Why semi-authoritarians regimes may be more troublesome than autocracies: US and EU strategies of democracy promotion in the Mediterranean and the Newly Independent States

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I   Introduction

Over the last 15 years, democracy promotion has gained a prominent place on the foreign policy agenda of many international actors. Accordingly, an ever growing body of research takes note of these efforts, with the ultimate goal to explain why international democracy promoters are doing what they do – and with what effect. While the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) have attracted particular attention among analysts of US foreign policy and European integration and politics respectively, comparative studies are still rare and a transatlantic research community still has to emerge. In addition, there is hardly a consensus about what constitutes the subject matter of a common research agenda. In the midst of countless empirical studies on different actors and aspects in democracy promotion, there are only few proposals for a systematic analysis and even fewer attempts at theorization.

Setting out to develop a systematic comparison between the EU's and the US' efforts to promote democracy, we hope to contribute to the advancement of the research agenda on international democracy promotion. Most comparisons of EU and US strategies to promote democracy in third countries focus on the differences of their foreign policies and their roles as international actors in general. However, in devising and analyzing international democracy promotion, the political context of the target countries – especially with regard to regime type and potential dynamics of regime change – should not be neglected. In this paper we seek to illustrate the role of domestic, country-specific conditions for the external actors' democracy promotion strategies. In this respect, we assume that different political contexts provide for different opportunities for external intervention, but also for serious obstacles with regard to certain measures.

We start with outlining a research framework for the analysis of international democracy promotion in different contexts (II). Our empirical analysis focuses then in a first step on the conceptual level in order to search for clearly devised 'differentiated strategies' of the EU and the US respectively (III).[1] In a second step, we then turn to the implementation on the ground (IV). We have chosen four different countries from two regions that systematically vary with regard to their political context. Two of them, we regard as semi-authoritarian states (Morocco, Tunisia), one as a consolidating democracy (Ukraine) and one as a fully fledged authoritarian state (Belarus). This way, we verify the assumption about specifically European and American strategies in general, but also the existence of context-sensitive approaches. We assume that democracy promotion efforts are not only determined by the actors' general strategies but also mediated by the regime type (authoritarian, semi-authoritarian, democratic) and dynamics of and commitment to democratic reform. The degree of confrontation should decrease with the advancement of democratic reform, with actors switching from a conflictive to a cooperative approach to democracy promotion at a certain point. In contrast, in relatively

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[1] We do not take into account the EU's member states as individual actors of democracy promotion, but focus on the EU as external actor(s). For a complete picture of 'European' democracy promotion, it is of course necessary to consider national democracy promotion efforts as well (see e.g. Youngs 2006).

stable semi-authoritarian regimes, both a cooperative and a conflictive approach may pose difficulties, as the scope for consensual measures might be restricted while actors might not want to risk stifling existing reform dynamics by open conflict. Thus, we expect both actors to be more limited in their scope of action vis-à-vis countries that are neither openly authoritarian nor clearly democratic or willing to democratize. However, given the debate on the distinctiveness of EU and US foreign policy under the auspices of Venus and Mars respectively, we also expect the US switch more easily to a conflictive approach than the EU.

II   Setting the stage: analyzing (differentiated) democracy promotion

Before turning to the realities of EU and US efforts to promote democracy, it is first of all necessary to clearly delimit our understanding of the term. In the following, a framework for a systematic analysis and comparison will be developed. Therein it will also be necessary to consider different regime types and their potential implications for democracy promotion. The establishment of 'democracy promotion' as a field of research originated in the attention drawn to "international dimensions of democratization" (Whitehead 1996), going beyond the exclusive focus on internal actors and factors to explain the emergence and outcome of democratization processes. Since then, most studies have implicitly chosen an understanding of 'democracy promotion' that implies agency, but have rarely ever specified what exactly falls under this 'activity'. In this study, we conceive (international) democracy promotion as *an external actor's explicit attempt to directly establish or advance democracy as a regime type in a target country*.

Looking at EU and US efforts to promote democracy, we are, however, not interested in isolated, ad-hoc actions. As both actors are committed to democracy promotion as a general foreign policy goal, all measures taken can be interpreted as attempts to achieve this goal. This does not imply that an actor must have an 'strategy' in the sense of a purposefully designed master plan, building on clear assumptions about which means lead to the desired end (Burnell 2004, 2005). Still, analyzing his statements on and infrastructure for democracy promotion as well as his measures taken should allow the identification of different practices or patterns of democracy promotion. This can then lead to the ex-post classification of 'strategies'. These might not only differ between actors, but might also vary across target countries. After setting out the analytical framework, we will tackle the idea of 'differentiated strategies', i.e. the adaptation of democracy promotion efforts to the political situation on the ground.

An actor's commitment to promote democracy in his external relations should be the starting point for the analysis of his democracy promotion efforts. It is interesting to see since when and at what level democracy promotion is (officially) part of the foreign policy agenda, how it is related to other foreign policy goals and if it further specifies objectives and approaches. However, it is crucial to see how the general commitment translates into practice. Considering the various 'tool boxes' presented in democracy promotion literature,[2] we identify four tools, drawing on two different channels of international relations: 'diplomacy' and 'foreign aid'.[3] The diplomatic tools are (1) Political Dialogue and Negotiations, (2) (unilat-

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[2]   See for example the different sets of "tools" (Carothers 1999: 6), "instruments" (Youngs 2001: 357), "weapons" (Schraeder 2003: 26) for as well as "ways" (Burnell 2000: 7) or "types" (Schmitter, Brouwer 1999) of democracy promotion.

[3]   We draw a distinction between these two channels on the basis of the respective 'status' of the democracy promoter and the target country: In diplomatic relations, the interaction takes place between two – formally – equal actors, whereas foreign aid is provided by a donor to a recipient. We do not limit diplomacy to classical diplomatic relations, but identify several tools to promote democracy that are all managed in this 'arena' of international relations. We leave out military interventions as a form of coercion because they openly violate the sovereignty of the target country.

eral) Declarations, and (3) (negative and positive) Conditionality.[4] Foreign aid, in the form of technical and financial assistance, adds to these the tool of (4) Democracy Assistance.

The choice, design and application of the different tools reflect a variety of options on how to promote democracy and add up to different 'approaches'. Thus, tools can differ in terms of the domestic actors targeted, their mechanisms of influence, and the attitude towards the incumbent regime conveyed. In addition, they can aim at different areas or issues of democratization. First of all, democracy promotion activities can be targeted at different domestic actors. The basic distinction is between state and non-state actors. By definition, all the diplomatic tools address state – mostly governmental – actors.[5] By contrast, Democracy Assistance can be directed at both state and non-state actors. A choice is related to the actor's understanding of domestic reform processes and the driving forces behind. This can be summarized as *bottom-up and top-down approaches* to democratization and democracy promotion. Second, the tools draw on different mechanisms of influence to induce domestic change from the outside, as they are, for example, identified in compliance and Europeanization research (*Figure 1*). Depending on the perceived reasons for 'non-compliance', the external actor can thus choose between *socialization, enforcement, and management approaches*: A lack of will is addressed by persuasion and socialization or by creating (positive or negative) incentives, whereas a lack of capacity is directly tackled by support (e.g. Chayes, Chayes 1993; Checkel 1997; Schimmelfennig, Sedelmeier 2004; Tallberg 2002; Underdal 1998). Each tool is primarily associated with one of these mechanisms – diplomatic tools build on either socialization or external incentives, whereas Democracy Assistance is mostly about capacity building. However, sometimes it is difficult to know which mechanism is actually at work.

Figure 1: Democracy Promotion Tool Box

Instruments		Influence Mechanisms	Actor
Diplomacy	Political Dialogue & Negotiations	Social Learning & External Incentives (Bargaining)	State
	Unilateral Declarations	Naming & Shaming	
	Positive & Negative Conditionality (on diplomatic relations and aid)	External Incentives (Reducing or Imposing Costs)	
Foreign Aid	Democracy Assistance (TA/FA)	Capacity Building and Socialization	State and non-state

Third, in choosing, designing and applying the different tools, an actor takes up a specific stance on the – more or less democratic or authoritarian – incumbent regime and its role for democratization, viewing it as partner or adversary in democracy promotion efforts. On the one hand, there is the inclusion of the target country's regime in defining and realizing the agenda of democracy promotion. The external actor can operate cooperatively or in one-sided, unilateral actions and with or without the approval of the regime. On the other hand, external actions can disturb the domestic balance of power. Thus, they support or undermine a regime by inflicting 'costs' on it or supporting alternative, potentially oppositional, actors. The diplomatic tools can all be regrouped according to these two dimensions (*Figure 2*), taking into account the respective mechanisms of influence.

