
Worldwide promotion of democracy: challenges, role and strategy of the European Union

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The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), founded in 1964, is one of the political foundations of the Federal Republic of Germany. Through its international activities and projects, KAS makes a substantial contribution to international cooperation and understanding. It is named after the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Konrad Adenauer.

Through international partnerships with private organisations and movements, state institutions and think tanks, KAS intensifies global knowledge transfer and promotes civic education. The 65 KAS offices worldwide act as central service and information centres.

Through its projects and activities, KAS contributes to the worldwide promotion of democracy and to strengthening of the rule of law, as well as to peace and social harmony, the fight against poverty and social exclusion, the extension of the concepts of the social market economy, and European Union integration. KAS considers these developments as conditions for the improvement of the political, socio-economic and environmental foundations of life.

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Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEPAL	United Nations Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean
DDSP	Democracy Development Strategy Plan
EDF	European Development Fund
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro (currency)
GDP	Gross domestic product
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
KAS	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
LDCs	Least developed countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals (UN)
NePAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
ODA	Overseas development assistance
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
TEC	Treaty establishing the European Community
TEU	Treaty on European Union
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USD	United States dollar

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Introductory remarks

Frank Spengler

Putting democracy first

Development and democracy are decisively linked. This was recognised recently by the leaders of the Group of Eight nations (G8) at the Heiligendamm summit in Germany. The German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development is very much involved in promotion of democracy, with Minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul saying recently ‘without democracy, we will not make any considerable progress in the fight against poverty.’

This general statement leads to the question: ‘What kind of democracy do we want?’ Should it be direct or representative? What should the constitutional arrangement be? Should there be limits on the ‘tyranny of the majority’? What are the core elements – from cultural or historical or other framework conditions – of democracy?

In this context, it is important to address the value system and the development orientation of the political elites in developing countries. The preconditions for sustainable and successful establishment of democracy have to be addressed. This involves looking at questions of mentality, institutions, economic and legal frameworks, and, last but not least, religion. The role of external and internal actors must be considered, including how the relationships between them are organised.

In summary, there are many questions relating to development and democracy promotion that need to be answered. Unfortunately, the importance of democracy for development has not been addressed as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), on the basis that democracy is a goal in its own right and not just a means to achieve human development. For too long the approach has been ‘liberation first, democracy later’ or ‘stability/security first, democracy later.’ But it is time to put

democracy first. This has been a key orientation of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) for forty years and democracy promotion will continue to be central to KAS's international work.

Introductory remarks: the European Union and democracy promotion

Elmar Brok MEP

Democracy promotion: key issues for the European Union

The European Union is a unique model, with a legal commitment to human rights and the rule of law. EU countries must remember this in dialogue with each other and with third countries. Despite the EU's cultural diversity, there is recognition of common values and the fact that the countries and people of the EU can learn from the Union's diverging experiences and traditions.

To spread the values of peace and freedom beyond the EU's borders, it is necessary to foster mutual dialogue and cooperation. In order to strengthen the mutual understanding between cultures, religions and ethnic groups, the EU must forge a normative human rights dimension in foreign policy. However, human rights clauses are often not implemented. One of the most important jobs of parliaments is to continually remind governments that human rights clauses have to be implemented.

This works better for smaller countries. The bigger and more powerful a country, the less it usually insists on the implementation of human rights clauses. This is largely because of the power of vested interests. It is a classical foreign policy question: how can the right balance be found so that neither values nor interests are neglected? Parliaments have to address this problem, by pushing national governments and the European Commission in certain directions. In addition, the EU has to implement policies that are sensitive to culture, ethnicity and gender differences. It also has to show more coherence in these policy approaches.

Democracy and security in Europe and abroad

Democracy, good governance and respect for human rights are not the norm for most

countries outside the EU. However, these values are the cornerstone of peace and human development. Without them, security and modernisation will simply not be possible. This is a very important point. Arguments must be made to convince countries that there will only be a chance for stable development with good economic and social conditions when the conditions for democracy, good governance and respect for human rights exist.

A lack of democracy in some countries creates serious problems for the EU. This is increasingly true for security matters, with regards to failed states, refugees, migration, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, it is very much in the interest of the EU to promote democracy, good governance and human rights around the world.

This is one of the most convincing arguments: that promotion of democracy and human rights should not just be done for moral reasons, but also for self-interest.

Illegal migration across the Mediterranean is creating considerable pressures, with thousands of people risking their lives. The EU must help the countries of sub-Saharan Africa develop good governance and democracy in order to improve their social and economic development.

EU mechanisms

The EU has several mechanisms for democracy promotion: control, contagion, convergence and conditionality. EU membership helps underpin democracy in the EU member states. Articles six and seven of the EU Treaty (affirming respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and containing clauses enabling EU member states may act to preserve these rights in other EU countries) provide a mechanism for EU intervention if the values of the rule of law or democracy are violated in member states.

EU membership in that sense is therefore good for ensuring fundamental freedoms. But EU membership is also a benefit in terms of cooperation between member states in common institutions, which stabilise democracy. It is not surprising that former dictatorships like Greece, Spain and Portugal during the 1980s looked to EU membership as promising stability and development. This was and still is the case in eastern European countries.

Given their wealth, security and stability, EU member states and other western democracies are a source of inspiration for states that are candidates for EU association

agreements or EU membership. This gives a direction and purpose to convergence of democratic principles with EU norms.

Democratic principles can also converge due to socialisation leading to the internalisation of democratic norms. The involvement of the EU in helping underpin political, legal and economic reform efforts can play an important role in this.

The EU is already an important actor in democracy promotion and has a good track record. It spends roughly EUR one billion on democracy promotion and development aid projects annually, equalling 50 percent of the global budget in this field.

As well as working with bilateral donors, the EU also acts in cooperation with international organisations such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

There is still room for improvement and a need for better coordination. A comprehensive and coherent bottom-up approach is needed for designing and implementing strategies of assistance. However, democracy cannot be imposed from the outside. Genuine democratic transition must always come from within.

Lessons learned

The American strategy of democracy promotion and regime change through direct intervention has failed. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for democracy promotion. The concept and practice of democracy differ from one country to another. Long-term commitment is needed. It takes time to build new institutions and trust.

The EU's greatest successes in democratisation are the enlargement process as well as the enhanced new neighbourhood policy with greater financial resources (a overall budget of EUR 12 billion for the 2007-2013 period). In return for democratic reform, the EU offers a share in the EU single market, closer cooperation in the fields of energy and transport and the possibility to participate in the EU's internal programmes. Instruments include advice on democratisation, governance reforms, capacity building for administration and measures against corruption and fraud.

European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights

Pressure from the European Parliament was a significant factor in the creation of a new financial instrument: the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. Financing for democracy promotion, worth more than EUR 130 million annually, is part of this programme. The initiative will bring more flexibility to projects and will be

independent of national governments in the partner countries. This is important in the case of countries like Belarus. Where it is not possible to work with the government on democracy, instruments are needed that make it possible to develop and help civil society groups, so that democracy can grow from within.

It is important that this programme is carried out in a way that frees us to work with a wider range of actors, including parliaments and political foundations. This was prohibited in the past.

The European Parliament will scrutinise the European Commission to ensure that it implements the instrument in such a flexible way that the aims can be achieved and it does not suffer from bureaucratic bottlenecks.

Tasks ahead

Coordinated efforts are vital in order to address the following questions:

- How democratisation can be supported in countries with very limited freedom and hostility towards external interventions that aim to support civil society;
- How to develop a European democracy support template, based on specific European perspectives on democratisation and democratic practice;
- How to improve the effectiveness of EU incentives for democracy, conditionality and sanctions.

Keynote presentation: democracy promotion – key to peace, stability and development in a globalised world

Karin Kortmann

The rationale for democracy promotion would seem to be self-evident: supporting democracy and setting up funding programmes. However, it is not always clear what ‘democracy promotion’ actually means. It is important to exchange examples of good practice and to discuss the contribution public policy instruments can make alongside the efforts of civil society, political parties and foundations. Discourses on supporting democracy usually refers to the term ‘good governance’, which can be summed up as support for human rights, reinforcing the rule of law, and the fight against corruption. All this is a part of democracy, but an exact meaning remains to be defined.

Universal values

As Mr Brok stated in other words, democracy is a universal value. The values of democracy and human rights are not ‘Western export models’, but are found in all societies. In the 2000 Millennium Declaration, the international community said that the right of all people to a life in dignity, security and freedom is best fulfilled through democratic and participatory governance, on the basis of the will of the people.

The universal validity of democratic principles is also apparent in the fact that a large majority of states has acknowledged the underlying principle of human rights: from freedom of expression all the way to participation in elections.

The African Union

Many of Germany’s partner countries have adopted democratic principles of their own accord. The African Union (AU) is a good example. Member countries signed the

African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance at the AU Summit in January 2007. The African presidents, members of government and parliament involved have taken the EU as their template, and they are proud of what the AU stands for: unity, more possibilities to act, and more transparency. And African integration continues: some African presidents favour a monetary union, as completed by the EU.

In the AU Charter, the signatories commit themselves to, among other things:

- Follow the principles of respect for human rights and democracy, gender equality, and equality in public and private institutions.
- Fight against all types of discrimination and take measures that give women full and equal participation in all decision-making processes, and thus contribute to a democratic culture.

The European example

Democracy is a European value. Europe is a community of values, which, according to the Amsterdam Treaty, builds on ‘the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law’.

Young people often take democracy for granted. They do not know why democracy promotion should still be financed. This shows that many people’s thinking still remains focused on the national level and lacks a European or a global perspective. It also shows how vital it is to promote the EU’s democratic principles, which are still not put into practice in many places, for example in the Balkans. This shows how much still remains to be done for freedom and democracy.

During the last 50 years – especially since the fall of the Berlin wall 1989 – Europe has become a model example of democratisation. The EU has very successfully made accession of new member states conditional on democratic principles. This makes the EU one of the most successful democratisation projects of all time.

In addition, in the Maastricht Treaty, democracy promotion in the EU’s partner countries is set out as an aim of both EU common foreign and security policy and development policy.

In the EU’s association and cooperation agreements with third countries, clauses on human rights and democracy constitute a basis for focused political dialogue. Principles such as democracy, human rights and good governance are also included in the Cotonou

Agreement, which links the EU to 77 African, Pacific and Caribbean states. These principles are binding for all parties to the agreement. These initiatives are thus a positive example of the linking of international agreements to universal values.

Moreover, the European Consensus on Development sets out human rights, fundamental freedoms, peace, democracy, good governance and gender equality as common values. With the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, the EU has created a separate instrument, which specially supports non-state actors, and thus bottom-up democratisation processes. Nevertheless, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have their limits. They have a comparative advantage due to their partner-oriented approach, but NGOs and civil society are not all-powerful. They are important actors, but not necessarily the most appropriate actors when it comes to democratisation.

The link between democracy, peace, security, stability and development

The combination of democracy and development – even more so than the link between democracy and security – has been a common feature in the evolution of European states. Freedom, security and democracy cannot be regarded separately from social development. Alongside the freedom from material needs, freedom from fear and the right to live in dignity are aspects of a successful fight against poverty. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to tie the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to democratisation strategies.

However, democracy is not only an important prerequisite for sustainable human development. Democratic participation is also an independent aim of human development. Only in this way can the globalisation process be managed fairly.

Democracy is one of the four interdependent goals of German development policy: fighting poverty globally; stabilising peace and making democracy a reality; shaping the globalisation process fairly; and protecting the environment. These aims are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

Democracy offers mechanisms for balancing diverging interests. In this way, it can support stability, security and peaceful development. Democratic governments find it difficult to ignore the needs and rights of their populations. As demonstrated by Amartya Sen, there has never been a major famine in a country that respected fundamental democratic freedoms.

Democracy enables all parts of society to participate in political processes, especially

underprivileged groups. This is a condition for shaping globalisation in a fair and just way. Democratic control acts as a bulwark against human rights violations and maladministration, and contributes to a long-term rolling back of conflicts.

There is tangible evidence that, in more democratic states, there is a higher probability that the state will establish conditions supporting development, and will focus on growth that benefits all parts of society. Democracy also favours responsible and sustainable management of natural resources.

Example: Latin America

Recent developments in Latin America have shown that the establishment of formally democratic states – including elections – does not suffice. The Latin American poor do not yet participate sufficiently in the better prospects provided by growth and increased income. Statistics from the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) illustrate this: in 2006, 205 million people remained in poverty in Latin America, of which 79 million were in extreme poverty. Nowhere in the world are income differences as striking as in Latin America. In this light, it is not surprising that, according to a 2006 *Latinobarómetro* survey, just 58 percent of Latin Americans preferred democracy as a form of governance.

Only the rich can afford a poor state. The poor, on the contrary, need a welfare state that provides for them, supports them, fosters their activities and guarantees their participation. For example, tax revenues, which can play a decisive role for development-oriented growth, are very low in south and central America, when compared to Germany. In Guatemala, for instance, there is a ceiling of 15 percent. The more tax revenues there are, the more the state can support the common good. This is why Germany counts on successful financing instruments and financing organisations for the development of democracy.

Successful democratisation processes have to be deeply anchored in societies, because a democratic system can only be as good as the people it is supposed to serve. These people have to be able to accept it and breathe life into it.

To return to the Latin American example: in 2006, after many parliamentary and presidential elections, it seemed that Latin America had shifted to the political left. However, this change was connected to the emergence of charismatic leaders, rather than to strong political parties. This shows the importance of securing the results of elections by establishing effective party democracy.

Before showing how democratisation processes can be supported, two factors must be considered:

Special challenges for democratisation support

First, democratisation cannot be dictated. The role of external actors in democratisation processes must not be overestimated if we do not want to fall into the trap of assuming that we are omnipotent. Democratisation must come from inside a society; it needs time and must be regarded from a long-term perspective. Democratisation cannot be ‘prescribed’ from the outside, but has to be carried by societal forces in the relevant countries. This should also be observed when choosing vocabulary: ‘democracy support’ or ‘democracy building’ seem more appropriate terms than ‘democracy promotion’.

Second, supporting democratisation processes means facing special challenges:

One of the aims of democracy support is to ensure long-term peace, security and stability. Counter to this aim, it must be recognised that democratisation processes can require the breaking-up of established power structures. This can result in destabilisation of the situation, at least in the short-term.

The democratisation process itself is a redistribution process of political and consequently economic power. This can lead to conflicts related to economic redistribution and changed political priorities. Those that have derived political and economic privileges from authoritarian power structures often work against any erosion of their vested interests. Consequently, the needs of the ‘losers’ in the democratisation process must be addressed.

On the other hand, those who obtain certain rights because of democratisation will not always support the common good, but will also pursue vested interests. This is the reason why human rights, including protection from discrimination, are so important: they demonstrate at the same time the extent of and the limits to everyone’s personal rights.

Furthermore, donors are also subject to conflicts of intent, for example between short-term economic interests and an informed interest in sustainable development. Discussion is needed of a more systematic, coordinated and coherent European approach towards democracy support, which is an inherently complicated affair demanding patience and long-term commitment.

When comparing lists of least developed countries (LDCs) or low income countries with a simple democracy index, for instance the Bertelsmann Foundation's index, it becomes apparent that most of these countries are not democratic.

On the other hand, at no time in history have as many governments been democratically elected as today. However, in many of the countries that have advanced further in their democratisation processes, democratic principles lack a profound link to society. The gender question is one example: in ten countries in the world, women are not represented in parliament, and in fifty countries women make up only ten percent or less of national parliamentarians. This raises the question of how the German Bundestag would look without gender quotas.

Example: Ghana

All these challenges are in many countries counterbalanced by developments that show the steady advancement of democratisation and its positive influence on peoples' lives. One example is Ghana, a country that just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its independence. After a long phase of political instability, Ghana has been on the right track since the beginning of the 1990s. The government is committed to far-reaching state reform, and its policy can justly and appreciatively be described as oriented towards development and the eradication of poverty. Democratic change towards a pluralistic political culture is gaining momentum, also because of a civil society that is becoming increasingly active. Ghana's progress means there is a realistic possibility that it will, by 2015, be able to reach the MDGs set by the international community in the year 2000. The proportion of Ghanaian people suffering from hunger declined from 37 percent in 1990 to 11 percent in 2005. These are indicators based on hard facts, but the government is also engaging in activities to foster the participation of civil society.

Ghana's positive image in the international community was recently reinforced. Ghana was the first African country to submit itself to a critical analysis regarding the quality of its governance, carried out by other African countries in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NePAD). Finally, not only is Ghana itself stable, it also engages in successful efforts to stabilise the whole region. On several occasions Ghana has played a mediating role in foreign politics, for example in the conflict in the Ivory Coast.

