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Diplomatic Voting Alignment and Organized Violence in Somalia Eritrea Egypt and Sudan from 2010 to 2025

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Abstract

This study describes diplomatic voting alignment and organized-violence outcomes for Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, and Sudan from 2010 to 2025 using secondary data. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) analysis covers 1,469 recorded adopted-resolution votes per country and yields six dyadic raw-agreement rates between 85.50% and 93.18%. Cohen's kappa ranged from 0.329 to 0.615, while the Benati–Capurri Alignment Index ranged from 0.055 to 0.210. The security analysis uses the UCDP Country-Year Dataset on Organized Violence within Country Borders, version 26.1, with 64 country-year observations and no missing values in the selected outcomes. Best-estimate organized-violence fatalities sum to 159,161 across the four countries and period, with substantial concentration in Sudan and Somalia and a marked increase in Sudan in 2023–2025. Six exploratory dyad-specific Spearman correlations between annual voting agreement and log-transformed mean pair fatalities were small to modest ($\rho = -0.216$ to 0.312) and not statistically significant at conventional levels (all unadjusted $p > .05$). These descriptive analyses do not establish causation; the small panel, repeated dyads, agenda-dependent voting, and temporal dependence limit inference. The findings illustrate why raw voting agreement

should be paired with complementary chance-adjusted measures and why diplomatic alignment and domestic security should be analyzed as distinct constructs before causal claims are considered.

Keywords: diplomatic alignment; United Nations General Assembly; Horn of Africa; regional security; organized violence; secondary-data analysis; Somalia; Eritrea; Egypt; Sudan

1. Introduction

The Horn of Africa and the adjoining Red Sea basin constitute a strategically important regional environment in which domestic security challenges intersect with maritime access, transboundary resources, external partnerships, and wider Middle Eastern and African geopolitical competition. Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, and Sudan occupy different positions within this environment, yet their foreign-policy choices can intersect in multilateral institutions and regional security debates. Understanding whether their public diplomatic positions converge—and whether such convergence is associated with patterns of organized violence—requires measures that are transparent, comparable across countries, and based on observed data.

Recorded voting in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is widely used as an observable indicator of states' positions on international issues. Unlike private diplomatic discussions, roll-call votes record each participating member's stated choice on a resolution. Research has used these records to examine political alignments, changing blocs, and foreign-policy preferences (Kim & Russett, 1996; Adarkwah et al., 2026). However, voting agreement is not equivalent to a formal alliance. Similarity can arise because countries share preferences, because a resolution receives broad support, or because the set of issues put to a vote changes over time. Recent methodological work specifically warns that simple agreement measures can overstate alignment when resolutions are adopted by large majorities (Benati & Capurri, 2026).

Security is similarly multidimensional. Counts of organized-violence fatalities or the presence of different forms of organized violence capture important but incomplete aspects of security. They do not measure all forms of political instability, maritime insecurity, interstate tension, institutional resilience, or human security. A rigorous analysis should therefore define the outcome narrowly, use a transparent source, document coverage and missingness, and avoid treating an association as causal evidence.

This article implements a two-part empirical design. First, it describes pairwise UNGA voting agreement among Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, and Sudan from 2010 through 2025 and supplements raw agreement with Cohen's kappa. Second, it describes country-year security outcomes from the verified UCDP OrganizedViolenceCY version 26.1 file and presents a cautious exploratory comparison between annual dyadic voting agreement and the mean annual fatality burden of the two countries in each dyad.

1.1 Research questions

1. RQ1. What levels of pairwise voting agreement are observed among Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, and Sudan in UNGA recorded votes from 2010 to 2025?
2. RQ2. How does pairwise voting agreement vary over time, and how sensitive are the estimates to the treatment of abstentions and non-voting observations?
3. RQ3. What patterns of organized violence are observed in the four countries over the same period, based on verified UCDP country-year indicators?
4. RQ4. Is there a defensible descriptive association between diplomatic voting agreement and security outcomes, given the small number of countries and years and the limitations of the measures?

