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Affinity communities in United Nations voting: Implications for democracy, cooperation, and conflict

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Highlights

1. We give the first quantitative analysis of whether the UN functions as designed.
2. We define and study the effects of community co-membership based on UN votes.
3. Co-membership suppresses conflict, showing that states use the UN as intended.
4. Co-membership boosts alliance creation and maintenance through a feedback process.
5. Co-membership reflects transitions to democracy, but does not cause them.

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