Sensitivity to contexts

In order to meet the challenges outlined, it is essential to take into account the specific political, economic and societal/cultural contexts in the partner country. These contexts must form the basis for the support for democracy and democratic structures. There is

no blueprint for democracy: the African continent is composed of more than 50 states, which deserve individual analysis. Depending on the historical and cultural foundations of different societies, democracy can take on different forms.

This is why no distinct model of democracy should be promoted, but rather the advancement of principles linked to democracy and the rule of law. They include gender equality, empowerment, participation and non-discrimination, transparency and accountability, and respect for and protection of human rights. Regional human rights conventions can act as a point of reference. In addition, the jurisdiction of the associated institutions can be taken into account.

Example: Afghanistan

The German Bundestag and the European Parliament have been discussing for some months the ongoing and future reconstruction of Afghanistan. Germany has contributed substantially to the development of democracy in Afghanistan: the constitution is drafted, a strategy for the fight against poverty exists, and the country has a democratically-elected president and parliament. Nevertheless, our hands are tied regarding certain points of which the Afghan people must take ownership. For example, a federal system seems a more obvious choice than centralism for such a large country, but centralism has a certain tradition in Afghanistan, which cannot be bypassed. This shows that democracy can be supported and fostered, but western models of democracy cannot be exported wholesale to developing countries.

Germany's development cooperation policy

German development cooperation follows the principle of not supporting one distinct model of democracy, but rather adapting plans to the specific context.

Germany is one of Europe's main actors in the area of democratisation support, not only in the context of the German presidencies in 2007 of the EU Council and the G8, but also in terms of bilateral cooperation and the efforts of the German political foundations since the 1960s.

The work of the German political foundations

The political foundations represent a German particularity. They play a unique role in fostering democracy through development cooperation. Furthermore, they have played a significant part in establishing the German tradition of democracy support.

The clear political orientations of the foundations – each is associated with one of the parties represented in the German Bundestag – facilitate trusted relations with partners

on the basis of similar political orientations. By being present on the ground, the foundations' expatriate employees constantly build up networks and trust. They gain access to elites and leading personalities from the worlds of politics, society, economy, science, and the media. They support their partners with great expertise.

Similar to other non-state actors, such as NGOs or churches, the political foundations are able to become active even in areas where governments cannot engage in development cooperation, or in situations where they do not wish to act, such as in Zimbabwe under Mugabe, where non-state actors are carrying out important work.

For example, governments often cannot support opposition movements, trade unions or civil society. In countries with governments that lack the will to improve political framework conditions, or in countries where crises or violent conflicts are taking place, non-state organisations are able to strengthen the forces of reform in society, and can thus support democratisation from the bottom up.

The instruments used by non-state actors are more flexible than governmental ones and make it possible to react faster, for example during coups d'état or political upheaval. This flexibility applies to the use of funds as well as the choice of project partners, fields of action and execution of projects. Thus, political opportunities and possibilities can be seized intuitively.

However, German foundations are in no way the only interested parties committed to supporting democratisation processes worldwide. Many other bi- and multilateral organisations are active in this area, and more funds are being made available for democratisation projects. In the light of the Paris Agenda, coordinated action with a division of labour is the key. Development cooperation will be at its most effective if governmental and non-state organisations engage with their particular strengths in a complementary manner.

Conclusion

At the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome, EU member states, under Germany's EU presidency, reaffirmed the Berlin Declaration: 'the European Union will continue to promote democracy, stability and prosperity beyond its borders'. This shows that Europe is on the right path – democracy support is already high on the agenda. Nevertheless, Europe's potential for democracy building could be exploited even more.

For instance, in many EU programmes the topic could be stressed more. It could

make use of stronger instruments, and the European Commission should introduce an instrument to support functional, democratic party systems.

The quality of action depends on effective cooperation between the different partners and participants. Political foundations such as KAS can achieve what politicians sometimes only manage in grand coalitions, because foundations often achieve greater harmony on issues that are otherwise blocked by political obstacles.

Session one

Democracy promotion: definition, priorities and preconditions

Democracy: features and fundamentals

Dr Cor Van Beuningen

Democracy and democratic governance

In contemporary usage, the term ‘democracy’ refers to a government chosen by the people. In a democratic regime, the citizens in charge of government are selected by electoral competition, and while in power they are disciplined through various checks and balances. In fact, elections serve as such a control mechanism, through the prospect that those in power may not be re-elected.

Checks and balances are also involved in formal mechanisms like referenda and plebiscites; in the classical separation of powers in the *trias politica*, e.g. by enabling parliamentary control and independent court action; in relatively autonomous agencies like the central bank, or the ombudsman; in informal and contestatory mechanisms like extra-parliamentary pressure groups, civil society organisations and, especially, the mass media (press freedom). The principles of legality and *legitimacy* urge democratic governments to respect the rule of law and democratic principles, be responsive to the voice of citizens and to respect and foster human rights.

At the same time, a democratic government is a *government*, that is: a body with the power to make, and the authority to enforce rules and laws. A government has to *govern*, and to perform the essential state functions, which are:

- To provide external and internal security, maintain law and order and provide safety (to which ends it holds the monopoly of force) and social stability;
- To facilitate and regulate social and commercial interaction;
- To give directionality to societal development, to redistribute incomes and to allocate values
- To protect and promote the vulnerable;

-
- To supply basic public services.

While the previous paragraph insisted on the legitimacy of *democratic* governance, here, the focus is on the *effectiveness* of governance: to what extent does the (democratic) government fulfil its tasks, while making the most effective use of scarce resources?

Legitimacy and effectiveness

In short, democracy is a particular mode of organising the power question in society, i.e. one that involves, on the one hand, mechanisms to *install authority and exercise power*, and on the other hand, mechanisms to *control, limit and disperse power* through checks and balances. And democratic governance is to be judged by its effectiveness, i.e. by the effective use of authority and other scarce resources (*be responsible*), as well as by its legitimacy in terms of respect for democratic principles (*be responsive*).

Of course, both sides are intricately intertwined. A particular government will most probably enhance its legitimacy (in the eyes of the population; i.e. legitimacy understood as societal approval) when it performs its functions in a more effective way. Conversely, a government that is lacking legitimacy will find it increasingly difficult to govern without reverting to coercive and oppressive means, and then risks to get involved in a downward spiralling process – losing both legitimacy and control.

At the same time, a government will be confronted in practice with many situations in which it turns out to be difficult to navigate between the two instructions – to be responsible (effective government) and to be responsive. Such will be the case, for example, when the broader or longer-term interests of the country urge the government to take measures that are disapproved by the majority of the population.

Governance and governability

The popular notion of (good) *governance* refers to the quality of the government; and the concept comprises both these quality dimensions, legitimacy and effectiveness, while addressing the (quality of the) government.

Whether a particular government is actually able to govern in a democratic and efficient way (or: the extent to which it is able to do so) not only depends on its own qualities, however. This is true, not only because in a democracy, the (quality of the) government, being an elected body, reflects to a certain extent the (quality of the) society that it is supposed to govern. But also, the actual outcome of the government's policies and actions depends to a large extent on their reception by this same society. In order to be able to govern in any effective way, a government needs the acceptance of its authority

as well as the recognition, by at least a broad majority of the population, of its right to monopolise the use of force and to enforce its laws. Furthermore, a democratic government needs to be able to count on citizens that are able and willing to respect democratic principles, to exercise their democratic rights and to fulfil the corresponding (*republican*) duties. The extent to which these contextual conditions are actually fulfilled determines to a large extent the *governability* of this society and thus the success of any government. The quality of democratic governance is a reflection of the quality of the citizens being governed.

Thus, governability is a concept that captures the complex interrelationship between (the ‘quality dimensions’ of) the government and the society to be governed. Unfortunately, this is a concept that is considerably less popular both with students and policy makers, probably because it refers to this highly inextricable and dynamic interaction between society, politics and government.

Democratic politics

Free elections are essential but not sufficient for the make up and well-functioning of democracy. In order to avoid malfunctioning and even perversion, respect for human rights – especially for the minority, and for minorities - and for the rule of law is indispensable, as are effective institutions and checks and balances.

In democratic politics, different proposals for the directionality to be given to the development of society compete for electoral support. This presupposes both *voice and choice*, which in turn implies the following: an electorate composed of citizens; a number of different proposals for public or collective action, embodied by competing political parties (multiparty democracy); and free elections.

Ideally, then, democratic politics involves a number of political parties with different proposals for development, competing for the electoral support of engaged citizens.

However, it will be clear to anyone slightly familiar with reality in developing countries, that the factual functioning of politics here does not comply with this ideal description. This is also true for most democracies (and even, for that matter, for most democracies in the first world). What can be observed in reality, is – for example - that political bosses compete for electoral support, however *not* in order to get access to state power and to serve development and the common good, but aiming to get access to the *loot* constituted by public resources, in order to administer them as their own patrimony and distribute them amongst themselves and their clientele (state capture, patronage and clientelism, corruption).

And conversely, the electorate is constituted *not* by engaged citizens that choose the best proposal for the development of society, but by persons that act as clients looking for compensation by their patrons through the redistribution of the public loot.

In fact, what is involved here is a more or less institutionalised perversion of the *logic* of democratic politics; a perversion which to some extent is observable in many if not most of the developing countries (and elsewhere). Forms and procedures may be perfectly ‘democratic’, while they are being used and made to function for purposes that are against everything that democracy was meant for.

Democracy and the (nation-)state

Over a period of at least two centuries, the principles of human rights, the rule of law, and democracy have firmly embedded themselves in Western nation-states and their political-legal consciousness. The uncontested position of these principles in the West is matched by their universal appeal and their dissemination throughout the world. Two more recent developments stand out, however.

Firstly, the past decades have witnessed a transformation and erosion of the unique role of the *state* in the creation and development of policy and law. Both internal (see below) and external factors, such as globalisation and internationalisation, are to be held responsible for this. The state is in danger of losing its quality as the focal point of public decision-making. To the same extent, the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are in danger of losing their traditional centre. They are developed and defined in relation to national and sovereign states; and their relevance, implementation and operation are dependent upon mechanisms (such as the separately functioning powers of the *trias politica*) that are associated with a particular constitutional design within the framework of a state. Without relevant sovereign states, the future of democracy seems to be unclear.

Secondly, the connection of democracy and state with *nation* is becoming more and more troublesome. Remember that democracy is a form of government; state a geopolitical entity; and that nation refers to a cultural and eventually also ethnic community. Historically, in Western Europe the three coincided geographically and evolved simultaneously – strengthening each other. Accordingly, the nation-state and nation building have long been on the agenda of the new states after decolonisation.

At present, however, phenomena related to culture (including religion and language) and ethnicity, seem to have mostly divisive effects in the context of state and politics. Again, a case of the perverted use of democratic institutions: democratic forms and

procedures are instrumentalised by politicians who expressly promote and capitalise on religious or ethnic conflict and hatred, thus inviabilising society and undermining the idea and purpose of democracy as such. Cf. Zakaria's *illiberal democracy*. Ethnic and religious strife are at the heart of many of the armed conflicts in the past years, and more generally, issues related to uniformity and diversity with regard to *identity* will continue to affect the viability of democracy and the state for a good time to come.

Identity matters

Hence, the double project of a unified state and democracy is historically connected to the coming about of a collective identity in nation-terms: people sharing a common national *founding myth*, language, religion and *ethnos* (blood, territory and history).

If such a '*thick*' national community is currently an unfeasible (or undesirable) project in many cases, it is still hard to see how a society composed of individuals and multiple communities (e.g. kinship, ethnic, religious) might constitute a viable state and democracy without a certain degree of social cohesion. Will the democratic state be sustainable without a substantial part of the population sharing a sense of loyalty, belongingness or collective identity – albeit in the form of an *imagined political community*?

What is required then, is that at the level of personal, subjective identity, people should be prepared not only to comply with established democratic principles, procedures and outcomes, but also to identify and commit to being a member of a political community, a citizen of the *republica*, together with other citizens; and to act accordingly; in other words, to perceive a collective interest and to match the citizen's individual interest with this when making particular choices in the public domain.

Morality matters

Similarly, one might wonder whether a democratic state is viable without a substantial part of its citizens sharing a certain degree of moral sensitivity, of basic beliefs or convictions about how we should live together, expressed in values such as decency, tolerance, respect, recognition and care. Moral sensitivity differs from complying with the rules by obedience or out of prudence; as it differs as well from calculation involved in reciprocity, *do ut des* or *quid pro quo*, and the calculated matching of individual with collective interests. Moral sensitivity goes beyond rational discourse, but reaches personal, emotional layers involving empathy, generosity and care for the other, even for the unknown other.

The soft side of democracy

To paraphrase Robert Putnam: it is moral sensitivity, civic engagement, trust and social

capital that make democracy work. The viability of the democratic and constitutional state depends on the extent to which citizens are prepared and willing to cooperate, both among themselves and with their government. The degree in which the great majority of the population is willing to more or less voluntarily comply with the most important societal rules is related to the volume of their social capital, their civic engagement and horizontal and vertical trust; and this, again, to the degree in which they share a sense of identity and of a common fate, as well as a moral sensitivity and a set of basic beliefs and values – as members of a *moral community*.

In the longer run, democracy is about moral attitudes and the moral capacities of the people, of the individual persons both in society and in the government (moral leadership); it is about their willingness and ability to transcend the immediate me/here/now and to care for others, the common good, the environment and the future. One wonders how do these moral attitudes come about? This question has been raised in Western philosophy since the days of Socrates. Socrates defended the thesis that with regard to good and evil, the individual person - in the end - has the final say. Moral attitudes cannot be organised; empathy and generosity cannot be produced and respect, recognition and care cannot be imposed. Moral insights can only be found through reflection and consent of the person involved. Moral sensitivity cannot be enforced; it can only be guided or supported.

Thus, what makes for the vitality of a society and for the viability of the democratic state cannot be produced on purpose. If moral attitudes are to come about, they come about only as a by-product of social interaction.

Government is meant to serve and facilitate this interaction and the coming about of these moral attitudes. But government can also frustrate the coming about of moral attitudes and propel a downward spiralling movement. Too much and wrongly directed government intervention may frustrate meaningful social interaction, substitute social ordering mechanisms and block the coming about of moral sensitivity (cf. *subsidiarity*).

May I conclude this overview with what I suggest might be the one single statement that is relevant for our further discussion:

Changes in the political make up of a society; changes in the so called democratic structures and procedures, will only be sustainable if and when they are matched by – indeed, if they are sustained by – corresponding changes in the political culture; and where this is not the case, those changes in the political structures and procedures will most probably not have the intended effects, but quite unintended, perverse effects.

Democracy promotion: definition, priorities, preconditions

Dr Hauke Hartmann

Introduction: improving democracy promotion

There are several indispensable universal dimensions of a democracy: participation; the rule of law and horizontal accountability; and the protection of human rights. But these also stand in a complex relationship with national identity and cultural norms, with the actual performance of political actors (both in office and at the ballot box), and with governance and the effort to balance out responsibility and responsiveness. So democracy promotion is quite a complex issue.

There are three major points that should be considered when guiding democracy promotion in the future, especially in a European context:

1. The preparatory phase: precision in defining the shortcomings of defective democracies and authoritarian systems;
2. The implementation phase: creating and expanding the linkages between pro-poor policy and democracy promotion; and
3. The evaluation phase: explaining better what works when and how.

I shall deal with each of these in turn.

The preparatory phase

In identifying the strengths and the weaknesses of the target country, it is necessary to deal simultaneously with norms, with institutions, with processes and with the actual actors involved in the process.

After all, there are many defective democracies that have proved to be amazingly stable.

These countries are not simply transitioning. A point of focus is needed for democracy promotion. There is no blueprint, and an approach that works with one system may not work elsewhere. Therefore, we have to define more precisely where to concentrate our efforts.

The Bertelsmann Transformation Index

The Bertelsmann Transformation Index* lists 18 separate indicators to describe the democratic quality of a political system. Its hallmark is that it does not simply give scores. It also explains why the scores have been given, backed up by detailed country reports. These explain shortcomings and give reasons for deficiencies, be it with regard to press freedom, judicial independence, the stability and acceptance of democratic institutions, or the formation of social capital.

