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### **The Meaning of “Force” and the Boundaries of the *Jus ad Bellum*: Are “Minimal” Uses of Force Excluded from UN Charter Article 2(4)?**

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Are there forcible acts that, because of their small scale or confined purposes, are not prohibited by UN Charter Article 2(4)? Some acts that might fall below a supposed “gravity threshold” are small-scale armed confrontations or counter-terrorist operations, targeted killings, forcible abductions of single individuals, and hostage rescue operations. This article argues that no gravity threshold applies to Article 2(4) and that small-scale acts remain covered by the prohibition on using force. In addition to potentially enabling states to invoke various “grounds precluding wrongfulness” to justify an expanding range of small-scale forcible acts, excluding such acts from the scope of Article 2(4) is conceptually confused and inconsistent with customary practice.

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