

A possible alternative to democracy assistance: Non-military democracy promotion

This is more of a musing than an advocacy. We have come across a division based on the narrow and limited notion of democracy assistance. In particular, exclusive definitions have emerged that place democracy assistance as a very small sub-set of democracy promotion. So, the next question, one that we have been wrestling with, seems natural: Is “democracy promotion” itself a workable mechanism?

“Democracy promotion” has generally been determined to be too large and unwieldy of a mechanism. It is used in a number of diverse and contradictory ways and opens up the affirmative to include a number of other options, some of which go outside the realm of the topic paper and the emphasis on “assistance” and “democracy.” The topic paper is billed as an “assistance” mechanism—a sub-set of a separate democracy promotion paper—and it is observed in a footnote that “no resolution has used the word ‘democracy.’” Gordon’s original paper from 2007 is here: <<http://www.cedadebate.org/forum/index.php?topic=2380.msg4481#msg4481>>. The point, overall, is that democracy assistance is a better alternative because democracy promotion is very amorphous and could lead to the inclusion of development aid, economic pressure, all sorts of military options, any type of conditional declaration, and some other unknowns in addition to the standard forms of democracy assistance and diplomacy.

I agree with this conclusion, but diligence requires that we take another look, even if briefly, at the possibility of using the broader term “democracy promotion,” and what sacrifices would be made. To begin, there are reasonably good limiting definitions of democracy promotion. The mechanism wording document has a few limiting definitions and there are more to be found. We cannot rely on Lappin’s overbroad definition of promotion (any foreign policy designed to encourage democracy abroad) in this context because more restrictive interpretations will hold the day.

“Democracy promotion” as a mechanism can be contained through a good topicality debate. DP is/is not economic. DP is/is not military. There are cards on this in the mechanism wording paper as well as the older topic paper that were re-posted with the Arab Spring paper. Another example that it is non-military:

German Development Institute, '09

([http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3.nsf/\(ynDK_contentByKey\)/ANES-7QAH6E/\\$FILE/BP%201.2009.pdf](http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3.nsf/(ynDK_contentByKey)/ANES-7QAH6E/$FILE/BP%201.2009.pdf) “The Three Cs of Democracy Promotion Policy: Context, Consistency and Credibility,” Briefing Paper 1/2009, acesd 6/7/11)

“Democracy promotion” comprises all non-military means of (re)establishing or strengthening a democratic political order. While a distinction is often made between “democracy assistance” (in the sense of direct, positive measures) and “democracy promotion” (which may also include negative military and/or economic incentives or coercion), we use the term in this paper in the (non-military) sense defined above. Democracy promotion became a central paradigm in Western foreign and development policies during the 1990s, becoming an element of strategies for dealing with such global challenges as poverty alleviation, state-building, civilian conflict management and the fight against terrorism. Annual expenditures on democracy promotion amount today to roughly € 10 bn or nearly 10 per cent of global official development assistance (ODA). Democracy promotion comprises such activities as support for democratic institutions (e.g. parliaments) and procedures (e.g. elections), human rights, the rule of law and civic education. Donors use sets of instruments that include measures in support of democratic processes that are negative (e.g. conditions attached to loans and grants),

positive (e.g. aid to civil society), direct (e.g. capacity-building with parliamentarians) and indirect (e.g. promotion of fiscal transparency)."

Regardless of the good limiting cards out there, democracy promotion does present some problems in terms of how broad it could become, primarily in three ways: military action, economic sanctions/incentives, and conditioning. When we look at these three places where "promotion" is much larger than just "assistance," it is not so clear we want to avoid all of these larger forms of action. Much of the concern expressed about the topic thus far is how restrictive the mechanism is and how the affirmative will not be able to do the really sweeping things that are necessary to create US-based solvency. Some of those larger actions we would probably want to include would be conditioning and sanctions, two crucial mechanisms for the support of democracy.

If, hypothetically, we are looking for a way to add some of these larger actions but not all of them, we could always specify the type of democracy promotion with an adjective. Using a phrase like "non-military democracy promotion" might do the trick. It is worth considering because we know that "democracy promotion" solvency and "US key warrants" will be easier to locate in more countries than it will be with the assistance mechanism. In fact, democracy promotion is mentioned in a lot of the evidence in the topic paper as a way to effect change.