Cultural contexts and local identities are mentioned, but they are not the issues being compared. The Index compares and assesses the features of a democratic system – the norms, institutions, processes and political personnel – whose importance is universally accepted and which can be measured by the same yardstick in interregional comparisons. Still, the cultural context must be taken into account. In order to make that more clear, one example will serve:

Example: Islamist parties

From an analytical point of view, using the universal criteria for democracy, the best hope for the Maghreb states are the Islamist parties. They represent the only serious actors with a broad social basis calling for democracy, good governance and openness of the political system. But from a cultural point of view, the western countries and their governments tend to be distrustful of Islamist parties, which are believed to have authoritarian and absolutist agendas. So it is necessary to differentiate between various Islamist actors, some of which are potential partners in the liberalisation of political regimes, while others clearly do not sufficiently share the political agenda of democracy based on the rule of law. The starting point in any analysis would then be the universally binding features of democracy, while potential protagonists have to be assessed taking local and cultural contexts into account.

Such an approach, which is broader than just focusing on free elections and basic human rights, is a genuinely European approach, because it expresses the European scepticism towards political systems. The European perspective is coloured by the European experience of illiberal mass movements bringing down democratic regimes

* <http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/>

by democratic means. There is, perhaps more than in other political cultures, awareness that the functioning of the democratic system must be constantly monitored. This European scepticism should reflect most prominently in civic education, democracy awareness building, but also in support for watchdog institutions and generally in the strengthening of the rule of law.

The implementation phase

With regard to social and economic rights, there is a very real difference between Europe and the US. In Europe, compared to the US, there is a general willingness to allow the state a much larger degree of intervention for the promotion of economic wellbeing. The US meanwhile has not ratified the second United Nations Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, and is in general very concerned that a clear commitment to chartered rights in that field might lead to a conflict between negative rights (confining state action) and positive rights (expanding state action).

In Europe, however, it is quite clear that the interplay between political rights and social rights has to be analysed in order to make a holistic assessment of the possibilities for participation and freedom of choice. Social development and social justice enable more freedom of choice. There is no automatic link, but nevertheless an interconnection.

This distinction has a very real and practical significance when the goals of democracy promotion are defined. Questions must be addressed, such as whether poverty, hunger and sickness make it harder to introduce democratic governance (in the sense that there seems to be a correlation between the standard of living and the quality of democracy), and if the protection of at least the most basic social and economic rights are not part-and-parcel of democratic development.

According to KAS “the opportunity for the citizens to participate actively in solving problems and in decision-making – the most basic element of democracy – is even indispensable for people’s survival and for socioeconomic development in the medium term. The Millennium Development Goals cannot be reached and sustained without existence of democratic life.” I readily subscribe to this.

This is not to say that democracy promotion is really about economic development. But it means that an increase in social justice is likely to improve the quality of democracy. The Bertelsmann Transformation Index takes into account both the political and the economic aspects of transformation. This does not mean adding to the already long catalogue of measures for democracy promotion by simply adding redistributive or welfare elements. However, a pro-poor policy, as pursued, for example, by the British

government, can and should be linked to a policy of democracy promotion.

The evaluation phase

Every so often the following points are stressed: democracy promotion should not follow blueprints, and local conditions define much of the agenda. Measures for democracy promotion have to be devised by taking the political and economic status of a transforming country into account and by identifying partners in relation to the political regime, whether it is reformist, repressive or simply reactionary.

While this is all true, all of this is already happening. There is no masterplan of responsive action, or a grand design of culture-conscious intervention, but steps are taken on a daily basis, including pragmatic approaches by the local representatives of political foundations, innovative instruments developed by NGOs, or different measures chosen by different EU member states. One thing is certain: one of the greatest assets of European democracy promotion, aside from potential membership, is its diversity.

In fact, multifaceted intervention by different European players fits very well with the different democracy dimensions (norms, institutions, processes, personnel), and different shortcomings and challenges, whether in participation, rule of law, human rights or social integration.

But systematic evaluation of the multitude of measures is lacking. For example, it is very well to ask for civil society integration, bottom-up approaches, but it is not clear how exactly these measures are integrated into broader democracy promotion approaches. Individual measures alone cannot achieve it. The interplay of measures has to be evaluated, and this would have a number of benefits: less waste of money or energy, and the establishment of a continuous learning process. Such an approach would certainly require the willingness and the candidness of all institutions – public and private – engaged in democracy promotion. They would have to share their experiences in an open and self-critical manner, not only touting the successes, but also admitting failures and mistakes. It would be worthwhile, however, because it would shed light on current efforts as well as on the activities still needed.

Worldwide promotion of democracy: challenges, role and strategy of the European Union

Kristina Kausch

Defining democracy promotion

While there has been endless debate on the definition of democracy, it is doubtful that extensive theoretical debate on a definition of democracy promotion will add significant practical value to this field of work in policy terms.

There is no universally accepted definition of democracy, despite the considerable attention that democracy support has received in recent years. Instead, many democracy promoters indirectly define democracy by listing the policy areas, measures and instruments that contribute to democratisation. Among EU member states there is a wide range of headings under which measures that contribute directly or indirectly to promoting democracy are listed (for example, good governance, public administration reform, human rights, civil society support, rule of law, and decentralisation).

Because of this European democracy policies, rather than operating with an overarching definition of democracy promotion, rather pragmatically aim to influence the direction of the overall reform process by working on the different components of democracy.

Obviously, focusing on the components of democracy narrows the perspective on the relationships these different elements have to one other, and how they are ultimately supposed to lead to the 'big undefined whole'.

Nevertheless, the lack of a strict definition is not necessarily a weakness. It also has certain advantages. In democracy promotion, where interpretive concepts often prevail over firmly delimited policy categories, it might be preferable to work without an overly mechanistic framework.

Clarity of objective

The quality of a democracy promotion policy starts with the clarity of its objective: what is the aim of a democracy promotion policy in a particular country? Is the ultimate aim a broad systemic political change, selective reform in specific areas, or stabilisation of the regime?

What seems like obvious common wisdom does not come naturally to European policy practice. Much of the European ‘political’ funding (EU and member states) goes to specific human rights and good governance issues, but it is not always evident that these selective measures actually have a positive impact on political reform in a broader sense.

For example, civil society funding that helps pressure groups successfully push the regime into introducing liberalising reforms, which are often extremely important and valuable in and of themselves (for example womens’ rights groups pushing for reform of the civil code in Morocco or Algeria), in some cases also serve to actually close off prospects of systemic political reform. Similarly, many European governance projects appear to have strengthened the policy-making capacity of ruling elites and thereby helped to shore-up incumbent regimes. Moreover, as recipients can be critical of specific human rights issues and pro-regime at the same time, clarity of objective and strategy are important to reduce the risk of adverse effects.

In consequence, it is necessary to ask if the priority is to create ‘islands of improvement’ in selected focus areas (basic human rights for example), or to work towards a broader agenda of systemic political reform. The former option is likely to be used in some semi-authoritarian regimes to postpone more comprehensive systemic reforms. So far, neither member states nor EU institutions have made a clear choice in favour of broader systemic objectives in their general democracy promotion approaches.

Communication: relying on Europe’s better ‘democracy brand name’ is not enough

In many non-democratic states, the EU enjoys a favourable image compared to the United States as a promoter of democratic values. At the same time, Europeans must not be over-confident in what they like to present as the EU’s better ‘democracy brand name’. Local populations are not always convinced that the EU is genuinely committed to promoting democracy. For example, Egyptian civil society might say: the US is getting serious about democracy, why is the EU still dealing with the regimes? Or sometimes, the Europe partnership-based approach is perceived – maybe wrongly – as a lack of genuine commitment to democracy.

Similarly, Europeans are right to stress that ‘democracy cannot be imposed’. But this notion often seems to be confused with an ambivalence in Europe’s intentions to engage in democracy promotion per se. In the Arab world in particular this argument has been picked up and instrumentalised to the Europeans’ disadvantage. Whether or not one feels that such doubts about the genuine European commitment to democracy promotion are entirely fair, a greater clarity of message is needed.

In part, communication of the objectives of democracy promotion is also a question of nomenclature/terminology. In order to distinguish the European approach from others, some favour the use of different terminology. Instead of the term ‘democracy promotion’, which for many equals US policies, terms such as ‘democracy support’, ‘democracy assistance’ or ‘democratic politics’ are seen as preferable. This is particularly important when European democracy promoters seek a more neutral label that allows them to get access to influential policy-makers in the countries in question.

‘Indirect’ democracy promotion: exploring the mysterious spillover

There is an ongoing debate in Europe on how explicit democracy support should be. Democracy promotion policies are motivated not only by the value of democracy in its own right, but also by its instrumental role in advancing a broad range of other policy goals. Where democracy is seen as a goal in itself, the argument that investing resources in economic cooperation and development, military cooperation, administrative reform and so on is the best way to provide a more favourable context for democratisation, is central to European policies.

While in theory this is a good approach, evidence suggests that a spillover from development or economic liberalisation to democracy, can often be elusive. Moreover, no regular, systematic and independent EU-wide audits are compiled that show the ‘democracy impact’ of these indirect measures. More work is needed in this area. Beyond the very common notion of there being a link between political and economical liberalisation, there is nothing that shows the exact nature of this link: it is not clear in what way economic development and poverty reduction are actually helping democratic dynamics, and vice versa.

Levels of intervention: Europe’s hourglass assistance

Broadly speaking, the focus of European governmental democracy funding has moved away, and rightly so, from a narrow focus on the more formal procedural elements of democracy (elections, formal democratic institutions), towards a more gradual long-term bottom-up civil society-oriented approach.

More concretely, European democracy policies have been simultaneously focusing on two levels. On the one hand, politicians have been mediating at the highest diplomatic levels (top-down approach). On the other, European policies have acquired a good reputation for grassroots capacity-building bottom-up projects (which can be considered a distinctive emphasis of European actors in general).

European engagement is however rather weak at the mid-level of political-institutional level reforms such as political parties, parliament support and reform of civil-military relations. This is problematic because an overly strong focus on civil society grassroots support may not be enough. It is often argued that the democracy-generating potential of civil society depends largely on the existence of effective links between the civil society grassroots level and political decision-makers. In consequence, there is a need for European democracy agents to effectively balance bottom-up and top-down dynamics. This is one of the most obvious shortcomings of EU policies. Moreover, this is also the level at which democracy potential is most often blocked in semi-authoritarian states.

Conflict or competition between top-down and bottom-up approaches also arises from the number of contradictions between the political development agenda and the security and trade agendas. This gap becomes even greater when dealing with authoritarian regimes that are rich in resources, which are being encouraged by high energy prices.

In summary, a concerted approach to overcome these conceptual divisions between foreign policy and development – both between European member states and between national ministries – is desirable.

Democracy promotion: the German approach

Dr Eduard Westreicher

Democratic principles

In German development cooperation we do not promote a particular form or model of democracy but rather the enforcement of democratic principles governed by the rule of law. These comprise respect for political, civic, economic, social and cultural human rights, empowerment and political participation, democratic gender relations, non-discrimination of disadvantaged minorities and population groups, legal certainty, rule of law, transparency and accountability.

Characteristics of a democracy

There are however some characteristics that determine a democracy:

Free and fair elections

In a democracy, government representatives are elected freely and fairly by people who are entitled to vote, actively and passively at regular intervals, and always with at least two alternatives to choose from.

Civil Society

Democracy depends on enlightened and organised civil society articulating itself, and bringing influence to bear on the decision-making process of the state, during and beyond elections. Democracy can be successful and sustainable only if it is developed equally at local, regional and national level. Free and independent media are another important characteristic of democratic systems.

Approaches to democracy support and the German criteria catalogue

The specific situation in a given partner country or region can require very different approaches and priorities to assistance. The German Federal Ministry of Economic

Cooperation and Development (*Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* – BMZ) published in 2005 a position paper (BMZ 2005 ‘Promoting Democracy in German Development Policy: Supporting Political Reform Processes and Popular Participation’) that explains the German position on democracy promotion within the scope of development cooperation. Political foundations such as KAS participated extensively in preparing the paper.

In this position paper, policy options are formulated for supporting processes of democratisation in different political situations in partner countries, for example, in hybrid systems, in authoritarian states or in post-war societies.

As far as approaches and priorities are concerned, particular attention in our view has to be given to conditions of fragile statehood. BMZ recently published (May 2007) the strategy paper ‘Development-Oriented Transformation in Conditions of Fragile Statehood and Poor Government Performance’. The strategy stipulates that there are different possible approaches, and that it is important to strengthen a democratic culture through the political participation of the poor and disadvantaged, especially women, young people, and minorities.

Germany has also updated its catalogue of criteria, first established in 1990. Besides concrete analysis to examine the feasibility of projects and programmes, assessment of the development orientation of Germany’s partner countries within the framework of this annually updated catalogue is of great relevance. Democracy is one of the five main criteria in the catalogue, as follows:

- Pro-poor and sustainable policies;
- Respect for, protection and fulfilment of all human rights;
- Democracy and the rule of law;
- Efficiency and transparency of the state;
- Cooperative stance within the international community.

Range of players

The German approach to democracy support takes account of actors at different levels with specific performance profiles. Democracy promotion through state players mainly depends on the partner governments’ willingness to reform. Political foundations and churches can be active in areas where official bilateral development cooperation cannot play a part.

A certain degree of institutional variety is necessary for the promotion of democracy.

NGOs must act on their own responsibility, and must be able to work without political constraints. Pluralism is one of the constituent features of democratic societies.

Challenges

Even with constitutional gender equality, women are often left without (appropriate) involvement in political decision-making and positions of power. This constitutes a challenge for supporting sustainable democratisation processes. There is much work to be done on this issue, by EU member states and by the Commission.

Secondly, measures must address the younger generations. In Zambia for example, the average age of the population is 16.5 years. In the Palestinian territories it is 16.9. The younger generation has to play an important role in democratisation processes. Therefore, development cooperation must address this target group specifically.

Thirdly, the 'soft side' of democracy must not be overlooked. This involves listening to our partners. Are we really ready to do this? Should we take more time to listen and discuss rather than presenting to partners a prefabricated model of democracy?

Democracy promotion: definition, priorities, preconditions

Discussion

Contribution from Frank Spengler, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Two simple points need to be made about democracy promotion. First, nobody is a born democrat. Second, democracy only works with democrats. This might be very simple, but it leads us to one of KAS's main activities: political education. KAS also works on democracy promotion through partner organisations, and has activities not just in so-called developing countries but also in Germany. One of the biggest successes since the second world war is that Germany progressed from its background to become one of the most lively democratic states. This was not done overnight, but through internal and external actors. Democracy promotion is an educational process.

We now have the right instruments and people who can go to local groups and teach the principles of democracy to both young people and adults. What is the way forward for political education?

Contribution from Peter Köppinger, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

KAS works in many Latin American countries. In terms of our EU-supported work there, there have been no projects where KAS received funds for political education. But we were approached by the Commission Delegation in Bolivia after Evo Morales won the election, to conduct a project on political education, on pluralist party systems, on the necessity or the advantages of representative democracy. This shows that political education is not just to be used reactively, but it should be used pro actively.

Question from Dr Cor Van Beuningen, Socires

Is enough attention given to education in citizenship, in dealing with diversity and morality, and in democracy?

Response from Dr Hauke Hartmann, Bertelsmann Stiftung

Political education is crucial. It re-emphasises democratic norms and has had fundamental effects on German society. But it is important to take cultural variants of democracy into account. By political education we mean purely and simply discussion about strategies of change, and agreement on normative goals that can be regarded as universal. Political education is not about imposing certain models. In Latin America, perhaps even more so in Africa, there is a significant resistance to being manipulated in terms of democracy education. Delegates from those areas ask if they have to subscribe to a certain kind of democracy, and will not participate if they feel they have to. This might be one reason why enthusiasm for political education can sometimes be lacking. This is unfortunate because political education should be strongly supported.

Response from Kristina Kausch, Fundación par alas Relaciones Internacionales y el Dialogo Exterior (FRIDE)

FRIDE does research, and does not run its own democracy promotion or education programmes. The effectiveness of political education depends on who it is targeted at: political elites, civic education or the local level. For the latter, it is not surprising that there is no funding available, as it would be a long term investment, for which it is hard to attract funds.

Response from Dr Eduard Westreicher, German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development

A great deal of educational activity deals with conflict prevention, peace and security, for example in the Palestinian territory. This activity also covers civic and political education, in particular through the work of the Civil Peace Service (Ziviler Friedensdienst, <http://www.ziviler-friedensdienst.org/>).

Contribution from Roel von Meijjenfeldt, Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy

To give an example relating to democracy education: in Indonesia, where forty years of dictatorship ended in 1998, leaving a disconnection between the political elite and Indonesian civil society. Today, five Indonesian regions have a 'democracy schools' programme. The democracy schools have been fully developed and are run by Indonesians. It is interesting to see, in the largest Muslim democracy, young Muslim women participating in such programmes, writing articles in the local press and organising media programmes on democracy in the Indonesian context.

