

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Defending Democracy: A Global Survey of Foreign Policy Trends 1992-2002 evaluates how sovereign states promote and defend democracy beyond their borders. The project is a key component of the Democracy Coalition Project's goal of assessing states' adherence to a central provision of the Warsaw Declaration, which over 100 governments endorsed at the Community of Democracies conference in Warsaw, Poland in June 2000. The Declaration commits signatories to "work together to promote and strengthen democracy" at home and abroad. The survey examines the extent to which states have lived up to this commitment.

Scope

This inaugural survey examines the foreign policies of a representative sample of 40 states worldwide over a ten-year period, beginning in 1992 and ending in 2002. The 40 surveyed countries include 9 Sub-Saharan African states (Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania); 8 states from the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru, United States, Venezuela); 7 from Asia (Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Thailand); 10 from Europe (France, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom); 3 from the Middle East/North Africa (Jordan, Morocco, Turkey); and 3 states from the former Soviet Union (Georgia, Ukraine, Russia).

All but one of these states (France) endorsed the Warsaw Declaration. However, France is included in this survey as it is one of the world's leading democracies and a powerful force in world affairs. While the Warsaw Declaration dates to June 2000, the time frame for this inaugural survey goes back ten years to cover seminal democracy-related events that have occurred since 1992. This time period was selected in order to provide a richer picture of the evolving norms and practices of the international community that began to take hold as the democratic wave unfolded with the end of the Cold War. The ten-year time frame will also help establish a baseline for subsequent surveys.

Survey Concepts and Questions

The survey seeks to answer one broad question: how have states promoted and defended the ideals of democracy through their foreign policies since 1992? Such a complex issue involving states' behavior and underlying motivations does not lend itself to simple quantitative analysis. At the same time, any solid qualitative study must be carried out in a systematic way so as to avoid or greatly minimize subjective judgments of individual researchers, particularly because the survey seeks to draw some general conclusions across cases.

To balance these concerns, DCP designed what we think is an innovative methodology that combines a sensible qualitative research framework with a common yardstick for assessment. The end product is a straightforward, accessible evaluation of each state's record of promoting democracy abroad. The analysis takes into account states' varying capacity to influence international politics. The survey is also designed to capture the country-specific context in which foreign policy is formulated. Each essay was written based on a common framework that specifies research guidelines and a set of seminal cases for each region against which the policy responses of all the states of that region are assessed.

Conceptually, the treatment of the question “*how have states promoted and defended the ideals of democracy through their foreign policies?*” is tackled by examining four subject areas: (a) a state’s response to the overthrow of democratically-elected governments abroad; (b) a state’s response to the manipulation of electoral processes abroad; (c) the degree of state support for international democracy efforts, including through foreign assistance; and (d) the nature of a state’s policy towards entrenched dictatorships.

The Warsaw Declaration deals with the first three of these issues. The fourth (policy towards entrenched dictatorships) was not mentioned directly. However, DCP felt strongly that how a state deals with dictatorial regimes is often a good indicator of the value it places on democratic norms and practices in constructing its foreign policy.

Response to the overthrow of democratically elected governments

The Warsaw Declaration highlights the disruptive impact of coups d’etat and other forms of unconstitutional overthrows of democratically-elected regimes and commits states to “*cooperate to discourage and resist the threat to democracy posed by the overthrow of constitutionally elected governments.*” This survey probes how the 40 states in our sample responded to such overthrows in neighboring countries or in countries where the surveyed state has interests and /or wields some leverage. The survey assesses states on the basis of their *willingness* to demonstrate disapproval of such overthrows, and the degree of *support* they give to international and regional attempts to isolate the new regime and restore democratic rule.

