

**CODEBOOK DATASET ULTIMATA IN COERCIVE  
DIPLOMACY, 1920-2020**

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Tim Sweijs

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# 1 Codebook Dataset Ultimata in Coercive Diplomacy, 1920-2020

## 1.1 Introduction

This codebook accompanies a dataset which contains information on 87 ultimata issued in *interstate* coercive diplomacy in the period 1920-2020. The dataset has been compiled as part of the research conducted for my PhD Thesis *The Use and Utility of Ultimata* and updated for publication for the Palgrave MacMillan book *The Use and Utility of Ultimata in Coercive Diplomacy*. Ultimata in interstate coercive diplomacy consist of a specific demand or set of demands, a time frame for compliance, and a threat of military punishment in case of non-compliance, and are issued by the government of one state to the government of another state. For each ultimatum, concise case summaries have been written up. To consult the case summaries, please refer to the website [www.coercivediplomacy.com](http://www.coercivediplomacy.com). A coding framework has been created to describe and assess each ultimatum episode in a quantified or a semi-quantified manner. The coding scheme draws on the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) dataset, the Militarized Compellent Threat (MCT) dataset, the National Material Capabilities dataset and the Polity regime dataset. This document describes the coding framework and explains how the variables have been operationalised. Additional discussion of the definition and operationalisation of ultimata as well as the procedures which have been relied on in compiling the dataset is provided in the book. The dataset itself is available at [www.coercivediplomacy.com](http://www.coercivediplomacy.com).

## 1.2 Variables

### 1.2.1 Number

Each ultimatum is listed with a number from 1-87 which is awarded chronologically starting from 1920 onwards.

### 1.2.2 Date

The date that the ultimatum was issued is provided in dd-mm-yyyy format.

### 1.2.3 Case

Each case title includes the main participants in the format coercer(s)-target of coercion as they appear in the Polity regime dataset.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marshall, Gurr, and Jagers, 'Polity IV Project, Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2013, Dataset Users' Manual'; INCSR, 'Polity IV Annual Time-Series, 1800-2014, INCSR Data', 2016,

#### 1.2.4 Coercer

The coercer is listed with its name as registered in the Polity regime dataset. The Polity project assesses political regime characteristics and transitions from 1800-2018 and describes a state as a 'recognized central authority for a (potential) social unit that is delimited spatially through the identification of formal, territorial borders' featuring 'more or less institutionalized authority patterns'.<sup>2</sup> Only cases involving ultimata issued by the government(s) of one or more states against the government of another state are considered. Cases of coercive diplomacy that exclusively involve non-state actors, either on both sides or on one side (with the other side being a state entity), are not included.<sup>3</sup> In multinational or coalitional coercive diplomacy, the state with the greatest capabilities is listed as the primary coercer (see below).

#### 1.2.5 Other coercers

Similar to coercer.

#### 1.2.6 Nature of coalition

Three coalition types are distinguished: unilateral if there is one coercer, bilateral if there are two coercers, and multilateral, if there are three or more coercers:

- 1 = Unilateral
- 2 = Bilateral
- 3 = Multilateral

#### 1.2.7 Regime type coercer

For regime type, the polity2 regime score of the Polity dataset is listed.<sup>4</sup> This is a composite score of democratic and autocratic features of the regime which runs from -10 (fully autocratic) to +10 (fully democratic). The Polity regime dataset assesses regimes both on democratic dimensions (institutionalised procedures for preference expression for citizens about policies and political leaders; institutionalised constraints on the exercise of executive power; and protection of civil liberties) and autocratic dimensions (restriction and competitiveness of

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<http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html>.; and for after 2014, INCSR, 'Polity V Annual Time-Series, 1800-2018, INCSR Data'.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, Gurr, and Jagers, 'Polity IV Project, Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2013, Dataset Users' Manual', 1.

<sup>3</sup> In a few instances ultimata have been included involving states or state-like entities which are not listed in the Polity regime dataset because these entities largely functioned like states and fulfilled in my interpretation the conditions of the Polity regime criteria. These cases are Armenia and Georgia in the early 1920s (in the short time window following the Russian Revolution in 1917 and their annexation by the Soviet Union in 1921/1922), Syria in the 1920s (after its independence and prior to it becoming a French Mandate State), and Republica Srpska in the mid-1990s (after it had been established in 1992 in the civil wars that erupted after the dissolution of Yugoslavia).