The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, in cooperation with the Dutch government and EU partners, is considering introducing the model in, for example,

Afghanistan. The objective is to introduce the concept of democracy, locally developed, and to identify the capacity within countries to run these programmes and initiate the discussion about what democracy means in different contexts.

Contribution from Karin Kortmann, German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development

Some further examples can be given from Germany's experience:

First, in the Balkans, during the Serbian governmental negotiations in 2006, it was noticeable that 80 percent of the younger generation had never left Serbia. We aim to give Serbia an EU accession perspective. Young people will become leaders, and they deserve the opportunity to get to know institutions, build up networks, and acquire experience abroad. Therefore, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development agreed with the foundations and the German embassy to introduce a voluntary exchange. In 2007, 200 young people from Serbia will come to Germany in order to get to know institutions, as well as paths to further and higher education and professional training. This is an important first step in the right direction.

Second, from January 2008, Germany will implement a development cooperation voluntary service. Ten thousand young people from Germany will be given the opportunity to engage in a project in a developing country for a period of between six months and two years. This implies exchanging experience with young people in other countries, concerning their different systems and how they function, and about the possibilities for (political) participation.

Third, before the elections to the Afghan Parliament, a political foundation invited young women from Afghanistan to the German Bundestag so that they could become acquainted with the German parliamentary democratic system. Members of the Afghan Parliament, who have been sitting in parliament for two years, have neither an institutional nor a personal model for parliamentary democracy. This fact underlines the importance of the partnership between the political foundations and the parliamentarians. It is relatively easy to get elected, but in order to work effectively for four or five years, with successes and setbacks, it is necessary to have support.

Concerning political education, mentalities will not change over night. That is why political education should be a daily task. Without political education, decision making procedures remain a mystery. Therefore, in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, we should not just rely on primary education. Other educational horizons must be taken into account, and a broad strategy is necessary for this.

Question from Sabine Wölkner, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Problems for EU democracy promotion might arise because of conflicting interests the EU has in certain regions. For example, in the central Asian states, the EU wants to develop alternative energy networks so that reliance on Russian energy supplies can be reduced. The EU is therefore dependent on dealing with authoritarian regimes in the region to reduce the dependence on Russia. Therefore in considering the approach to democracy promotion, it is necessary to consider the EU's perspective over issues such as this as well as cultural contexts and priorities. How genuine is the EU's commitment, and how might security and trade interests interfere with the commitment to democracy promotion? Are there any hidden agendas?

Response from Kristina Kausch

Foreign policy approaches towards certain countries must always balance different policy priorities. However we expect more from the EU because democracy is one of its core values. Greater expectations are what makes a difference to other states.

Question from the floor

Is the Bertelsmann Transformation Index typically European, in comparison to the Freedom House index or other American indices? Does the European specificity stand out compared to the American approach?

Response from Dr Hauke Hartmann

The answer to both questions is yes. The index is very comprehensive and covers the social, economic and governance dimensions. Such a holistic approach is to a certain extent the European point of departure.

In addition, the index covers in its criteria the first and second Covenants on Human Rights, so it is universal as well as European. A European viewpoint is quite compatible with a universal approach.

More than 250 experts involved in the work on the Bertelsmann Transformation Index have published a separate study called 'Violence, extremism and transformation'. This shows that political violence is most common in very defective democracies, where there is a challenge to the monopoly on the use of force, where the rule of law is not observed, and where ethnic fragmentation is politically instrumentalised. This illustrates the fact that democracy promotion has to deal with instability and insecurity. At the same time, working on the consolidation of democracy contributes to stabilisation.

Contribution from Dr Cor Van Beuningen

The classical state sees its people as subjects and is responsible for law and order. Social and democratic states such as Germany see their people as consumers or clients of public services. A democratic state can be created, but citizenship is not generated by itself. The German philosopher Böckenförder made it clear that the liberal democratic state does not create the conditions for the rise of citizenship. Democracy might be more acceptable if many state functions were separated from democracy. Democracy promotion deals with the structures of democracy, and then switches to civil society. But the middle level is neglected.

Contribution from Roel von Meijenfeldt

It is a very important observation, that there are bottom-up and a top-down approaches, often leaving out the middle level. There is the state, political society and civil society. This underlines the need to focus on political society.

The notion of subsidiarity is very intriguing. Subsidiarity is defined within state structures: doing at the lowest level that what can be done best at the lowest level. Many democracy promotion activities can be done much better by political foundations or civil society organisations, but there is a funding relationship with the EU, rather than a partner relationship. The EU can work on a number of initiatives, but it cannot take the same risks as other organisations and experts can.

Question from Dr Cor Van Beuningen

The concept of subsidiarity is also present in Catholic social teaching, including the interrelationship between the state and the citizens, and the responsibilities of each. Is this concept applicable to the European democracy promotion actors?

Contribution from Dr Peter Köppinger

It is complicated because democracy promotion is done with partner countries. It is not a question of civil society and political foundations in Europe dealing with civil society and political foundations in the partner countries. It is more complex. EU institutions (not only the Commission, but also the Council, and the European Parliament to a lesser extent) start from the fiction that there is somebody they can deal with who represents the partner country, including its civil society. This representative is the government, in particular the finance minister or the minister of foreign affairs. The government can be treated as a democratic government. But if the country really was democratically represented, the EU could rely, for example, on these issues of subsidiarity being addressed: what can be done by the people themselves, by civil society, by the political actors, and what has to be left to the state.

But commonly, when it comes to the relationship between civil society actors and political actors in these countries, it is a mess. It is only possible to find a way out of this mess with very honest and deep analysis of the shortcomings of the country with regard to its democratic structure.

Contribution from Dr Cor Van Beuningen

Where four actors are involved -- governmental and non-governmental actors in Europe and in partner countries -- notions like subsidiarity could be involved when dividing tasks between the EU actors. However each of the governmental and non-governmental actors has its own partners in other countries. This needs further debate, and is linked to the question asked by Dr Westreicher: 'Are we really ready to listen to our partners?'

Moreover, there is a communication issue: the EU does not seem to articulate its policies. At a recent conference, the Latin American speakers asked why Europe does not express its opinions and sell its approach in the world? Why are Europeans so shy in communicating policies that are, after all, already implemented? Why do they not more explicitly position their approach in contrast to the American 'hard approach'?

Contribution from European Commission representative

Expectations should be placed on the EU, especially by the European Parliament, concerning its influence in the world. But the EU began as a cooperation agent, especially in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. This relationship dates back to the 1960s and has greatly influenced the view of the Commission. The Commission was limited to the cooperation objectives, and is now slightly strait-jacketed, with the main objective being poverty reduction.

Because of this, the Commission is used to working with central governments. Only since the Cotonou Agreement has civil society been accepted as an actor in cooperation. Parliaments are now the legitimate bodies, due to democratisation in Africa. The Commission does not have an institutional knowledge of working with these actors. It is also good that the Commission does not rush too quickly to get involved in political situations in countries where it is not used to working with such actors. Commission personnel posted to partner countries rotate every four years, whereas, to work deeply, knowledge is needed of the social and political dynamics in a country, in order to avoid appearing to be a political actor with a Western imprint. The Commission's relationships with partner countries will evolve, but there are demands for quicker action in foreign policy. That is not the institutional background the EU comes from.

Session one

Internal actors, external actors: country categories, country approaches

Internal actors, external actors: country categories, country approaches (I)

Frank Spengler

Reasons to engage in democratisation

The 2002 United Nations Human Development Report stressed that the best way to achieve sustainable human development is to build strong and deep democratic governance at all levels of society. The report made it clear that democratic participation is a goal in its own right and not merely a means to achieve human development.

But why should external actors get involved? For Christians, it is a question of solidarity. From a Christian point of view, solidarity and subsidiarity are two sides of the same coin. Subsidiarity in this context means supporting partners in such a way that they will be able to solve their problems and decide on their own destiny. Why are we promoting democracy? Because, based on experience in many countries, democracy stands for social justice, economic efficiency, political stability, ecological sustainability, and optimal use of resources according to the principle of political competition.

KAS promotes democracy in our partner countries as a value-oriented system and as a political process. However, we explicitly recognise that democracy can take different forms depending on the historical and cultural foundations of partner societies.

Defining democracy and ways of support

However, what do we mean by democracy? In a democracy, power is exercised by representatives who are freely elected by the population, at regular intervals, and with at least one alternative candidate each time. Criteria for a functioning democracy include the separation of powers, a system of checks and balances, the rule of law and protection of human rights, and a free media. As well as national and regional programmes, KAS has introduced sectoral programmes, addressing media and the rule of law.

Democracy depends on an educated, articulate and organised civil society, which has the possibility of influencing governmental decision-making processes, even between elections. Democracy can only be successful and sustainable if it is made possible at local, regional and national levels. So these are the three levels of intervention, especially for KAS, which mainly concentrates on local government structures.

Active participation by civil society means ownership of the democratic process. The mentality change must come from inside, through active engagement of internal actors. The political elite of a country plays an important role. It has to accept and pursue a development-oriented reform policy.

External actors can only supplement, support, and motivate the democratic transformation process in a country. Change, again, must come from internal actors, mainly from the political elite, operating within organised, relevant, and efficient party structures.

Adapting democracy support to the country context

In designing tailor-made country strategies for democracy promotion, three categories of countries can be considered:

In the first category, political and government forces openly promote the establishment or strengthening of democracy. These are countries where democracy promotion can include government-organised projects as well as projects organised by civil society. External actors take the role of dialogue partners, providing technical expertise, best practice examples, and assistance in implementing jointly-drafted solutions, which can be done both by internal and external actors.

The second category includes countries with formal democratic structures where the government and political forces maintain authoritarian attitudes, and are reluctant to translate the constitutional democratic order into real democratic life. In such countries, government forces do not support the strengthening of the democratic culture. Strengthening and capacity-building involving civil society organisations and other non-state actors is primarily the task of so-called non-governmental actors.

In the third category, government and ruling political forces openly oppose multiparty democracy and functioning democratic processes. In most of these cases, there is still nevertheless room for projects by foreign, non-state actors, especially by political foundations and NGOs. The objective is to build up civil society's democratic awareness and capacity.

Internal actors, external actors: country categories, country approaches (II)

Roel von Meijenfeldt

The euphoria about the spread of democracy is over. The current discourse focuses on the backlash against democracy with reference to Russia, Belarus, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and others. The threats against the advancement of democracy come from autocrats fighting back, they come from rising powers that challenge the international foundations of democracy, they come from the scarcity of energy sources, they come from weak states that cannot control their territory or provide for their people, they come from terrorists who respond to alienation or to perceived or real injustices. And they come from a warming planet that will spur new diseases, spawn more devastating natural disasters and catalyse deadly conflicts. Finally, they come from the US retreat from multilateralism, from an understanding that the world shares a common security and a common humanity.

Efforts to strengthen the EU's democracy support profile – and by profile I mean capacity to act – are most welcome. Europe's peace and welfare depends on the foundation of democracy; democracy is the vocation of Europe. The EU should be the number one champion of democracy. What we value at home we should value also in the relations with our partners. In fact, the famous democracy and human rights clauses in the agreements with third countries provide the EU with a unique legal framework to advance democracy and political dialogue as a standard feature in the relations with third country governments.

The EU's hidden contribution to democracy support

While the EU and its member states are the biggest providers of ODA, and have a unique legal framework for democracy and human rights assistance, many democracy activists and policy makers somehow fail to note the EU contribution to democracy

support. At a recent conference on EU-Latin America relations, the outspoken former Mexican foreign affairs minister, Mr Castaña stated that Europe is absent in the current political debate in Latin America about the political and economic direction: “We share many values with Europe but we miss the European Union in the battle of ideas that is currently waging on the Latin American continent.” He strongly argued that there is a need for an alternative to the neo-liberal ideas of the Washington consensus and the ideas of the Bolivarian revolution of Hugo Chavez. The European model is highly relevant but, “where is Europe in the debate?”, he asked.

He encouraged the EU to be less shy. He did not want to diminish the importance of a number of the EU instruments, but underlined the sense of urgency for the EU to enhance its active engagement in supporting democracy. If democracy is not anchored more solidly beyond Europe’s borders, it will come to haunt the European continent sooner or later.

Defining European democracy support

A number of conferences have addressed democracy promotion, including a conference in 2004 organised by a network of political foundations and hosted by NIMD at the International Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands.

The 2004 Dutch EU Presidency were offered the outcomes of this meeting in The Hague Statement. In this statement a number of dimensions are identified that together form what one may call a specific European identity in how democracy is supported. These were:

- Variety in social and political organisations
- Democracy – social justice nexus
- Democracy is work in progress
- Peaceful transition through dialogue
- Human rights and the rule of law
- Democracy assistance preferred over conditionality
- Regional context and supra-national institutions

Strategic approaches

Democracy support is not a matter of more money but of a more strategic employment of available funds to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals and the evolution of political systems go hand in hand. It is also a matter of going deeper into the hardcore issues of what makes democracy work or not work. With the EU commitment to reach the 0.7 percent of GDP target for ODA by 2010, and the G8 commitment to

double its funding for Africa by 2010, the funds available will increase substantially while the political infrastructure to absorb these funds in many cases remains weak and will come under strong pressures.

Poor states undergoing democratisation are better placed to reach development goals than their authoritarian counterparts. Democracy and development go hand in hand, hence the importance of political development and the support for democratisation processes, and the need to review the instruments available within the EU to enhance the European capacity to provide the support to our partners in countries in transition, in young democracies, and in countries that resist democratic transformation. With the backlash against democracy there is no time for complacency or for doing more of the same. We need to be honest in assessing the needs and learn lessons about how to respond better.

How has NIMD translated the dimension of the European identity in its programmes?

At NIMD we work specifically with all the political parties across the political divides in young democracies, in countries in transition and increasingly also in post-conflict countries. True to our European experience, we facilitate dialogue amongst the political parties about the challenges they face in making their democracies work and deliver better. NIMD provides reform agendas that are locally owned and about which there is considerable political will to implement these changes. We also facilitate agreements among the political parties about how the political parties can receive external support. Provision of support is subsequently based on such agreements.

The good news is that it works. Parties in Zambia for example are in the process of agreeing on a roadmap for constitutional reform. Parties in the recent elections in Mali played by the rules of the code of conduct they had developed. Parties in Guatemala are increasingly reaching out to include the indigenous population and women into the political process. Parties in Bolivia are meeting each other to discuss a new political party system.

The essence of the task is not a menu of projects that should be supported by the EU or other international partners; the essence is to facilitate national agreements on the core reforms that can subsequently be supported by outside partners. In ten countries, from Indonesia to Kenya, Zambia, Ghana, Bolivia and Guatemala for example, political parties have formed Centres for Multiparty Democracy (or institutions with similar names) in which political leaders cooperate in driving political reform processes and through which parties are supported in their institutional development.

In Ghana, for example, the parties are in the process of completing the first Democracy Consolidation Strategy Paper, which is entirely locally driven and is expected to become a key document for the EU in providing new governance assistance under the tenth EDF. It is not the EU producing a plan or the World Bank facilitating a PRSP, it is the Ghanaians doing it themselves with experts from within or from within the region. The local ownership content is high as an expression of the fact that democracy cannot be exported. The same process is taking place in a number of other countries within the context of the tenth EDF programming in cooperation with the local EU delegations.

The primacy of politics

These programmes do strengthen the primacy of politics. They generate higher levels of trust among political antagonists in often fragile societies. It helps to overcome the syndrome of winner-takes-all and to develop a common responsibility for the political bases of the country. It also attracts interest among the international partners who find in these locally owned Centres for Multiparty Democracy the instruments through which international democracy support can be harmonised. NIMD and KAS have cooperated to jointly support political reform processes in a number of countries through the new Centres for Multiparty Democracy. One of the additional outcomes of this process is that political parties that focus on their institutional development also tend to develop a more pronounced political platform or, if you prefer, an ideology. This makes them more reliable partners for joining international political families and in establishing ties with sister parties within the EU, for example.

The international context necessitates a more pronounced democracy assistance profile on the part of the EU. I am glad that over the past two years the European institutions have undertaken a number of significant steps. The Council produced a first policy paper; the three institutions engaged in an intensive debate about the new EU financial instruments for democracy support in the context of the financial perspectives 2007–2013; the European Parliament established a democracy caucus and a democracy bureau. The recent Berlin EU Declaration on the occasion of the celebration of the EU's fiftieth anniversary contained a clear reference to democracy promotion as an objective of EU external policy. The sentence in this short statement reads:

The European Union will continue to promote democracy, stability and prosperity beyond its borders.