Response to manipulation of electoral processes

The survey also assesses how each of the forty states reacted to attempts by foreign governments to manipulate electoral processes in order to hold on to power, impose a handpicked successor or to prevent a particular individual from seeking office. The Warsaw Declaration underscores citizens’ right to “*choose their representatives through regular, free and fair elections with universal and equal suffrage, open to multiple parties, conducted by secret ballot, monitored by independent electoral authorities, and free of fraud and intimidation.*” Though the responsibility for conducting free and fair elections lies primarily with domestic governments, the international democratic community increasingly has taken on an obligation to help ensure fairness through election monitoring and to respond in the event of election-related malfeasance by foreign governments.

Support for international democracy

Efforts by democratic nations to help foster democratic norms and practices are essential to strengthening democratic governance worldwide. The Warsaw Declaration charges governments to “*collaborate on democracy-related issues in existing international and regional institutions, forming coalitions and caucuses to support resolutions and other international activities aimed at the promotion of democratic governance.*” This survey evaluates states’ commitment to this task as evidenced by their efforts in multilateral fora and in bilateral relationships, including the provision of development assistance. An important indicator of the degree of support for international democracy is the priority given to democracy-strengthening in overall assistance strategies, in some cases measured by the total amount and percentage of aid dedicated to democracy programs. Similarly, the extent to which a recipient government seeks foreign assistance for building democratic institutions is a relevant factor.

Policy towards entrenched dictatorships

Entrenched dictatorships not only violate their citizens’ rights as enumerated in the Warsaw Declaration and many other international instruments, they can also become the source of regional instability and breeding grounds for terrorist activity capable of threatening

democracies nearby and further afield, as the events of 11 September 2001 demonstrate. There is little doubt that dictatorships such as those in Afghanistan under the Taliban, Cuba, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Zimbabwe, the Sudan, China and Burma, pose security threats to their democratic neighbors and constitute a challenge to supporters of international democracy. States heeding the Warsaw Declaration's call to "*help create an external environment conducive to democratic development*" should therefore devise ways to support democratic forces working within such countries. To the best of their ability, supporters of democracy should employ a combination of positive and negative inducements to encourage political liberalization and evolution toward democratic governance in these closed societies.

Each of the four issue areas outlined above carry approximately the same weight in assessing a state's overall record of promoting democracy abroad, although the overall score also factors in a state's historical circumstances and capacity to effect change beyond its borders.

The Research Team

The research team for this survey consists of three main groups that worked together as a unit. A small team of experts assisted with the conceptual development of the project. A second team of skilled researchers and writers collected and analyzed information on states' foreign policy records in essay form. A third team of regional specialists and functional experts read the essays and provided feedback that was then incorporated in subsequent drafts. Technical experts then took charge of general processing tasks such as editing, fact checking, and standardization. Each of the groups consisted of experts in their respective fields: social science, journalism, law and others with country-specific expertise and field research experience, and technical editing.

DCP's research unit maintained general oversight of the project. It produced the essay guidelines, organized the research team and exercised final authority over quality control and standardization. The survey benefited enormously from the extensive input from our outside expert reviewers.

The Review System

A review team was formed, composed of both peers (researchers) and external experts. They formed part of an elaborate system of quality control designed to ensure that each essay presented an accurate interpretation of the material, and that the survey standards established in the guidelines were uniformly applied across all forty surveyed states.

The initial drafts of each report were subjected to a rigorous peer review process. Each researcher was asked to read and comment on one other essay from his/her region of specialization. They were asked to determine whether the research guidelines had been applied accurately, and to comment on the factual information in the case studies. Since these reviewers were reading papers about their own regions of interest, they were able to exchange information about findings and sources with one other. To encourage the reviewers to be as vigorous as possible in critiquing their peers, comments were passed on to the writers anonymously, unless the reviewer wished to be named. In several instances reviewers did, in fact, request that their identities be disclosed to facilitate the exchange of information and further collaboration.