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[4] Notwithstanding the classification as a diplomatic tool, conditionality can relate to the general relations between promoter and target state as well as to decisions over foreign aid.

[5] Under the heading of "public diplomacy" (e.g. Roberts 2006), examples of government-to-people diplomacy are discussed, especially with regard to broadcasting programs.

Figure 2: Diplomatic Tools for Democracy Promotion

		Influence mechanisms		
		Social Learning	*External Incentives*	
Disturbance of domestic balance of power — low → high		Political dialogue and negotiations Influence through persuasion & social learning		Influence through rewards (i.e. the application of positive conditionality – can be linked to foreign assistance)
			Influence through bargaining (including threats and promises)	Influence through declarations (naming & shaming)
				Influence through sanctions (i.e. the application of negative conditionality)
		Inclusion of Regime		
		interactive mode ──────────────────────→ **unilateral mode**		

In contrast, democracy assistance can in itself vary (*Figure 3*), which is closely linked to the domestic actors targeted. Taken together, this adds up to (more or less) *cooperative and conflictive approaches* to democracy promotion.

Figure 3: Democracy Assistance

		Influence mechanism		
		Capacity Building		
Disturbance of domestic balance of power — low → high		Primary targets: • State institutions • GONGOs • Non political NGOs • Political active NGOs • Media • Political active NGOs • Political parties • Exclusively opposition parties	Primary targets: • State institutions • GONGOs • Non political NGOs • Political active NGOs • Media • Political active NGOs • Political parties • Exclusively opposition parties	Primary targets: • State institutions • GONGOs • Non political NGOs • Political active NGOs • Media • Political active NGOs • Political parties • Exclusively opposition parties
		With approval	*Without approval*	*Against disapproval*
		Inclusion of regime in choosing targets		
		interactive mode ──────────────────────→ **unilateral mode**		

Finally, the 'areas' of intervention or the 'issues' tackled in democracy promotion efforts should relate to the actor's understanding of democracy or at least of crucial elements or aspects of a democratic regime.[6] In research on democracy promotion, these aspects are often intermingled with the question of which actor is targeted. This is most often the case with regard to democracy assistance to non-state actors, where the actor – e.g. civil society, media, etc. – is equated with the area targeted. However, the objective of, for example, an active civil society can be pursued by addressing both state and non-state actors, aiming either at the reform of the legal and institutional framework (e.g. laws that guarantee the freedom of associa-

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[6] For a systematic analysis of the (different) definitions of democracy underlying international democracy promotion efforts, it is advisable to draw on the abundant democratic theory literature. Here, we content ourselves with opening up a continuum between narrowly defined 'electoral democracy' and fully fledged 'liberal democracy' (see e.g. Diamond 1999).

tion) and the state's performance in following its own rules, or at the capacity of civil society actors to actively take part in domestic political processes.

Even when limiting the analysis of democracy promotion activities to these four aspects, it is obvious that external actors can go about democracy promotion in very different ways. At the same time, the challenges to democracy promotion vary a great deal with the specific context in every target country. With regard to democracy promotion, the political situation is of crucial interest, including the legal and institutional design as well as the role of state and in the political processes. Although every situation is unique, this thought is directly linked to research on different regime types. It is easy to imagine that the different realities external democracy promotion has to deal with have implications, with regard to both the scope for action and the 'appropriateness' of action, i.e. the chances of success and effectiveness.

Although more countries than ever in history claim to be democracies, there is still no universally accepted definition of democracy. Democratic theory provides a wealth of normative concepts – ideal types – of democracy (e.g. Held 2006), of which 'liberal democracy' is prevalent but nevertheless contested in its content and its claim for universality. This conceptual uncertainty of democracy is closely linked to the problems of empirical research on democracy in matching concepts with reality (e.g. Diamond 2002; Merkel 2004).[7] This conceptual and empirical uncertainty has given rise to a multitude of 'democracy with adjectives' (Collier, Levitsky 1997), which is symptomatic for the renewed attention paid to the reality of many regimes somehow suspended in the air between democratic and authoritarian regimes.[8] The often persisting combination of democratic and authoritarian features challenges the idea of a 'transitional period' that will lead to the consolidation of either regime type.[9] However, implications for democracy promotion have, until now, only rarely been considered (Carothers 2000; Ottaway 2003).

Most actors engaging in external democracy promotion claim that they are not insensitively imposing their idea and conception of democracy, including specific institutional arrangements. Instead, their efforts are supposed to be tailored to the needs of a country, considering its specific political (and economic and social) situation and dynamics of change. Considering the claims of 'tailor-made' activities, this leads to the question of 'differentiated strategies': strategies that are adapted to specific political situations, conceptually and/or empirically. Of course, every situation is unique, but research on regime types allows identifying some typical settings democracy promotion has to deal with.

In a necessarily (over-)simplifying attempt to establish an analytical link, we consider two features of different regimes as being of special relevance for democracy promotion. On the one hand, there is the 'need for democratic reform' in a specific country. On the other hand, there is the regime's commitment to democracy as an ideal regime type. Both are 'subjective' categories, referring more to the perception or interpretation of the external actor than to 'objective' conditions. Thus, to diagnose a 'need for democratic reform', the country's political situation has to be assessed against the background of a democratic model. Some form of 'liberal democracy' probably serves as the point of reference for most (liberal democratic) democracy promoters. The specific need varies in its degree, e.g. when comparing fully-fledged authoritarian regimes with newly established democracies, but also in its content,

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[7] Difficulties persist in determining when to speak of 'a democracy', i.e. finding criteria to clearly distinguish democratic and undemocratic regimes, to measure degrees of 'democraticness' or to designate 'thresholds' (in the sense of minimal requirements to qualify for a regime). Research on democratization faces the same conceptual and empirical challenges to identify, operationalize, measure, and weigh indicators (Beetham 2004; Berg-Schlosser 2004; Lauth 2004).

[8] Different authors try to deal with these 'democratic grey zones' (Bendel, Croissant, Rüb 2002), 'illiberal democracy' (Zakaria 1997), 'defective democracy' (Merkel 2004), or 'hybrid regimes' (Diamond 2002).

[9] Postulating 'the end of the transition paradigm', Carothers has argued that the traditional view of (democratic) regime change in three phases has been simplistic and teleological (Carothers 2002).

touching upon different elements of democracy, such as elections, the rule of law, and human rights, including the conditions for independent media and active civil society. The commitment of a regime – of a government – can be stated, illustrated in the implementation of reforms, or simply assumed by the external actor. With this category, we try to allow for taking into account crucial role of governments in international relations and cooperation, without implying that democratization as a domestic process solely depends on a regime's willingness.[10] We have tried to place different – simplified as democratic, semi-authoritarian, and authoritarian – regime types within a continuum opened up by these two dimensions and to consider their implications for democracy promotion.

