UN operations	Makes no distinction between EU, NATO, and UN operations

strategic culture seems to have predisposed Finnish decision-makers toward the option of refraining from OUP, by prioritizing territorial defense over international operations; by perceiving Finnish participation in peace enforcement operations as inappropriate, ineffective, and unproductive; by perceiving force as an instrument for self-defense; and by viewing the role of NATO in OUP with suspicion.

### Concluding remarks

There are some significant differences in the strategic culture of Finland vis-à-vis that of Sweden. With regard to the core tasks of the armed forces, Sweden places more emphasis on international operations, and less on territorial defense, compared to Finland. Regarding operational mandates, Sweden finds participation in peace enforcement operations such as OUP as more appropriate, effective, and productive, in relation to Finland. With regard to the willingness to use force, both states perceive that armed force should be delimited to defensive purposes, but Sweden also imposes a moral obligation upon itself to participate in humanitarian interventions. Regarding preferred organizational frameworks, Sweden is more positively oriented to NATO-led operations, compared to Finland. These differences in strategic culture are summarized in Table 1.

As noted in the introduction, Finland and Sweden often follow each other in international operations, but in the case of OUP, differences in strategic culture seem to have predisposed Finnish and Swedish decision-makers toward different options: in the Swedish case, toward participation; and, in the Finnish case, toward nonparticipation. This means that perspectives based on material factors cannot provide complete explanations of the differences in outcome between Finland and Sweden. These findings corroborate earlier studies on strategic culture, which have demonstrated that culture can add to our understanding of why states with relatively equal military capacity can act very differently regarding participation in military operations.

In order to investigate the empirical reach of the strategic culture framework applied here, the framework should also be applied to other decisions to participate (or to not participate) in military operations. A case to consider is the bombing campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, in which we can observe variations in military contribution by participating states such as Britain, France, and Germany, in spite of relatively equal military capability and (presumably) similar threat perceptions. Future research should also investigate more closely how strategic culture interacts with rationalistic factors. For instance, in the case of OUP, the Finnish government was also preoccupied with impending parliamentary elections, scheduled for April 17, 2011, when it decided on its nonparticipation. Although Finnish strategic culture contributed strongly to the Finnish nonparticipation, as demonstrated in this article, how and to what extent did the government's preoccupation with its political survival matter for the Finnish "no"? In which ways can rationalistic factors complement explanations based on strategic culture?

