

# [The place of military in conflict resolution: analyzing the views of various cand...](https://assignbuster.com/the-place-of-military-in-conflict-resolution-analyzing-the-views-of-various-candidates/)

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Speech takes place at Loyola. Candidate has recently secured the Democratic nomination for president and is now outlining his policy proposals in a series of speeches at colleges and universities. This speech addresses the candidate’s view of the military’s role in humanitarian interventions and the challenges posed by China in the South China Sea.

The following speech is presented in teleprompter format.

-INTRODUCTION OF CANDIDATE BY LOYOLA PRESIDENT-

-APPLAUSE-

-CANDIDATE ENTERS GENTILE ARENA AND CLIMBS UP TO STAGE-

-CANDIDATE WAVES TO CROWD AND GREETS LOYOLA PRESIDENT-

-CANDIDATE CONTINUES TO WAVE TO CROWD AND APPROACHES PODIUM-

Thank you everybody!

Thank you! Thank you so much!

Please take your seats. Thank you!

-WAIT FOR APPLAUSE TO END-

It’s a great honor to be here at Loyola. I cannot think of a better place to talk about the protection of human rights and our national security around the world. Thank you to all the students, faculty members and to Dr. Jo Ann Rooney for such a great welcome. I’m truly honored. Thank you.

America is exceptional. For centuries, America has been a beacon of hope for those thirsting for justice and freedom. As a nation, we’ve fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and offered sanctuary to the oppressed. It is in the very DNA of our country to help the poor and protect the innocent. Americans are a compassionate people who cannot ignore injustice when they see it.

Today, our world faces many humanitarian crises. Constantly, we hear of fighting breaking out somewhere in Africa or the Middle East. We see the images of a mother clutching her children, uncertain what to do or where to go in the face of indiscriminate violence. The past few years alone have been marked by a massacre in Syria with hundreds of thousands of people dead and millions of refugees displaced.

These situations are tragic and we cannot ignore these people’s plight. But more often than not, there are little to no American national security interests at stake in these conflicts.

For too long, America’s solution to distant wars and conflicts around the world has been to add more fuel to the fire. Whenever we hear of a government or terrorist group killing civilians, murdering women and children, our immediate response is to send our military to fix the problem.

We never stop to ask ourselves whether sending the military will bring about peace. We never stop to ask ourselves whether our military is equipped to help these people. We never stop to ask ourselves whether military intervention won’t end up hurting these people more than it helps their cause.

The American military is the best fighting force the world has ever known. Our military’s primary purpose is to fight and win wars. But there are many things that we expect our armed forces to do that they simply aren’t designed to accomplish.

Iraq, Libya, Syria, Somalia—these are some of the places that we have intervened militarily claiming to have the best interests of civilians at heart. However, instead of bringing about peace, stability, and prosperity, we’ve fueled instability, lawlessness, and insurgency.

Benjamin Franklin once said, “ The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results”. The United States keeps intervening in countries it has no national security interest in and then wondering why those missions fail.

Let me be clear, I believe that the intentions of President George W. Bush, President Barack Obama, and all past administrations were good when they engaged in humanitarian military interventions. But the military is a good tool only when America’s national security interests are threatened. Only when our national security is threatened does the military receive the proper resources, support, and direction it needs to accomplish its objectives. Humanitarian interventions, by their very nature, are often misdirected underfunded boondoggles that cost America billions of dollars and the lives of its men in uniform.

In conflicts where American national security interests, such as trade routes, energy supplies, or military bases, are threatened, it makes sense to position our military strategically to deter intrastate conflicts from affecting the United States. However, any aspect of the conflict that does not affect our national security interests does not warrant a unilateral military response from the United States.

The United States does not have the capability to be the world’s police man. As president, I will not allow for American service men and women to die fighting another country’s war!

-PAUSE-

That is why, under my administration, the United States will only respond militarily to crises where American national security interests are at stake. We will, however, consider assisting a United Nations authorized military intervention if we believe there are clear achievable objectives and the world community is willing to provide sufficient resources to achieve those objectives. Over are the times of endless wars!

-PAUSE-

The United States still has a moral responsibility to protect those innocent civilians caught in the cross fire of war. Even greater is our responsibility to protect those who are the targets of genocide and ethnic cleansing.

Therefore, rather than immediately resorting to military intervention in the face of human rights abuses, my administration will engage America’s financial and diplomatic resources to protect the innocent.

First, the United States, rather than fund unending military interventions, will financially aid countries that open their borders to fleeing refugees. Our objective in humanitarian interventions is to keep innocent people away from the death and destruction of war. We will grant whatever peaceful humanitarian aid is necessary to ensure the health and safety of refugees.

Second, we will pursue United Nations authorized military interventions to stop genocides and illegal wars. If the United Nations Security Council does not approve of such an intervention, the United States will not enter unilaterally into the conflict. We will, at a minimum, impose sanctions against any entity that commits war crimes and we will pressure and embarrass those countries who continue to conduct business with such war criminals.

