

Abstract of the doctoral dissertation:
“Interdependencies between U.S. Regional Extended Deterrence Commitments”

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The doctoral dissertation examines how, why and to what extent U.S. extended deterrence commitments to European member countries of NATO and to countries in the Asia-Pacific (particularly Australia, Japan, and South Korea) create security interdependencies between the U.S. allies in these regions. Building on various concepts developed primarily within the realist paradigm of international relations, mainly neo-realist theories, the research identifies and defines three types of interdependencies: strategic priorities, security interests, and military interdependencies. Several case studies analyze whether each type of interdependence has existed during Barack Obama’s presidency – between January 2009 and May 2016.

The examination of three types of interdependencies supports an investigation of whether the following hypothesis is well founded: Even though U.S. European and Asia-Pacific allies are not formally aligned by mutual defense treaties, because of shared reliance on U.S. extended deterrence their security is highly interdependent. Changes in U.S. extended deterrence in one region affects U.S. allies in other regions. Furthermore, because of shared reliance on U.S. extended deterrence, the U.S. allies in Europe and the Asia-Pacific have become “aligned by default.” Even without a formal alliance commitments, in some security contingencies U.S. allies in one region could expect support from U.S. allies in another region. The U.S. role for countries in Europe and in the Asia-Pacific goes beyond being a security guarantor. The United States play a role of the hub of a centralized network of interdependencies among the U.S. allies.