The external review process involved over 80 foreign policy and democracy experts from academia, the non-profit sector and diplomacy. Several officials of the Open Society/Soros Foundation network were also asked to review the country reports. Each expert reviewer was selected for his or her professional and research interest and experience in the assigned country. Expert reviewers were specifically asked to provide a thoughtful critique that addressed substantive issues and, most importantly, to determine whether the author had presented an

accurate and unbiased analysis. They were also invited to comment on the methodology. All comments were passed on anonymously to the writers. These comments proved extremely helpful in the extensive revision process. Several reviewers agreed to review more than one essay, which had the added benefit of providing a comparative perspective for assessing research quality.

Research and Reporting

The development of guidelines for the project was a comprehensive process that drew input from a team of technical advisors with relevant experience in the subject matter. DCP circulated the draft work plan and essay guidelines and solicited comments on feasibility and methodology. Based on the feedback, key aspects of the project were revised to improve operationalization of key concepts. Researchers also were asked to comment on the work plan and guidelines prior to orientation meetings hosted by DCP. A point-by-point discussion of the survey concepts with the researchers identified some issues requiring further clarification.

Essay Guidelines

The essay guidelines provide a general description of what the researcher should consider in assessing a state's performance on any particular issue. It poses pointed questions to guide the study, and suggests examples of what would constitute "good policy responses" to the various challenges discussed in each of the four categories. To enhance standardization, the responses of each state to a set of seminal cases were evaluated. This provided a common denominator for assessing the policy responses of all states in a given region. The seminal cases were selected from a larger list of potential cases that presented significant opportunities for the surveyed states to defend democracy abroad. Seminal cases were those deemed to be of such importance that all the surveyed states in the given region should have responded to developments in that country.

In the first category, *response to the overthrow of democratically-elected governments*, for instance, the essay guidelines pose the following questions:

- How did the government respond to military coups or other forms of overthrow of democratically-elected governments in neighboring states, or in states where it has interests and/or influence?
- Did the state do all it could to signal its disapproval of such practices?
- Did it support regional and international attempts to isolate regimes that gained power via such illegal routes?
- Did it support "democracy clauses" introduced at regional and international fora?

To help the researchers in their assessments, the following examples of "good" responses were suggested:

- strong condemnation of military coups and overthrows of democratically-elected regimes;
- willingness to sever diplomatic ties with such regimes;
- willingness to impose economic sanctions on such regimes;
- willingness to support regional and international efforts to facilitate a transition back to democracy through diplomatic initiatives, political isolation, economic sanctions, etc; non-cooperation (culturally, economically, militarily and diplomatically) with such regimes;
- supporting a democratic government in exile – diplomatic, legal, economic, military.

Seminal Cases:

Sub-Saharan Africa: Cote d'Ivoire (1999), Niger (1996);
Asia: Pakistan, Indonesia, Philippines, Fiji;
Europe: former Yugoslavia, Austria, Haiti, Cote d'Ivoire;
Former Soviet Union: Pakistan;

Latin America: Venezuela (2002), Ecuador (1999), Peru (1992), Guatemala, Paraguay, Haiti (1994);
Middle East/North Africa: Nigeria, Niger, Pakistan;
United States: Venezuela, Pakistan, Haiti.

In the second category, *response to the manipulation of electoral processes*, the following questions were posed to guide the research:

- How did the state respond to attempts by foreign governments to manipulate electoral processes or to uphold fraudulent election results?
- What did it do to pressure such government to remedy the situation?
- How willing was the government to monitor elections or to fund independent election monitoring missions to such states?
- Did it endorse the report produced by such independent monitors?
- Did it support international action against regimes that sought to manipulate electoral laws and processes for the benefit of retaining power or preventing a particular candidate from seeking office democratically?
- Did the state support the imposition of international sanctions against regimes that have gained power by such illegitimate means?