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## Notes

1. Resolution 1970 was adopted by the UNSC on February 26, 2011. It condemned the use of force by the Muammar Gaddafi regime against protesters participating in the civil war, and it imposed a series of sanctions in response. Resolution 1973 was adopted on March 17, approved by a vote of 10 in favor, zero against, and five abstentions from China, Russia, Brazil, Germany, and India. It formed the legal basis for military intervention in Libya, authorizing the international community to establish a no-fly zone and to use all means necessary, short of foreign occupation, to protect civilians.
2. Peter Viggo Jakobsen, "Still Punching Above Their Weight? Nordic Cooperation in Peace Operations after the Cold War," *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 14, no. 4 (August 2007): 465.
3. Tuomas Forsberg and Tapani Vaahtoranta, "Inside the EU, Outside NATO: Paradoxes of Finland's and Sweden's Post-Neutrality," *European Security*, vol. 10, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 69.
4. Max Jakobson, "Suomen ja Ruotsin kanssa," *Helsingin Sanomat*, January 14, 1998.
5. Krister Wahlbäck, "Det hotade landet och det skyddade," in T. Suominen and A. Björnsson (eds.), *Det hotade landet och det skyddade: Sverige och Finland från 1500-talet till våra dagar* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2002), 121–146.
6. See the contributions in Heiko Biehl, Bastian Giegerich, and Alexandra Jonas, eds., *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defense Politics across the Continent* (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2013).
7. The aim is not to investigate how the strategic cultures in Finland and Sweden were created, but rather to describe the content of each culture and then investigate how culture contributed to Finnish and Swedish policies regarding OUP.
8. The assumption that material factors play a key role in decisions to participate in military operations is mainly found in the realist school of thought and in the willingness and opportunity perspective. For realist contributions, see, for example, John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Steven Lobell, Norrin Ripsman, and Jeffrey Taliaferro, eds., *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009). For recent works on the willingness and opportunity perspective, see Renato Corbetta, "Determinants of Third Parties' intervention and alignment choices in ongoing conflicts, 1946–2001," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 6, no. 1 (January 2010): 61–85; Harvey Starr, "Territory, Proximity, and Spatiality: The Geography of International Conflict," *International Studies Review*, vol. 7, no. 3 (October 2005): 387–406.
9. See, for example, Carnes Lord, "American Strategic Culture," *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 5, no. 3 (September 1985): 269–293; Jeffrey Lantis, "The Moral Imperative of Force: The Evolution of German Strategic Culture in Kosovo," *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 21, no. 1 (March 2002): 21–46; Tiejun Zhang, "Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Features," *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 21, no. 2 (April 2002): 73–90; K. P. O'Reilly, "A Rogue Doctrine? The Role of Strategic Culture on US Foreign Policy Behavior," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 9, no. 1 (January 2013): 57–77. For an attempt to capture the strategic culture of the Nordic states, see Iver B. Neumann and Henriikki Heikka, "Grand Strategy, Strategic Culture, Practice: The Social Roots of Nordic Defence," *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 40, no. 1 (March 2005): 5–23. However, the Neumann and Heikka article, as well as most other contributions to the study of Nordic strategic culture, do not focus on decisions to participate in military operations.
10. For two exceptions, see Brendon O'Connor and Srdjan Vucetic, "Another Mars-Venus divide? Why Australia said 'yes' and Canada said 'non' to involvement in the 2003 Iraq War," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 64, no. 5 (December 2010): 526–548; Jan Ångström and Jan Willem Honig, "Regaining Strategy: Small Powers, Strategic Culture, and Escalation in Afghanistan," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 35, no. 5 (October 2012): 663–687.
11. Heiko Biehl, Bastian Giegerich and Alexandra Jonas, "Introduction," in Biehl et al., eds., *Strategic Cultures*, 7–17.
12. Rashed Uz Zaman, "Strategic Culture: A 'Cultural' Understanding of War," *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 28, no. 1 (March 2009): 68–88.
13. Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 1977).
14. Colin Gray, "National Style in Strategy: The American Example," *International Security*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Fall 1981): 35.
15. John S. Duffield, "Political Culture and State Behavior: Why Germany Confounds Neorealism," *International Organization*, vol. 53, no. 4 (Autumn 1999): 765–803; Lantis, "The Moral Imperative of Force."
16. Duffield, "Political Culture and State Behavior."
17. Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
18. Elizabeth Kier, "Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 4, (Spring 1995): 65–93.
19. Ångström and Honig, "Regaining Strategy," 671.
20. Duffield, "Political Culture and State Behavior," 772.

