



CENTER ON DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT,  
AND THE RULE OF LAW

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**EVALUATING INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCES ON DEMOCRATIC  
DEVELOPMENT: WORKING PAPER**

*Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions:  
Concept Paper*

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## INTRODUCTION

Do international factors, including democracy promotion policies of Western actors, play a significant role in encouraging or discouraging transitions to democracy? If so, when and how do external incentives, financial and technical aid, socialization techniques, diplomacy or demonstration effects influence domestic decision-makers to attempt to transition to democracy? What combination of domestic conditions and foreign “interventions” are most likely to lead to the weakening of non-democratic regimes and their replacement with democratic governments? What are the pathways of external influence on domestic change and what does the nexus of interaction between external and domestic variables look like in reality?

Despite growing Western interest in facilitating democratic development in transitional countries, the dynamics of international influence on democratic transitions are poorly understood. With faltering progress in Iraq since the invasion of 2003, mixed results in Afghanistan since 2001, democratic rollbacks in Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union over the last few years, the issue of what works and what does not in bringing about democratic change is particularly pressing. Occupation post World War II worked in Germany, but why not (yet) in Iraq? Sanctions seemed to have promoted regime change in South Africa, but why not (yet) in Iran? Electoral monitoring efforts helped to produce real results for democratic regime change in Serbia in 2000 and Georgia in 2003, but did not produce the same results in Azerbaijan in 2005 or Belarus in 2006. Western-sponsored democracy assistance programs appear to have helped democratic institutions take root in Poland and Ghana, but have not had a similar effect in Russia and Nigeria. Moreover, even in the more circumscribed area of democracy aid there is a striking dearth of information regarding what works under what circumstances, especially considering the amount of donor money, time and effort put into the cause.

CDDRL’s new research program *Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development* aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the efficacy of available instruments to encourage democratic development, in an effort to learn what has worked, what has not, and under what conditions.

We identify and distinguish between four main types of democratic development outcomes, postulating *a priori* that the role of external factors is likely to vary considerably across these four categories: (1) transition to electoral democracy; (2) consolidation of substantive, liberal democracy; (3) liberalization of autocratic regimes, and; (4) post-conflict democratic development. Thus, factors driving (or impeding) democratization in post-conflict Liberia, for example, are not necessarily the same set of factors driving (or impeding) democratic consolidation in contemporary Serbia.

We begin the four-track research program with the first category, transition to democracy. By exploring and compiling a set of case studies of successful and failed democratic transitions since the advent of the Third Wave of democratizations in 1974, we hope to gain a better understanding of external influence on domestic democratic

development dynamics, and to provide a better guide to future academics and policymakers interested in promoting democracy abroad.

Although the research design outlined below is specifically tailored to explore transitions to democracy, it is our hope that conceptual, theoretical and methodological insights gained under this track will inform the design of research tools for the remainder of the outcomes that are the subject of inquiry in this program. Comments and suggestions regarding any aspect of the research agenda are actively encouraged and would be gratefully received.

## **BACKGROUND**

In his second inaugural address in January 2005, President George W. Bush stated explicitly, “*It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and every culture, with the goal of ending tyranny around the world.*” No other inaugural speech in American history has devoted more attention to the theme of democracy promotion. Bush, however, is merely the most recent in a long line of American presidents who have found themselves involved in the uncertain business of promoting democracy in other countries. In fact, the debate about the American role in promoting democracy abroad begins with the founding of the United States. Back then, the United States did not have the means to influence the evolution of political regimes in other countries. Nonetheless, some of America’s founding fathers considered the unique American system of government to be a model and example for other aspiring democrats. This tool of democracy promotion – the “beacon on the hill” – still remains a potentially powerful instrument.

