Natural Disasters and their Impact on Cooperation Against a Common Enemy

Abstract

The impact of a natural disaster on the coordination of defensive efforts by a target state (G) and an ally (A) in relation to the choice to stage an attack by a terrorist (T) is studied. We focus on “long term impacts” which increase costs of defensive efforts for G, showing how the choice by A to provide assistance or not and the ultimate choice by T to attack or not might be altered. A unique Subgame Perfect Nash Equilibrium is identified. A comparative statics analysis reveals how the natural disaster alters the equilibrium outcome with respect to: (i) whether A chooses to provide assistance and (ii) whether T chooses to stage an attack. A natural disaster of sufficiently small magnitude might counter-intuitively lead to: (i) A not providing assistance which otherwise would have been provided and (ii) A not staging an attack which otherwise would have been staged.