These are all important steps forward. What is missing in this EU architecture is a high level European civil society democracy foundation for which some of us have taken

the initiative and which we hope to establish during the EU fiftieth anniversary year. We know that there is a lot of misunderstanding about what this civil society instrument is about. It is not an extra layer for example, it is just a civil society initiative involving prominent European politicians with the ambition to provide extra input to enhance the EU profile, to provide a gateway for democracy activists outside Europe to the bewildering institutional set-up of the EU and EU civil society, to become a European catalyst and knowledge hub for more strategic democracy support, and to provide flexible responses and funding for opportunities arising to advance democracy in partner countries. It is going to do at the European level what we are successfully doing at various national levels. KAS and other interested organisations are invited to join this European foundation either now or at a time of their own choosing. The door is open and shall remain open for all those who hesitate or argue against a new civil society instrument. The initiative is a response to the vast demand in EU partner countries for increased partnership and professional capacity with the EU in an international context that is becoming more difficult by the day. It is to this call we are responding, based on the value we attach to making democracy support a core business within EU foreign policy, as it is within Europe's own borders.

Internal actors, external actors: country categories, country approaches (III)

Vidar Helgesen

The role of the European Union in worldwide democracy promotion is something of great interest to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), even if a majority of IDEA's member states lie beyond Europe's borders. IDEA includes eight EU member states as members. We have the view that in the present global context, the EU should step up to the plate and do more in terms of worldwide democracy building.

Questions about the role external actors can play, and which approaches work and do not work, are part of an intense questioning of democracy building strategies. This reveals that democracy building and democracy are increasingly contested and more challenged than they have been for a long time. They also operate in a more complex environment, partly of course as a result of Iraq and the rise and fall of the US freedom agenda. So there is a legitimacy challenge to democracy building.

There is, at the same time, an evolving difference of opinion when it comes to models of political and economic development. China is economically successful in the global context, but has a completely different political system from western democracies. In conjunction with the rise of China, western donors' conditionalities are being questioned. The first time the African Development Bank staged its annual meeting outside Africa, it went to China. Countries ask why they should bother about the World Bank with its models and conditionalities, when they can benefit from Chinese generosity.

These developments pose a challenge to Europe's role as the biggest donor in development cooperation. Development and democracy are interlinked, and challenges to external assistance mean a new approach is needed. The first step in this respect is

recognising that little can be achieved by external assistance, that democracy must be home-grown and that, while there is a space for external assistance, it is not playing the major role.

One of many tools IDEA has at its disposal is the state of democracy assessment methodology. This is meant to be used by national actors to assess their own democracies, rather than for outsiders to carry out assessments. It is not a ranking instrument, but leads to perception-based analysis that can internally trigger reform discussions, not least among political parties.

A knowledge-driven approach

Democracy promotion should be knowledge-driven rather than ideology-driven. In recent years we have seen democracy promotion placed centrally on foreign policy agendas, not least from Washington. But the time has come to refocus on knowledge-driven approaches, on the need for professional networks to develop, on sharing knowledge, and on the need to critically assess the successes or failures of democracy building actors.

Another clear need is to recognise, appreciate, and celebrate the diversity of democratic experiences. This is important in the current global context that is more polarised and divided, and in which it has become too easy for autocrats to portray democracy support as something coming from industrialised countries and being part of hidden foreign policy agendas. It is necessary to showcase more experiences from the global south, not least that democracy can take root in very different situations and can be expressed very differently, but is based on some key principles. It is clear that the European approach to democracy building should be one that recognises and builds on diversity in the regions.

Related to that, there is much benefit in collaborating with regional organisations. The Organisation of American States and the African Union both have democracy charters. Other regions have not come that far, but there are opportunities.

Reviving multilateralism

Multilateral approaches and long term thinking in democracy support need to be revitalised. Some say democracy building has become 'projectified'. More work is needed to build sustainable, long-term partnerships.

Long-term thinking and action leads to closer cooperation between the democracy and development communities. The democracy building community should provoke a

tough examination of some development cooperation policies. One question in this respect is if development cooperation at times risks reducing the space for democratic politics in partner countries. Interviews with African political parties have revealed interesting responses to the question ‘how do you go about shaping and presenting policies to the electorate?’ The response was that this was not a critical issue because it is covered by the PRSP process – Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. What is seen as useful from the development perspective can be limit natural national political competition.

The Paris Agenda, which is firmly owned by donors, talks about accountability and ownership. But accountability in practical terms has become more about the relationship between the donor government and the partner country and its government, than about accountability issues within that country, such as the space occupied in setting priorities and monitoring the use of funds by the parliament and political parties.

Denmark, for example, provides budget support to Nicaragua. But only half of the budget support is visible to the Nicaraguan parliament. This is not a corruption issue. The money can be accounted for in the donor-recipient relationship context, but there is no full accountability between the government and the parliament.

If development, like democracy, is to be driven from within, we need to give space to national politics. This is an issue which goes beyond assistance to political parties. There should be political party assistance, and more of it, but it is also necessary to move beyond it and to make national politics in partner countries work effectively for development. Donors focus on governance and, to a certain degree, civil society. But there is too little focus on political society. A more political approach to development would mean that donors at times would need to accept choices they do not necessarily agree with. It is more important to look at how decisions are made than what decisions are made.

Even more important is to accept the time needed to make politics work. Development aid must be more than technical discussions between the ministry for development in the donor country and the ministry of planning or finance in the partner country. It is a matter of requiring from the partner country that they have proper political processes that ensure that development cooperation is not there to relieve national actors of their responsibility for their own development, but to support it. There is also a demand for checks and balances to be in the system by the virtual of functioning national politics.

Democracy promotion should not be on the margins of the much bigger field of development assistance, but should act to influence the development actors so development and democracy work in partnership.

Democracy promotion in fragile states: challenges and opportunities for the EU

Julia Leininger

Introduction

Democracy promotion must address three questions: **who** promotes democracy **where** and **how**?

The industry of democracy promotion has flourished in recent years. It is exercised by a multitude of actors in very heterogeneous contexts – some of them extremely difficult. This presentation focuses on fragile states, a specific type of difficult environment, and on the specific actor that is the European Union.

Against the background of the current debate on international democracy promotion with specific regard to the EU, I argue that, firstly, the EU should play a major role as a promoter of democracy. Secondly, the paradigm of sequencing in democracy promotion is not valid under certain circumstances and, thirdly, the EU could strengthen its role as a democracy promoter within its existing framework by pursuing a complementary approach of state-building and democracy promotion.

My presentation is structured in three parts. First, I introduce my concept of democracy promotion and state-building in the context of fragile states. Second, short empirical findings from the EU's cooperation with Haiti and Mali will be discussed. Third, I will conclude my presentation with general remarks on how the EU's role as a promoter of democracy can be strengthened.

I use the term democracy promotion in a rather narrow sense; that is I am talking of assistance to democracy in terms of direct technical, and maybe also financial support. I further assume that democracy cannot be enforced or exported.

Promoting Democracy in Fragile States

Lately the international community has paid special attention to fragile states, since they are not only considered a threat to the international system, but also seen as causes of poverty.

What is a fragile state?

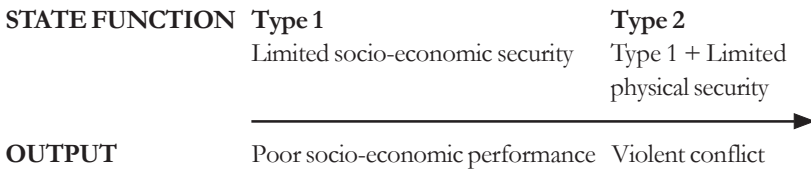
A fragile state lacks the core elements of a state. Thus, it is necessary to refer briefly to these elements. A state is constituted by three core elements: Firstly, a monopoly in the use of physical force, which, secondly, must be exercised in a determined territory for, thirdly, the protection of the people living in it. The main function of a state is to provide security for its people. Security means physical security as well as socio-economic security.

Fragile states: constitutive characteristics

Fragile states are characterised by their limited or sometimes even absent capacity to control, manage and act. Also, they lack stable, efficient institutions and structures, for example infrastructure or police forces. The weaker or more fragile a state, the lower its output in terms of providing security to its citizens. Figure 1, a continuum of state fragility, illustrates this: considering the functions of a state, a state is considered fragile when it lacks the provision of socio-economic output to its citizens. I call this fragile state type 1.

Following the continuum to its other extreme, fragility is increasing. On this end, the state – fragile state type 2 – fails to provide physical security. Violent conflict is the output. Consequently, it can be said that conflict or post-conflict states are fragile states, but not all fragile states are conflict or post-conflict states. Nevertheless, empirical studies have shown that fragile states are generally conflict-prone owing to their limited management capacities.

Figure 1: continuum of state fragility



Sequencing: first state-building, then democratisation

International actors respond to the problem of state fragility by implementing state-building and democracy promotion activities. State-building by definition does not aim at a specific form of government. With democracy promotion, the opposite is the case. Whereas state-building focuses on state institutions and structures, democracy promotion aims at supporting a specific type of regime.

Policy makers and scholars argue that external democracy promotion must follow a sequence. That is to say that state-building should be concluded before democracy can be promoted. Accordingly, external actors should first support state-building and in a second step democratisation. It has been widely argued that state-building has to be given priority in the context of fragile states (see below). This thinking and behaviour is based on the assumption that certain preconditions must be fulfilled before democratisation and its external support can be successful. These preconditions consist of a capable and well-functioning state, the rule of law, and socio-economic development.

‘The Sequencing Fallacy’ (Thomas Carothers)

Against this background I agree that the first phase of state-building has to be completed before democratisation can be successful. This first phase of state-building comprises the basic state framework in order to develop an effective state bureaucracy. But I argue that for the following reasons sequencing of external intervention is not necessarily conducive to democratisation (Carothers 2007):

1. *Misuse of the state by (semi-)autocratic rulers.* They misuse the state in order to concentrate their power and resources. They very often fail to have a welfare orientation and use the state apparatus for repression.
2. *Rule of law is strengthened by democratisation.* In turn, rule of law also challenges non-democratic rule; e.g. a strong and independent judiciary and parliament are sources of power beyond the executive’s reach.
3. *Socio-economic development is not a sufficient precondition* for successful democratisation, as the case of Singapore shows. Nevertheless a high degree of socio-economic development is conducive to the stability and survival of democracy.
4. *Sequencing can delay democratisation indefinitely if state-building is unsuccessful.* Consequentially, external state-building and democracy promotion could complement and mutually reinforce one another.

Findings from EU activities in Haiti and Mali

Given these assumptions, I would now like to present some empirical evidence,

where such a complementary approach on behalf of the EU could strengthen its role as an external democracy promoter.

Haiti and Mali are both fragile states, although with very different degrees of fragility. Whereas Haiti is located on the violent conflict end of the fragility spectrum, Mali is located on the other end, with poor socio-economic output. Whereas Mali has become the prime example for democracy and good governance throughout the 1990s, Haiti remains a country in ‘chronic crisis’ with a tendency to backslide towards autocracy.

EU democracy promotion: benefiting from the EU’s strong state-building role

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the EU has emphasised state-building in Haiti and Mali. For instance, the EU has supported infrastructure and the rule of law within the framework of the European Development Fund (EDF). Democracy and its promotion have played a minor role, if at all. The most recent EDF, from 2008-2013, includes a focus on good governance, but in terms of state-building efforts rather than in terms of explicit democracy assistance activities. Similarly, the former European Initiative for Human Rights and Democracy (EIHRD) – now the European Instrument for Human Rights and Democracy – has scarcely been implemented. This can be explained by the fact that the logic of sequentialism/sequencing is anchored in the EU’s understanding of political transformation processes. Consequently the EU has a low profile in democracy promotion in third countries, whereas it plays a more visible and accepted role in state-building.

Nonetheless, higher priority has been given to democracy promotion in various Commission communications and especially in statements and regulations of the European Parliament. If the EU really wants to play a major role, these statements and regulations must be followed by a strong political commitment to implementation. There are various entry points for the EU to assist democratisation processes within its existing policy frameworks.

The EU in Mali

In the case of Mali I would like to stress one major state-building programme, which is being conducted in very close partnership with the Malian government.

Since 1993 the EU has successfully supported Malian actors and institutions in their decentralisation process. By 2006 most institutional settings at central, regional, and municipal levels were in place. But the institutional framework still lacks – among other things – the de-concentration of economic resources from the central state level

to the regional level due to reluctant policies by national politicians.

In this decentralisation programme the EU applied a mere technical approach. Although it can be considered successful, it could have had a greater impact in terms of democratisation if it had followed a more systemic and political approach. The following example will underline this statement. In order to guarantee the representation of municipalities on the regional and national level, regional committees were created in order to influence the national political process. The decision-making of these committees is very often disconnected from their popular basis due to a lack of information and lack of mobilisation of the respective population. Therefore, the EU's technical state-building measures should be and could be easily complemented by democracy promotion such as systematic political education of citizens. This could, for example, support municipal and regional representatives in their efforts to implement vertical de-concentration. In the long run this could improve the socio-economic situation of Malians and, in turn, deepen Malian democracy.

The EU in Haiti

In Haiti, like other (post-)conflict countries, cooperation has been difficult due to a lack of legitimate Haitian counterparts to work with. The EU has cut off its development programmes several times and for long periods, when democratic rule was interrupted (for example by a military coup in 1991).

Notwithstanding the freezing of its development support, the EU continued some humanitarian projects with non-governmental partners. At the same time, when Haitian democratisation was threatened or interrupted by military and semi-autocratic rule, significant parts of the international community, specially regional organisations such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organisation of American States (OAS), made efforts to protect and promote democracy in Haiti. Not so the EU. Although cutting off aid to non-legitimated governmental counterparts is consistent with the EU's overall development policy framework, the EU could have indirectly contributed to the stabilisation and democratisation of Haiti by supporting regional organisations.

An extreme concentration of power and resources in the hands of a very small political elite has long been a structural problem in Haiti. Since 2006 the EU's delegation to Haiti has made efforts to contribute to the redistribution of power by rhetorically emphasising the importance of good governance. On the level of programmes, it first contributes to the strengthening of the judiciary. Second, it follows the new trend of civil society support in EU development cooperation. Thereby, the EU aims to

strengthen civil society's capacity to contribute to Haiti's development, and its role as the watchdog of Haitian politics. Although these contributions are important, and could foster democratic elements of the regime, the approach lacks – like Mali – a systemic approach. (Re-)distribution of political power is impossible without linking it to a democratically elected legislative branch, which plays an important role in the democratic game of checks and balances.

Some general conclusions can be drawn from these empirical findings:

Policy approaches

In fragile type 1 states (poor socio-economic output) state-building should be complemented by technical democracy assistance. This can help to ensure the sustainability and inclusiveness of formal institutions and strengthen democratic political culture, which, in turn, makes democracy more stable in the long run.

In fragile type 2 states (violent conflict and poor socio-economic output) systemic institution-building is of major importance. Although the EU's growing commitment to strengthening civil society is a vital element of democracy assistance, it can be counterproductive in (post) conflict countries, where non-state actors 'make' politics beyond institutional arrangements. Civil society support – as well as support for the rule of law – should be complemented by democratic institution-building.

In fragile states where (semi-)autocratic rule dominates and EU aid is frozen, the EU should indirectly promote democracy by supporting regional organisations such as the African Union or the Organisation of American States.

The internal structure of the EU

Finally, internal reforms or changes are needed if the current emphasis on democracy promotion is to be reflected in policies towards third countries:

- A shift is needed on all levels from the EU's current rule-of-law mentality, which is conducive to sequentialism, to a systemic perspective on democratisation processes.
- The new European Instrument for Human Rights and Democracy Promotion can only be used in an effective manner if it is systematically integrated into a broad and democracy-oriented concept of state-building.

Internal actors, external actors: country categories, country approaches

Discussion

Question from Frank Spengler, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

State-building and democracy should be complementary. What should the role of EU actors such as political foundations be in creating the preconditions for state-building and democratisation? Are there benefits to indirect promotion of democracy through regional organisations?

Contribution from the floor

Taking the example of Mali, as part of a six year process, the people of Mali were asked to come up with their own redesign of regional structures. The consultative process was very long and drawn out. But it was a very rare event: the people were asked to draw up their own boundaries for territorial reorganisation, which led to a decentralisation programme.