As American power grew, especially in the twentieth century, U.S. instruments for influencing domestic regime change also expanded. With varying degrees of focus, American presidents have adopted strategies for undermining autocrats, including military intervention, economic sanctions, and assistance (both covert and overt) to anti-regime forces. U.S. leaders also have pursued constructive engagement of pro-American autocrats as well as positive conditionality as a non-coercive means to foster democratic change.<sup>1</sup> Alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and multilateral agreements and organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) also have played and can play a central role in fostering democratic development.

The creation of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in 1983 marked a new stage of providing direct, public support for human rights activists and democratic organizations in other countries. NED in turn helped to create four institutes— the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the International

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<sup>1</sup> David Adesnik, and Michael McFaul, “Engaging Autocratic Allies to Promote Democracy” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Spring 2006), pp. 7-26.

Republican Institute (IRI) - the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS, formerly the Free Trade Union Institute, FTUI), and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). All of these organizations have expanded, continue to play a role in promoting democracy, and therefore must be included in any serious study of international influences on internal democratic change.

In the 1990s, the actors involved in and money allocated in the United States for democracy assistance expanded dramatically.<sup>2</sup> Most importantly, with the announcement of its "Democracy Initiative" in December 1990, AID established democracy promotion as one of its central objectives and soon became the main funder of U.S. democracy assistance programs; its budgets dwarfing those of NED. The list of AID partners extends well beyond the NED family, and now includes some very old organizations which are more recent recipients of AID funding, including Freedom House, IREX, the African-American Institute, and the Asia Foundation, as well as newer NGOs dedicated to promoting sectors crucial for democratic development, including the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), which monitors, supports, and strengthens the mechanics of the election process in emerging democracies. The American Bar Association's Central and East European Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI) promotes rule of law, and Internews is an AID partner organization focused on promoting independent media. In addition to the non-profit NGOs, many for profit companies have developed democracy and governance divisions over the last decade. The list of implementing partners for democracy and governance programs of AID includes over two dozen companies and organizations which in turn subcontract with hundreds of other organizations to fulfill contracts assigned with AID. Annual American spending on democracy assistance today hovers around \$1.5 billion.

Beyond AID, the U.S. Defense Department has also become involved in the democracy promotion business especially in Afghanistan and Iraq, where the lines between civilian activities funded by AID and the State Department and military activities run by the Pentagon have become blurred. Soldiers have been called upon to perform all sorts of activities that would have been considered the purview of AID and AID-contractors just a few years ago.<sup>3</sup>

Most recently, President Bush has created the Millennium Challenge Corporation, started the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), and increased the money available for the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor for its discretionary grants program. All of these efforts have greatly expanded the resources earmarked for promoting good government abroad.

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999); and Larry Diamond, *Promoting Democracy in the 1990s: Actors and Instruments, Issues and Imperatives*, (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1995); Peter Burnell, "Democracy Assistance: The State of the Art." in Peter Burnell, ed. *Democracy Assistance: International Cooperation for Democratization*. London: Frank Cass. (2000).

<sup>3</sup> The expanding scope of this kind of work is outlined in Department of Defense, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction*, Directive No. 3000.05, November 28, 2005.

Not long ago, Americans efforts at promoting democracy dwarfed all others. This is no longer true today. Individual European countries also pursue a range of policies aimed at promoting democracy, as do Japan, Australia, and Taiwan, to varying degrees. Without question, though, the most pivotal European instrument for democracy promotion has been the European Union, including first and foremost the accession process but also the direct assistance programs provided by the European Union to new democracies.<sup>4</sup> In addition, hundreds of non-American non-government organizations, foundations, and private companies have now entered the democracy promotion business. In Europe, the German Stiftungen are the oldest and most active non-governmental organizations in this field. The traditionally prominent role of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, the Henrich Böll Stiftung and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung has been complemented by the emergence of other active European political foundations.

Finally, in parallel to this multitude of actors funded by U.S. and European governments, private foundations also provide support for democratic assistance programs throughout the world, including the Soros Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the German Marshall Fund of the United States. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), and other human rights and media watchdog organizations occupy another crucial niche in the international effort to develop democracy.