Taking a brief look at "non-military democracy promotion," it has some positives and negatives. On the negative side, it is more cumbersome and more difficult to locate the entire phrase "non-military democracy promotion" as a term of art in the literature. Secondly, if we decide to risk using the phrase "democracy promotion" in the first place, it might be easier to find good exclusive cards that distinguish military action from democracy promotion and allow that debate to play itself out. Thirdly, the idea that anything is "non-military" gives the negative another argument based on securitization. Opening up this area could be good and bad.

Hanggi, '04 (Heiner in *Conceptualising Security Sector Reform and Reconstruction*, by Alan Bryden, Heiner Hänggi, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces)

Since the end of the Cold War, we have witnessed a substantive widening and deepening of the concept of security. On one hand non-military security issues such as political, economic, societal and environmental aspects are now broadly accepted as component parts of a meaningful security agenda. Furthermore, military threats and the way states respond to them have changed, as illustrated by the events of 9/11 and its aftermath. Asymmetrical threats and warfare, as well as the blurring of the lines between different dimensions of traditional and new security issues, have emerged as characteristic features. The US-led 'war on terror' is particularly illustrative of the changing nature of military security as well as the increasing 'securitisation' of non-military issues. On the other hand, the primacy of national security has been undermined by the logic of globalisation and the corresponding changes in the role of the state. With the proliferation of intra-state wars and the privatisation of conflict in poorly governed and 'failing states' the international community began to recognise that more often than not it is individuals and social groups which need to be protected rather than the state whose dysfunctionality is often the primary cause of insecurity. This led to the emergence of new security concepts such as 'societal security' and 'human security'. The latter, which has gained much recognition in the international arena, illustrates best the paradigmatic change from the primacy of national (and international) security to the growing importance of transnational, sub-national and individual security. Although still an ill-defined and contested concept, human security covers a wide range of threats to the security of individuals and social groups such as anti-personnel landmines, small arms and light weapons, child soldiers, trafficking in women as well as, in its wider notion, all aspects of human development such as economic, food, health and environmental insecurity. In sum, what makes these problems 'new' security issues, shaping a new or transformed international security agenda, is not that they are truly novel phenomena but rather that they are 'securitised', which means that they are explicitly characterised and treated as security concerns.

The positives of the phrase “non-military democracy promotion” (when compared to “democracy assistance”) are that more avenues for action are opened up for debate without allowing military intervention, training, or logistics.

The Free Dictionary (acsd 6-8-11, nonmilitary)

Adj. 1. nonmilitary - not associated with soldiers or the military; "unmilitary circles of government"; "fatigue duty involves nonmilitary labor"

Websters Online (acsd 6-8-11, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nonmilitary>)

“: not : other than : reverse of : absence of <nontoxic> <nonlinear>”

Dictionary.com (acsd 6-8-11, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/military>)

“Military: of, for, or pertaining to war: military preparedness.

Wordnet.web (acsd 6-8-11, Princeton, <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=military>)

of or relating to the study of the principles of warfare; "military law"; characteristic of or associated with soldiers or the military; "military uniforms"; associated with or performed by members of the armed services as contrasted with civilians; "military police"

Moving more to the topic area, the Egypt example is an important one because a lot of the affirmatives we are hoping to include involve the transition period after the ouster of an autocrat and before the emergence of a new regime. In Egypt, democracy promotion (and assistance) have been a huge part of the debate over the US relationship to the Mubarak regime during the past twenty years. The entirety of this next article is fascinating in that it was written back in July of 2009, but it also shows how democracy promotion relies on democracy assistance as its central core, but it is flexible in many of the means at its disposal. Some authors concede that democracy promotion, in extreme cases (like Iraq), can include military intervention. Writing out those options would keep debates centered on the ability to assist democracy in the region.