Suggested examples of “good” policies include:

- willingness to condemn strongly attempts to manipulate electoral processes by foreign governments;
- willingness to monitor foreign elections;
- willingness to fund independent election monitoring efforts and to endorse the reports of such missions;
- willingness to condemn attempts by foreign governments to uphold the results of flawed elections;
- willingness to sever diplomatic ties over such flawed electoral processes;
- willingness to freeze the assets of the officials of regimes that perpetrate electoral fraud;
- willingness to campaign for international isolation of a regime that engages in such electoral malpractice;
- willingness to suspend cooperation in key areas such as economic relations, military, sports, diplomatic and cultural exchanges.

Seminal Cases:

Sub-Saharan Africa: Zimbabwe (2002), Zambia, Nigeria, Cote d’Ivoire;
Asia: Malaysia (1999), Cambodia (1998);
Europe: Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Belarus, Peru, former Yugoslavia;
Former Soviet Union: Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine;
Latin America: Peru (2000), Haiti (2000);
Middle East/North Africa: Algeria, Egypt;
United States: Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Haiti (2000), Peru (2000).

The following questions were posed regarding states’ willingness to promote international democracy:

- What is the government’s policy on the promotion of international democracy?
- Does it regard democracy in other states as an important foreign policy goal?
- Was it willing to devote a significant percentage of its foreign assistance budget to projects that strengthen democracy abroad (for donor countries alone)?

- Was democratization a priority area in the search for funds abroad (for aid-receiving states)?
- What did the state do to promote democratic values in foreign countries?
- Did it actively promote democratic values in regional and international fora?

Suggested examples of “good” policy include:

- devoting a fairly large percentage of the foreign assistance budget to democracy support (for donor states);
- solicitation of donor assistance for democratization programs (for recipient states);
- active and meaningful participation in international democracy fora;
- solid ratification record on international protocols and agreements dealing with respect for human rights and democratic values;
- willingness to vote in favor of international resolutions that condemn undemocratic trends in all countries;
- willingness to speak out forcefully and consistently in support of democracy abroad;

The final category, *policy towards entrenched dictators*, examined the nature of the state’s relationship with authoritarian regimes and what it did to help promote democracy.

Suggested examples of “good” policy responses include:

- willingness to impose a credible sanctions regime or a policy of constructive engagement to encourage democratic change;
- willingness to support pro-democracy actors in undemocratic countries;
- a good record of voting to support international resolutions that isolate entrenched dictators;
- a good record of voting in favor of international resolutions that impose political and/or economic sanctions on such regimes;
- willingness to provide asylum to democracy activists exiled by dictators;
- a record of non-cooperation (culturally, economically, militarily and diplomatically) with such regimes.

Seminal Cases:

Sub-Saharan Africa: Sudan, Nigeria;
 Asia: China; Burma
 Europe: former Yugoslavia, Belarus;
 Former Soviet Union: Belarus, Uzbekistan;
 Latin America: Cuba;
 Middle East/North Africa: Iraq, Libya;
 United States: China, Cuba, Sudan, Iraq

THE RATINGS

The survey employs a four-tiered rating scale to evaluate the overall record of each state in promoting democracy abroad. The scale comprises the following values:

Poor (no effort / minimum effort);
Fair (medium / mixed effort);
Good (strong effort);
Very Good (exceptional effort).

It must be stressed that the rating is based on an assessment of the *effort* that a country makes to promote and defend democracy beyond its borders and not the *effectiveness* of its policy actions. Each surveyed state is awarded an overall score (the *Defending Democracy Abroad* Rating) that is a composite of its performance in each of the categories. It is intended to measure how much a state was willing to do, taking into account its capacity and influence.

The *Defending Democracy Abroad Rating* awards the highest rating of *Very Good* to states that work exceptionally hard to promote and defend the values of democratic governance abroad. The rating of *Good* is awarded for a solid record of achievement regarding democracy promotion opportunities beyond one's borders. A *Fair* denotes a mixed record in promoting and defending democracy abroad. The minimum rating, *Poor*, is awarded for little or no effort with respect to strengthening and defending democratic norms abroad or in condemning the violation of such norms by foreign governments.