Has all of this activity produced any results? Despite current skepticism growing in the United States and Europe about the efficacy of democracy promotion, the anecdotal evidence of success is too great to ignore. Few would question the central role played by occupation forces in fostering democratic government in Germany and Japan after World War II. Though a more controversial claim, it is difficult to imagine the consolidation of democratic regimes in Western Europe in the absence of NATO. The American security umbrella played a similar facilitating function for democracy in South Korea, and Taiwan. The Helsinki process is another example of an international effort that had very direct and positive consequences for democratic development in Eastern Europe. Regarding the effectiveness of sanctions in fostering internal political change, South Africa is frequently cited as a success story. Without question, the export of election monitoring technologies such as parallel vote tabulation and exit polls played a crucial role in bringing down Pinochet in Chile in 1988, Milosevic in Serbia in 2000, and sparking the Orange Revolution in 2004. Regarding the consolidation of democracy, Western funding keeps alive hundreds of thousands of civil society organizations around the world. At the micro level, AID publications are filled with “success stories” about the effectiveness of parliamentary training program in country B or the emergence of a U.S. sponsored jury trial system in country C. At the most aggregate level, it cannot simply be a coincidence that the rise of American power over the past two hundred years has corresponded with the expansion of democracy worldwide.

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<sup>4</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, *Designing Democracy: EU Enlargement and Regime Change in post-communist Europe* (2005); Milada Anna Vachudova, *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage and Integration After Communism* (2005); Amichai Magen, *The Shadow of Enlargement: Can the European Neighbourhood Policy Achieve Compliance?*, 12 Columbia Journal of European Law 383 (2006).

And yet, our understanding of the causal impact of international instruments on domestic outcomes is still underdeveloped and unsystematic.<sup>5</sup> In academia and the think tank world, our appreciation of the international dimensions of democratization has grown.<sup>6</sup> From their inception in the late 1960s through to the 1990s, predominant explanatory models of democratic transition perceived the process as essentially a domestic drama, took the individual national-state as the unit of analysis, and screened out international factors.<sup>7</sup> As late as the early 1990s the role of international actors was correctly described as the “forgotten dimension” in the study of democratization.<sup>8</sup> While some prominent comparative political scientists continue this tradition,<sup>9</sup> studies of democratic transition and consolidation have become more internationalized in the last decade.<sup>10</sup> Yet, the subject still remains strikingly understudied.<sup>11</sup> Given the prominence the task of democracy promotion has assumed for policy makers in the US and Europe, this gap in our knowledge is cause for concern.

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<sup>5</sup> To assert that the field is underdeveloped does not mean that important work has not been done already. No one has contributed more to this literature than Thomas Carothers. His books: *In the Name of Democracy* (1993); *Assessing Democracy Assistance* (1996) *Aiding Democracy Abroad* (1999); *Critical Mission* (2004) and *Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad* (2006) -- as well as his numerous articles on democracy promotion almost single-handedly have defined this subfield and defined several of the major themes and disputes in this literature. In addition to other works cited in this proposal, other important studies include Sarah Mendelson and John Glenn, *The Power and Limits of NGOs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Laurence Whitehead, ed., *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Richard Youngs, *International Democracy and the West: The Role of Governments, Civil Society, and Multinational Business* (Oxford 2004); Michael Cox, John Ikenberry and Takashi Inoguchi (eds.), *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (Oxford 2000); and Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Johns Hopkins Press, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> See Laurence Whitehead, “Democratization With the Benefit of Hindsight: The Changing International Components”, in Edward Newmann and Roland Rich, *The UN Role in Promoting Democracy: Between Ideals and Reality* (2004) 135-166.

