

converge and that define acceptable state behaviour for both recipient and donor countries." Uvin and Biagiotti regard political conditionality as a regime that "is not firmly established or consensual: In many ways, it is an emerging regime, emanating from a few rich countries and impregnated with their ideology, subject to much dissension and conflict."

In other words, even if there is a base upon which to build a regime of political conditionality in support of military spending reductions, it is less clear that there is a base in international norms for singling out developing countries for special pressures to reduce their military spending. Furthermore, as Uvin and Biagiotti point out, most plans in the North to link ODA to military spending reductions appeal exclusively to the economic impact of military spending in developing countries, with no attention to the impact on peace and security. They also make the interesting point that agencies like the IMF have traditionally claimed that they cannot address military spending issues inasmuch as these are political prerogatives within the purview of sovereign states, but when the issue comes to be redefined as an economic matter, then the IMF feels perfectly at ease in intervening and applying political pressures. Indeed, they go on to claim that generally the international community and major powers in particular, have until very recently encouraged high levels of military spending in developing countries and in the world generally.

The current formulation of political conditionality is most problematic inasmuch as the northern or industrialized states appear to want to impose conditions that apply to others but not to themselves. This pattern applies more generally to the promotion of democracy as well. When it is in the interests of the major powers to support dictatorial regimes, then they seem to feel free to do so, even by helping them to increase their military expenditures. When it is in the interests of major powers to intervene against dictatorial regimes in support of democracy, they may on occasion do that -- but always according to their interests rather than according to accepted international norms. To the extent that this approach prevails, political pressures on developing countries will be perceived as violations of sovereignty much more than as encouragements to meet international standards.