In subsequently supporting these new local structures the primary focus was on training people in participatory budgeting. This is a basic point of democracy: a village plans how it wants to spend its money and must be able to track what the local authority does with the money and if it fulfils the village's requirements. We should not forget that even in a classical development cooperation project, participation can be promoted at the most basic level. That can have a much more lasting impact on political awareness and local capacity to determine development pathways than, for example, supporting a formal parliament from the outset.

Contribution from the floor

The key issue of power sharing must be included in the debate. In Africa especially, concentration of power is an obstacle to democracy. A country's president can be at the

same time the head of government, of state, of the army, of the party, and in charge of appointing governors and judges. In addition, winning elections means winning access to resources. So in some countries, winning elections means winning everything. In such systems without separation between state and government, it is even difficult for non-party members to work in a state administration. Such structures are not conducive to democracy.

Donors often reinforce these structures because they work with these governments. Opposition parties become weaker, and civil society is not necessarily strengthened. Notwithstanding assistance programmes, it is sometimes not even clear what civil society represents, because even that is often controlled by government. We have to ask what measures we can take to address these problems, and we should discuss state-building in terms of power sharing.

Contribution from Vidar Helgesen, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

On power sharing: constitutional reform is, in a power sharing context, very important in divided societies, where inclusiveness is a real challenge. It is attracting significant new investments, both in supporting constitution-building processes at national level, and trying to make the international network of institution-building experts more coherent. This is a pool of very able individuals, but little has been done to compile experience of what and what does not work.

Our point of departure when it comes to constitutional reform is the need for properly inclusive processes. Probably the most successful constitution-building process in recent decades was in South Africa, which took six years. In Bolivia meanwhile, the president set out an ambition to have a new constitution in one year, but two thirds of the time was spent arguing over procedural matters. Time must be allowed for inclusive processes to work. These have the advantage of building in checks and balances. Perfect constitutions can be drafted behind closed doors. But if the process is more inclusive, it will ensure that the final written text a basis in the political reality.

On the winner-takes-all culture: in development aid, this illustrates the need to go beyond the executive. Setting requirements for the political community to be engaged is a way of putting in place checks and balances. This is a momentous challenge for the development agenda in the years ahead.

Contribution from Roel von Meijenfeldt, Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy

The Centres for Multiparty Democracy, of which there are now ten established in different countries (supported by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy), engage in power sharing exercises. These are institutions owned by the political leaders in the country concerned and they follow the democratic concept by electing the functionaries of the foundation. Candidates try to win the elections in order to manage the institutions in their way.

In general a shift is taking place, with political party leaders accepting democracy development is a joint effort. Thus they have to find consensus on the foundations of the political systems, including the constitutional process and the political structure, be it presidential or parliamentary. In many countries, the debate is moving back to the constitutions (mostly negotiated as part of the post-colonial settlement) in order to address some of their gaps and shortcomings. The constitutions still contain echoes of the colonial powers, and were not designed or developed for the specific needs of the country in question.

Many discussions stem from the idea of joint responsibility for stability in the country to enhance development and economic development. It is a learning exercise for the stakeholders. The mindset has to change, it is not about just transplanting institutions.

Mali is an interesting case because in addition to the EU's activities, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) has also in recent years supported political parties in Mali. When NIMD arrived in Mali, there were 106 political parties in a so-called federal state. These were not real political parties, but stakeholders who called themselves parties. Through a very long consultative process, also involving the regions, the groups were narrowed down to five or six parties, which now have spokespersons and work as groupings in parliament. Party leaders meet every month, with the participation of EU delegates, in order to discuss issues related to the political development of the country.

Recent general elections in Mali seem to have been fair. Nevertheless, the opposition did not accept the outcome. However, when the court ruled on the election results, the opposition accepted the verdict. The problem was solved peacefully. This secured the results of the technical cooperation that had taken place. It was a complementary approach, facilitated by political foundations and bilateral donors, to involve the political stakeholders in the democratisation process. All in all, Mali is a good example of effective democracy promotion.

Contribution from Frank Spengler

The South African experience represents a masterpiece of successful cooperation between internal and external actors. First, a constitutional assembly was elected, based on temporary power sharing through a government of national unity. Second, a final constitution was written. Finally, elections took place.

One key to success was trust in the external actors and the international community. Also, in South Africa there is power sharing within a federal arrangement (though not a federal state). Power sharing was sufficiently guaranteed, at least for a transition period, and this was sufficient to satisfy all players.

Contribution from Julia Leininger, German Development Institute

Channelling aid, for example from the EU, through regional organisations is a good option. Regional organisations such as the Organisation of African States and the African Union are committed to democratic values and are legitimate channels for EU aid, and for indirect democracy promotion.

Question from Jadranka Foster, Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Democracy building is obstructed by competition between democracy building agencies. They should collaborate, but they compete in terms of priorities, funding and partners. How can these obstacles be overcome?

Contribution from Roel von Meijenfeldt

This is a topic that needs to be addressed. In Europe, as in other parts of the world, there are all sorts of institutional interests. People working in development feel that funds available in their field are being used for political, and even for military and security, ends. There is a complex interconnection between development and democracy owing to vested interests, specifically in the area of development. However this is part of the reality and development specialists are aware of it.

It is a question of opening minds and focusing on the instruments. The instruments we have for delivering assistance must also be better used. Ways to link the democratisation and development agendas to the security agenda in post-conflict countries must also be considered.

Contribution from Vidar Helgesen

The problem involves two relationships: one between the democratisation institutions, and the other with the development actors. In the development field, there is much talk about increasing coherence and coordination, as well as the need for more consistency.

In the democracy building community there has been too little of that. The democracy building community is even less coherent than the development community. That was probably acceptable in more optimistic times, when democracy builders seemed to go from success to success, and donors did not ask many critical questions. Now there is a need to critically reassess the quality of democracy building exercises. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) is pursuing this agenda: acting as an intergovernmental organisation without any national, ideological, or model bias to bring actors together. IDEA's non-prescriptive nature can be an asset when inviting discussions on what constitutes effective assistance. On effective electoral assistance, IDEA has helped shifting the focus from mere election observation to more sustainable election administration.

The next step is to move forward on the political party assistance agenda and on other aspects of democracy building. This is necessary if we mean to influence the development community.

Contribution from Frank Spengler

The question of diversity and unity, or unity in diversity, is at the heart of our discussions. In many cases, such as post-conflict situations, it is not possible to approach the various players from a common platform. Very often, there is a lack of trust, and it is hard to build long-term relationships.

In South Africa, if the German foundations had adopted one platform when working with the local partners, some groups would have been excluded from the dialogue, or would have been marginalised, because they would not have felt they were being represented. The smaller parties were the most difficult to bring into the dialogue, not the national parties. It was difficult for seven parties in a federal state to agree on one constitution. The situation could only be dealt with by taking the diversity of the partners into account and acting accordingly. There is room for diversity, though coordination is necessary. This is equally true for European countries.

Question from Annette Braun, Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU

If a free press is a precondition for democracy, should there be, even in fragile states, more projects promoting a free press? Should a free press be part of the approach to state-building in fragile and transitional states?

Contribution from Julia Leininger

Support for a free media is already part of state building to some degree. Deutsche

Welle, for example, supported the free press in the Balkans. The integrated UN peacekeeping missions also focus on free media, for example in Haiti.

Contribution from Roel von Meijfeldt

The Centres for Multiparty Democracy also try to improve civil society relationships, often starting with the media. The relationships between political actors and the media, for example, are often very bad.

Examples include a programme in Latin America focusing on media and politics, with radio stations covering the relationship between political society and the media, because of the recognised influence of the media on political developments.

This type of approach will become an increasingly important part of democracy support. One of the great developments for many young democracies is press freedom. But there is also a need for democracy education in this respect because often the press is based on sensational journalism and does not sufficiently fill the informative role of the media.

Internal actors, external actors: country categories, country approaches – conclusions

Dr Karsten Grabow

In summarising the main issues relating to defining democracy promotion, and developing appropriate policy approaches, three main points can be identified:

The concept of democracy promotion

First, there is consensus that a detailed definition of democracy promotion or democracy assistance is necessary, not only from European countries or organisations, but also from the EU itself. This definition should emphasise that democracy means much more than regime change and free elections. Democracy is a demanding political concept that is important for people's lives. Therefore, democratic values should be placed at the centre of all activities – political education and democracy promotion – since democracy begins not at the institutional level, but in hearts, minds and behaviour. Once a detailed definition of democracy promotion exists, democracy promotion must become an integral part of the foreign policy of both EU member states and the EU itself.

The role of foundations and other democracy promoters

Second, it is crucial to focus on institutions (such as parliaments) and individual and collective actors. Focusing on political parties is especially important, because parties are key actors of political integration and decision-making, which serve a special purpose in democracy promotion. Without political parties, democracy cannot be organised. There are reliable and experienced organisations at European level, such as political foundations and party institutions, that can work with political parties in order to promote democratic party systems. These organisations combine experience of global democracy promotion and promotion of democratic parties, with country expertise and access to democratic and political decision-makers. Crucially, they are also based on

general democratic values. These values, combined with experience of global democracy promotion and long established contacts with democratic partners in the host countries, make these organisations an efficient instrument of democracy promotion abroad.

A multilevel approach

Third, the range and diversity of organisations, such as foundations and European political party organisations, are decisive assets for European democracy promotion. It seems logical that the work of promoting multiparty systems should be done through a decentralised framework, based on and committed to universal values of democracy. For this purpose, political foundations, party organisations and similar institutions can serve as a model.

Session three

The EU approach: targets, expected results, instruments

The European Union: key actor in worldwide democracy promotion

Danièle Smadja

Introduction

The first issue that becomes apparent when looking at democracy promotion is that there is a confusing lexicon of terms ranging from democracy promotion, democracy support, democracy building, democracy assistance or support, to democratic governance. The European Commission favours taking ‘democracy promotion’ as a concept encompassing the full range of external relations and development cooperation activities, which contribute to the development and consolidation of democracy in third countries.

However, the final objectives of democracy promotion are clear, even if different terminologies are used. More relevant perhaps are the means, approaches, methods, instruments and tools of democracy promotion. But first, I would like to touch upon some common understandings and assumptions underlying the EU’s activities in this field.

First, understandings of democracy may vary. Yet, the concept of democracy, including the rule of law and the protection of human rights, constitutes a universal value, the principles of which are enshrined in numerous international texts and conventions. Democracy and human rights are inseparable and interdependent.

Democracy is thus a right for all and a goal in itself. Democracy has an intrinsic value.

Second, democracy is a process. In this context, I would like to refer to Recital 9 of the new European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights Regulation: “democracy has also to be seen as a process, developing from within, involving all sections of

society and a range of institutions (...) that should ensure participation, representation, responsiveness and accountability. The task of building and sustaining a culture of human rights and making democracy work for its citizens, though especially urgent and difficult in emerging democracies, is essentially a continuous challenge, belonging first and foremost to the people of the country concerned but without diminishing the commitment of the international community.”

In other words, democracy “promotion” must not impose ideas, but support the relevant local actors in their efforts to steer change and the democratic reform process.

Third, the democratic process has an important value in creating the conditions for effective poverty alleviation and economic development. It is a prerequisite for government accountability, including civilian control of security. It is required to sustain an independent judiciary, a free media and a framework for protecting human rights. It is a tool to fight corruption and impunity. It is the most basic form of crisis management and conflict prevention.

Fourth, to accomplish its aspirations as a responsible global player, pursuing peace, stability, and prosperity through effective multilateralism, the EU also needs like-minded democratic third countries as partners. The European Security Strategy (“A secure Europe in a better world”) of December 2003 underlines that “the quality of international society depends on the quality of the governments that are its foundation. The best protection for [the EU’s] ... security is a world of well-governed democratic states. Spreading good governance, supporting social and political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening the international order.”

Approaches, methods and instruments

The EU’s commitment to supporting democracy has evolved over time, irrespective of the fact that democracy and human rights have been integral to the process of European integration from the outset. Today, the EU operates on the basis of formal Treaty mandates setting the “development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” not only as an objective of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (Article 11(1) TEU); but also as a key commitment in development, economic, financial and technical cooperation with third countries (Articles 177(2) and 181a(1) TEC).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the prospect of EU membership spurred moves towards democracy in Greece, Spain and Portugal and contributed to the

unique experience of German reunification.

With the EU enlargement strategy towards central and eastern European countries, the accession process gradually became the EU's first major experience of democracy promotion, much more far reaching than had been the case for previous candidate countries that had also emerged from dictatorship. These accession processes broke fresh ground in terms of EU democracy promotion experience, using sophisticated political conditionality, underpinned by the prospect of EU membership, thus facilitating the consolidation of political reforms, launched with the change of regimes in 1989-90.

Similar democracy promotion instruments are built into the European Neighbourhood Policy, albeit without the same accession perspective, but including Action Plans with agreed reform targets and a strong element of conditionality.

A Governance Facility endowed with some •300 million over seven years has been created in order to reward those countries covered by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, which have made the most progress in implementing the governance-related reform agenda set out in their respective Action Plan.

Political conditionality is also a key feature of our relationship with ACP countries. The Cotonou Agreement now provides for systematic formal political dialogue and introduces new procedures to deal with violations and corruption.

The objective of progressively stronger commitments to human rights, good governance and democracy in development cooperation has gained momentum in the European Consensus on Development Policy of December 2005. Specific provisions are foreseen in each of the subsequent regional strategies:

- The new Strategic Partnership with Africa provides, for instance, for a Governance Incentive Fund – endowed with •3 billion over five years – which provides support to consequent reforms of ACP countries in democratic governance and some assistance for the African Peer Review Mechanism;
- The EU-Latin America partnership aims to strengthen political dialogue, social cohesion and democratic governance;
- The proposed new strategy for the Caribbean also calls for a mutually beneficial partnership on democracy and human rights;
- The forthcoming Strategy for a New Partnership between the EU and Central Asia places good governance, the rule of law, human rights, democratisation, education and training as key areas where the EU is willing to share experience and expertise.

New financing instruments of critical relevance

The new European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) supports an integrated approach to democracy building and the protection and promotion of human rights worldwide. Working with, for and through civil society organisations without the need for consent of governments or local authorities gives the instrument its critical profile. The objective is to promote the kind of open society that is required in order for civil society to thrive and to become an effective force for dialogue and democratic reform. The EIDHR is also the financing basis for the EU's Election Observation Missions, which are a distinct instrument of the Community in its support to building democracy in third countries.

The other new financing instrument is the Instrument for Stability, one part of which replaces the Rapid Reaction Mechanism. The instrument has to be placed in the context of the 2001 Göteborg Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, which highlighted a different dimension of democracy promotion. It is designed primarily to prevent conflict, support post-conflict political stabilisation and to ensure early recovery after a natural disaster. It is an explicitly political instrument focusing on re-establishing the critical functions of the state in a post-crisis situation.

A quite separate set of developments must also be mentioned. Following on from events in the Balkans, the EU decided to develop capabilities in four priority areas of civilian administration: police, rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection. The various missions accomplished to date such as the rule of law missions to Georgia and Iraq, the police missions to Bosnia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, have contributed to local professional capacity to support democratic institutions.

The EU approach to democracy promotion

The EU, together with the democracy assistance of its member states, accounts for an expenditure of around •3 billion annually on democracy, governance and related activities – more than the US.

Three elements can be considered as characterising the EU approach to democracy promotion or democracy building:

- 1). The EU approach relates to a wide variety of possible situations. It may be targeted towards regimes with very limited freedoms and little political pluralism; it may be combined with peace-building in post-conflict situations; it may support new institutions and democratic practice in emerging democracies; it may be well integrated in development cooperation, strengthening participation and

accountability within sector programmes for achieving Millennium Development Goals; it may also be offered to more established democracies to assist in dealing with new threats, such as terrorism.

- 2). The EU approach uses many different instruments or tools. The focus may be on financial and technical assistance and grant aid, but several other tools may be of particular relevance such as political dialogues and other diplomatic instruments, financial incentives, conditionalities and sanctions, trade and investment instruments - for example EU support for WTO membership - mobilisation of civilian and military capabilities, humanitarian assistance, multilateral initiatives, public information and advocacy and monitoring.

The wide range of possible instruments, that may be used individually or in combination, means that there is a major challenge for the EU to achieve a joined-up approach between instruments, to ensure coherence and a common narrative between different democracy actors and donors.

This is not always easy.

The value that democracy can add, for example in helping achieving the MDGs, attracting investment, avoiding social unrest and political instability, linked with 'local ownership' of the democratisation and development process, is a standard justification for democracy assistance, whereas universal values and commitments under international conventions are often used as a frame of reference for political conditionalities and invoked in cases of specific abuse.