<sup>7</sup> In the seminal study: *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Southern Europe* (Washington: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), for example, Philippe Schmitter asserted that: “[O]ne of the firmest conclusions that emerged... was that transitions from authoritarian rule and immediate prospects for political democracy were largely to be explained in terms of national forces and calculations. External actors tended to play an indirect and usually marginal role...”, in “An Introduction to Southern European Transitions”, in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Southern Europe* (Guillermo O’Donnell et al. eds., 1986), p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> In 1991 Geoffrey Pridham pointed out that the role of international structures and actors was “the forgotten dimension in the study of democratic transition.” Geoffrey Pridham, “International Influences and Democratic Transition: Problems of Theory and Practice in Linkage Politics,” in Pridham, ed., *Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe* (1991), p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> See for example: Jon Elster et al., *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies: Rebuilding the Ship at Sea* (1998) and Barbara Geddes, “What Do We Know About Democratization after Twenty Years?” *2nd Annual Review of Political Science*, (1999), pp. 115-144.

<sup>10</sup> See in particular: Laurence Whitehead (ed.) *The International Dimensions of Democratization* (1996); Jon Pevehouse, “Democracy from the Outside-In?, International Organizations and Democratization” vol. 56, no.3, *International Organization* (2002), pp. 515-549.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Schraeder, “The State of the Art in International Democracy Promotion: Results of a Joint European-North American Research Network”, vol.10, no. 2, *Democratization* (Summer 2003), p. 22.

## PROBLEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

The existing state of knowledge on external sources of democratic transitions, and the efficacy of democracy promotion tools, suffers from five main shortcomings:

**First**, isolating the effects of outside factors requires an assessment of domestic factors in the process of democratic change. The study of international democracy promotion, in other words, necessitates breaking the domestic-international barrier, and developing both theoretical and empirical knowledge on external-internal linkages of democratization. It is an inherently interdisciplinary endeavour, requiring theoretical insights and methodologies from several fields of social science. In practice however, for a variety of historical, intellectual, methodological and institutional reasons, theories of comparative politics, international relations, institutions and international law have constructed largely separate, independent and self-contained spheres of inquiry, with distinct actors and research questions. Just as political scientists focussing on the domestic politics of foreign countries have screened out international factors, students of international relations concentrate on international outcomes and have been unprepared to research causal linkages between international agents and domestic actors.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, researching external dimensions of democratization must involve the insights of both academics and practitioners. Yet the separation between the two worlds remains profound. In attempting to explain exogenous influences on domestic political developments, academics have tended to gravitate towards history (often going back several centuries) rather than grappling with the messy “history of the present”.<sup>13</sup> For their part, practitioners borrow few insights from academics, and the two groups are generally “engaged in dissimilar enterprises.”<sup>14</sup>

A **second** shortcoming stems from the fact that the existing analyses on international democracy promotion focuses on the democracy promotion efforts (the “supply side”) of

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<sup>12</sup> For a detailed discussion of the divide see: Andrew Moravcsik, “Introduction: Integrating International and Domestic Theories of International Bargaining,” in Peter Evans, Harold Jacobson and Robert Putnam (eds.) *Double-edged Diplomacy* (1993) at 5-9; Hakan Yilmaz, “External-Internal Linkages in Democratization: Developing an Open Model of Democratic Change,” vol.9, no.2 *Democratization* (2002) 67-84. For a discussion of the divide between international relations theory and international law see: Anne-Marie Slaughter et al., “International Law and International Relations Theory: A New Generation of Interdisciplinary Scholarship,” vol. 92 *American Journal of International Law* (1998), p. 367.

<sup>13</sup> See in particular: Avner Greif, “Coercion and Markets: The Dynamics of Institutions Supporting Exchange,” in *Handbook on New Institutional Economics*, (Claude Menard & Mary Shirley eds., 2005); Avner Greif and Eugene Kandel, “Contract Enforcement Institutions: Historical Perspective and Current Status in Russia,” in (Edward Lazear ed., 1995) *Economic Transitions in Eastern Europe and Russia: Realities of Reform*; Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (1966); Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1992* (1990).