<sup>4</sup> Marshall, Gurr, and Jagers, 'Polity IV Project, Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2013, Dataset Users' Manual'; INCSR, 'Polity IV Annual Time-Series, 1800-2014, INCSR Data', 2016, <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html>.; and for after 2014, INCSR, 'Polity V Annual Time-Series, 1800-2018, INCSR Data'.

political participation and constraints on the chief executive). For both of these dimensions they receive a score. The polity2 regime score is the sum of the two scores. Regimes exhibit both democratic and autocratic features and can be classified as fully democratic, autocratic or anocratic (a regime characterised by a mix of democratic and autocratic features). While the polity2 regime score is a commonly used measurement to assess and classify regimes, it has also been the subject of critique because of its composite nature that sometimes obfuscates the existence of real differences between institutional features of regimes both within and across these higher order classifications. As a first and rough indication of regime type, however, it is fit for purpose here, it serving as the basis for further in-depth analysis.<sup>5</sup>

polity2 regime score 6 – 10 = democracy

polity2 regime score -5 – 5 = anocracy

polity2 regime score -6 – -10 = autocracy

For the entire dataset, if no data are available, na is entered.

### 1.2.8 Material capabilities coercer

To assess the capabilities of the primary coercer, the composite indicator of national capabilities (CINC) score of the National Material Capabilities dataset is used.<sup>6</sup> The CINC score is based on three dimensions consisting of two indicators each: demographic (total population and urban population), industrial (primary energy consumption and iron and steel production) and military (military personnel on active duty and military expenditures over the past five years). The CINC score is based on the sum of the six scores calculated as a share of the total set of capabilities in the international system.<sup>7</sup> The ability of capabilities indices to adequately capture power has been critiqued on several grounds,<sup>8</sup> but it is generally acknowledged that material capabilities do matter and that the senior leadership of coercers and coerced generally do factor

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<sup>5</sup> See Marshall, Gurr, and Jagers, 'Polity IV Project, Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2013, Dataset Users' Manual', 13–17. and Monty G. Marshall and Monty G. Marshall Benjamin R. Cole Cole, 'Global Report 2014 - Conflict, Governance, and State Fragility' (Vienna, VA USA: Center for Systemic Peace - George Mason University, 23 July 2014), 20–22,

<http://www.systemicpeace.org/vlibrary/GlobalReport2014.pdf>. See also Patrick M. Regan and Sam R. Bell, 'Changing Lanes or Stuck in the Middle: Why Are Anocracies More Prone to Civil Wars?', *Political Research Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (1 December 2010): 248, <https://doi.org/10/dx8mkf>.

<sup>6</sup> The Correlates of War Project, 'National Material Capabilities v4.0'; The Correlates of War Project, 'National Material Capabilities v6.0' (The Correlates of War Project, 2018). For the period 1920-2015, v4.0 was used. For the period 2015-2020, v6.0.

<sup>7</sup> Singer, 'Reconstructing the Correlates of War Dataset on Material Capabilities of States, 1816–1985'.

<sup>8</sup> See Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton University Press, 2004), 4. Stephen Biddle, for instance, contends that despite the centrality of power to the international relations and strategic studies literature, such indices are not very good at explaining victory and defeat in military conflict. He claims that in the academic world 'logically unsound, unitary notions of military capability [...] mask crucial trade-offs' and in an analysis of the wars in the period 1900-1992 he finds core elements of the CINC index to be poor predictors of victory and defeat. Biddle, 21. The problem in the practitioners world, so he argues, is that analyses are either 'rigorous but narrow' such as combat simulation models focusing on material factors alone, or 'broad but unrigorous' such as more holistically inclined accounts which seek to incorporate factors such as skills, strategy, morale etc. Biddle, 2.

in capability differences as a major factor in their decision making processes.<sup>9</sup> In this study, the CINC score offers a first rough approximation of the material capabilities of the coercer, which is the basis of further more in-depth analysis.

#### 1.2.9 Military capabilities coercer

To assess the military capabilities of the primary coercer, the annual military expenditures from the National Material Capabilities dataset is used.<sup>10</sup>

#### 1.2.10 Target of coercion

Similar as for coercer. Only cases involving ultimata issued by the government(s) of one or more states against the government of another state are considered. The two Berlin Deadline Crises in 1958 and 1960 which featured two ultimata presented by the Soviet Union to the four Western states (France, UK, US, and Western Germany) are counted as two ultimata, rather than as eight different ultimata, as the Western states coordinated their actions and operated like a block led by the US. The strongest state, the US, is listed as the primary target of coercion.

#### 1.2.11 Regime type target of coercion

Similar as for regime type coercer.