21. According to the Finnish Constitution of 2000, the president is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. It is also the president that makes the ultimate decision on participation and on ending participation in military crisis management. Mika Kerttunen, "Strategic Decision Making and Culture: The Case of Finland," in H. Edström and D. Gyllensporre, eds., *Alike or Different? Scandinavian Approaches to Military Interventions* (Stockholm: Santérus Academic Press, 2014), 103–125.
22. O'Connor and Vucetic, "Another Mars-Venus divide?" 539.
23. This aspect of strategic culture is adapted to the organizational context of European states. For a state in Africa, for instance, possible organizational frameworks would, in addition to the UN, include the African Union and other regional organizations.
24. The author has not conducted all of the interviews himself. He has been given permission to use the interview transcripts from two master's theses on similar subjects: Anders Jönsson, *En perfekt storm? Sveriges val att delta med stridsflyg i Libyen-kriget 2011* (Stockholm: Swedish Defense University, 2014); Björn Jönsson, *Prudence in Intervention: A Comparative Analysis of Sweden's and Finland's Diverging Libya Decisions* (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2014). Only one respondent wished to remain anonymous.
25. Carl Bildt, personal blog, February 20, 2011, available at <http://carlbildt.wordpress.com/> (accessed August 10, 2015); Alexander Stubb, "EU Sanctions against Gaddafi's Libya Must Be Discussed," press statement, February 22, 2011, available at <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=213535&contentlan=2&culture=en-US> (accessed December 15, 2013); Niklas Svensson, "Reinfeldt: Ingen diktator ska sitta kvar," *Expressen*, February 22, 2011.
26. Foreign Ministry of Finland, "Finland Grants Additional Humanitarian Aid for Refugees of the Libyan Crisis," press release 72/2011, March 2, 2011, available at <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=214327&contentlan=2&culture=en-US> (accessed March 25, 2015); Foreign Ministry of Sweden, "Svenska hjälpsatser till Libyen," press release, March 5, 2011.
27. Bildt, personal blog, March 18, 2011; Foreign Ministry of Finland, "Situation in Libya," press release 82/2011, March 18, 2011, available at <http://www.finlandtunis.org/public/default.aspx?contentid=215880&nodeid=31743&contentlan=2&culture=en-US> (accessed April 14, 2014); Alexander Stubb, personal blog, March 18, 2011, available at [www.alexstubb.com/fi/blog/](http://www.alexstubb.com/fi/blog/) (accessed December 15, 2013).
28. Interview by the author with Erik Widman, Deputy Director, Head of Europe Division, Security Policy Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (September 27, 2013). A similar argument was also raised by other respondents: Interview by Björn Jönsson with Inger Buxton, Deputy Director, Head of Euro-Atlantic Division, Security Policy Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (December 17, 2014).
29. Bildt, personal blog, March 18, 2011; Parliament Records of Sweden, 2010/11:74, March 17, 2011, statements 14, 40, 118; Kristofer Sandberg, "Svenska folket: Sänd Jasplan till Libyen," *Expressen*, March 22, 2011.
30. Bildt, personal blog, March 24, 27, 2011.
31. Love Benigh and Örjan Magnusson, "Nato har frågat Sverige om Jas-plan till Libyen," *Sveriges television*, March 28, 2011, available at <http://www.svt.se/nyheter/varlden/nato-har-fragat-sverige-om-jas-plan-till-libyen-1> (accessed September 18, 2013).
32. Bildt, personal blog, March 28, 2011.
33. Foreign Ministry of Sweden, "Regeringen föreslår Libyeninsats," press release, March 29, 2011.
34. Government bill, 2010/11:111, "Svenskt deltagande i den internationella militära insatsen i Libyen," March 29, 2011. The contribution was limited to eight *Gripen* planes for enforcing the no-fly zone, a Saab 340 AEW&C for airborne early warning and control, and a C-130 Hercules for aerial refueling. The unit would amount to approximately 130 military personnel and would be made available for three months. In a parliamentary decision on June 17, the mission was extended to October 24 with a mandate that covered reconnaissance across the full spectrum of UN-mandated tasks.
35. For the domestic politics surrounding Sweden's Libya decision, see Fredrik Doeser, "Sweden's Libya Decision: A Case of Humanitarian Intervention," *International Politics*, vol. 51, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 196–213.
36. Parliamentary Report, 2010/11:UFöU3, March 31, 2011.
37. The NBG is one of the 18 EU battle groups. It consists of around 2,200 soldiers, with manpower from several North European countries. The second alert period of the NBG was between January 1 and June 30, 2011, meaning that all personnel shall be at their operating basis within 48 hours after the decision to initiate an operation is made. This factor facilitated a rapid implementation of the Swedish decision. If the NBG had not been on standby at this point in time, the government would not have been able to commit Sweden to OUP until one month later. This is confirmed by two military officers: interview by Anders Jönsson with Anders Silwer, Lieutenant General, (former) Chief of Operations, Armed Forces Headquarters (April 27, 2012); interview by the author with Stefan Wilson, Lieutenant Colonel, Commander of the Swedish Libya operation, April–July 2011 (September 9, 2013). For a more detailed discussion about the impact of the NBG on Sweden's decision, see Fredrik Doeser, "Sweden's Participation in Operation Unified Protector: Obligations and Interests," *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 21, no. 5 (December 2014): 642–657.
38. However, fears of increasing Russian military aggression after the Ukrainian crisis have led to a strengthened focus on territorial defense.