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*, (1999), p.94.

individual countries, notably the United States.<sup>15</sup> In reality, it is never the case that the United States alone - or any other external actor for that matter - plays an independent causal role in the development of democratization in another country. The unique *American* contribution to democratic development in a given country can only be isolated if all other external variables are included in the analysis. There was a time when the United States government was the only major actor in the world promoting democracy, but that time has passed. As noted above, today, the European Union, individual European governments and their democracy-promoting foundations and NGOs, the United Nations, NATO, the World Bank, and hundreds if not thousands of transnational networks and private foundations also contribute to the democracy promotion business. Simply focusing on the American contribution to a case of democratization (or the lack thereof) is methodologically suspect and therefore empirically flawed. There is some analysis on the role of Western European governments and supranational European institutions (particularly the European Union) in promoting democracy abroad,<sup>16</sup> but American and European insights are rarely integrated, and few studies are prepared to look at a range of international actors and processes.<sup>17</sup> Consequently there has been little systematic thinking about the spectrum of forces shaping the international “democratic environment,” not to mention the interaction of the external environment with domestic processes.

**Third**, studies of democracy promotion have been directed towards specific regions at different time periods – Southern Europe and Latin America in the 1970s and 80’s, Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s, and most recently the Middle East. This geographical and temporal fragmentation has left a “patchy” and disconnected set of findings that seriously hinders our ability to draw any sound conclusions about external influences on domestic change across time and place. The only way to evaluate current contributions to democracy promotion is to begin the analysis following World War II, and to examine case studies across geographical regions.

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<sup>15</sup> See in particular: Tony Smith, *America’s Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (1994); Carothers (1999); Michael Cox, John Ikenberry and Takashi Inoguchi, *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts*; Thomas Carothers, *Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion* (2004).

<sup>16</sup> On European democracy promotion, see Richard Youngs, *The European Union and the Promotion of Democracy* (2001); Paul Kubicek (ed.), *The European Union and Democratization* (2003); Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier (eds.), *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe* (2005); Michael Emerson (ed.), *Democratization in the European Neighbourhood* (2005); Geoffrey Pridham, *Designing Democracy* (2005). A prominent recent exception to American-European separation is Richard Youngs, *International Democracy and the West* (2004). See also the collection of essays in: Peter Burnell (ed.), *Democracy Assistance: International Co-operation for Democratization* (2000).

<sup>17</sup> On the role of the UN for example see Newmann and Rich, *The UN Role in Promoting Democracy*. On the role of international law in democracy promotion see Gregory Fox and Brad Roth, *Democratic Governance and International Law* (2000).

**Fourth**, to date, studies of democracy promotion have tended to follow “successful” cases of democratization. This is partly a reflection of the political economy of democracy promotion (where democracy promotion follows instances of initial domestically generated democratic breakthroughs). Yet a serious analysis of the external influences on internal change cannot focus only on cases of democratic development, but must also look at instances of regime change when the outcome was not democracy. These cases of “failure” must be included into the analysis to avoid selection bias and to isolate the causal mechanisms that were ultimately necessary for democratic change as opposed to the initial breakdown of an authoritarian regime and or liberalization.

**Fifth**, the same set of explanatory factors (whether internal or external) may have a different impact on democratization depending on the kind of democratic outcome being analyzed. For instance, the mix of independent or causal variables that generate initial political liberalization in an autocratic regime may not be the same forces that trigger successful transitions. Likewise, the factors that influence a transition may be irrelevant to the consolidation of liberal democracy. Countries trying to build democratic institutions after a war or state collapse face a different set of challenges than democratizing regimes with relatively effective states. Given that there has been little bridge building among analysts of democratic transitions, consolidation and post-conflict state building, it is less surprising perhaps that we have not yet differentiated between these radically different situations of democratic change and the varying roles of external actors in each category.

We identify these shortcomings to emphasize that the process of assessing democracy promotion is difficult. But this cannot be an excuse for continuing to ignore this important theoretical and policy problem. We seek to address these shortcomings from a theoretical and practical policy point of view.