Third, we will no longer sell or in any way provide weapons to non-state actors. We will stop the supplying of weapons to these groups by attrition. As conflicts end and the non-state actors we currently supply stop their activities, we will cease to supply weapons and will not begin to supply new organizations as new conflicts arise. In addition, we will pursue a treaty between the United States, Russia, China, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Ukraine, Israel, and the United Kingdom, the top weapons exporters in the world, to stop the supply of weapons to foreign non-state actors. My hope is that such a treaty will deescalate conflicts in places like Syria and Ukraine.

Today, the Syrian civil war rages with great intensity with no end in sight because the Russian government is supplying the Syrian government with weapons. On the other hand, the United States is supplying the rebels fighting the Syrian regime. So long as the United States and Russia continue to fuel their respective sides, there will be no end to the war in Syria.

President Obama made the right choice in not ‘ putting boots on the ground’ in Syria. But he made the mistake of supporting disorganized and fragmented rebels. By supplying these rebels, who have no substantive chance of winning the war and forming a credible government, President Obama inadvertently prolonged the conflict in Syria and the plight of the innocent people caught in the middle of it.

In Ukraine, the Russian government is supplying weapons to rebel groups in Eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian government would have already defeated these groups if they weren’t continually propped up by the Russian government. When world super powers provide weapons to non-state actors, seldom do we help either side win. Often, we simply prolong the conflict and the suffering of those involved.

My plan isn’t perfect and I am fully prepared to disclose some of the risks of my plan. First, the size of the United States’ influence and the reach of its military and economic interests leave very few countries where the United States doesn’t have a national security interest. We will be inevitably drawn into some conflicts as they arise. Moreover, the costs of providing for refugees will be steep and is subject to congressional approval.

In regards to seeking United Nations authorized interventions, it is very difficult to obtain approval from the members of the Security Council. China and Russia often veto resolutions to intervene militarily in the internal conflicts of other countries. Pressuring or embarrassing powerful countries into sanctioning war criminals may sour relations between the United States and many of our economic partners. Moreover, the effects of sanctions are slow to take effect and have varying degrees of success in coercing desired actions.

Finally, a treaty to no longer supply weapons to non-state actors will be difficult to achieve, especially considering Russian activities in Eastern Ukraine. Supplying weapons to non-state actors is a powerful tool in national security and foreign policy. It will be very difficult to convince nations to give up such a power and even more difficult to convince the Senate to approve of such a treaty.

I still believe that my plan is the best choice for accomplishing our national security objectives and protecting as many civilians as possible.

Whether we intervene militarily or not, conflicts result in thousands of refugees seeking asylum. We can either spend money prolonging a conflict and producing more refugees and death or we can protect the refugees that are already displaced from their homes and cut off the flow of weapons that fuel wars.

Nothing in my plan is easy to achieve or guaranteed to succeed, but it is within our grasp. We cannot continue the failed policies that leave thousands of our service men and women dead and costs us billions of dollars. We have to curtail the shady weapons deals that fuel conflicts. We have to band together as a world community to fight genocide. With the world’s resources, we can achieve world peace. It’s time we give soft power and diplomacy a chance to end conflicts. It’s time we give peace a chance.

Now I do not want anyone to interpret my hesitation to use military force as weakness. It is not weakness to exercise restraint in engaging the military. Just as it is not a strength to be reckless in deploying military assets. If faced with a threat to the national security of the United States, I will consider all options on the table and will not hesitate to use military force, if necessary, to protect American interests.

However, with the destructive power of weaponry today, we must be prudent in how we conduct foreign policy to ensure we do not unnecessarily escalate disputes into armed conflict.

Today, the United States faces a formidable challenge from China. It is of critical importance that, while asserting American interests, we avoid an armed confrontation with China. Such a conflict would have disastrous consequences for the world. That is why my plan for resolving the South China Sea dispute rests on a constant, steadfast, and patient assertion of international law.

Currently, China is violating international law by claiming nearly the entire South China Sea to be part of its Exclusive Economic Zone. The United States would have no problem granting China such a claim, if only it was true. China is instead strategically building islands throughout the South China Sea and then claiming such man-made islands to be part of its territory along with the waters around it. By claiming those waters, China also claims the 200-mile radius around the islands that give China exclusive rights to develop and take advantage of natural resources in the area. International law does not recognize such claims and neither will the United States.

China is entitled to the territorial waters around any lands that are not man-made and where China is clearly the sovereign government in control. That means that the United States will only recognize China’s Exclusive Economic Zone to be areas north of the Paracel islands. On July 12, an international tribunal confirmed this opinion in ruling for the Philippines in its case against China. China however, has ignored the ruling and has continued to expand man made islands and build military bases on these islands throughout the South China Sea.

These actions by China constitute a direct threat to American national security interests. $5. 3 trillion dollars worth of goods pass through the sea every year, nearly 30 percent of global maritime trade. That includes $1. 2 trillion worth of annual trade with the United States and large amounts of oil. If China asserts that the South China Sea is part of its territorial waters, it would give it the power to hold international trade hostage if it ever chose to close off shipping routes through what it considers to be its territorial waters. If China’s claims to the South China Sea were to be recognized, the United States Navy will not have as much flexibility in conducting operations in the area and ensuring free passage to ships.