39. For an introduction to these changes in Swedish security policy, see the contributions in Fredrik Doeser, Magnus Petersson, and Jacob Westberg, eds., *Norden mellan stormakter och fredsförbund: Nordiskt säkerhetspolitiskt samarbete i det gamla och nya Europa* (Stockholm: Santérus Academic Press, 2012).
40. Government bill, 2008/09:140, "Ett användbart försvar," March 19, 2009.
41. Interview by the author with Peter Göthe, Deputy Director-General, (former) Head of Department for Strategy and Security Policy, Ministry of Defense, (current) Head of Strategy Directorate, Swedish Defense and Security Export Agency (October 8, 2013); Interview by Björn Jönsson with Anna-Lena Sörenson, Social Democratic Party, (former) Member of the Defense Committee (2010–2014), (current) Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee (December 4, 2014).
42. Government bill, 2010/11:111.
43. Parliament Records of Sweden, 2010/11:81, April 1, 2011, statements 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.
44. Interview by Björn Jönsson with Hans Linde, Left Party, Foreign Policy Spokesperson, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee (November 14, 2014).
45. Andrew Cottey, "The European Neutrals and NATO: Ambiguous Partnership," *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol. 34, No. 3 (September 2013): 460.
46. Wilhelm Agrell, *Ett krig här och nu: Sveriges väg till väpnad konflikt i Afghanistan* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2013).
47. Parliament Records of Sweden, 2010/11:78, March 29, 2011, statement 1.
48. Bildt, personal blog, March 29, 2011.
49. Ibid.
50. Interview with Buxton.
51. Interview with Linde.
52. Parliament Records of Sweden, 2010/11:74, statement 134.
53. Wolfgang Hansson, "Sverige skickar åtta Gripenplan: Men de får inte attackera markmål," *Aftonbladet*, March 29, 2011.
54. Sten Tolgfors, "Socialdemokraterna försvårar Sveriges internationella ansvarstagande," *Svenska Dagbladet*, May 11, 2011.
55. Interview with Widman.
56. Interview by the author with Jörgen Cederberg, Head of Section for Defense Policy and Civil Contingencies, Department for Strategy and Security Policy, Ministry of Defense (October 31, 2013).
57. Interview by Björn Jönsson with Göran Lennmarker, Moderate Party, (former) Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee (2006–2010), (current) Distinguished Associate Fellow, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (December 1, 2014); Interview by Björn Jönsson with Fredrik Malm, Liberal Party, Foreign Policy Spokesperson, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee (November 12, 2014); interviews with Linde, Silwer, and Sörenson.
58. Interview by the author with Therese Hydén, Deputy Director, Head of Section for International Law and Treaty Law, Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (October 16, 2013); interview with Sörenson.
59. Interview with Buxton.
60. Interview with Linde.
61. Carl Bildt, "Speech Held at International Conference on Libya, London," March 29, 2011, available at [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2011\\_03/20110927\\_110329\\_-London-Conference-Libya.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_03/20110927_110329_-London-Conference-Libya.pdf) (accessed September 18, 2013); Interviews with Buxton and Cederberg.
62. Interviews with Lennmarker and Widman.
63. Sten Tolgfors, personal blog, March 29, 2011, available at <https://tolgfors.wordpress.com/> (accessed November 20, 2013).
64. Government report, 2007/08:51, "Nationell strategi för svenskt deltagande i internationell freds- och säkerhetsfrämjande verksamhet," March 13, 2008, 4.
65. Interview with Göthe.
66. Government report, 2007/08:51, 12.
67. Interviews with Buxton, Göthe, and Lennmarker.
68. Interview by the author with Åsa Anclair, Deputy Director, Department for Strategy and Security Policy, Ministry of Defense (October 31, 2013).
69. Annamari Sipilä, "Suomi mieltii avunpyynnöt maltilla," *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 22, 2011.
70. Maria Gestrin-Hagner, "Inte uteslutet att finska soldater skickas till Libyen," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, April 5, 2011; Marcus Lindqvist, "Sveriges beslut påverkar inte Finland," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, March 30, 2011; Sipilä, "Suomi mieltii avunpyynnöt maltilla."
71. According to Finnish newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat*, NATO had already made contact with the Finnish government, asking whether it was interested in participating in the no-fly zone. However, this was denied by Defense Minister Jyri Häkämies. Kari Huhta and Juha-Pekka Raeste, "Natoa kiinnostaa Suomen tulo ilmaoperaatioon," *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 22, 2011.
72. Yle Uutiset, "Rehn haluaa perusteluja Libya-päätöksille," television interview with Elisabeth Rehn, April 2, 2011, available at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/rehn\\_haluaa\\_perusteluja\\_libya-paatoksille/5336242](http://yle.fi/uutiset/rehn_haluaa_perusteluja_libya-paatoksille/5336242) (accessed April 28, 2015).
73. Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå, "Tangerar gränsen för mandatet," *Svenska dagbladet*, March 31, 2011.



