

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910779345203321
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Titolo	Constructing international security : alliances, deterrence, and moral hazard // Brett V. Benson, Vanderbilt University [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2012
ISBN	1-139-79429-9 1-316-09017-5 1-139-77993-1 1-139-77689-4 1-139-78292-4 1-107-25473-6 1-139-22569-3 1-283-71602-X 1-139-77841-2
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xiii, 207 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Classificazione	POL011000
Disciplina	355/.031
Soggetti	Security, International
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Machine generated contents note: 1. Understanding the design of security commitments; 2. A typology of third-party commitments; 3. Time consistency and entrapment; 4. Evidence of moral hazard in military alliances; 5. A theory of commitment design; 6. Testing the implications for alliance design; 7. Deterrent commitments in East Asia; 8. Constructing security in today's world.
Sommario/riassunto	Constructing International Security helps policy makers and students recognize effective third-party strategies for balancing deterrence and restraint in security relationships. Brett V. Benson shows that there are systematic differences among types of security commitments. Understanding these commitments is key, because commitments, such as formal military alliances and extended deterrence threats, form the basis of international security order. Benson argues that sometimes the optimal commitment conditions military assistance on specific hostile

actions the adversary might take. At other times, he finds, it is best to be ambiguous by leaving an ally and adversary uncertain about whether the third party will intervene. Such uncertainty transfers risk to the ally, thereby reducing the ally's motivation to behave too aggressively. The choice of security commitment depends on how well defenders can observe hostilities leading to war and on their evaluations of dispute settlements, their ally's security and the relative strength of the defender.