Guirgus, '09 (Dina, July, 2009, “Promoting Democracy in Egypt”, Eurasia Critic, <http://www.eurasiacritic.com/articles/promoting-democracy-egypt>, acsd 6-8-11) executive director of the Washington-based Voices for a Democratic Egypt, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law)

Not only is support for the legitimate democratic aspirations of the Egyptian people in the strategic interest of the community of democracies, but backtracking now and returning to an aid and foreign policy that prioritizes only economic development at the expense of democracy promotion simply rewards the regime for its brutal crackdown against secular democracy activists. While the U.S-Egyptian alliance is important and often mutually beneficial, Mubarak has been able to deliver very little in terms of substantive advancement on regional peace with Israel, not to mention the failure to deliver on internal development, as Egypt has witnessed regression on numerous development indicators under Mubarak's 28 year tenure. While Mubarak is perceived abroad as playing a key role in regional stability, the corruption of his regime and its continued repression of the Egyptian people are undermining that very stability and security. Obama's administration should not fall victim to the false claims and propaganda of illegitimate authoritarian dictatorships-and to the sense of needing Mubarak at all costs. This would hamper progress on vital regional U.S. interests and damage American credibility, which already suffered a serious blow during the past eight years. There is no reason why pursuing strategic interests should come at the expense of sound and effective democracy promotion policies; in fact, seeking both simultaneously will strengthen each other. How to Move Forward. As critical as development assistance is, the truth is that foreign aid has been buying Egyptians bread for decades while an autocratic and corrupt regime has continued to squander economic aid without allowing for the genuine flowering of an open society, fertile to homegrown economic development, foreign investment and democratic citizen engagement. Meanwhile, effective support for political reform from 2004-2005 did have concrete effects that resulted in the formation of precisely the robust constituency that would

successfully drive positive reform if sustained. While change can and is and will continue to come from within, giving up on democracy promotion programs and policy in favor of "technical assistance" would simply consolidate the extremely unpopular status quo of the last twenty eight years. As Egyptians continue to fight and sacrifice for their basic freedoms, the U.S. and the community of democracies cannot remain neutral on these issues; such neutrality amounts to a de facto endorsement of the status quo. It was not the failure of U.S.-funded governance programs or U.S. support for democracy that led to the demise of the "Arab Spring" and the ensuing government backlash. In reality, it was the lack of U.S. consistency in its policies once it got cold feet in the aftermath of Islamist victories in Egypt and Palestine, as well as trouble in Iraq. The early success, and ultimate failure, of U.S. pressures on Egypt in 2005 has proven one very important fact: strong verbal support for political reform and for the efforts of activists, coupled with consistent (non-military) action, is an effective tool for democracy promotion.

Debates about how to intervene in these countries hinge on whether or not military action is included. Libya is a case in point as is Syria. In April, US lawmakers expressed the desire to action in “nonmilitary ways” in response to crackdowns in Syria. This was also right before the hawks took hold of U.S. policy in Libya, making the opposite decision there. Despite the differences between Egypt and Libya, democracy promotion/assistance is significant in both places.

Bowman, '11 (“US Senators Urge Non-Military Intervention in Syria” Michael, April 24, 201, acsd 6-8-11, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/usa/US-Senators-Urge-Non-Military-Intervention-in-Syria-120569589.html>)

U.S. senators of both major political parties are urging greater support for Syria’s embattled opposition short of direct military intervention. After days of bloody attacks and raids by Syrian security forces on civilians, American legislators say the United States should provide greater backing for those opposed to President Bashar al-Assad. Republican Senator Mark Kirk of Illinois appeared on CBS’ “Face the Nation” television program. “We should use the diplomatic weight and authority of the United States to undermine the Syrian dictatorship. I think we are witnessing the slow end of the Assad dictatorship, and we should stand with the people of Syria.” Kirk was asked if he envisions a U.S. military role in Syria similar to ongoing U.S. efforts in Libya. “No, I think the U.S. military is now overstretched with four major missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Japan. But U.S. weight and diplomatic authority can be a great source of strength and political support for the Syrian opposition.” That view was echoed by Democratic Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut. “We should encourage the democratic movement in Syria, but at the same time avoid anything like an open-ended commitment. Certainly no [U.S.] troops on the ground.” Blumenthal said he hopes events in Syria play out more like those in Egypt, where Hosni Mubarak left power without foreign intervention, than the current situation in Libya, where leader Moammar Gadhafi remains in power despite a NATO-led air campaign. Also appearing on CBS was Democratic Senator Chris Coons of Delaware, who said the United States should continue to play a constructive yet limited role in promoting democratic change in the Middle East. “America is safest and America is strongest when we lead with our values. And the values we have that are really compelling to folks around the world are when we stand up and support democracy and people who are seeking a greater role in their own countries. We have done that in a way that I think is moving (positively impacting) the Middle East -- not towards the Seventh Century caliphate view of al-Qaida, but instead towards a view of wanting to participate in the 21st Century.” Some U.S. legislators are urging more aggressive U.S. military efforts to end the rule of Libya’s Gadhafi. But Senator Coons urged patience, saying the current strategy of applying military and economic pressure on Gadhafi needs time to work.