#### 1.2.12 Material capabilities target of coercion

Similar as for material capabilities coercer.

#### 1.2.13 Military capabilities coercer

Similar as for material capabilities coercer.

#### 1.2.14 Material capability difference

Material capability differences are calculated by subtracting the CINC score of the target of coercer from the CINC score of the coercer. On the basis of the result, the coercer is judged to be stronger or weaker:

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<sup>9</sup> Press, for instance, in *Calculating Credibility – How Leaders Assess Military Threats* asserts that decision makers base their assessment on a combination of military capabilities and vitality of interests which he calls ‘current calculus’. Press does not offer a general operationalisation of these capabilities but tailors them specifically on case by case study base. Daryl G. Press, *Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats* (Cornell University Press, 2005), 20–28. Other authors concur. See Glenn Herald Snyder and Paul Diesing, *Conflict Among Nations: Bargaining Decision Making and System Structure in International Crises* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Peter Viggo Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy After the Cold War: A Challenge for Theory and Practice* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1998).

<sup>10</sup> The Correlates of War Project, ‘National Material Capabilities v4.0’; The Correlates of War Project, ‘National Material Capabilities v6.0’ (The Correlates of War Project, 2018). For the period 1920-2015, v4.0 was used. For the period 2015-2020, v6.0.

CINC-score coercer > CINC-score target of coercion = stronger

CINC-score coercer < CINC-score target of coercion = weaker

If there is no score, because the state has no data for that particular year in the Material Capabilities dataset, then a stronger/weaker judgment has been made based on an assessment of the available evidence.

#### 1.2.15 Military capabilities difference

Military capability differences are calculated by subtracting the military expenditure of the target of coercer from the military expenditure score of the coercer. On the basis of the result, the coercer is judged to be stronger or weaker:

Milex coercer > Milex target of coercion = stronger

Milex coercer < Milex target of coercion = weaker

If there are no data available, because the state has no data for that particular year in the Material Capabilities dataset, then a stronger/weaker judgment has been made based on an assessment of the available evidence.

#### 1.2.16 Type of demands

The demands contained in ultimata are wide in scope and varied in nature. Demands are coded in five different categories: 1) *territory* 2) *regime* 3) *policy* 4) *reparations* 5) *violence and arms*. The categories mirror those but are not entirely similar to the ones in the MCT dataset, which distinguishes between *territory*, *leadership*, *policy*, *reparations* and *other*.<sup>11</sup> Territory frequently appears as part of the demands in ultimata. I have chosen for the category regime rather than leadership because demands can also concern lower levels officials as well as infringements on the regime's sovereignty. Instead of including the category *other*, which I found to be not very distinctive as a standalone category, the category *policy* contains all policy related demands which are not covered in the other categories. Reparations for (perceived) committed wrongs lie at the heart of many different coercive attempts involving ultimata. I have also included *violence and arms* as a standalone category because in a relatively sizeable proportion of cases these appear as central demands in the ultimata. This leads to the following taxonomy of demands:

- 1 = Territory: includes demands to cede control of territory and/or transfer sovereignty, to withdraw people or military equipment from an area, to grant basing rights and allow the stationing of foreign military forces and/or their transit.
- 2 = Regime: includes demands to dismiss members of the senior leadership of the regime as well as lower ranking officials, to renounce royal claims, to appoint

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<sup>11</sup> Sechser, 'Militarized Compellent Threats, 1918-2001', 384.



particular individuals to the senior leadership, to embed foreigners into the civil service and to accept submission into a mandate or protectorate.

- 3 = Policy: includes demands to change one or multiple policies that extend across a variety of domains, which include political issues (suppress political demonstrations, allow public gatherings, host, postpone or adapt the terms of a plebiscite; change or reject a particular law); social issues (protect people and interests; expel individual(s), release prisoners, hand over bodies of deceased persons); economic issues (adopt new currency; accept and respect the terms of a joint business venture; irrigate more land; promote economic integration; restore navigation signals); security issues (grant safe passage free from interference to vehicles and vessels; close off supply lines; provide weapons to societal factions; close down terrorist camps); ideological issues (stop insult / provocation); diplomatic issues (re-establishing relations and/or upgrading the official status of the relationship); and international inspections (allow an international commission to conduct a criminal inquiry or weapon inspectors to verify disarmament efforts).
- 4 = Reparations: includes demands to offer material or immaterial reparations for perceived wrongs, including monetary reimbursement, offering apologies, paying tribute, prosecuting and/or punishing citizens, and participation in negotiations to settle differences.
- 5 = Violence and Arms: includes demands to cease armed hostilities and/or disarm, including the handover of weapons, the elimination of weapons and weapon programmes, and the reduction of force numbers.