1.2 Objectives

5. To calculate and compare pairwise UNGA voting agreement for the six unique country dyads.
6. To document temporal variation, denominators, and data-quality decisions for the voting analysis.
7. To describe security outcomes using verified UCDP country-year data without substituting simulated observations.
8. To assess whether the available panel supports exploratory association tests and to state the limits of any inference.

2. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1 UNGA voting as an indicator of diplomatic positioning

UNGA roll-call voting provides repeated public observations of states' positions on international questions. Comparative voting patterns have been used to study policy preferences and alignment across time and among groups of states (Kim & Russett, 1996). Agreement rates are intuitive and useful for descriptive comparison, but they assume that resolutions are equally informative and that the voting agenda is sufficiently comparable across units and periods. In practice, resolution topics and the frequency of recorded votes vary, which can affect measured similarity independently of a change in underlying preferences (Adarkwah et al., 2026).

Methodological choices matter. Abstention can be treated as a substantive position distinct from yes and no, whereas absence or non-voting should not automatically be interpreted as a vote preference. Benati and Capurri (2026) explain that broad majorities can produce high raw agreement even where the two states' voting choices are not more aligned than would be expected from their individual voting distributions. Häge and Hug's work on agreement

measures likewise emphasizes the importance of accounting for chance agreement and the prevalence of consensus decisions. For this reason, raw agreement is best treated as a first descriptive measure, not a definitive latent-preference or alliance measure.

In this study, pairwise agreement is retained as the primary, readily interpretable statistic and is reported with comparable-vote denominators and the limitation that the estimate is agenda-dependent. Cohen's kappa is included as a chance-corrected sensitivity measure. A further robustness analysis could compare these results with a voting-alignment index that adjusts for each country's marginal voting distribution, provided the data structure supports stable estimation.

2.2 Regional security and organized violence

Security in the Horn of Africa is not reducible to a single outcome. Country-year measures of organized violence can nevertheless provide a consistent basis for comparing the incidence and intensity of certain forms of political violence across countries and years. The UCDP Country-Year Dataset on Organized Violence within Country Borders aggregates georeferenced event data and distinguishes categories of organized violence. Its codebook and version should be cited and consulted when selecting outcomes and interpreting zero values, missing observations, and fatality estimates (Davies et al., 2026; Yilmaz, 2026).

A narrow outcome definition is necessary for comparability. Fatality estimates measure the intensity of recorded organized violence, while indicators for state-based, non-state, or one-sided violence represent different forms of violence rather than interchangeable manifestations of a single construct. These measures do not capture every dimension of regional security and should not be interpreted as comprehensive country-level security scores. The analysis should report the

selected variables separately and avoid combining them into an index unless there is a clear theoretical and measurement justification.

2.3 Linking diplomatic alignment and security: a cautious framework

A possible relationship between diplomatic alignment and security is theoretically ambiguous. States that face similar threats or share strategic interests may vote similarly in multilateral institutions. Conversely, governments may coordinate diplomatic positions to signal solidarity, build coalitions, or contest external policies. Yet raw voting similarity may be driven by common positions on issues unrelated to immediate regional security, and country-level violence may be affected by domestic institutions, conflict dynamics, economic conditions, and external intervention. The present design therefore treats any association between voting and security as exploratory rather than causal.

The analysis distinguishes (a) descriptive diplomatic voting patterns, (b) country-year organized-violence patterns, and (c) exploratory covariation between annual dyadic voting agreement and a dyad-level summary of the two countries' fatality estimates. The third component is deliberately limited: it does not identify a causal effect, and its correlations are vulnerable to temporal dependence and the reuse of countries across dyads.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study adopts a quantitative secondary-data design using country-resolution voting records and country-year security indicators. No questionnaire or new human-participant data collection is required. The geographic scope is Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, and Sudan, and the temporal scope is 2010–2025. The maximum country-year panel contains 64 observations (four countries

multiplied by 16 years), subject to source coverage and missingness. Six unique country pairs are examined for voting agreement.