Figure 4: Democracy promotion in different regimes
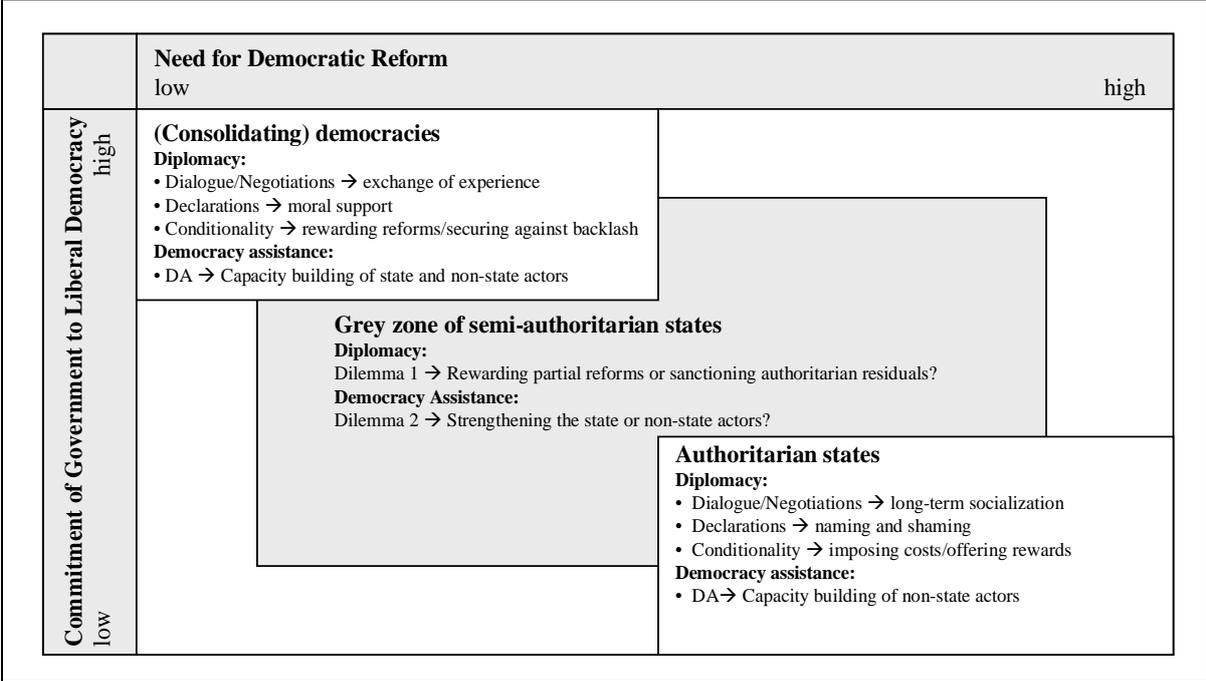
Measuring – and theorizing – the impact of democracy promotion is still one of the greatest challenges to research, as its positive role is more often postulated than empirically shown and negative effects are usually not even considered. However, it might be fruitful to discuss potential scope conditions for the (effective) implementation of democracy promotion. For example, the areas and intensity of intervention should be adapted to the (perceived) need for reform. The regime's attitude towards democratic reform – and external intervention – will certainly delimit the chances for a productive cooperation. Together with the capacity of a regime, it will furthermore suggest the choice of specific mechanisms of influence. Thus, to threaten or impose sanctions on a regime willing but incapable to implement reforms, or to provide capacity-building to a stubbornly authoritarian regime, might be counterproductive because it might result in (de)stabilizing the regime.

Looking at the different types of regimes (*Figure 4*), not (yet) fully accomplished democracies but committed to a process of democratic consolidation are definitely the 'soft cases' for democracy promotion. External actors can focus on supporting domestic dynamics with expertise and resources and offering rewards to ease and encourage reforms. By contrast, openly authoritarian regimes do not leave much room for outspoken democracy promotion. Either the external actor follows a conflictive approach, built on open condemnation, (the

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[10]   A third relevant feature is definitely the regime's capacity to implement reforms. However, this is a cross-cutting issue in relation to the other two. It is certainly crucial for choosing democracy promotion tools, but dealing in this article with 'functioning' statehood (state monopoly on force), it is only secondary for the choice of general approaches. In contrast, the situation in countries with 'weak' statehood poses very different challenges, linking democracy promotion to concepts such as peace, state, and nation building.

threat of) sanctions and support for oppositional forces. Or he chooses an approach not openly attempting at democracy promotion, e.g. trying to socialize the regime in general interactions, counting on democratizing effects of modernization (development assistance), or resorting to covert action. However, few authoritarian regimes still refuse any official commitment to human rights or democracy, as enshrined, e.g., in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. So, there is a vast 'grey zone' of (semi)authoritarian regimes to deal with and in which it might be difficult to determine the nature of a regime between a mixture of democratic and authoritarian features, the regime's official attitude towards democracy, and dynamics of regime transformation or change that might point into either direction. In view of these uncertainties, external actors face several dilemmas: If they choose encouragement and reward – slow, selective, incomplete – progress, they might actually support strategic liberalization that does not need to result in democratization but stabilizes the regime against internal and external pressure. If, by contrast, they choose to sanction persisting undemocratic practices or human rights abuses, they might stifle existing reform dynamics instead of pressuring the regime to reform. Again, addressing democracy assistance at state actors might help stabilize an undemocratic regime. Turning to non-state actors, it is however not guaranteed that they represent independent civil society, whose organization and accessibility for external actors will most likely be restricted by a regime fearing democratic contestation. Taken together, the scope for external democracy promotion activities might be very limited and/or efforts run the risk of adverse effects in semi-authoritarian regimes, making them the real 'hard cases' for democracy promotion.

III   EU and US democracy promotion at the global level

Turning to the empirical realities of EU and US democracy promotion efforts, this section will provide a general outline of their strategies at the global level. This includes looking at their infrastructure, i.e. their agencies, resources, and tools available, as well as identifying the different approaches they adopt. However, we are mainly interested in analyzing in how far the actors differentiate their strategies according to the (political) country context, both at a conceptual level and within their choice and design of tools.

The configuration of EU democracy promotion

Today, the EU as an international actor is committed to promote democracy in its relations with third countries. An explicit commitment outside enlargement policies has for the first time appeared in 1986, in the context of development cooperation. It has been enshrined in the treaties of Maastricht (1993) and was thus transformed from a political commitment into a legal 'obligation', at first for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and development cooperation, ten years later also for 'other' external cooperation (Nice 2003). It is hence officially included as a foreign policy goal in both first and second pillar policies of the EU and thus concerns all EU institutions involved in external relations in general. However, the main actors for devising and implementing democracy promotion definitely are the European Commission and the Council of the EU.

Notwithstanding the legal commitment, no comprehensive policy or strategy for democracy promotion has been established. A framework has been roughly sketched in 1991, envisaging a predominantly 'positive approach', manifest in the tools of (political) dialogue, positive (aid) conditionality and democracy assistance ('support'), combined with the option of 'appropriate responses' (negative conditionality), targeted at both state and non-state ('civil society') actors.[11] Over time, the Commission and the Council have developed a patchwork of

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[11]   See the European Commission 1991, the Declaration on Human rights, Conclusion of the Luxembourg European Council (Annex V), 06/28-29/1991, and the Resolution of the council and of the member states meeting in the council on human rights, democracy and development, 11/28/1991.

tools and specifications for democracy promotion (European Commission 2001b) that follow these basic distinctions. However, the specifications contain no clear assumptions on the precise impact of different tools and potential scope conditions for their success.

With regard to our tool box for democracy promotion, the EU has all types of instruments at its disposal. These are either integrated into its general foreign relations or specifically designed for promoting democracy. The high degree of formalization and standardization of provisions for democracy promotion is striking and has sometimes led to the verdict of a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to democracy promotion (Börzel, Risse 2004).[12] Thus, an 'essential element clause' is included in most bilateral agreements since the early 1990s (European Commission 1995). It sets the basis for democracy promotion in general and negative democratic conditionality. At the same time, most agreements formalize a political dialogue within joint bodies established under the agreements. The major instrument for providing democracy assistance, the European Initiative, since 2007 Instrument, for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), is a horizontal cooperation program with a global scope. Democracy assistance is mainstreamed in similar ways into the geographical cooperation programs, by now all subject to conditionality.

While bilateral – association and cooperation – agreements and external cooperation programs are both regionally adapted, their provisions on democracy promotion follow global guidelines. So, the EU has a 'universal' tool box for its 'universal' quest of promoting democracy. Still, it underlines in nearly every document on democracy promotion that measures have to be 'tailor-made', taking account of the specific country situation, as external initiatives can only support the domestic process of democratization that has to come from 'within'.[13] And indeed, some of its instruments are designed to be inherently flexible: Democratic conditionality is by definition 'reactive' to the political situation in a target country.[14] Another tool directly linked to the country context is democracy assistance that should, in a programming procedure, be adapted to the specific needs of a country.

Taken together, the EU disposes of all instruments included in our tool box and can thus draw on a wide range of approaches to democracy promotion (*Figure 5*). However, considering what can be learned from policy documents and a quick glance at the world-wide application of its tools, it clearly privileges a cooperative over a conflictive approach. This is manifest in its emphasis on political dialogue and joint initiatives in general, its primary reliance on interactions with state actors, and the rare instances of sanctions applied. Even the EIDHR that allows in theory a potentially conflictive approach to bottom-up democracy assistance encounters in practice manifold (bureaucratic) obstacles to working with non-state actors against the disapproval of the host regime. Until 2003, there have been no explicit guidelines for the choice of approaches and the application of tools related to the political situation and regime type of target countries.