From the point of view of building a guide for assessing external influence on transitions to democracy, as noted earlier, we emphasize the long ignored international context in democratization, while at the same time bringing in domestic political and economic factors.

Regarding policy development, the need for a comprehensive study such as ours is even greater. Most donors have intensified efforts to improve the tools at their disposal for evaluating democracy assistance. They acknowledge that one major problem is that the evaluation of individual projects has invariably been carried out in isolation from broader debates over the international dimensions of democratization. This has generated a knowledge-gap, where assessment of democracy initiatives on the ground has rarely been systematically linked to the more overarching political and international aspects of political change. Our program will seek to bridge this.

Finally, senior policymakers wishing, or compelled by their superiors, to develop democracy promotion policies currently have almost nothing to read to inform and guide their decisions. Earlier this year, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice launched an initiative called Transformational Diplomacy, which among other things, aims to train

officers about democratization and democracy promotion. Yet, finding materials for such a training course is not easy. Every day, literally tens of thousands of people in the democracy promotion business go to work without training manuals or blueprints or simply well constructed case studies in hand. Published case studies of previous successes are hard to find in the public domain, which means that democracy assistance efforts are often reinventing the wheel or making it up as they go along, as was on vivid display in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Even basic educational materials for students seeking to specialize in the democracy promotion do not yet exist.

It is time, therefore, to undertake a comprehensive comparative study of democracy promotion that incorporates both donor and recipient perspectives, that considers both domestic conditions and international tools, that brings together the knowledge of academics and practitioners deeply engaged in these issues, and that looks at both successes and failures over a 30+ year period of attempts to promote democracy abroad.

### **METHODS/ANALYTIC APPROACH**

As noted earlier, the vast majority of existing studies on democracy promotion adopt a “supply-side”, “outside-in” perspective, focusing first on the external dimension (and usually just the U.S. or just the EU dimension) without developing a nuanced explanation of internal democratization in the country being studied.

Our approach is different. We aim to identify general lessons about transitions to democracy by examining local factors explaining either the success or failure of transition in each one of the country cases in the study. These factors may include the rise of a reformist group within an otherwise non-democratic government, the formation of a democratic leadership pact or mass movement outside government, defined economic or societal changes, changes in institutional makeup and capacity, the role of the “change agents” and “veto players”, and so forth. Importantly, at this stage of the analysis we will identify the factors and define the interrelations between them, without reference to the possible role of international actors.

We are commissioning detailed case studies of successes and failures in the category of transition, from around the world, doing so within a carefully defined theoretical and methodological framework (see the *research guide for case study authors* available on this site). To avoid selection bias, we are including cases of successful and also failed transition in our analysis. We have also selected cases so as to compare two cases with many shared features (such as geographic location, GDP per capita, degree of ethnic homogeneity, moment in history when the “outcome” occurred), but with different outcomes to try to isolate a pivotal factor (international and/or domestic) that might account for the divergent outcomes.

**What is meant by “Democratic Transition”?** We understand this to be a precise moment in time in which a regime makes a qualitative leap in levels of democracy, either from an authoritarian regime to an electoral democracy or from a semi-autocratic regime to a more democratic system.

It is not always the case that a successful democratic transition or democratic breakthrough also triggers a gradual, evolutionary process of consolidating liberal democracy. Instead, these successful cases can degenerate into partially consolidated democracies and sometimes even slip back into authoritarian rule. For instance, the dramatic breakthrough achieved by people’s power in the Philippines two decades ago did not put this regime on a smooth course towards democratic consolidation. The Lancaster House accords on Zimbabwe in 1979 ushered in a much more democratic regime in that country’s first years of existence, but this initial democratic breakthrough did not create momentum for democratic consolidation. The collapse of communist dictatorship in the Soviet Union/Russia in 1991 produced a more democratic regime in Moscow in the immediate aftermath, but not in the long run. Even more recent democratic breakthroughs in Serbia 2000, Georgia 2003, and Ukraine 2004 have not (yet) produced liberal democracy. But in this first phase of the program, the intended focus of these case studies is explicitly not democratic consolidation, but rather more narrowly targeting those factors that produced transition or breakthrough – factors that may be quite different from those that ensure democratic consolidation.