3.2 UNGA voting data and sample construction

The voting source is the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library dataset, "United Nations General Assembly Voting Data," version 6, published on 15 October 2026. The dataset records member-state votes on adopted resolutions decided by recorded vote and includes fields for member-state code, vote, date, session, resolution symbol, and related metadata. The dataset description states that votes on individual paragraphs of draft resolutions and drafts that failed to be adopted are not included. The analytical file was filtered to the four countries and calendar years 2010–2025.

The source-driven reproducibility run confirmed 5,876 country–resolution records (1,469 per country), 1,469 unique UNGA resolution identifiers, complete four-country coverage for every identifier in the filtered period, and no duplicate country–resolution records. All six dyads therefore have 1,469 matched resolution records. Pairwise denominators differ because observations coded X (non-voting) for either country are excluded from the comparable-vote denominator.

3.3 Operationalization of voting agreement

For each dyad i,j, the raw agreement rate is defined as:

$$\textit{Agreement rate}_{ij} = \textit{(number of identical substantive votes) / (number of comparable substantive votes)} \times 100$$

The codes Y (yes), N (no), and A (abstention) are treated as substantive votes. A pair of identical codes among these three categories is counted as agreement. Any resolution for which either

country is coded X (non-voting) is excluded from that dyad's comparable-vote denominator. This approach prevents non-voting from being treated as agreement or disagreement, but it may create selection effects if non-voting is systematic. Annual results should therefore include denominators as well as percentages.

Raw agreement has a known limitation: when the voting agenda contains many resolutions with overwhelming majorities, two countries can appear similar even if their voting choices do not reflect unusually close preferences. Cohen's kappa is reported as one sensitivity measure; it adjusts observed agreement for the agreement expected from the two countries' marginal distributions of Y, N, and A. We also report the Alignment Index (A-index) proposed by Benati and Capurri (2026) for UNGA voting. It subtracts the S-index expected under independent voting, estimated from the paired marginal vote distributions, from the observed S-index. The S-index codes Yes = 1, Abstention = 2, and No = 3 and is calculated as one minus the mean absolute difference between paired codes. Both kappa and the A-index are reported alongside raw agreement because they address different measurement properties and should not be treated as interchangeable.

3.4 Security data and outcome definitions

The security source is the UCDP Country-Year Dataset on Organized Violence within Country Borders, version 26.1. The uploaded archive contained 7,132 country-year records in the full CSV. Filtering to Egypt, Eritrea, Somalia, and Sudan for 2010–2025 produced 64 rows: 16 for each country. The selected variables include state-based violence presence and best-estimate fatalities, non-state conflict presence and best-estimate fatalities, one-sided violence presence and best-estimate fatalities, and cumulative best-estimate fatalities from organized violence within country borders. The selected outcome fields contained no missing values in the 64-row

extract. The UCDP best-estimate figures are source-defined estimates, not independently verified counts of every death.

The primary security outcome is the dataset field cumulative_total_deaths_in_orgvio_best, corresponding to the codebook's cumulative_total_deaths_in_orgvio_best_cy definition: the best estimate of fatalities from organized violence within a country in a given year, covering state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence. The analysis also reports the presence indicators sb_exist, ns_exist, and os_exist and their corresponding best-estimate fatalities. The indicators are binary presence measures, not measures of intensity. The 64 complete country-year rows contain 15 zero best-estimate fatality values and 49 positive values. The codebook cautions that a zero fatality estimate does not necessarily prove that no fatal organized violence occurred: threshold rules for inclusion of dyad/actor fatality estimates can yield zero values in some country-years. Accordingly, zeros are retained as coded and interpreted with this measurement caveat.