More work would need to be done to really flesh out this possibility, but an initial look shows some promise for the phrase “non-military democracy promotion.” It is a wide open question—what is and is not democracy promotion in the first place—so we may want to put that genie back into the bottle. Let me conclude with two final points. The first is that promotion and assistance go hand-in-hand. You can find authors (like Collins, below) who might distinguish between promotion as conditioning that works from the top-down and assistance that works primarily from the bottom-up, but you cannot find authors contending that we should artificially look at one and not the other when making policy decisions:

Collins, '09 (Collins, S. D. ,Can America Finance Freedom? Assessing U.S. Democracy Promotion via Economic Statecraft. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 5: 367–389.)

Due to the inherent and emergent challenges to democracy promotion, if the United States wishes to achieve significant democratization results in the future, improvements in its strategic approach will be needed. An initial step would entail providing more substantial and consistent funding for democracy promotion efforts. Washington has historically devoted relatively meager sums to democracy promotion; as democracy aid represents approximately just 0.01% of all federal budget expenditures (Forsythe and Rieffer 2000; Baker 2005). Increased funding levels, however, will not be enough, if the other strategic approaches remain static. Greater attention and material resources should be devoted to those measures which have demonstrated to be the most effective catalysts of democratization; particularly, civil society aid and election assistance. Furthermore, agencies would be wise to assertively remedy the poor design and implementation issues which frequently afflict democracy programs; such as excessively brief time frames, absence of coordination with other donor states, inattention to unit-level influences (e.g., culture, history), and unfulfilled aid promises.¹⁷ Finally, incentive approaches, which utilize politically conditioned aid and trade privileges should not be ignored or undervalued. The Millennium Challenge Account shows significant promise as a means of leveraging aid for democracy, and therefore should be fully funded.¹⁸ Preferential access to America's world-leading import market represents a powerful inducement which has long been underutilized as a democracy promotion tool. For trade to be an effective catalyst for democratization, however, the U.S. will have to practice clear and credible democratic conditionality, where candidate states must demonstrate significant democratic progress before benefits are granted. Even if these enhancements are adopted, Washington will continue to find financing freedom to be an arduous task. Still, strategic improvements will facilitate democratization efforts against a growing headwind of authoritarian resistance.

And, finally, the need for flexibility in our assistance programs and in our overall approach to democracy promotion can be seen in the debates happening over what the U.S. can do. Zoellick's creativity (fiat) in terms of looking for new ways to provide support and assistance is exactly what affirmatives will want to try to access:

Sadiki, June 6 (Larbi, 2011, "The Mathematics of the Arab Spring" *Aljazeera.net*, acsd 6-7-11, Dr Larbi Sadiki is a Senior Lecturer in Middle East Politics at the University of Exeter, and author of *Arab Democratization: Elections without Democracy* (Oxford University Press, 2009) and *The Search for Arab Democracy: Discourses and Counter-Discourses* (Columbia University Press, 2004, <http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2011/05/2011531132934920499.html>)

