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Wanted: A Mid-Range Theory of International Peacekeeping

[Oldrich Bures](#)

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Abstract

This essay provides a critical review of the existing scholarly attempts to conceptualize and theorize about peacekeeping operations. It reveals that

even though studies of such operations are increasing, most of the available literature is idiosyncratic and atheoretical. Moreover, although a number of authors have recently begun to utilize conflict resolution and international relations concepts in their analyses, these theories are not yet fully integrated into the study of peacekeeping. After inspecting the future research agendas outlined by the leading experts in the field, the author critiques the recent calls for a “macrotheory” of international peacekeeping and concludes by making the case for the development of a “mid-range” theory that can more firmly place international relations, conflict resolution, and peace studies scholarship into the study of peacekeeping.

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