

population, there are a number of countries of similar size and economic weight where some have militaries and some do not. Liechtenstein is a small landlocked high performing European economy as is San Marino yet Liechtenstein is unarmed and San Marino maintains the Guards of the Rock and a citizen militia. Costa Rica and Panama are Upper Middle Income Central American States with no military sitting in the same region as Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras who are all Lower Middle Income Countries with significant military capabilities. There is no single set of economic circumstances that determine whether a state will build a military or not.

A common historical picture for these 20 states is even more difficult to find than the broad similarities around area and population. Of the 20 states, 11 are former British colonial possessions, three are former US colonial possessions, one is a former Danish possession and three are products of the Latin American independence movements of the early 19th Century²⁴. Of the 20 only Liechtenstein and Andorra have been independent for more than 200 years and even then, their sovereignty was in a framework of European Imperial allegiances. Of the 20 states there are only three that have suffered invasion and occupation by a foreign power in the last 50 years. These three states Grenada, Haiti and Panama were all invaded by the United States, they all had military forces when they were invaded and, crucially, those military forces and the Governments they supported are recognized as being causal factors for the invasion by being instrumental in holding undemocratic leaders in power²⁵.

The Utility of Armed Forces

The type of state choosing to have no military is therefore highly variable in terms of size, population, history and circumstance. What has greater commonality is the utility of military forces in mitigating security threats to these states. It can be argued that military forces defend a state in three main ways.

The first way is to be a credible fighting force that has the ability to defeat armed attacks from likely adversaries. This is the approach taken by larger nations like India, China and Russia. These militaries are capable of fighting alone, tend to be large in number and possess a wide

Report, February 2007), retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20111005100501/http://www.unescap.org/pdd/publications/working_paper/wp_09_02.pdf

²⁴ Dominica, Grenada, Kiribati, Mauritius, Nauru, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are all former British possessions. Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau are former US possessions. Iceland is a former Danish possession. Haiti gained independence from France and Costa Rica and Panama from Spain in the early 19th Century.

²⁵ William R. Keylor, **A World of Nations**, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 281-283.