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[12] A wording that the EU has refuted several times, see e.g. the Council Conclusions on Governance and Development, 2541st meeting of the Council of the EU (Annex VI), Brussels, 11/17/2003.

[13] See e.g. Ferrero-Waldner, Benita 2006: Remarks on democracy promotion, speech delivered at the conference "Democracy Promotion: The European Way" organized by the European Parliament's Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Brussels, 12/07/2006.

[14] This holds true for positive and negative conditionality as realized in the enlargement and neighborhood policies on the one hand and in bilateral agreements on the other hand. However, the norms established as conditions – democracy, human rights, the rule of law, etc. – are vague and do not provide clear criteria for sanctions or rewards, which are again rarely specified. Decisions on the application of conditionality must therefore be considered as highly political, both with regard to the evaluation of a specific situation and the choice of 'appropriate measures'. In addition, systematic and transparent monitoring procedures have only recently been extended beyond development and enlargement policies.

Figure 5: The configuration of EU democracy promotion

Tools	Institutionalization	Responsible Agency
General guidelines on application of tools		(European) Council, Commission
Dialogue	formalized in agreements	Commission, Council
	ad-hoc	
Declarations	Common Position (CFSP)	Council
	regular monitoring reports	Commission
	ad-hoc declarations and resolutions	Commission, (European) Council, European Parliament
Conditionality	formalized in agreements	Commission, (European) Council
	on aid → Council regulations	
Democracy Assistance	EIDHR	Commission, EuropeAid
	as part of foreign assistance	

In 2003, the Commission has introduced for the first time an explicit distinction of different 'types' of countries that are targets of its 'governance policy' in external relations (European Commission 2003a). It distinguishes "difficult partnerships", "effective partnerships" and "post conflict situations" according to governance indicators not further specified and gives "policy prescriptions", drawing on its experience with different countries (17/19).[15] While difficult and effective partnerships are differentiated according to the regime's (lack of) commitment to political reforms (with or without the capacity to implement them), post conflict situations are marked by weak or inexistent state institutions. Difficult partnerships can apparently cover a wide range of situations, as they

> "range from countries where the EC approach to governance includes dialogue and financial support through various financial instruments, to extremely difficult partnerships where co-operation is suspended." (20)

The only general guideline is that totally withdrawing from a country, the apparently hardest form of sanction foreseen, should be only the last resort, always trying to make use of any "entry points and approaches to co-operation" (20). If sanctions are applied and a truly cooperative approach is no longer possible, the EU should still keep up humanitarian aid, democracy assistance directed at civil society, monitoring activities, and multilateral diplomatic initiatives (20-21). In less problematic cases, where the 'universal' set of cooperation instruments is in place, activities include dialogue and capacity building, especially in the area of human rights and civil society (22). This is hard to distinguish from the approach in effective partnerships, where measures include dialogue and democracy assistance directed at state institutions (participation, rule of law, human rights, good governance) and civil society. For post conflict situations, the communication refers to the EU's general approach to conflict resolution that actually builds on the ideal of long-term conflict prevention (see e.g. European Commisssion 2001a).[16]

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[15] Interestingly, the range of instruments laid out in general only includes dialogue, humanitarian, and development assistance (European Commission 2003a: 18), conditionality is only indirectly included, referring to sanctions such as the suspension of cooperation. Countries and regions cited as examples for the three categories are: North Korea, Angola, Bangladesh (difficult), Guatemala, Rwanda (post conflict, the Mediterranean, Burkina Faso, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (effective).

[16] The Council has welcomed the Commission's attempt at a strategic differentiation, recommending to "operationalise the principles contained in the Communication into guidelines and a handbook", Council Conclusions on Governance and Development, 2541st meeting of the Council of the EU (Annex VI), Brussels, 11/17/2003. In the following, however, the distinction and respective policy advice seems to get blurred again. A discussion paper put forward by the Commission and the Council General Secretariat in June 2006 still points out the "wide *variety of possible situations and objectives*" of democracy promotion, without giving detailed policy advice. The discussion paper has appeared on a 'Democracy Agenda' website and is attributed there to the European Council. It is impossible to trace the document in the EU's official registers.

The next Commission communication on development and governance does not clearly distinguish different situations any more, "fragile states" becoming now "especially difficult partners" (European Commission 2006a: 9). The Commission's dilemma in finding an alternative to its predominantly cooperative approach – that needs an already responsive and open regime – is maybe best summarized in external relations commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner's recent admittance that

> "[w]e also know there are several difficult questions we must tackle: how to support democratisation in countries with very limited freedoms and hostility to external intervention in support of civil society?"[17]

The configuration of US democracy promotion

In contrast to the EU, the US commitment to international democracy promotion dates back to the era of President Wilson and World War I (Hook 2002). However, the US 'liberal grand strategy' is often questioned with regard to a 'gap' between rhetoric and practice (Ikenberry 2000; Smith 2000). Thus, it is in line with the general 'resurgence' of democracy promotion on the international agenda at the end of the Cold War that the US renews its commitment and changes its practices, now pursuing this foreign policy goal with the whole array of tools introduced above. While democracy promotion had already been gaining importance under President Clinton (Cox 2000; Hook 2002), its final breakthrough as a priority issue can be seen in the much cited second inaugural speech of President Bush in 2005. In March 2006 the White House has issued the latest National Security Strategy (NSS) that is closely linked to the foreign policy goal of democracy promotion: "It is the policy of the United States to seek and support democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world." (White House 2006: 1).

Similar to the EU, the US does not have clear strategy for democracy promotion. Only recently there have been some efforts firstly to more systematically adjust diplomatic and assistance tools and secondly to better adapt to the political contexts in which democratization is promoted. One of these efforts is included in the already cited NSS of 2006. The document sets out guidelines for the application of diplomatic tools and assistance for democracy promotion purposes. Furthermore, in comparison to the NSS of 1998 (White House 1998), different contexts in which democracy promotion takes place are acknowledged for the first time by stating two different goals of democracy promotion. While "ending tyrannies" refers to push for regime change, "promoting effective democracies" essentially means supporting democratic consolidation (White House 2006: 3ff.). The former goal requires, according to the NSS, non-tolerance and adverse action, i.e. the application of a conflictive approach, while pursuing the latter goal involves offering support to the government, thus indicating a cooperative approach. Obviously, generally proposed measures like "[s]peaking out against abuses of human rights", "[s]upporting publicly democratic reformers in repressive regimes" or "[a]pplying sanctions that designed to target those who rule oppressive regimes" are thought to impose costs on the regime in place and thereby undermine it. This kind of negative conditionality is complemented by positive conditionality for states that are believed to perform better. "Encouraging foreign direct investment in and foreign assistance to countries where there is a commitment" to democratic norms or "concluding free trade agreements" aim at easing costs for governments that pursue democratic reforms and can be understood as an offer of reward for the country's commitment to reform. In the absence of a clear account of

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See: The EU approach to democracy promotion in external relations. Food for thought, 06/21/2006, http://www.democracyagenda.org/modules.php?mop=modload&name=Upload&file=index&op=getit&fid=15, 05/04/2007, here: page 3.

[17] Ferrero-Waldner, Benita 2006: Remarks on democracy promotion, speech delivered at the conference "Democracy Promotion: The European Way" organized by the European Parliament's Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Brussels, 12/07/2006.

how tyranny is defined or even more importantly of how commitment is detected, the link between the application of the proposed sets of instruments and the country contexts remains very vague and open to interpretation. Apparently, the current US government has formulated two very distinct approaches that take into account the context of either 'authoritarian states' or '(consolidating) democracies' according to the categories elaborated above. The vast grey zone of semi-authoritarian states in between has, however, apparently been neglected. The emphasis in both ideal tracks of democracy promotion that basically rely on 'carrots' or 'sticks' distinguishes the 'strategy' of the Bush-administration from its predecessor. For example in the 1998 NSS, dialogue on human rights as a tool was highlighted, something that completely lacks in the NSS of 2006 (White House 2006; White House 1998). Generally speaking, the new strategy on promoting democracy puts much more emphasis on 'disturbing' tools than the NSS of 1998.