**Specifying the Set of Explanatory Variables:** The next move in our analysis will be to “zoom out” to assess whether a given international actor, or set of actors, can be said to have played a tangible role in the factors identified as having caused the domestic change, and if so how. This approach will help overcome the selection bias inherent in “outside-in” studies, and will help focus the research on understanding the role of international actors (both “positive” and “negative”) without predetermining which international actors are to be analyzed. Unlike most previous studies, we will not be limiting our analysis to the role of the United States, the European Union or the UN but will look at the full panoply of potential international sources of internal change, including global economic influences, non-governmental actors, and the more difficult to trace role of norms and ideas in the international system.

The list of potential external sources is nearly endless. To structure our analysis, therefore, we group these possible factors into five categories, and relate them to our “spectrum of intervention” benchmarks.

First, we try to identify the ideas, scripts, and norms in the international system that can influence internal change. Democracy, both as a normative idea and as an effective method of rule, has appealing qualities. Since the collapse of communism, democracy has faced very few ideological challengers.<sup>18</sup> Autocratic rulers persist throughout the world, yet few dictators in power try to justify their positions using anti-democratic creeds or doctrines. Pockets of illiberal creeds, racist norms, patrimonial rituals, and anti-

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<sup>18</sup> Michael McFaul, “Democracy Promotion as a World Value” *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Winter 2004-2005) pp. 147-163.

democratic ideologies exist throughout the world, but only Osama bin Ladenism and its variants constitute a serious *transnational* alternative to liberal democracy today. Yet, bin Laden's vision for governance is hardly a worldwide challenger to democracy as the most valued political system in the world.<sup>19</sup> Is there a way to trace the causal impact of these ideas about democracy that are floating throughout the international system? Though difficult, we at least want to begin our study by placing this hypothesis into the analysis.

Second, we will examine the role of international institutions, including the World Bank, IMF, European Union, NATO, OSCE, Council of Europe, the G8, the United Nations, the Organization of American States, Organization of African Union, and the OECD. These organizations rely in the first instance on "transformative engagement" and integration as the mechanism to induce democratic change.<sup>20</sup> The EU is seen as especially effective in pulling democratizing countries into its orbit and then compelling them to consolidate many democratic practices, procedures, and institutions before being offered EU membership. Does it work? Does the absence of these multilateral institutions make it more difficult to build democracy?

Under this rubric of explanatory factors, we also plan to explore the relationship between security and democratic development and the proposition that a country with secure borders has a better change at developing a democracy than a country without secure borders. Since these multilateral institutions often help to reduce regional security risks between states, we should be able to identify a pattern of democracy development between those states embedded in international security arrangements and those not. Many of these international institutions also have democracy assistance programs, which we will include as potential sources of democracy assistance in our analysis. For instance, the EU has the European Initiative on Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Stabilization and Association Process for the Balkan countries, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (with substantial funding, through the MEDA program, for socio-economic development and governance reform in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean), the European Neighborhood Policy (which offers a stake in the Single Market and the prospect of enhanced contractual links with the EU in return for progress on a wide range of domestic governance reforms), as well as political conditionality embedded in the Cotonou framework governing EU relations with the African and Pacific group of countries.

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<sup>19</sup> However paradoxically, greater discussion about democracy in the wider Middle East has paralleled bin Laden's resurgence after September 11<sup>th</sup>. Arab intellectuals who contributed to the *Arab Human Development Report* propelled the issue of democracy to front and center by stating boldly that the "freedom deficit [in the Arab region] undermines human development and is one of the most painful manifestations of lagging political development." In the last three years, Arab civil leaders and intellectuals have convened several international conferences to discuss and promote democracy's development. Even as disdain for American power in the region skyrockets, debate about democratic values and democratic reforms has never been more serious.