74. Huhta and Raeste, "Natoa kiinnostaa Suomen tulo ilmaoperaatioon"; Juha-Pekka Raeste, "Stubb: Hävittäjien lähettäminen Libyaan olisi ollut iso muutos," *Helsingin Sanomat*, March 31, 2011; Yle Uutiset, "Haloselta ynmarrystä Naton iskulle Libyaassa," television interview with Tarja Halonen, March 28, 2011, available at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/haloselta\\_ymarrysta\\_naton\\_iskulle\\_libyassa/5333086](http://yle.fi/uutiset/haloselta_ymarrysta_naton_iskulle_libyassa/5333086) (accessed April 28, 2015).
75. Interview by the author with Tommi Koivula, Senior Researcher, Department of Warfare, Finnish National Defense University (August 26, 2015); Interview by Björn Jönsson with Charly Salenius-Pasternak, Senior Researcher, Finnish Institute of International Affairs (December 17, 2014); interview by Björn Jönsson with Tero Shemeikka, Social Democratic Party, (former) International Secretary of the Social Democratic Party (1995–2011), (current) Advisor and Press Attaché to the Minister for Foreign Affairs (November 25, 2014).
76. Yle Uutiset, "Rehn haluaa perusteluja Libya-päätöksille."
77. Huhta and Raeste, "Natoa kiinnostaa Suomen tulo ilmaoperaatioon"; Raeste, "Stubb: Hävittäjien lähettäminen Libyaan olisi ollut iso muutos"; interview with Koivula.
78. Interview by the author with Hiski Haukkala, Professor, Special Adviser, Unit for Policy Planning and Research, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (June 8, 2015).
79. Interview with Salenius-Pasternak.
80. Antti Seppo and Tuomas Forsberg, "Finland," in Biehl et al., eds., *Strategic Cultures*, 113–124; interview with Shemeikka.
81. Seppo and Forsberg, "Finland," 115; interview by the author with Teija Tiilikainen, Director, Finnish Institute of International Affairs (June 8, 2015).
82. Since 1956, Finland has participated in around 30 UN peacekeeping and observation missions with almost 40,000 troops. Seppo and Forsberg, "Finland," 115.
83. *Ibid.*, 116.
84. Interview by the author with Teemu Palosaari, Researcher, University of Tampere, Finland (March 22, 2015). A similar argument was also raised by other respondents: interview by the author with anonymous respondent, Ministry of Defense (June 9, 2015).
85. Interview with Tiilikainen.
86. Interviews with Haukkala, Palosaari, and Salenius-Pasternak.
87. Seppo and Forsberg, "Finland," 119.
88. *Ibid.*
89. Teemu Palosaari, "Still a Physician Rather than a Judge? The Post-Cold War Foreign and Security Policy of Finland," *Swiss Political Science Review*, vol. 19, no. 3 (September 2013): 370.
90. Interview by Björn Jönsson with Janne Jokinen, (former) Head of the North Africa Section, Department for North Africa and the Middle East, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (August 2010–July 2013), (current) Head of the Political Section, the Finnish Embassy in Washington (December 4, 2014).
91. Sipilä, "Suomi mieltii avunpyynnöt maltilla." A similar statement is also found in Stubb, personal blog, April 4, 2011.
92. Yle Uutiset, "Halonen: Vaaleilla ei ratkaisevaa vaikutusta Suomen Libya-päätökseen," television interview with Tarja Halonen, April 2, 2011, available at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/halonen\\_vaaleilla\\_ei\\_ratkaisevaa\\_vaikutusta\\_suomen\\_libya-paatokseen/2485289](http://yle.fi/uutiset/halonen_vaaleilla_ei_ratkaisevaa_vaikutusta_suomen_libya-paatokseen/2485289) (accessed April 28, 2015).
93. *Ibid.*
94. Yle Uutiset, "Ruotsin päätös ei vie Suomen Horneteja Libyaan," television interview with Alexander Stubb, March 29, 2011, available at [http://yle.fi/uutiset/stubb\\_ruotsin\\_paatos\\_ei\\_vie\\_suomen\\_horneteja\\_libyaan/5333807](http://yle.fi/uutiset/stubb_ruotsin_paatos_ei_vie_suomen_horneteja_libyaan/5333807) (accessed April 28, 2015).
95. Matti Simula, "Puoluejohtajat: Ei suomalaishävittäjiä Libyaan," *Suomen Kuvalehti*, March 31, 2011.
96. Janne Strang, "Finlands varumärke är fred, inte krig," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, March 31, 2011.
97. *Ibid.* This point was also raised by President Halonen; see Yle Uutiset, "Halonen: Vaaleilla ei ratkaisevaa vaikutusta Suomen Libya-päätökseen."
98. Marcus Lindqvist, "Sveriges beslut påverkar inte Finland"; Jenita Sillanpää and Kari Huhta, "Ahtisaari kehuu Suomen päätöksiä," *Helsingin Sanomat*, April 4, 2011.
99. Marcus Lindqvist, "Sveriges beslut påverkar inte Finland"; interview with Jokinen.
100. Yle Uutiset, "Halonen: Vaaleilla ei ratkaisevaa vaikutusta Suomen Libya-päätökseen."
101. Interview with Jokinen.
102. Seppo and Forsberg, "Finland," 119.
103. Palosaari, "Still a Physician?" 372.
104. Yle Uutiset, "Haloselta ynmarrystä Naton iskulle Libyaassa."
105. Interview with Tiilikainen.
106. Interview by the author with Tuomas Forsberg, Professor, University of Tampere, Finland (August 18, 2015).
107. Interviews with Forsberg, Haukkala, and Tiilikainen.
108. Interview with Tiilikainen.
109. Interview with Haukkala.
110. Interview with Palosaari.