Many Arabs are speaking out against a possible Euro-US "hijacking" or "containment" of the regional movement through this type of "cheque book diplomacy". I will argue here that this position is not intellectually robust, and that the Arab Spring demands dialogue, not political and cultural protectionism. There is a moment of confidence across the Arab geography: Arabs can hold their own. This bodes well for recasting Arab-West relations, as it veers away from a return to hollow views of cultural and socio-political autarchy. Simply crying "US hands off the Arab Spring" is not the answer. From Zoellick to Cameron. The British prime minister seems to be right on track for lending support aimed at democratic reconstruction in Egypt and Tunisia. Cameron has earmarked £110m (\$180m) for development over the next four years, echoing the G8 outlook on the Arab uprisings. How exactly the money will be distributed and whether it will be spent on projects that support the rule of law, freedom of press and pluralism is missing from Cameron's transcript. This new-found enthusiasm for spending generously on the Arab Spring - whether by Obama, Cameron or the "International Misery' Fund" - echoes the World Bank's April message in support of the Arab Spring. World Bank President Robert Zoellick set the tone in favour of a participatory citizenry which will develop good governance - shorthand for the rhetoric of accountability, transparency and efficiency in the political economy of developing areas. The sub-text: Funds for what? There are opportunities, but also perils, in Western aid aimed at supporting the Arab uprisings. It depends on how you read between the lines - especially when the text articulates that aid donation is a function of *realpolitik*: the goal of which is to limit immigration and extremism. The EU has recently been called upon to "humanise" its immigration laws; addressing this as an area of non-monetary aid so that Arabs are able to access opportunities that Europeans may be willing to offer. As for fighting extremism, no-one is naive enough to believe that democracy alone will stamp out extremism. Likewise, aid aimed at fighting extremism can actually imperil institution-building and risk a return to *mukhabarat* ["secret police"] regimes that kill, imprison, torture and ignore the rule of law. This is a declarative objective of the Western financial charm offensive; such an attack was recently revealed by the G8 in Normandy. A confused agenda whose facade is "democracy promotion" - and its substance "fighting terrorism and immigration" - will fail to achieve attention as a recipient or a donor. It will obfuscate, rather than clarify, the role played by Western governments in the "Arab Spring".

The mathematics of Arab democracy. Aside from the British support pledged, there are additional billions that have had a Pavlovian effect on the Egyptian and Tunisian prime ministers, respectively, Essam Sharaf and Beji Caid el Sebsi. The aim is "good governance" without causing basket-case economies. Sharaf is seeking to offset the immense damage to the country's tourism industry caused by the uprising, while el Ssebsi has built a case based on refugee influx. Both are also scrambling for a cut of the four billion in aid and loans to be contributed by the US. Freer access to EU markets is another aim of both men. There is no shortage of EU cash, but the question is whether this will be as "charitable" as the aid that was invested into eastern and central Asian democratic transitions via the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In any case, there is still much to be revealed about the reins attached to these packages when they finally see the light of day. Zoellick's cheque book is also on offer - and there are hints of billions in World Bank funds for the Arab Spring countries. More to the point, Zoellick's rhetoric hints at creative methods that aim to fund community empowerment which would bypass the state and target the people directly through their communities instead. Whether the shareholders in the Bretton Woods financial system - US, China, Japan, and the EU - sharpen or blunt Zoellick's creativity remains to be seen. Money, unfortunately, is not given to further only values (note the stress on values by Obama in his speech to the British parliament), but also to further the donors' interests. Autonomy vs autarchy. Two fundamental principles must be understood in order to grasp the mathematics of the Arab Spring. One the Arab side, return to autarchy is self-defeating. Pride and greatness have been returned to Arabness, and there is no longer any need to engage in autarchic brands of discourse. Autarchy has been the fundamental currency of dictators keen on secluding the Arab masses from the flow of ideas hostile to their own selfish rule. This has been done in the name of all kinds of ideologies. This is the moment for spreading cosmopolitanism of good governance, moral protest, anti-authoritarian resistance, and social justice. This is a shared space - in which Arab narratives and struggles engage with like-minded currents transcending geography and time. "Hands off our Arab Spring"-type narratives ignore the global voices and ethical forces who are joining in this emancipatory moment being ushered in. So to recoil via autarchic propositions goes against the spirit of this movement. It is as if they are claiming that the Arab Spring has not recharged the batteries of self-confidence enough for Arab nations to engage the outside world with confidence, self-assertion and a greater capacity for self-representation. Autarchy only reinforces Orientalist narratives that have misrepresented Arabs for so long through images of invisibility, inferiority, and an incapacity to speak back. Conditionality in reverse. Similarly, no patronage from the Western powers is needed. Arabs in Tunisia and Egypt have reclaimed - and in Libya, Syria and Yemen are in the process of reclaiming - the right to self-govern. Hence the current moment demands a transition from the idea of conditionality imposed *by* the donors to a new conditionality, in reverse, imposed by the *recipients* of the funds. That is, good governance must be thought of as a two-way street: where there are equal obligations on the donor and the recipient. The donor community has generally flouted its own rules of good governance by plugging authoritarian rule into the global financial system by way of handouts, grants, and funds. These have typically had much to answer for in terms of reproduction of autocracy, corrupt regimes - the likes of which WikiLeaks has revealed Western governments' intimate knowledge of - and the procurement of technology of oppression that prolong dictatorship; Mubarak and Ali are but two examples of this. The injustice and irony in all of this is that debt incurred by non-representative regimes is still counted as legally binding, which shackles the oppressed citizenry to billions that are owed from morally questionable transactions organised by the very institutions that have preaching "good governance" since the early 1990s. Democratization: from mathematics to morality. A return to ethical basics and conditionality is necessary, and can be achieved by these means: Funds and grants are to be dispensed only to governments "of the people" - which means democratically elected governments, complete with a system of legitimate checks and balances. Right now, this excludes the transitional governments of Egypt and Tunisia. Both have presented cases for billions of dollars from the funds on offer by the West, however, neither is representative of the people. Technical aid, materials or training for the military, police or intelligence must be in accordance with the rules of upholding democratic rule and the principles of good governance - meaning that they are subject to transparency, and with full knowledge and approval of elected parliaments and other civic bodies and institutions. Aid, including that given to non-governmental organisations, must not limit the choice of recipients when it comes to choosing a developmental path. It must not be subject to the values and interests of the donors whose free market economies, in this instance, are very difficult to replicate in an Arab world - the goals of which include robust sustainable development solutions and distributive mechanisms aimed at equal opportunity, social justice, and poverty eradication. The bulk of aid must be geared towards addressing "the two Ds": i) democratic consolidation, with the root problem of youth disaffection, loss and disenfranchisement, and ii) distribution to deal with the acute problems of marginalisation - which is the root problem of youth disenfranchisement. Civic-capacity building must be factored into the process of aiding Arab democracy-building. And it must include the re-training of police forces and the dismantling of the apparatus of oppression one by one. Police and intelligence forces have traditionally been the enemies of the Arab populace. This must change. Through conditionality in reverse, good governance becomes a mutually binding contract. It will ensure that Arab-Western political and economic engagement is underpinned by ethics of shared obligations and responsibility. By doing it this way, external finances will bring relief, goodwill, dialogue and friendship instead of burdening the Arab and Western worlds with fear, distrust and acrimony. The currency of freedom. It still remains to be seen how, and even if, the masters of world finance