The United States must be careful in how in conducts its policies with China. The Chinese government has proven to be very difficult in negotiation. China refuses to negotiate with parties, it believes, have no stake in the dispute because they do not border the South China Sea, like the United States. It prefers to negotiate bilaterally, giving it an advantage over the smaller countries that are involved. Therefore, to prevent China from retaliating against the United States, the United States must conduct its policies in a way that the international community will support it. We must avoid antagonizing China while making clear that violating international law is not acceptable.

There are multiple courses of actions to resolve the dispute with China over the South China Sea. Some have said to simply let the Chinese take the sea because it is not in China’s interest to close of shipping routes through the South China Sea anyway. Freedom of navigation will continue; China’s interests are in the resources located beneath the sea.

Others say that we should hold other agreements and deals hostage until China gives up its claims. Some have even encouraged policy makers to begin to sanction China until it decides that the South China Sea isn’t worth the souring its foreign relations.

Finally, others believe that we should continue our policy toward the dispute as we have to this day. The United States should continue to fly military air missions and sail its navy through the South China Sea, irrespective of any supposed territorial claim by China.

The Obama administration has looked at all of these options and has decided to continue the sailing Freedom of Navigation missions through the South China Sea. I believe that this has been a patient, yet effective policy. As long as the international community does not recognize China’s exclusive rights to this zone, China is still limited in the actions it can take. China is a behemoth and will soon be a world power but it, just like the United States, is limited in the actions it can feasibly take.

Under my administration, the long-term policy objective will be to ensure that free trade can be conducted without obstruction and that the economic rights of our allies are not infringed upon. That is why I will continue the Obama administration policies of conducting Freedom of Navigation operations in the South China Sea, regardless of territorial claims over man-made islands. This will help ensure ships may sail through the South China Sea without inhibition. In addition, if any of our allies choose to take advantage of the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone recognized by the international community as theirs, we will protect their assets from Chinese harassment and obstruction. We will invite all nations to participate in such operations to demonstrate the international community’s commitment to uphold international law. All U. S. warships and aircraft will be directed to not comply will any demand to exit any falsely claimed territorial airspace or waters. If China escalates the conflict by firing on American military assets, the military will be authorized to respond in kind.

As long as the international community doesn’t recognize China’s claims, they will struggle to conduct operations and assert their authority in the South China Sea. It is my hope, that through the steadfast conduct of the international community, China will recognize that it cannot violate international law whenever it is convenient for them.

This course of action is good for the United States because it is a stable predictable policy. As much as our refusal to recognize China’s claims will frustrate Beijing, the Chinese government has little to no basis to challenge, or disproportionately react to, peaceful Freedom of Navigation operations in seas where such operations have been historically conducted.

Moreover, this policy does not arrogantly assert American superpower dominance, instead it patiently asserts the will of the international community to uphold international law. China, while frustrated and challenged, will not feel pressure to lash out and act in an irrational or excessively hostile manner.

This policy is better than the alternatives because the other policies either set a terrible precedent for future disputes or they escalate the conflict to unnecessarily high levels. If we allow China to claim control over the South China Sea without opposition, we grant them exclusive rights to 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. These are resources that fall within the Exclusive Economic Zone of many countries in the region, including many of our allies. We cannot begin a policy of giving in to Chinese demands in violation of international law simply because it is diplomatically expedient to do so.

We also cannot hold other agreements, treaties, and interests hostage subject to China giving up its claims. To behave in this manner would potentially embarrass China and encourage Beijing to act defensively and intransigently in face of an adversary. This could unintentionally escalate tensions and have potentially disastrous consequences. God forbid the United States and China engage in a shooting war with each other.

Continuing our policy of conducting Freedom of Navigation operations is within our abilities as a naval superpower. The risk level of this plan is relatively low and does not exceed the risk level we have considered acceptable in the past. We cannot be certain how China will conduct itself and how aggressively it will pursue recognition and respect of its claims. What I do know is that under my presidency we will pursue peace through strength.

America doesn’t have to be in a perpetual state of war. It seems that every few years, we become entangled in yet another conflict where the objectives aren’t clear and resources are sparse. We can assert American interests and values without immediately engaging an active military response.

It’s time we applied the lesson our parents taught us to our military use – ‘ think before you act’. It’s time for war to be abnormal and peace to be usual. It’s time for civil war to cease and sectarian violence to be thing of the past. It’s time for the innocent to be protected and vulnerable to be cared for. It’s time for the nations of the world enforce international law and it’s time America stood at the forefront of that enforcement.

It’s time for America to change the world.

Thank you Loyola! God bless you! AND GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!)

-STEP AWAY FROM PODIUM AND WAVE TO CROWD-

-SHAKE LOYOLA PRESIDENT’S HAND AGAIN-

-WALK AMONG CROWD-