111. Interview by Björn Jönsson with Jan Koskimies, Left Party, Political Assistant to the Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee (November 28, 2014); interviews with anonymous respondent, Jokinen and Saloniemi-Pasternak.
112. Interview by Björn Jönsson with Stefan Wallin, Swedish People's Party, (former) Minister of Culture and Sport (2007–2011), Minister of Defense (2011–2012) (November 27, 2014).
113. Interviews with Haukkala, Koskimies, Tiilikainen, and Wallin.
114. Foreign Ministry of Finland, "Libya's Situation and International Action," UTP 20/2010—follow-up letter 2, April 5, 2011; Marianne Lydén, "Finland närmare insats i Libyen," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, April 6, 2011.
115. Interview with Jokinen.
116. Interview with Haukkala.
117. Ibid.
118. Interviews with Jokinen, Shemeikka, and Wallin.
119. Interview by Björn Jönsson with Paavo Väyrynen, Center Party, (former) Minister for Foreign Affairs (1977–1987, 1991–1993), Minister for Foreign Trade and International Development (2007–2011), (current) Member of the European Parliament (December 10, 2014). Foreign Minister Stubb later said that he regretted the decision to not participate in OUP. Suomen tietotoimisto, "Nyky päivä: Stubb ångrar att Finland inte deltog i Libyen-operationen," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, September 9, 2011, available at <http://hbl.fi/nyheter/2011-09-09/nykypaiva-stubb-angrar-att-finland-inte-deltog-i-libyen-operationen> (accessed April 4, 2014).
120. Interview with Väyrynen.
121. Interview with Shemeikka.
122. Another alternative explanation concerns possible differences in defense industry interests. While Finland purchased its Hornets from the USA, Sweden has a domestic manufacturing of *JAS Gripen*. For the Swedish defense industry it is important that the planes have "conflict credential" and are "battle-proven," while Finland has no incentives for testing its planes for marketing purposes. However, this study has not found any empirical evidence showing that the Swedish strategic leadership took into account defense industry interests when it decided on participation in OUP. If the Swedish government had been interested in selling airplanes, it would probably have used these planes earlier, for example, in Afghanistan, as noted by several of the interview respondents.
123. O'Connor and Vucetic, "Another Mars-Venus Divide?"; Ångström and Honig, "Regaining Strategy."

## Notes on contributor

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