Two types of much more formalized conditionality can be found with regard to development assistance. In the Foreign Assistance Act a set of eligibility criteria establishes the conditions under which countries qualify as recipients. The form and level of assistance is, however, not only subject to these criteria, but can also largely depend on whether a particular country or policy goal is in line with US geo-strategic interests and thus considered of high priority (USAID 2006: 4-5; see also Carothers 1999: 5). After all, only one criterion is directly related to democracy and democratization and thus qualifies as a tool for democracy promotion. Only in the case of serious human rights violations, assistance to the government of the respective country may not be provided.[18] Like the norms covered by the EU essential elements clauses this criterion leaves room for interpretation. The decision over its application however is by contrast a completely unilateral one. Recent efforts of the US government to link foreign assistance even more closely to conditionality manifest themselves in the founding of a second major development assistance agency in 2004, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). Though scarcely providing democracy assistance as such, it is built inter alia on democratic conditionality as a demanding set of conditions must be met by countries for eligibility. With regard to democracy, the indicators range from civil liberties and political rights to good governance related criteria and are drawn from datasets of Freedom House and the World Bank Institute respectively. Thus, whereas negative and positive conditionalities as described above always imply political decisions on their application, the MCC relies on a rather technical and transparent way of rewarding countries. Countries meeting the criteria of the MCC either qualify for a threshold or a multi-year compact agreement and receive substantial funding mainly for economic development.

US democracy assistance is provided both by the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the latter being the most important agency in this respect (Melia 2005). Since its foundation in 1961, it has been operating relatively independently from the Department of State, although there are currently many changes underway that attempt to improve alignment of diplomacy and aid. Democracy assistance is defined by USAID as the promotion of "the rule of law and human rights, transparent and fair elections coupled with a competitive political process, a free and independent media, stronger civil society and greater citizen participation in government, and governance structures that are efficient, responsive and accountable."[19] In a strategy paper of 2005 USAID explained its framework for democracy assistance. Generally, USAID programs serving this purpose can address both state and non-state actors (USAID 2005a). The relative weight of bottom-up and top-down approaches depends on the country context, in particular with regard to the regime in place. In authoritarian regimes USAID rather targets non-state actors, while state actors seem to be the primary targets in countries engaged in democratization or consolidation processes (USAID 2005a). In the context of autocracies, non-state actors explicitly include politi-

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[18]   Foreign Assistance Act, §116.
[19]   http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance, 05/06/2007.

cal parties, media or politically relevant NGOs, whereby USAID is voluntarily risking the "blame [of] 'outside interference'" by the government in place (USAID 2005b: 25). USAID thus somehow reproduces the dichotomy that has been observed with regard to diplomacy. Moreover, USAID does similarly not mention democratic grey zones. Instead, it more generally states that there is no blueprint for an ideal democracy assistance program. Rather, each has to be tailored according to a country's needs (USAID 2005a). The State Department as a comparably minor provider of democracy assistance has the oversight of the Human Rights and Democracy Fund (HRDF) that has been established in 1998. In contrast to USAID there is no strategic framework for the use of its resources, but the list of projects financed by the HRDF indicates that it primarily addresses non-state actors and thus the development of democratic societies rather than state institutions.

Figure 6: The configuration of US democracy promotion

Tools	Institutionalization	Responsible Agency
General guidelines for Democracy Promotion		White House
Dialogue	ad-hoc in diplomatic relations	Department of State
Declarations	ad-hoc	White House
	ad-hoc	Department of State
	regular reports on human rights	
Conditionality	ad-hoc in diplomatic relations	Department of State
	on aid → Foreign Assistance Act on aid → Millennium Challenge Account	Congress, USAID, MCC
Democracy Assistance	HRDF	State Department
	as part of foreign assistance	USAID

Comparing EU and US democracy promotion on the conceptual level

Conceptually, both actors dispose of all tools for democracy promotion. On the search for differentiated 'strategies' we did not find comprehensive policy frameworks for democracy promotion in different environment, but some significant (although not surprising) differences. The EU primarily hinges on a cooperative approach, meaning that almost in all environments the same toolkit made up of political dialogue, assistance for both state and non-state actor and for the most part positive conditionality is applied for advancing democracy. The EU further relies on contractual relations which leave little room for acting unilaterally. It was only the Commission that attempted twice to conceptually differentiate between different contexts, without however really attaching preferences over specific tools. The US, on the other hand have a somewhat differentiated strategy on the conceptual level both with regard diplomacy and to democracy assistance. They suggest following a conflictive approach towards autocracies and a cooperative approach towards consolidating democracies. The grey zone of semi-authoritarian states has been largely neglected.

IV   EU and US democracy promotion at country-level

In this section we finally investigate to what extent EU and US approaches towards specific countries are adopted according to the situation on the ground, adding up to a 'differentiated strategy' to democracy promotion. In this respect we further ask whether we can find traces of the conceptual differentiation sketched for the global level. At the same time, we attach great importance to the comparison of respective approaches and strategies of the two actors.

For these purposes, we have chosen four different countries from two regions in which democracy is being promoted by both the US and the EU. As we are coming from European Integration studies, we have chosen the countries from the Eastern and the Southern dimen-

sions of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The countries are Morocco and Tunisia, part of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and Belarus and Ukraine, both successor states of the Soviet Union. They have been systematically chosen due to their different political backgrounds, in particular with regard to their democratic performance and regime. *Figure 7* illustrates these differences over time, taking the Freedom House Political Rights and Civil Liberties indices as provisional indicators.

Figure 7: Combined Freedom in the World index, 1995-2006
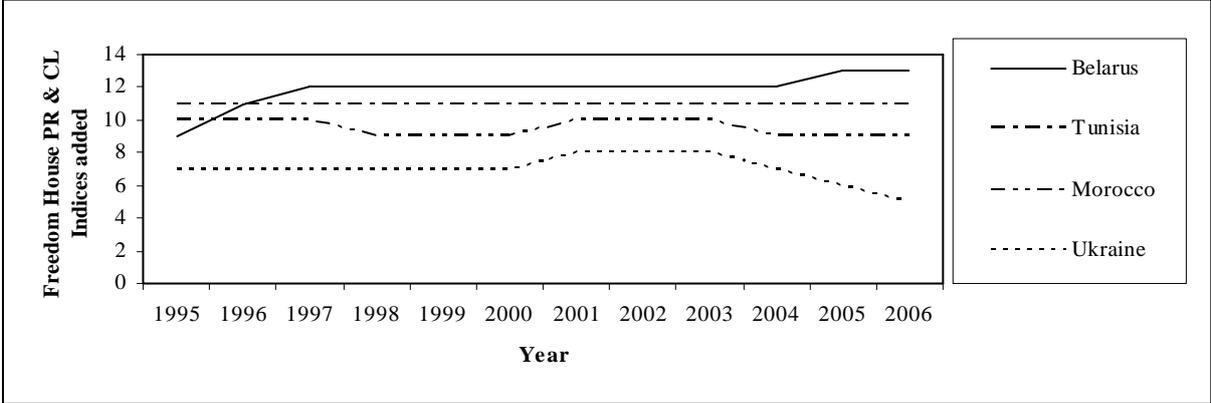
Apparently, by 2006 Ukraine and Belarus represent both ends of the spectrum, the latter being on the way to consolidating democratic institutions and the former being a fully fledged autocracy. According to our own framework we would consider them being 'soft' and 'hard' cases for democracy promotion. Tunisia and Morocco on the other hand can neither be considered (consolidating) democracies nor complete authoritarian states. They both clearly belong to the grey zone of semi-authoritarian states, but Morocco has witnessed over the last few years a process of at least liberalization, whereas Tunisia's political reforms from the early 1990s have got stuck.