If ultimata contain multiple demands, multiple demands are coded. The coding scheme makes no preconceived judgments as to which demands concern interests that are more vital more than others.

#### 1.2.17 Time horizon

The time horizon of the ultimatum is provided in hours.

#### 1.2.18 International support for target of coercion

Support by other states for the target of coercion may come either in verbal form (e.g., a public statement) or in material form through the provision of (military) equipment and/or forces.

- 0 = No support
- 1 = Verbal support
- 2 = Material support

#### 1.2.19 International involvement (other states)

The involvement of external state actors (that are neither coercers nor targets of coercion nor the League of Nations or the United Nations) in the process, either prior to or after the ultimatum has been issued.

0 = no external actors involved

1 = external actors involved

#### 1.2.20 Involvement League of Nations or United Nations

The involvement of the League of Nations or the United Nations in the process. This is the case if these organisations (and the relevant bodies and actors within them) are actively involved in the crisis. Active involvement means more than merely the issuance of a public statement, but requires an active role in the crisis prevention, crisis escalation, or crisis resolution stage of the incident.

0 = no LoN/UN involvement

1 = LoN/UN involvement

#### 1.2.21 Demonstration of force coercer

Demonstration of force by the coercer through the mobilisation of its forces and/or military manoeuvres prior to or after the ultimatum.<sup>12</sup>

0 = no demonstration of force

1 = demonstration of force

#### 1.2.22 Use of force coercer

Use of military force by the coercer prior to or after the ultimatum.<sup>13</sup>

0 = the coercer did not use military force

1 = the coercer used military force

#### 1.2.23 Demonstration of force target of coercion

Similar as for demonstration of force by coercer.

#### 1.2.24 Use of force target of coercion

Similar as for use of force by coercer.

#### 1.2.25 Compliance of the target of coercion: first response

Strategic coercion is a dynamic process in which coercer and coerced act and react in an interactive sequence of moves and countermoves. Ultimata serve to convey the final warning,

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<sup>12</sup> This is similar to the demonstration of force variable of Sechser, 384., which is more elegant and parsimonious than the more elaborate Crisis Management Technique category of the International Crisis Behavior dataset, see Variable 7 CRISMG, see Brecher et al., 'International Crisis Behavior Data Codebook, Version 11'. Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, *A Study of Crisis* (University of Michigan Press, 1997). See also the description offered by Blechman and Kaplan of the use of armed forces in Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Brookings Institution Press, 1978), 12–13.

<sup>13</sup> Similar to the MCT dataset, see Sechser, 'Militarized Compellent Threats, 1918–2001', 384.

following which, absent full compliance, the coercer may opt to use his armed forces either to punish the coerced or to forcefully attain his objectives. Yet ultimata in real crisis situations, contrary to those issued in ultimatum games in laboratory simulations, do not always mark the final stage of negotiations. In many cases, also absent full compliance, ultimata are followed by an additional round of negotiations, sometimes with a limited military probe in between. Case studies are well suited to provide a detailed account of the dynamic nature of these processes and the case summaries already provide an overview of the various moves and countermoves, including of the history leading up to the ultimatum. But in order to get a better sense of this process in a comparative perspective for all eighty-seven ultimata, the analytical framework needs to capture the interactive nature of the bargaining process too. In some cases, the bargaining process is characterised by a single move and counter move, but in other cases this can stretch over a series of moves. As the bargaining process can go on and on, for the sake of parsimony, the analytical framework distinguishes between two rounds of bargaining. Round one covers the *first response* of the target of coercion to the ultimatum and the *first follow on response* of the coercer. Round two covers the *second response* of the target of coercion and the *second follow on response* of the coercer.

The first response of the target of coercion variable codes for whether the target complies with the demands of the ultimatum. Building on the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the MCT dataset, I also distinguish between the following three outcomes: The first category is *no compliance*, when the target of coercion does not comply. The second category is *partial compliance*, when the target of coercion complies with some of the demands. The third category is *full compliance*, when the target of coercion complies with all the demands contained in the ultimatum.<sup>14</sup>

- 0 = no compliance
- 1 = partial compliance
- 2 = full compliance

#### 1.2.26 First follow on response coercer

Following the initial reaction of the target of coercion (which can be either no compliance, partial compliance or full compliance), the coercer can pursue multiple courses of action:

1. **Escalation:** The coercer ends the bargaining process, opts for control, and uses large scale force in the form of the deployment of military forces that invade the territory of the target of coercion in order to forcefully achieve their objectives.<sup>15</sup>
2. **Punishment:** The coercer continues the bargaining process, but uses military force to inflict damage on the opponent with the explicit purpose of changing the calculus of target of coercion and get the target to comply voluntarily with the demands of the ultimatum.
3. **Negotiate:** The coercer continues the bargaining process but does not use military force.