<sup>20</sup> On the notion of "transformative engagement" see Richard Youngs, 'Engagement: Sharpening European Influence', in Youngs (ed.) *New Terms of Engagement* (Global Europe Report, The Foreign Policy Centre, May 2005), pp. 1-14.

Third, we seek to weigh the impact of the foreign policies of individual states. Obviously, as the world's hegemon, American foreign policy will occupy the center of attention under this rubric, but foreign policies of other states pushing for democracy as well those trying to stifle it, must also be brought in to the analysis. Russia, for example, is a regional hegemon with tremendous lingering influence in non-democracies like Belarus, and fragile transitional cases like Georgia and Ukraine.

A central part of our research design is to devise clear criteria for conceptualizing the range and estimated impact of external sources of influence across our set of case studies. While the list of potential external sources of democracy is enormous, the clear advantage of our method lies in its sequencing – identifying internal causes of change and only then zooming out to trace any relevant external influence. As such our study does not prejudge potential sources and paths of external influence.

## OUTPUTS

The transitions track of the research program will initially produce a set of 16 country case study reports, each of which will become a CDDRL Working Paper, and the majority of which will form the basis for chapters in an edited volume. The set of case studies selected out of the applicable universe of cases is as follows:

<i>Case Study</i>	<i>Success / Failure</i>
Algeria (1991-2)	F
Angola (1975)	F
Azerbaijan (2005)	F
Chile (1988)	S
China (1989)	F
Ghana (1996)	S
Indonesia (1998)	S
Iran (1980)	F
Mexico (2000)	S
Poland (1981)	F
Russia (1991)	S
Serbia (2000)	S
South Africa (1994)	S
South Korea (1987)	S
Turkey (1982)	S
Ukraine (2004)	S

The number of interesting and important cases is much greater than our capacities to analyze them. As a way to select cases for this volume, we looked at cases considered (a) difficult, (b) strategic, and (c) to have some international dimension. In addition, we wanted to have variation in the type or mode of transition. For instance, the cases of

Turkey and South Africa were pacted transitions, the case of Russia did not involve pacting, and the cases of Serbia and Ukraine are very specific cases of breakthrough from semi-autocracy. We also aimed for geographic diversity – our cases range from post-communist Eastern Europe, to southern Africa, to Asia and the Middle East.

Edited volumes can often be slow to come to press. Although we feel they will be welcome additions to the academic and policy literature when completed, we feel compelled to produce shorter, pithier products earlier in the program cycle. As a result, we will create a separate section of the already highly successful CDDRL Working Papers series that is devoted to this program in particular. Our Working Papers currently reach an audience of thousands world wide. They are produced quarterly and are easily downloadable as PDF documents at no charge to the reader. We have found this mechanism to be an excellent vehicle by which to quickly disseminate timely research findings to a wide international audience.

We plan to write up our findings as cases commonly written for business school students. Our goal is to disseminate these short, case-style studies to targeted segments of the international policy community. These could be used by practitioners seeking greater knowledge of interventions that can be shown to make a difference without having to wade through books on the subject of democracy promotion. Like our working papers, we can reach a wide audience of interested readers by electronically publishing these cases on the main CDDRL website as PDF documents.

During the course of this program, we also will work with USAID, the European Union, national governments, and NGOS to assemble on one website all information related to evaluation of democracy promotion. To date, most of this data sits in the bowels of bureaucracies. It needs to be public.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

This document should be read in conjunction with the research guide for case study authors produced to ensure a common analytical framework for all case study researchers, an essential condition for comparative research of the magnitude and complexity we are aspiring to.

All existing and future documents relating to the program will be gathered in a designated section of CDDRL's website, providing regularly updated information about the program's development:

[http://cddrl.stanford.edu/research/evaluating\\_international\\_influences\\_on\\_democratic\\_development/](http://cddrl.stanford.edu/research/evaluating_international_influences_on_democratic_development/)