Figure 8: Categorizing the cases
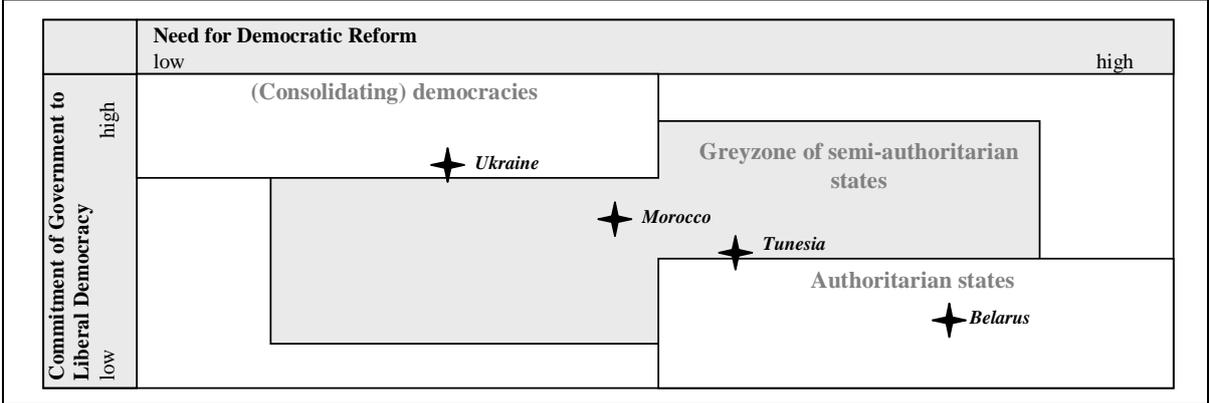
Our search for differentiated strategies on the ground starts with a short overview on the EU and US policy frameworks for the MENA and in the (Western) Newly Independent States (NIS) respectively, before coming to the two case studies that we have conducted in both regions. Each of our case first sketches the general relations between our democracy promoters and the respective country. Second, we analyze the general perception of the country context, followed, thirdly, by an analysis of how this perception is translated into specific approaches to democracy promotion. Ukraine and Belarus have experienced much greater political change over the last 10-15 years than Morocco and Tunisia, therefore the temporal dimension plays a greater role, when analyzing democracy promotion efforts of the EU and the US.

Democracy promotion in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region

EU and US efforts to promote democracy in the MENA countries take place in very different regional policy frameworks. Since its first bilateral contacts in the early 1960s, the EU has elaborated a specifically 'Mediterranean' policy. The 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) is marked by an overarching multilateral framework and highly standardized bilateral relations, which are further strengthened by the 2003 European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In contrast, the US has a longer tradition of bilateral relations, but it has only recently – after the events of September 11, 2001 – developed a distinct regional approach with specific programs and multilateral elements.

The EU is reportedly committed to promote democracy in the MENA countries since 1990 (European Commission 1991: 3), even though an explicit, open and high-level regional commitment is included for the first time in the Common Strategy of 2000.[20] Since the early 1990s already, the EU has applied 'global' democracy promotion tools and integrated democracy promotion in its regional policy. The MENA region has always been included in the US global commitment to and efforts at democracy promotion. However, attention to the region's 'unsatisfactory' political situation has increased dramatically after the events of September 2001. Since then, promoting democracy in the MENA region has been portrayed as one of the major challenges in the 'war on terrorism' (Carothers, Ottaway 2005), including in a speech by President Bush at the NED in 2003. Thus, both the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the so-called Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) Initiative are explicitly designed as comprehensive endeavors to promote democracy – and prosperity and security – in the region.[21]

Since the mid-1990s, the EU has institutionalized political dialogue and conditionality to promote democracy in the MENA region. Formalized multi- and bilateral political dialogues take place in the frameworks of the Barcelona Process (Senior Officials) and the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements (EMAA, Association Councils), in some cases in specific human rights sub-committees. Democratic conditionality is included in the EMAA, the MEDA and now ENPI regulations, and the general ENP framework. However, the 'essential element' clauses have never been invoked by the EU to justify 'appropriate measures' nor are funding levels under MEDA openly linked to the political situation in the recipient countries – observers rather see a link to economic reform (Youngs 2002). Democracy assistance has been provided since the early 1990s, through the regional external cooperation program (MEDA I+II, ENPI) and a MEDA Democracy Programme (MDP) that was later merged into the global EIDHR. In both cases, the programs' share spent on democracy assistance in MENA countries is difficult to discern.[22] In general, we find the same patterns of standardization and reliance on a cooperative approach as on the global level. Nevertheless, there is significant country-variation in the application of these tools that needs to be checked for consistency against the EU's explicit claims.

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[20] Common Strategy (2000/458/CFSP) of the European Council of 19 June 2000 on the Mediterranean region. Additionally, there has been a specific communication (European Commission 2003b) and the issue has also been addressed again by the European Council. See Presidency Conclusions on a Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East, European Council, 06/17-18/2004.

[21] The launch of the MEPI was announced by Secretary of State Collin Powel in 2002. It includes four 'pillars' of cooperation and receives special funding out of the Economic Support Fund. It is complemented by plans for a US-Middle East Free Trade Area. In 2004, the US also pushed for a multilateral "Partnership for Progress and a Common Future with the Region of the Broader Middle East and North Africa" or "BMENA Initiative" that brings together the G-8 and countries of the region for political and economic cooperation.

[22] The share of MEDA funding allocated to democracy assistance projects varies in the National Indicative Programmes 2002-2004 and 2004-2006 between 2-30%. Democracy assistance under the EIDHR has grown from about €1-2 million per year in the early 1990s to about €10 million per year under the MEDA Democracy Programme (1996-1999) and to about €15 million per year under the second EIDHR regulation after 2001.

In contrast, the US tools for democracy promotion are less formalized. Political dialogue is part of general contacts between (embassy) officials and their partners in the host country. However, with the "Forum for the Future" and the "Democracy Assistance Dialogue", multilateral dialogues have been created as part of the BMENA Initiative. Democratic conditionality is not bilaterally agreed, but the EU relies instead on extensive rules and criteria for a country's 'eligibility' to agreements and foreign assistance. Since 2005, the MCC mechanism of positive conditionality linked to foreign assistance has gained importance for the MENA countries. Democracy assistance has been provided through foreign assistance by USAID and programs managed by the State Department. HRDF funding for projects in MENA countries (individually and regionally) has dramatically increased in absolute figures from $55,000 in 1998 to over $7 million in 2004.[23] Projects under the MEPI political pillar have added to this another roughly $20 million per year since 2003.[24]

EU democracy promotion in Morocco

Morocco is fully integrated into the EU's Mediterranean (neighborhood) policy framework. It was one of the first countries to sign an EMAA in 1995 even before the launch of the EMP. It entered into force in 2000 and includes the standard provisions on political dialogue and democratic conditionality. With commitments of more than €1.3 billion in 1995-2004, Morocco has been the largest recipient of MEDA funding, even though payments have been low compared to commitments.[25] For 2007-2010, the new National Indicative Programme (NIP) earmarks €654 million for projects in Morocco, the largest sum given to any country under the ENPI (NIP Morocco 2007: 3).[26] With the establishment of the general EMP framework in 1995 at the latest, democracy and its promotion becomes an issue in EU-Moroccan relations.

At least since the end of the 1990s, Morocco has been perceived as a country engaged in political reforms and willing to improve its human rights record.[27] Apparently, the succession of Mohammed VI in 1999 was seen as positive development with regard to the commitment to political reform (CSP Morocco 2002: 9-10). The 2004 country report, after all the basis for the ENP action plans, depicts only very gently persisting human rights abuses and the undemocratic nature of the regime, praising mostly the accomplishment of substantial reforms and the holding of "largely free and fair" elections in 2002 (CR Morocco 2004: 5-10). Further progress is attested in the 2006 progress report, with Morocco clearly "pursuing a process of democratization" and being "considered as the most advanced in the region" (CSP Morocco 2007: 3). However, the new country strategy paper qualifies potential enthusiasm, adding that despite all the progress, "Morocco still has a way to go on the path to democratisation, respect for human rights, good governance and consolidation of the rule of law" (CSP Morocco 2007: 9).

EU democracy promotion has been following a cooperative approach in Morocco, relying on dialogue, rewards, and democracy assistance, and focusing on state actors. Declarations have only been used sparingly on the Western Sahara conflict and negative conditionality has never been applied. As usual, it is difficult to get any information on the issues

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[23] Its share of total HRDF funding has multiplied in 2001/2002; see http://www.state.gov/g/drl/c7607.htm, 05/06/2007.

[24] http://mepi.state.gov/, 05/06/2007.

[25] From MEDA I to MEDA II. Commitments and Payments (€million), http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/financial/1995_2004.pdf, 11/19/2006. Under MEDA I (1995-1999), payments were as low as 19%, rising to 65% for 2000-2004.

[26] The main country-specific documents of the EU will be cited in the same way: "<type> <country> <year>". Apart from the NIP, this applies to Country Strategy Papers (CSP) and combined CSP/NIP as well as to ENP Country Reports (CR), Action Plans (AP) and Progress Reports (PR).