- 3). The EU approach involves many different types of assistance. It may be long term and highly structured, as in an accession partnership agreement – combining a road map, financial and technical assistance, benchmarks, monitoring – or very short term and highly specific, such as election observation. It may involve very indirect action to assist in creating a conducive environment for democracy to flourish for example through peace building initiatives, educational reform, action to combat drug trafficking, or direct technical support for a specific political process for example security sector reform. Any action to facilitate, advocate, inform, educate, or bring pressure to secure particular policy changes, for example quotas for women in parliament or abolition of torture, may be considered a form of democracy promotion.

This diversity of situations, instruments and types of assistance raises pivotal questions:

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- Do we know what works and what does not work?
 - Is EU democracy promotion effective?
 - If not, what is the reason and how can the EU improve the effectiveness of its efforts to promote democracy abroad?

At the core of these questions lies the issue of assessing democracy support because the art of assessing democracy support has not yet caught up with the art of assessing the state of democracy.

Undoubtedly, there is a reasonable amount of evidence to suggest that democracy promotion in some cases has had some effect considering approach, time, place and circumstance. But that is not the same thing as overall impact. There is a distinct possibility that other and unintended influences from outside or domestic influences from within a country or both play a much stronger determining role.

A thematic evaluation of EC support to good governance, carried out last year and taking in a selection of EU assistance to democracy and human rights, came to the conclusion that assistance projects and programmes “can under certain conditions, be effective and efficient tools”. The report adds “it is the local environment in the partner countries that is the main determinant of the effectiveness or otherwise of EU support”.

In conclusion, what is needed are improvements to the existing methods for evaluating democracy support, which can be fed into the activities of the EU institutions activities, and fill what has been pointedly called the ‘policy process gap’ in democracy promotion assessment. This will enable us in turn to develop more coherent and consistent EU democracy assistance. It will help us to better define the EU’s overall strategies and its responsibilities as a key actor in worldwide democracy promotion.

The crucial question of the visibility of EU policy in this area remains, however. Many actors say that whatever is done in democracy promotion, ultimately what matters is the way it is seen. This is not only a question of publicity, to a certain extent propaganda about democracy promotion, which itself works for democracy promotion. The EU is not good at publicity and propoganda. Others, especially the Americans, are much stronger in this respect. The EU should follow the US example, and be much more visible about what it does.

However it is not easy. What is often needed for democracy promotion is confidentiality, not just letting local ownership flourish, but sometimes taking steps not to endanger the local partners.

Nevertheless, the EU needs to do more public diplomacy: to be seen at conferences and workshops in order to talk about its democracy promotion activities.

Questions and answers

Question from Marius Osswald, European Policy Centre

Do you think that there are too many actors involved on the European level? Do you think that they send contradictory signals to the developing world?

On the overall objective of democracy promotion, do you think it is unrealistic to talk about targeting democracy promotion worldwide? Is it not mainly an issue of promoting good governance among Europe's neighbours? Is there a risk of conflict with others, such as China, when Europe tries to disperse its limited resources worldwide?

Question from the floor

What limits are there on the situations, tools, instruments and types of assistance that the EU can use in its approach to democracy promotion?

Question from the floor

Please enlarge on the idea of sophisticated political conditionality.

Question from the floor

Who would be responsible for EU public diplomacy: the EU Council, the European Commission, or NGOs in the field?

Response from Danièle Smadja

In terms of the character of the EU's approach to democracy promotion, there is no specific characterisation of what we do, but this means many things are possible in the EU's activities. It can be a problem that we have many tools and many actors, but we should not try to limit the use of our instruments, or to limit the number of actors.

The wide range of EU activities and its involvement in democracy promotion worldwide is a logical consequence of the current situation of the EU, which claims to be a global actor. There is no sign presently from the EU's top political level to change the global focus, despite the need to concentrate, for security reasons, on a number of neighbouring countries. Furthermore, we have not yet defined the geographical borders of the EU.

The EU's global focus, in principle, should not diminish the quality of the EU's actions. The most important factor in democracy promotion, and in any external policy, is to ensure more coherence, more effectiveness and more visibility.

On the question of sophisticated conditionalities, in most of the EU's agreements with partner countries, human rights and democracy clauses are included, but it can be very difficult in practice to build on the clauses. Experience shows there are more subtle ways to push a country to do something. Sophisticated conditionality means pushing a country without necessarily arm-twisting, but with incentives and a more bottom-up approach, in order to arrive at a reform agenda.

These ideas lie behind the European Neighbourhood Policy and the associated action plans. They are not negotiated like bilateral agreements and are not legal commitments. They are more like moral and political commitments.

In terms of public diplomacy, all actors should be involved in this. The EU is a plurality of actors and it would be ridiculous to prevent some actors from being involved. What are needed are better ways of working together.

By the end of 2007, we should have more clarity on the prospects for the EU's foreign policy role. In the constitutional debate, a double-hatted European foreign affairs representative, who is at the same time vice-president of the Commission, is under discussion.

Holding a position in the Commission will strengthen this representative. EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) works, but most foreign policy tools do not fall under the CFSP, but in the Community dimension (the first pillar). The representative's position in the Commission would bring more coherence between the different dimensions.

The EU's ambition in terms of democracy promotion is definitely to have more impact. This could come from concentrating efforts on certain countries or issues. But countries around the world look to the EU to take a lead, and consequently it is not, politically speaking, feasible to focus only on a few regions of the world.

Question from Anette Hübiger, member of the German Bundestag

Looking back at European history, political parties have always been key to democratisation. Diplomatic dialogue only works with partners, such as political parties, if they are reliable and offer continuity. Yet this is lacking in many developing countries.

How would the Commission address the role of political parties?

Question from Peter Köppinger, KAS

How can the European Commission democracy promotion strategy be effective if it overlooks the potential of working with political parties?

Response from Danièle Smadja

The Commission agrees that political parties are extremely important actors in democracy promotion.

But working with political parties is not a neutral exercise. The Commission does not believe it can support political parties and remain neutral. The European Parliament, NGOs and member states would ask why the Commission works with some political parties and not others. In the negotiations over the new European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, neither the EU Council nor the European Parliament gave enough support for including measures for supporting political parties. The EU budget will never be used to finance political parties.

In addition, the Commission will only act where it is more effective than work done at another level. Political parties and political foundations in EU member states do work with political parties in partner countries.

However this does not mean that the Commission does not work to promote political parties or political pluralism. The Commission aims to support political pluralism and the democratic space between the political parties and civil society organisations, and within parliaments.

The EU approach: targets, expected results, instruments (I)

Michael Gahler MEP

European Union democracy promotion up to now has had some weaknesses. It has lacked a common concept of democracy promotion, agreed by EU institutions and the member states. Cooperation among different actors is sometimes unsatisfactory. The central point of democracy promotion must be support for the creation of functioning democratic party political systems.

For the European Parliament it was central to include this in the new European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. In the view of the parliament, this should also include parliamentary actors and cooperation with political parties.

EU democracy support projects are often managed by professional consultancies. The democracy promotion actors from EU member states and partner countries are sometimes hardly involved. But to teach a class of students how to paint, one engages the painter himself rather than someone who has studied how painters learn to paint.

Finally, there is a lack of comprehensive and detailed information on the different programmes and projects promoted by European organisations as part of their worldwide democracy promotion efforts. Ongoing evaluation and exchanges of experience are needed, in order continuously to improve and to make our common initiatives more effective.

The EU approach: targets, expected results, instruments (II)

Anette Hübinger

Proper governance of a country and its level of development are intertwined. It is clear that the existence of democratic processes is a prerequisite for sustainable development. These considerations have led to discussions in the framework of Germany's development aid, over whether or not German development aid should be tied to democratisation, in order to increase the sustainability of development aid over the long-run. Democratisation plays an important role in determining development in some countries, whereas others do not develop.

Political aid

I am convinced that aid for political development should be added to the existing technical and financial development aid. In Germany, this has already happened. However an extra pillar for political development aid is not appropriate. German development aid has emphasised good governance as the centre of development policy. This includes:

- Establishment of democratic principles, rule of law, respect for human rights, the right to take part in politics, non-discrimination, equal rights for men and women;
- Promotion of good governance by means of transparency and the duty of accountability;
- Reinforcing civil society and democratic institutions, as well as professionalising the political system including political parties.

Democracy promotion is not confined to upper levels of state but must be implemented on all levels, particularly municipal level, in order to enhance participation of, and acceptance by, a wide cross-section of the population.

Democracy promotion in Bolivia

Let us take Bolivia as an example. The country has been in a state of intense upheaval. At the municipal level there is already progress in participation, partly due to the work of the German foundations. But across the broad population, political capacity and knowledge about how to handle new political instruments are still missing.

It is like an invisible ceiling: at the bottom, democracy gradually starts to work, but it is blocked from filtering up to higher levels. Even at the level of the Bolivian government and parliament, which recently were in the process of constructing a new constitution, education in the processes of democracy, has an essential role to play. A proper constitution cannot be established and introduced in the short time period planned in Bolivia.

European policy on democracy

In recent years, democracy, human rights and the rule of law have become reference values. This is also a testament to the European Commission, which has defined governance within the framework of the European Consensus on development policy. In its external relations bilaterally and multilaterally, the EU continuously emphasises democracy, human rights, the rule of law and good governance.

Recently, the Commission declared its intention to strengthen some instruments in preference to others. It will, for example, have partnership dialogue rather than sanctions, responsibility instead of conditionality, and budget support instead of project aid. Although these approaches could strengthen the processes of democratisation, they do require a foundation of established democratic principles.

There are still huge differences in the choice of instruments and their implementation. The German Bundestag has noted differences between Germany's development policy strategies and the EU's. Why does the EU opt for different approaches in different countries? In some cases it uses negative instruments such as sanctions, isolation, diplomatic non-recognition and cooperation with the opposition, but in other cases the EU only requests the introduction of standards, and contents itself with maintaining the political dialogue. And why – in other cases – is tough political conditionality agreed on but then not implemented?

Lack of consistency

It is in these respects that the absence of a consistent procedure becomes obvious. The European Consensus established a cooperation procedure and outlined that Community policy should complement the bilateral policies of member states and

international donors. This is particularly true in the area of democracy promotion.

Clearly, there is a lack of clear guidelines for implementing democracy promotion strategies and for setting democratic minimum standards as part of development policy. This is at a time when China is intensifying its contacts with developing countries without asking for good governance and democratic structures. Without firm implementation of the EU's concepts, the EU will fail to introduce democratic structures, and will fail to change bad governance into good.

Political conditions in developing countries should be respected and they require tailored approaches. Yet common approaches must be implemented in a concerted way so that all actors speak with one voice. Thus, in order to deal successfully with badly-governed countries, there are two essential prerequisites: concerted and consistent cooperation within the donor community, and coherence of aims and strategies.

Sanctions and positive incentives

Research has shown that the threat of sanctions is effective because it creates negotiating power – as long as all parties consistently stick to what has been agreed. Sanctions must be linked to tangible policy changes and they should also be linked to positive incentives.

The most important benchmark in the fight against bad governance in favour of more democracy is the inclusion of civil society and the establishment of a multi-party system. German foundations are very active in this respect, together with NGOs and churches.

In the European development portfolio, however, democracy support measures such as the promotion of parliamentary activity, work towards establishment of a multi-party system, the building of press- and media networks, and the strengthening of civil society, are not given a significant role. Yet these are the central elements of any democracy. That is why the core task of a political foundation is to promote education in the processes of democracy, alongside the building of political parties and providing assistance to parliaments. These aspects should be more comprehensively included in development cooperation policy. The experience and knowledge of the member states should also be factored in.

Support for democracy promotion should be voiced in a powerful and perceptible manner, because this is one of the goals of the European Consensus. However, concerted implementation of the goals has yet to happen. The financial instrument

(which entered into force in 2007) for worldwide promotion of democracy and human rights, underpins progress towards the goals but is not sufficient.

EU budget support and transparency

The EU's intensified use of budget support to promote democracy is extremely controversial. This is because central preconditions for budget support are the existence of working democratic foundations and thorough controls. Yet the Commission has announced that it wants to loosen these control mechanisms. This is contrary to the German view which is that control mechanisms should be tightened, including payment in instalments so that real development progress can be assured.

This must be understood in the context that the Commission has announced it will commit 50 percent of the Tenth European Development Fund to the ACP (African, Caribbean, Pacific) states as budget support. Civil society should be included to a much greater extent in these poverty reduction budget support exercises. They should not be limited to dialogue with government representatives. Inclusion of civil society would heighten transparency and give a better understanding of the particularities of the European approach to development cooperation.

Notwithstanding the adoption of the Paris Agenda, one of the most salient features of international development architecture remains its inefficient parallel structures, rather than a sensible division of work. The division of responsibilities and fine-tuning between the international institutions and bilateral donors must therefore urgently be improved. The German government decided to tackle this issue during its double presidency in 2007 of the Group of Eight nations (G8) and the EU.

A system is needed that allows flexible responses to political developments. Instruments are needed that allow faster and more structured reactions to changes; more development-friendly structures using indirect instruments, such as guidance in economic policy or the promotion of education, must be established. Such instruments have the potential both to provide opportunities to people and to weaken radical forces.

Further starting points for initiatives are, for instance, the transparency initiative for the raw materials sector. I am convinced that the European people would very much like to see the EU as a global player that contributes to peace by acting globally. Yet this can only be accomplished if the EU speaks with one voice.

The EU approach: targets, expected results, instruments (III)

Sean O'Regan

About 18 months ago, when I was handed this dossier, it was a political imperative for the EU Council to cooperate on democracy promotion with the United States. The Council was also working extensively with foundations and with the European Parliament to establish a new way for the European Union to dispense democracy support.

The Council therefore began to look at how the EU promotes democracy through Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). In its external policies, the EU had long been committed to the essential elements of democracy – to human rights, good governance and the rule of law.

CFSP has evolved, and lessons have been learned from earlier efforts. Increasingly strict conditionality has been put into third country agreements, and into European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions. Much more effort is being put into issues such as state building, reconstruction and recognising the role that civil society must play. In doing this, the Council is emphasising certain areas, and the emphasis may be different from that of the EU's partners. The leverage the EU therefore has is somewhat less than we would like to imagine.

During the last eighteen months, the EU has better defined its efforts in supporting democracy. But progress has not been as fast as some might wish, for certain reasons.

The work of the member states

In talking about the EU's support for democracy, it is often forgotten that what the EU itself does is far less than the work done by individual member states and by

European civil society. The member states naturally have very different approaches to supporting democracy, informed by their own historical experiences and understandings of what democracy support in third countries entails.

Some member states have very specific views on working only with states, whereas others take more universal approaches. This variety and richness of approach is important. But it also means that achieving a united EU front in support of democracy is not simple. It has been compared to herding cats.

Some progress has however been made. It was agreed in Council that for specific support to democracy, there is no one-size-fits-all model. It was also agreed that local ownership is key to a successful strategy in support for democracy. This might not seem ground breaking, but it is an advance on the position in the Council when the discussion started in January 2006.

Terminology

It was also agreed that further work is needed on terminology. This is crucial, but it does not necessarily mean we are seeking a definition of democracy. Agreement is needed on what is meant when certain terms are used. We have to be more coherent and visible in our support for democracy.

Many European countries have an unfortunate reflex reaction to the US approach to democracy support. This is unfortunate because there is a clarity of vision in the US approach which the EU approach sometimes lacks.

More coordinated use needs to be made of all the available instruments, both at Community and at member state level. The EU institutions must get their acts together. This is especially true of the Council, but it is also true of the Commission. The divides between the foreign policy community and the development community, between Brussels and member states, and between governments and civil society, must be bridged.

In addition, more needs to be done in communicating EU successes. Extremely good work has been done on ESDP missions, for example in the Balkans, where there has been a very significant impact. The EU's most recent mission to Aceh, Indonesia is a fine example of how the EU can do things well. But the story has not been sold very well. This raises the question of public diplomacy.

Having said all that, it is not necessarily the case that a unified EU policy or doctrine is

needed, beyond the multiplicity of doctrines and instruments that already exist and which have worked reasonably well over the years. In part, this is a recognition of the barriers there are to successful support of democracy. In recent years, democracy has acquired a bad name.

The 'west', whatever that term means, is perceived to be ambivalent on human rights and respect for international law. The EU sometimes likes to think that the world views it as being different from the US, but that is not always the case.