put their money where their mouth is. In particular, for now, no dispensing of aid must proceed until elected representatives of the people - and independent civil society groups - are in a position to deliberate and reflect freely on the terms and plans of the aid to be given. The only given in this discussion is that the organisers of Tahrir Square and Habib Bourguiba Avenue have spoken in favour of dignity and freedom, which is the currency of the Arab Spring. There is no need to fear for these masses and their epic resistance against tyranny. It is a resource they can, if need be, also direct towards resisting financial hegemony. What is reassuring about the new-found morality of resistance is that it rejects autarchy. It speaks the *lingua franca* of freedom - which transcends geography, religion, nationality and ethnicity. It uses Western technological innovations for the purpose of self-empowerment. On both accounts, the protesters have resisted and continue to refuse living under tyranny or on disconnected islands.

I think democracy assistance is a good phrase and have been a defender of using it since the outset. On the other hand if we are pressured for an alternative mechanism that might be a little more flexible without allowing any change in foreign policy to be topical, we might consider democracy promotion again or non-military democracy promotion. The debates in this area will be fine either way, but we at least have this option as well if we want to pursue it.

Kevin

Note: Wikipedia has some helpful references for democracy promotion, citing Carothers among others.

Wikipedia entry for democracy promotion: Democracy promotion, which can also be referred to as democracy assistance, or democracy building, is a strand of foreign policy adopted by governments and international organizations that seek to support the spread of democracy as a political system around the world. The precise definition of democracy promotion has been debated for more than twenty-five years. The multiplicity of terms used is a manifestation of the plurality of opinions and approaches taken by international actors, be they governments, NGOs or other third parties. For example, the term 'promotion' itself can be seen by some as too intrusive, or implying outside interference, whilst 'support' can be seen by some as more benign but, by others, as insufficiently assertive. These days the differences tend to divide into two main camps: those who see it as a political process on the one hand and those who see it as a developmental process on the other (see international relations and development aid for context).