[27] Evaluations of the political situation in Morocco are included in the programming documents of the geographic cooperation programs and are an integral part of the ENP country and ensuing progress reports. Unfortunately, respective documents are not easily available for the 1990s.

brought up in the political dialogue and on its impact. However, the EU-Moroccan Association Council has been one of the first to establish a distinct sub-committee on 'human rights, democratisation and governance', which met for the first time in November 2006. As it seems, Morocco is one of the first neighborhood countries to benefit of a new concept of positive conditionality linked to aid. Apparently, the country has already received in 2006 a supplemental MEDA allocation out of the 'Democracy Facility' launched at the Barcelona summit 2005[28] and is going to be eligible for the proposed 'Governance Facility' within the ENP.[29] Democracy assistance to Morocco has probably been the tool most continually applied – and with the most alterations over time: Under the MDP, the EU has actively funded 'grass-roots' initiatives in Morocco. The MDP evaluation lists nearly 20 Moroccan and regional projects targeting Moroccan civil society actors around 1996/1997 (Karkutli, Bützler 1999: 85-87). With the change to the horizontal EIDHR, there is a gap of several years where Morocco is only included in regional projects. It is only in 2005 and 2006 that the EIDHR finances about a dozen small scale projects each year with Moroccan NGOs.[30] While there had been a €30 million project on the modernization of the judiciary in 2000 (CSP/NIP Morocco 2002: 29), the NIP for 2002-2004 does not preview any democracy assistance related projects. In the 2005-2006 NIP, a human rights component is introduced with two comparatively small projects mostly addressing state actors.[31] The NIP for 2007-2010 includes three programs on a larger scale directly or indirectly related to the good governance and human rights priority, addressing mostly state actors.[32]

In general, the EU has over time preferred a cooperative approach to promoting Moroccan democracy, relying mainly on supporting and recently rewarding governmental efforts. Direct engagement with civil society has played a secondary role in terms of funding. The late (re-)introduction of democracy assistance to MEDA and the gap in EIDHR funding might indicate that in its strong appreciation of the Moroccan commitment to and efforts at reform, the EU had temporarily lost sight of the persisting need for reform.

US democracy promotion in Morocco

Relations between Morocco and the US, dating back to the late 18th century, are governed by a range of bilateral agreements, the most advanced being a Free Trade Agreement in force since 2006. Morocco is eligible to US foreign assistance, receiving both development and military assistance. Within the MENA region, it is only one of the 'other' recipients, as Israel and Egypt alone receive more than 90% of all US foreign assistance provided to the region (Sharp 2006: 7). Apart from a general increase of (military) funding over the last few years, foreign assistance has nearly doubled in 2005 as Morocco has started to receive funds out of the Economic Support Fund under MEPI. Foreign assistance requested for Morocco in the

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[28] Ferrero-Waldner, Benita 2007: The European approach to democracy promotion in post-communist countries, speech delivered at an international conference at the Institute for Human Science, Vienna, 01/19/2007 (SPEECH/07/29).

[29] European Commission: Morocco. Commission proposes more than €650 million in support of reforms, press release IP/07/274, 03/02/2008. However, there have been no signs of a formal set-up of the Governance Facility since the Commission's announcement to set aside €300 million of ENPI funds for 2007-2013 to "reward progress in implementing [governance] reforms" (European Commission 2006b: 12).

[30] The project lists on the EIDHR's website mentionf funding for civil society project of €0.55 million in 2001. The small-scale projects in 2005 and 2006 add up to about €1 million for each year, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/eidhr/projects_en.htm, 08/12/2007.

[31] For MEDA, these projects are small: €2 million are supposed to support the implementation of a national plan for democracy and human rights; another €3 million target state and non-state actors to improve strengthen civil society (NIP Morocco 2005: 30-32). Interestingly, there is no country-specific reason given, but explicit reference is made to this being 'standard' in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

[32] These are €20 million for supporting the ministry of justice in the reform of the judiciary and prisons, €8 million for realizing some recommendations of the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, and €20 million to support the reform of public administration (CSP/NIP Morocco 2007: 16-24).

financial years 2002-2007 amounts to $155 million, of which $69 million are earmarked for military assistance (Sharp 2006: 18). USAID has been active in Morocco since 1953 and operates through a mission in Rabat. Despite the long-standing commitment to promote democracy in international relations, it is only after the events of 09/11/2001 that the US has pursued this agenda more pro-actively in Morocco.

At least since the mid-1990s, the annual US Country Reports on Human Rights Practices have been denouncing human rights abuses and the undemocratic character of the Moroccan regime.[33] Similarly to the EU, there is a gradual shift in 1999, underlining the improvements intended and made under the rule of Mohammed VI. Nevertheless, this regular monitoring – and naming & shaming – exercise is much more explicit and detailed in listing all kinds of violations of internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms than any assessment that the EU has ever issued. In contrast, the respective country pages of USAID and the State Department are much more enthusiastic about the "steady, significant, and substantial progress in extending and implementing democratization and good governance reforms", underlining that "[a]s a stable, democratizing, and liberalizing Arab Muslim nation, Morocco is important for U.S. interests in the Middle East".[34]

Political dialogue does not take a formalized form, but is taking place in regular contacts and particular activities, such as roundtables.[35] This includes meetings with Moroccan governmental officials, but also with parliamentarians and civil society actors and high level political talks between head of states. Depending on the interlocutor, the purpose ranges from voicing criticism over discussing reform to gathering information. In contrast, it is not easy to find any records of public declarations on the political or human rights situation in Morocco issued by US officials.[36] Morocco is the first country in the MENA region to benefit from the new Millennium Challenge Account, qualifying as a candidate since 2005 and having been selected as eligible in 2005 and 2006. Negotiations on an aid package of $697 million for five years have just been concluded and the signature of the Millennium Challenge Compact is expected any time soon.[37] The Compact does not include direct democracy assistance, but given the comparably low level of foreign assistance, the additional $118 million per year are a significant reward. The clear democratic conditionality included in the eligibility criteria directly links it to better performances on Freedom House and World Bank governance indicators. Similarly, given the remark that "U.S. officials have praised Morocco for undertaking political and economic reforms" (Sharp 2006: 8), the sharp increase in foreign assistance in 2005, mainly MEPI funds, can be interpreted as a form of reward. There seems to be no country-specific democracy assistance to Morocco in the 1990s. USAID has launched an "Improved Government Responsiveness" program in 2004 for the period 2005-2008.[38] For the first three years, funds of about €18 million have been earmarked for activities including ca-

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[33] The "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices" of the last fifteen years, prepared since 1977 by the State Department, can be accessed at http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/. The reports are from now on referred to as "Human Rights Report <year>".

[34] See respectively http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east/countries/morocco/ and http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5431.htm, 08/07/2007.

[35] The only sources on political dialogue seem to be the annual reports of the State Department to the Congress on "Supporting Human Rights and Democracy. The U.S. Record" published since 2003. The reports can be found at http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/shrd/. The reports are from now on referred to as "U.S. Record <year>".

[36] The State Department only lists a few recent remarks and press releases on the Moroccan country web pages, but none of them is about democracy and human rights issues, just as the many press releases on the website of the US embassy to Morocco (see http://www.state.gov/p/nea/ci/c2416.htm and http://www.usembassy.ma/usmission/pas/media/pressreleases/releases.htm, 08/10/2007).

[37] Millennium Challenge Corporation 2007: MCC Board of Directors Approves 697.5 Million Poverty Reduction Grant to Morocco, Press Release, 08/09/2007.

[38] Congressional Budget Justification 2007, Morocco, http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2007/ane/ma.html, 08/05/2007.

pacity-building, anti-corruption, the holding of elections, and decentralization, addressing mostly state actors, including the Moroccan parliament and local administration. The HRDF has funded between 2001 and 2004 five projects in Morocco, amounting to $1.3 million, targeting for the most part civil society actors and human rights activists.[39] In the framework of the MEPI, four projects have been funded under the political (about $2.6 million) and seven under the women's pillar ($5.3 million) in 2003-2005.[40] The political projects directly concern for the most part political processes, addressing the parliament, parties, and civil society actors, while the women's projects focus on education and legal rights. In addition, the HRDF and especially MEPI have financed a number of regional programs which are not considered here.