3.5 Analytical strategy

9. Descriptive voting analysis: calculate pairwise raw agreement, agreements, disagreements, and comparable-vote denominators for the full period and by year.
10. Sensitivity analysis: calculate Cohen's kappa and the Benati–Capurri Alignment Index for each dyad using paired Y/N/A votes after excluding any event where either country was coded X. The A-index is defined as the observed S-index minus the expected S-index under independent voting, based on the paired marginal vote distributions.
11. Security description: summarize the 64 UCDP country-year records, best-estimate fatalities, presence of each violence type, country trends, and missingness.
12. Integration: calculate six separate Spearman correlations between each dyad's annual raw agreement percentage and log(1 + mean annual best-estimate fatalities of the two countries).

Each correlation uses 16 annual observations and is treated as exploratory because dyads share countries and the series may be temporally dependent.

13. Inferential caution: the four-country, 16-year design is small; pairwise correlations are unadjusted and do not control for country-specific factors, year shocks, or serial dependence. No causal interpretation is warranted.

3.6 Reproducibility and research integrity

The source-driven reproducibility audit was run on 18 October 2026 against the archived original UNGA Version 6 CSV and UCDP OrganizedViolenceCY version 26.1 ZIP. The script, source files, filtered extracts, checksums, outputs, and updated workbook are included in the replication archive. Original source download dates were not embedded in the supplied files; this is disclosed rather than inferred. The UCDP codebook and publisher records for the cited methodological and dataset references were checked. Remaining author-level items are confirmation of affiliation, funding, competing-interest declaration, and institutional ethics wording, plus final formatting against the selected journal's current instructions.

4. Results

4.1 Pairwise UNGA voting agreement

The processed voting summary indicates high raw agreement across the six dyads, ranging from 85.50% to 93.18% among comparable substantive votes. Eritrea–Somalia recorded the highest agreement (765 agreements among 821 comparable votes; 93.18%). Sudan–Somalia followed with 748 agreements among 821 comparable votes (91.11%), and Egypt–Somalia recorded 90.84% (764/841). The lowest raw agreement was Egypt–Eritrea (1,173/1,372; 85.50%). The pairwise summary table reports 1,469 matched resolution events per dyad; differences in comparable-vote denominators reflect non-voting observations coded X.

Country pair	Matched resolutions	Comparable votes	Agreements	Disagreements	Agreement (%)
Eritrea–Somalia	1,469	821	765	56	93.18
Sudan–Somalia	1,469	821	748	73	91.11
Egypt–Somalia	1,469	841	764	77	90.84
Egypt–Sudan	1,469	1,411	1,278	133	90.57
Eritrea–Sudan	1,469	1,336	1,188	148	88.92
Egypt–Eritrea	1,469	1,372	1,173	199	85.50

Note. Agreement rate = agreements divided by comparable substantive votes. Y, N, and A are substantive voting positions; an observation is excluded from the pairwise denominator when either member is coded X (non-voting). The table reproduces the currently available processed summary and should be revalidated against the source CSV and analysis script before submission.

Chance-corrected agreement sensitivity analysis

Cohen's kappa was calculated on the same paired Y/N/A votes used for raw agreement, with X-coded non-voting events excluded. The Alignment Index A was also calculated following Benati and Capurri (2026): the observed three-category S-index minus the expected S-index under independent voting, estimated from the paired marginal vote distributions. Because the two indices use different chance-correction logic, the results are presented as complementary sensitivity measures rather than interpreted as interchangeable scales.

Country pair	Comparable votes	Raw agreement (%)	Cohen's κ	S-index	Alignment Index A
Egypt–Eritrea	1372	85.50	0.329	0.835	0.101
Egypt–Somalia	841	90.84	0.372	0.897	0.072
Egypt–Sudan	1411	90.57	0.615	0.901	0.210
Eritrea–Somalia	821	93.18	0.331	0.922	0.055
Eritrea–Sudan	1336	88.92	0.425	0.875	0.140
Somalia–Sudan	821	91.11	0.336	0.890	0.069