Overthrowing autocracies

Another area where there is a particular challenge is the overthrow of autocracy and its aftermath. This is often difficult, particularly when it is associated with economic reform and social upheaval. It is also an uncomfortable truth that many traditional societies look to the west and see only moral and societal decay. Faced with that, they reject what they believe to be the causes of the decay, including democracy.

Then there is the question of the so-called backlash. The EU believes that democracy is the best route to stable, sustainable and peaceful prosperity. It is part of the EU value system. However, in China a strong, centralised approach to economic development has been seen to work, while Russia has actively promoted the notion that strong civil society and free media are threats to stability.

These both create difficulties relative to the EU approach, but they are difficulties that must be overcome. There is also a more delicate question that must be dealt with, which is how the consequences of support for democracy are approached when democracy produces surprising or uncomfortable results. That is a reminder of how fragile our own democracies are.

Personal remarks

I would like to make some personal comments, not reflecting the views of the Council. We have 27 different democracies inside the EU, and we should be cautious when judging third countries.

Is Iran a worse democracy than Iraq? Is Pakistan better than Afghanistan? Is Switzerland more democratic than France? These questions are not asked in order to make a comparison but to emphasise that value judgements about democracy are, by definition, not objective. This leads to a second observation: the EU should not be complacent about democracy.

It should not be forgotten that several countries that are now EU states have only had universal suffrage since the Second World War. Switzerland, meanwhile, has only had universal suffrage since 1971. Democracy has developed over centuries and can be lost very quickly.

To conclude:

- The EU has long recognised that the role of women in development and in sustaining EU development policy is extremely important. Far more recognition must be given to the role of women in developing democracy.
- In a lot of the countries the EU dealing with, the median age of the population is in the mid-teens. It is essential to engage with youth, in the schools, so far as schools exist, and at a level where they can be guided towards democratic politics instead of being diverted towards violence.
- Most importantly, it is essential to listen to the local communities we are working with. We do not know everything and we do not have all the answers.

Democracy promotion: the EU's implementation capacity

Jean Bossuyt

The European Community, the European Union and donors have done traditional development work for a long time. In the last ten to fifteen years however, they are supposed to have become more political animals doing sophisticated political work by implementing reforms in hostile environments. This is a mayor transformation and challenge, for which the EU is not yet ready.

The EU can continue to develop strategies and refine concepts in the next few years, but unless the implementation capacity follows, in terms of people and institutions, there will be an increasing gap between policy ambitions and the situation on the ground. That could affect, seriously, the EU's credibility, and create a backlash. So, implementation, implementation, implementation are key!

There are three central points about implementation capacity:

No simple blueprint

Democracy promotion is not about supporting elections, but about changing the culture, the attitudes and the norms of a country – a very complicated job. Change has come from within and takes long time. Unless there are domestic agendas and domestic drives of change, external support can make efforts, but will not produce strong results. There is a need for country specific approaches using the right mix of instruments. There are no simple models that can be easily applied.

Furthermore, those working in democracy promotion must get out of their corner and influence the development and security sectors.

New approaches and tools

But the question needs to be asked: has the changed approach been properly digested? Have they been internalised by the European institutions and the delegations, by the people who have to do the work?

Because reform in hostile environments cannot be achieved with the tools of the traditional donor agent. Have systems, processes, approaches and procedures been sufficiently adapted?

The right capacities and skills

The third central question is if one has people with the right mix of capacities and skills to do the sophisticated, untraditional work of democracy promotion.

To take the example of the EU delegations: they offer delegated authority and proximity, and they are the ‘frontline troops’, sometimes in hostile environments. But do they have enough room for manoeuvre? Are they present in sufficient numbers? There are increasing numbers of governance specialists, but they are often quite isolated, although they receive a constant stream of policies, guidelines, documents and handbooks.

Very often, they are people who want to follow the democracy promotion agenda, but they feel they do not have a clear political mandate. Within their delegation, democracy is not necessarily a priority, leading to member states questioning the commitment to political dialogue.

Unfortunately, in spite of all the positive initiatives, many windows of opportunity are missed because the system and machinery are not sufficiently capable. This can negatively effect the impact and credibility of the EU’s work. That is the situation for many delegations. It is the same in donor agencies. Collectively we face that challenge at the European level.

A new institutional culture

This raises the next question: how can one be effective in an environment where there are a lot of opportunities and where there is increasing pressure to work on democracy promotion? This is the real challenge for the EU for the next few years. Can we really build a new institutional culture to deliver on the political agenda?

New instruments, training and more people in the delegations are not sufficient. We need to look closely at the overall institutional culture, from the headquarters, to other institutions, to the delegations, where the people who have to take practical steps are.

Institutional culture change will come from the bottom up. There are several positive changes that can be seen as steps towards this.

First, remove the internal barriers. If the people in charge of democracy promotion remain isolated they will not achieve much. Barriers are being removed. EuropeAid Unit E4, for example, has taken an initiative to connect its governance people with its sector people.

Second, the delegation staff need more space and time. A concrete example of this is the civil society programmes. The US is involved in them and has a different approach to the EU. There is a quick-fix approach, but the delegations want to get to know civil society first, before money is put into projects. This approach is about investing in a process, which takes one and a half years and costs money. But the result has a firmer foundation. Delegations are asking how democracy can be supported in a structural way.

Third, many delegations are investing in decentralisation because it is perhaps the most fundamental transformation that can take place in many closed societies. There is a proliferation of EC support for decentralisation processes, providing a trigger for democracy promotion from the bottom up.

Fourth, EU level democracy support is seen by member states and others as having enormous potential added value, but it should not be isolated from other initiatives and measures.

Fifth, it is not just a question of knowing who the actors are, but also of engaging them. The demand side for reform is more and more evident. The EU should work on encouraging this demand for good governance; it is an enormously interesting arena.

Sixth, it is necessary to have allies in order to be strong, but has enough been done to strengthen these allies? For example, institutions in Africa, such as the African Union (AU), are producers of governance. The EU should enter into strategic partnerships with them. The European Commission has already invested heavily in the AU, but it remains fragile, especially at political level. The Commission is an important ally to the AU and should do more than simply providing financial support.

In the EU-Africa dialogue on the new EU strategy, the African Union was unhappy with the way the governance facility was developed. They felt the EU developed the

governance facility without consultation, leading to concepts of ownership, partnership and dialogue being questioned. In addition, Africa has its own norms of governance, making joint work even more important.

Seventh and finally, is the question of who does what in democracy promotion? There is a proliferation of institutions all over the world working on the issue. But is the EU connected to them? It is an enormous opportunity for the Commission, to manage its workload and be very strategic in identifying who can help in realising the agenda. We are still at the beginning of this challenge. But changing institutional culture is the precondition for more effective delivery of democracy promotion.

The EU approach: targets, expected results, instruments

Discussion

Question from the floor

What role does the panel see for organisations like KAS, or the other political foundations, in helping to work with the people in your delegations, to help them understand the democracy agenda and help it find a place inside the political structure of the country concerned?

Question from the floor:

The European security strategy has similar objectives to the USA's national security strategy. For democracy promotion, however, the means are different. How does the panel see the transatlantic agenda developing? Should there be a transatlantic job share - not necessarily a 'good cop-bad cop' approach, but what sort of cooperation agenda should there be and what is the appropriate forum to develop such an agenda? Is the G8, or any forum of rich democracies appropriate or should other channels be pursued?

Question from Samantha Chaitkin, Partners for Democratic Change International

The panel's view seems to be that there are three basic conditions for the EU's approach to democracy. The first is that the politicians take democracy more seriously, the second is the eventual development of a clear EU approach towards democracy promotion, and the third is a change in the EU institutional culture so that implementation is improved.

What of these should be the first priority? What is the starting point and how can European civil society help the EU?

Response from Jean Bossuyt

Institutional culture change should come first at this stage of the development of the EU's democracy promotion activities. The policies are there, the strategies are there, and the institutional structures are there, but making them work together is now the priority. What must be done now is to engage with the actors and organise subsidiarity.

Concerning the role of foundations: the political role of the European Commission delegations is to have a political dialogue with partner governments and to create space. Once space is created, who can deliver the goods? Firstly there are the local actors but there are also the foundations, which can make the sophisticated processes work. Process work is not something the Commission should do, nor should consultancies. Institutions and foundations should carry it out. There is a deal to be struck there, based on task division and mutual and comparative advantages.

There are some good programmes where this is done. In Malawi, for example, there is a national initiative for civic education to create demand for democracy. When the European Commission conducted a country strategy evaluation and reviewed the priorities in Malawi, the government wanted to stop the programme, saying it had achieved its objectives. Of course they wanted to stop it. It was creating exactly the kind of change dynamics at local level that were needed. But a political foundation would find it hard to resist the government's wish. The Commission is needed in order to support the continuation of such programmes.

This is the kind of institutional culture change that can be done in practise. But it is a question of mindset and having creative people in the Commission delegation. That is the kind of subsidiarity we need.

Response from Sean O'Regan

The member states and their embassies should not be forgotten. They collectively spend more on democracy promotion than the European Commission. Some member states are far better at democracy promotion and human rights protection than others. Smaller member states probably have more freedom to manoeuvre, as they do not necessarily have wider geopolitical activities, strategies or concerns.

There is very often a political imperative to do things immediately. This may not necessarily contribute to long-term democratic development. However, taking the long-term view may not allow short-term political imperatives to be addressed.

On the question of the transatlantic agenda, the after-effects of the divisions over Iraq

cannot be ignored. Regarding the forum for transatlantic dialogue on democracy promotion, my instinct is to say: not the G8. The UN is another, vitally important, forum and the US should engage more in the UN, where important democracy initiatives are taking place. There is also the Commonwealth, of which three EU states are members (Cyprus, Malta and the United Kingdom). The Commonwealth may not have a transatlantic role but it has an important democracy promotion role to play. It is multifaceted and we should use all forums that are available because each has its own strength. In Eastern Europe, the OSCE is very important.

Concerning the issue of sequencing, the political level needs to engage much more on the question of democracy promotion. Until this happens, and we have a clarity of message, we will continue to do things on an ad hoc basis.

I would like to return to the question of institutional change and internal coherence. At meetings, the Commission gives briefings on spending programmes that, member states have pointed out, have political implications, which need to be considered. The Commission response to this has been that it is a first pillar competence and they are therefore not interested.

However I have no doubt that if the Commission raised a question to member states, asking what they are doing in their spending programmes, the member states will have told the Commission it is not the Commission's business. We need to get over that hurdle. We need to work much more together on the ground.

Response from Anette Hübninger

I would like to respond to the question of politicians taking democracy promotion more seriously and developing guidelines. The Federal Republic of Germany already places emphasis on promoting democracy as part of our development cooperation policy. If the partner country acknowledges democracy promotion, further development cooperation is possible. This is the only way to bring about sustainable development. Yet on an EU level, the diversity of 27 states – with different conceptions of democracy – has contributed to a slight slowing down of that process.

For example, it is almost impossible in a European context to agree on financial support for political parties. The reasons for this may be quite understandable, but the subject merits further discussion. I see a chance for closer cooperation because of the coherence commitments EU member states have. Politicians can – in a bottom-up manner – articulate common guidelines for decent political and democratic development in the partner countries.

Question from the floor

Considering the number of gaps that need to be bridged in democracy promotion, should the European institutions and civil society organisations and political foundations start to address the issue of a unifying doctrine that works through the question of subsidiarity? This could begin on an informal basis in the near future.

Response from Jean Bossuyt

Democracy is a specific arena, but the EU has now very explicitly said that governance is the top priority, so the momentum is there. The EU has also said that governance is an overarching concept including democracy, human rights, decentralisation and rule of law. This high political profile of governance provides an opportunity to reintroduce, upgrade and reconnect the democracy agenda.

In terms of discussions between the three European institutions and civil society, such a quadrilogue has already been attempted on the EU's relations with civil society. It is called the Palermo Process. The objective was to address concrete issues: how to measure the impact of civil society. It was very interesting to bring together the different players.

However in a similar exercise on democracy promotion, the voices of third countries are absolutely needed. The most exciting moment in the Palermo Process came when it was opened to actors from the south. The protagonists are the people in the field, the local actors in third countries. So please let us not have a quadrilogue that is purely European. It might be more complicated, but it would certainly be advisable to include, from the start, actors from the partner countries.

Worldwide promotion of democracy: challenges, role and strategy of the European Union

Conclusions

Dr Peter Köppinger

Democracy promotion: the European approach

The first issue addressed by this workshop was the question of a joint European approach to democracy promotion worldwide.

Many workshop delegates agreed that a joint European approach is not only possible, but necessary. This issue must be pushed much higher up the political agenda. But it is clear that Europe is still far from such a joint approach. There is no agreement between the different European actors in democracy promotion – member states, political foundations, NGOs, the European Commission, think tanks and academic institutions – on key points. These are:

- What should be the key substantial elements of democracy, independent from cultural, historical and social framework and situation in a country;
- What priority should be given to democracy promotion in the development agenda of a country, relative to security, stability and poverty alleviation;
- What preconditions have to be in place for democratic development in a country; and
- What role should different internal and external actors play in developing democratic culture, democratic institutions and democratic procedures in a country?

But my view is that an agreement on a joint European approach on democracy promotion is possible. We therefore need a **European Consensus on Democracy**, similar to the European Consensus on Development Cooperation we have had since

December 2005. The European Parliament could draft a declaration, demanding the establishment of a European Commission working group to prepare such a document, involving the parliament, the Council, political foundations and other European democracy promotion actors in democracy promotion. The ‘food for thought’ document on European Democracy Promotion from the Council Secretariat, as well as the many interesting contributions during this workshop, will provide a starting point for this work. Once in place such a document would be the foundation for much more coherent and effective cooperation between all EU actors in their programmes and projects worldwide.

A coherent strategy

The second issue addressed by this workshop is the need for **a realistic and coherent strategy for the development of democratic culture and institutions in the EU’s partner countries** all over the world.

Notwithstanding the many efforts to assess the state of democracy in different countries, for example by IDEA and the Bertelsmann Foundation (and also included in the country strategy papers of some member states and the Commission), until now there is no procedure for a sound joint European assessment of the actual state of democracy, and the problems and deficiencies to be addressed in partner countries.

Therefore **the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council should select pilot countries in different regions in the world, where, starting as soon as possible, such a joint analysis should be made** by the democracy assistance actors active in the respective countries, including the bilateral agencies of member states, political foundations and European Commission delegations. **The analyses**, to be drafted after careful consultation with local stakeholders in democracy development, should feed into a **‘Democracy Development Strategy Plan’ (DDSP)**, similar to Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans that are standard in many developing countries. The DDSP should not only define the priorities and strategy for democratic development, but should also provide guidelines for effective orchestration of the European Commission’s different instruments (the country programme under the geographic instrument, the thematic instruments and programmes) and for the division of responsibilities and tasks between the different European actors.

How the DDSP would be connected to the activities of other relevant partners in the country – such as the UN, the World Bank, regional development banks and other bilateral partners like the USA and Japan – has to be decided according to the specific situation in the respective country. Whether the DDSP can be openly communicated

with the government of the respective country, or should be an internal European document, also depends very much on the specific situation in the respective country.

Assistance to political parties

The third issue is the question of assistance for the establishment or strengthening of democratic parties and party systems.

It has been stated many times that this is absolutely crucial for an effective democracy assistance strategy. From the workshop, we can conclude that **we, the political foundations and other democracy promotion actors, must work together with the European Commission, and with the support of the European Parliament, to ensure that assistance for the establishment and strengthening of democratic party systems, as it was included in the legal document for the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, will be written into the objectives and priorities in the annual programmes and calls for proposals under EIDHR.**

However, a preparatory exchange of ideas on formulating such objectives and priorities is needed.

The diverse European approach

The fourth issue at the heart of many statements during the workshop was the diversity and pluralism of European democracy promotion actors, programmes and projects.

This diversity has been considered to be one of Europe's big assets. However, it also creates a challenge because all the actors and projects must be brought together in coherent and effective country strategies. Even before that it is necessary to create procedures or mechanisms whereby different actors inform one another of their activities, exchange their experiences, and link up for potential cooperation.

Therefore, **we can conclude that the different groups of actors should take the initiative to establish a mechanism for regular mutual information exchange.** This would have the additional benefit of, at least partly, solving the problem of the low visibility of Europe's democracy promotion agenda and activities.

However such a mechanism can in no way lead to the setting up of an official institution that inherently through its coordinating activities would tend to limit the diversity, independence and plurality of the many different actors, even if not intended at the beginning.

For KAS, democracy promotion is at the core of our mission, and ongoing discussions on the subject are therefore vital. Let's stay in touch and continue to cooperate.