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<sup>14</sup> Sechser, 385. See also the discussion Blechman and Kaplan, *Force without War*, 67–71.

<sup>15</sup> This is in line with Freedman's idea that the target of coercion needs to be a voluntary agent, whose decisions the coercer attempts to influence, rather than an agent whose actions he fully controls, in which case coercion no longer comes into play. Lawrence Freedman, *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1998), 15.

4. **End:** The coercer ends the bargaining process and the episode comes to an end.<sup>16</sup>

Please note that in reality the coercer can pursue each single one of the four options regardless of the nature of the response of the target of coercion. In other words, the coercer can decide to escalate (1) if the coercion is unsuccessful (no compliance or partial compliance) but he can also do so if the coercion is successful (full compliance). Even if the latter course of action may seem to make little sense theoretically, this does occasionally happen in reality. Similarly, the coercer can, and is likely to, end (4) the bargaining process after having achieved their objectives (full compliance) but the coercer can also end the bargaining process and withdraw after the target of coercion has refused to satisfy any of their demands (no compliance).

The coercer can complete the bargaining process in two ways: the coercer can either escalate (1) or end the coercion (4). The response of the target of coercion is then measured by the first response of the target of coercion (no compliance, partial compliance, full compliance).

However, if the coercer either punishes (2) or negotiates (3), the bargaining process enters a second round, which is described using a similar framework. (see 1.2.29) The overall follow on response by the coercer is then coded for the highest magnitude of response during the entire bargaining process, which runs from escalation (1) => punishment (2) => negotiation (3) => end (4) (see 1.2.30).

#### 1.2.27 Compliance of the target of coercion: second response

See compliance of the target of coercion: first response (1.2.25).

- If the target's response is full compliance in the second round following negotiation, the target's response of the second round is listed as the overall response under compliance, and it marks the end of the episode (regardless of whether the coercer still inflicts punishment after compliance).
- If the target's response is no compliance or partial compliance in the first round, and the coercer uses punishment, the target's response of the second round is listed as the overall response, and the dataset lists whether the coercer achieved their objectives under achievement of objectives (see 1.2.31).
- If the target's response is no compliance or partial compliance in the first round, and the coercer uses escalation, the target's response of the first round is listed as the overall response, and we move to achievement of objectives (see 1.2.31).

#### 1.2.28 Overall compliance of the target of coercion

This is the final response of the target of coercion which is either the second response, or if and only if there is no second response, then it is the first response.

#### 1.2.29 Second follow on response coercer

See first follow on response coercer.

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<sup>16</sup> The ICB contains a FORM OF OUTCOME variable which covers how crises end which includes 'tacit agreement' and 'crisis faded' which would also be covered under 4. See Brecher et al., 'International Crisis Behavior Data Codebook, Version 11', 44.

### 1.2.30 Highest follow on response coercer

This is the response of the coercer which lists the highest magnitude of response which runs from escalation (1) => punishment (2) => negotiation (3) => end (4).

### 1.2.31 Overall outcome: achievement of objectives

If the target of coercion does not comply fully with the demands (no or partial compliance), does the coercer achieve their demands, regardless of whether the coercer has escalated (1), punished (2), negotiated (3) or ended the coercion (4)?

0 = no objectives achieved

1 = objectives partially achieved

2 = objectives fully achieved<sup>17</sup>

### 1.2.32 Fatalities Coercer

Did the coercer suffer any fatalities?

0 = no

1 = yes

99 = no data

### 1.2.33 Fatalities target of coercion

Similar as for fatalities coercer

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<sup>17</sup> The MCT distinguishes between full, partial or no compulsion under the condition that military force has been used. An escalation strategy that is really aimed at establishing control over your opponent, is different, however, from military punishment which may still coerce the opponent into (partially) complying. For the MCT, see Sechser, 'Militarized Compellent Threats, 1918-2001', 385, 398. The use force proxy is therefore not sufficiently distinctive here. In addition, sometimes (limited) force is used prior to, rather than after, the ultimatum has been issued.