4.2 Interpretation of the voting results

The chance-corrected measures reorder the raw-agreement ranking. Cohen's kappa was highest for Egypt–Sudan ($\kappa = 0.615$), followed by Eritrea–Sudan ($\kappa = 0.425$), Egypt–Somalia ($\kappa = 0.372$), Sudan–Somalia ($\kappa = 0.336$), Eritrea–Somalia ($\kappa = 0.331$), and Egypt–Eritrea ($\kappa = 0.329$). The A-index was also highest for Egypt–Sudan (0.210), followed by Eritrea–Sudan (0.140), Egypt–Eritrea (0.101), Egypt–Somalia (0.072), Sudan–Somalia (0.069), and Eritrea–Somalia (0.055). The A-index values are positive for all six dyads, indicating that the observed S-index exceeds the expected S-index under independent voting for the paired sample; this is evidence of excess similarity under this statistic, not proof of a formal alliance. The different rankings show why raw agreement alone is insufficient.

Annual estimates should be interpreted together with the number of comparable votes in each year. A percentage based on fewer resolutions is less stable than a similar percentage based on many observations. Annual estimates are also agenda-dependent: changes in the issues placed to a recorded vote can shift agreement even if underlying foreign-policy preferences remain unchanged. The present raw measure counts shared abstentions as agreement and excludes a vote event if either state is coded X.

4.3 Country-year organized-violence outcomes

The UCDP extract contains 64 observations covering all four countries in each year from 2010 through 2025, with no missing values in the selected presence indicators or fatality outcomes. The summed best-estimate organized-violence fatalities are 159,161 across the 64 country-years. Country totals are Sudan 115,666, Somalia 38,274, Egypt 5,192, and Eritrea 29. These are sums of country-year best estimates, not exact counts of all deaths. The distribution is strongly right-skewed, particularly because Sudan's best-estimate total rises sharply in 2023–2025. UCDP's

codebook further notes that zero fatality estimates can occur under the dataset's inclusion rules even where fatal organized violence may have occurred below the applicable threshold.

Country	Country-years	Total fatalities (best estimate)	Mean annual	Median annual	Peak year	State-based years	Non-state years	One-sided years
Egypt	16	5,192	324.5	240.0	2015	12	5	11
Eritrea	16	29	1.8	0.0	2016	2	0	0
Somalia	16	38,274	2392.1	2244.0	2023	16	15	16
Sudan	16	115,666	7229.1	1851.0	2025	16	16	16

Note. Fatality totals use the UCDP version 26.1 best-estimate variables. Presence-year columns sum the dataset's 0/1 indicators. The 64 country-year rows had no missing values in the selected outcomes; zero values are retained as recorded in the source extract.

4.4 Exploratory integration of diplomatic agreement and security outcomes

For an exploratory integration, annual raw voting agreement for each dyad was compared with the natural logarithm of one plus the mean of the two countries' annual best-estimate organized-violence fatalities. This dyad-year summary was chosen to avoid silently duplicating a country's outcome as if it were an independent observation in a pooled regression; nevertheless, dyads overlap because the same country appears in multiple pairs. Six separate Spearman correlations were calculated, each with 16 annual observations. The coefficients ranged from −0.216 to 0.312, and none was statistically significant using unadjusted two-sided p-values (all $p > .05$). The pattern provides no clear evidence of a monotonic within-dyad association in this small exploratory analysis. It does not establish that diplomatic alignment has no security relevance; the test is limited by low power, temporal dependence, annual aggregation, country-specific differences, and the coarse nature of both measures.

Country pair	n years	Spearman ρ	Unadjusted p
Egypt–Eritrea	16	-0.216	0.421
Egypt–Somalia	16	0.053	0.846
Egypt–Sudan	16	-0.015	0.957
Eritrea–Somalia	16	0.312	0.240
Eritrea–Sudan	16	-0.032	0.905
Sudan–Somalia	16	-0.168	0.535

Note. The security measure is log(1 + mean of the two countries' annual best-estimate fatalities). Correlations are exploratory, unadjusted, and not causal; country overlap and temporal dependence limit inference.

5. Discussion

The results support four cautious conclusions. First, raw UNGA voting agreement among the four states is high in the recorded adopted-resolution voting sample, but Cohen's kappa and the A-index yield more differentiated pairwise patterns. This is consistent with methodological research warning that broad majorities can inflate raw similarity measures (Benati & Capurri, 2026; Häge & Hug, 2016). Reporting raw agreement with denominators, kappa, and the A-index gives a more transparent account than relying on a single statistic.

Second, UCDP country-year data show marked differences in the distribution of organized violence. Somalia records high estimated fatalities throughout the period, while Sudan's annual estimates increase sharply in 2023–2025, including a 2025 best-estimate value of 75,174. Egypt's annual totals are much lower than those of Somalia and Sudan but exceed Eritrea's; the Eritrea series records positive best-estimate fatalities in only two years. The figures are specific to the UCDP version 26.1 operationalization of organized violence within country borders and should be interpreted with the source codebook and estimation uncertainty in mind (Davies et al., 2026).

Third, the six dyad-specific correlations between annual voting agreement and mean pair fatality burden were small to modest and statistically non-significant. These tests are exploratory rather than a definitive test of the theory. The annual alignment measure reflects the resolutions placed to recorded vote, while the security measure reflects estimated domestic organized violence. The two constructs may be linked through common geopolitical interests, regional threat perceptions, or external partnerships, but they may also evolve independently. The present design cannot distinguish these pathways, and no causal claim is warranted.

The study has several limitations. The UNGA file covers recorded votes on adopted resolutions and excludes paragraph-level votes and drafts that failed to be adopted. Raw agreement is agenda-dependent; Cohen's kappa is sensitive to marginal category prevalence, while the A-index is sensitive to its own vote coding and paired marginal distributions. UCDP fatalities are best estimates and do not capture every dimension of security, including institutional resilience, maritime security, political trust, or all forms of instability. Its coding rules mean a zero fatality estimate should not automatically be interpreted as definitive absence of fatal organized violence. The integrated correlations use only 16 annual observations per dyad, reuse countries across dyads, and do not adjust for serial dependence or common year shocks. Future research should examine issue-specific votes, compare multiple chance-corrected measures, and use a larger, theoretically specified design before testing causal hypotheses.

5.1 Conclusion

This study combines UNGA voting records with UCDP country-year indicators to provide a descriptive comparison of diplomatic voting congruence and organized violence in Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, and Sudan during 2010–2025. Raw voting agreement was high, while Cohen's kappa and the Alignment Index provided complementary adjustments for chance agreement and voting-agenda inertia. The security data documented substantial heterogeneity and a sharp rise in

Sudan's best-estimate fatalities in the final years. The exploratory dyad-specific correlations did not identify a statistically significant monotonic association between annual raw voting agreement and mean pair fatality burden. The defensible conclusion is not that diplomatic alignment causes security outcomes, but that their relationship requires richer measures and a research design that addresses temporal and country-level confounding.

Declarations

Author contributions

The author developed the research concept, designed the secondary-data methodology, and prepared the manuscript draft. The final contribution statement should be reviewed and confirmed by the author before submission.

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Conflict of interest

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Data availability

The data used in this study are publicly available from the United Nations Digital Library and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). United Nations General Assembly voting data (Version 6) are available at https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4060887. The UCDP Country-Year Dataset

on Organized Violence within Country Borders (Version 26.1), including its codebook, is available through the UCDP Dataset Download Center at https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/. The analyses reported in this article use secondary data from these sources, filtered to Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, and Sudan for 2010–2025. The original download dates were not recorded in the supplied file metadata. The processed extracts, analysis script, checksums, outputs, and updated workbook are retained in the study's replication archive. Redistribution of the UNGA data should comply with the terms stated by the United Nations Digital Library.

Ethics approval

Not applicable. This study uses publicly available secondary data and does not involve human participants or the collection of personal data from participants.

Consent to participate

Not applicable. No human participants were recruited or involved in this study.

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