EU democracy promotion in Tunisia

Just as Morocco, Tunisia is fully integrated into the EU's Mediterranean policy framework. Its EMAA, signed in 1995, was the first to enter into force in 1998. It includes the same provisions on political dialogue and democratic conditionality. While the MEDA funds of about €750 million committed in 1995-2004 are not even two-thirds of the Moroccan funds, it is still one of the larger recipients when considering the much smaller population (about one third) and the much higher payment rate, reaching 98% for 2000-2004. For 2007-2013, Tunisia is supposed to receive about €300 million under ENPI (CSP/NIP Tunisia 2007). The EU has been committed to promote democracy and human rights in Tunisia at least since the launch of the EMP in 1995.

While the criticism of undemocratic practices and violations of human rights is as carefully phrased as in the case of Morocco, the 2002 CSP for Tunisia lacks the optimistic view that a strong commitment to reform might remedy deficiencies in the future (CSP Tunisia 2002: 8-9). The 2004 country report is comparatively explicit about the shortcomings of democratic processes and the respect for human rights (CR Tunisia 2004: 5-10) and the progress report clearly states that progress compared to cooperation on economic and social issues, "progress on the political front" has not been satisfactory (PR Tunisia 2006: 2). This is indirectly linked to a lack of political will of the Tunisian government, using the action plan only selectively to pursue its own development priorities. Taking up the criticism, the recent CSP stresses that the joint action plan includes "far-reaching undertakings on democracy, governance and human rights" and that "[t]hese undertakings must now be followed up by tangible progress" (CSP Tunisia 2007: 5).

The EU is apparently trying to uphold a cooperative approach to democracy promotion with political dialogue and democracy assistance, despite major difficulties in implementing these tools in the face of open reluctance of the Tunisian government. Despite the general non-information on political dialogue, the 2002 CSP explicitly criticizes the lack of progress because Tunisia "est rétive à l'égard des critiques de l'UE concernant les questions des droits humains" (CSP Tunisia 2002: 6). In 2003, the EU-Tunisian Association Council has decided to 'mainstream' "matters relating to democratic principles and human rights" into meetings under the EMAA instead of setting up a specific sub-committee. In comparison with Morocco, there are a lot more declarations of EU actors on the Tunisian regime's failure to respect human rights. Between 2000 and 2006, the European Parliament has adopted at least six resolutions. Here, it becomes obvious that the Tunisian government interferes with EU democracy promotion efforts, withholding funds intended for local human rights NGOs, hindering their work, and refusing to cooperate in democracy assistance projects with state actors.[41] Declarations of the Council are scarcer, but there are statements on the 1999 and 2004 elections, asking the Tunisian government "to take the necessary steps to ensure that the next

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[39] http://www.state.gov/g/drl/p/c12440.htm, 08/05/2007.
[40] http://mepi.state.gov/c10158.htm, 08/05/2007.
[41] This is the case in the EP's resolutions of 09/29/2005, 12/15/2005, and 06/15/2006.

elections fully meet international standards".[42] However, there seem to be no more formalized actions taken, such as the adoption of Common Positions or the application of negative conditionality. In addition to the different diplomatic tools, the EU has also provided (or tried to provide) democracy assistance. The 1999 evaluation of the MDP deplores that efforts had been limited from the outset and urges the Commission to step up to its engagement despite manifest "difficulties to implement MDP projects because of the Government's opposition to any such interventions" (Karkutli, Bützler 1999: 110). Maybe in a reaction to this evaluation, Tunisia was selected as one of about 30 focus countries for the 2002-2004 period of EIDHR programming and has received approximately €2-3 million for projects mostly addressing the judiciary, trade unions and NGOs in micro-projects.[43] After the discontinuation of the focus country concept, there seem to be no more projects in 2005 and 2006. Under MEDA, €30 million had been committed for so-called 'third generation programs' on political reform in 2002, but these programs were partly cancelled or delayed by 2005 (NIP Tunisia 2005: 2). In 2007, the Commission finally reacts with a decision fundamental to democracy assistance:

> "in view of the serious difficulties in implementing third-generation MEDA projects and the problems surrounding the recent launch of the justice support programme, the Commission takes the view that efforts over the first period of the CSP should focus on good economic governance" (CSP/NIP Tunisia 2007: 1)

Consequentially, the 'strategic priority objective' of "medium-term political reforms concerning democracy and human rights, the rule of law and sound institutional governance" (CSP/NIP Tunisia 2007: 15) is not translated into any democracy assistance programs.

Taken together, the EU's democracy promotion efforts in Tunisia should probably be characterized as a 'failed cooperative' approach: While the Council and the Commission stick to cooperative tools, their implementation is hampered by the reluctance of the Tunisian government. While rewards are accordingly withheld, the EU does not openly consider the application of sanctions and it is only the EP that calls for a tougher position vis-à-vis Tunisian violations of human rights. However, the abandonment of democracy assistance efforts under ENPI illustrates the limits of a cooperative approach to democracy promotion without the willing cooperation of the targeted regime.

US democracy promotion in Tunisia

The "very good" bilateral relations between Tunisia and the US, equally dating back to the 18th century, have led in 2002 to a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement that is generally seen as a major step towards a Free Trade Agreement.[44] Tunisia is also one of the minor recipients of foreign assistance in the MENA region, but in contrast to Morocco, it has dropped out of the scheme for USAID development assistance in the mid-1990s, due to its favorable socio-economic development. Between 2002 and 2007, $55 million of military assistance have been requested for Tunisia, with annual appropriations increasing over time and nearly doubling in 2004 (Sharp 2006: 18). USAID has been active in Tunisia between 1957 and 1994 and while it accordingly has no mission in Tunisia, the MEPI regional office in based in Tunis. Democracy promotion activities have also been stepped up after 2001, but to a lesser degree than in Morocco.

The Human Rights Reports have been continuously exposing 'serious' human rights abuses and limitations to democratic processes by the Tunisian government over the past decade. Since 2004, the US democracy promotion reports go as far as to speak of "an authoritarian system of government and significant limitations to political participation and freedoms of expression, association, assembly and the press" (U.S. Record 2004: 191). In addition, they

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[42] Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Tunisia, Brussels, 10/26/2004.

[43] EIDHR Programming document 2002-2004: 17 and updates for 2003 (11-12) and 2004 (11).

[44] State Department background note on Tunisia, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5439.htm, 08/10/2007.

point out the remarkable contrast between relatively far advanced and well respected economic and social rights as opposed to the ongoing violations of political and civil rights and fundamental freedoms (U.S. Record 2006: 189). The State Department in its background note mentions at least "Tunisia's stated committed to making progress toward a democratic system", while deploring the poor human rights record and that "[p]rogress toward full democracy has been slow".[45] This does not, however, seem to impair the 'very good relations' or impede active military cooperation.

Political dialogue seems to focus on governmental contacts and meetings with civil society, local media, and representatives of religious groupings (U.S. Record 2006: 189). Despite the clear view on the political and human rights situation in the different monitoring reports, there are only few recent press releases of the State Department addressing human rights violations, mostly individual cases of prosecuted human rights activists.[46] Apparently, the US also tries to build up pressure more directly at the national level, e.g. by placing "opinion pieces in the local press" (U.S. Record 2004: 192). The US has not applied conditionality in its relations with Tunisia over the past decade: on the one hand, repeated criticism has never led to sanctions, e.g. the ineligibility for foreign assistance; on the other hand, Tunisia has been a candidate for the Millennium Challenge Account since 2006 but never come close to qualifying for a Compact. Compared with Morocco, US democracy assistance is nearly inexistent. The HRDF has not been used for financing projects specifically in Tunisia, which might only be covered by some regional projects. In the absence of the USAID channel for democracy assistance, this is surprising, even more so when the State Department is openly referring to the possibility that "HRDF programming is the only U.S. assistance available to citizens fighting to change their societies" as one of the main assets of the fund.[47] The situation of democracy assistance in the framework of the MEPI political and women's pillars is similar.[48] There has been only one Tunisian project on women and civil society in local governance, worth a good $200,000, in 2004. In contrast, Tunisia has been part of at least six women's and nine political multilateral projects in 2003-2004. The low level of democracy assistance might in part be explained by the US complaint since 2005 about an obstructive attitude of the Tunisian government, hindering US (and in general international) democracy promotion efforts (U.S. Record 2006: 189, 2005: 203), which resonates with the EU's difficulties in implementing democracy related programs in Tunisia.

Democracy promotion in the Newly Independent States

Both Belarus und Ukraine are subject to special regional policy frameworks by the EU and the US respectively. In reaction to the dramatic political change in the Soviet Union and its subsequent break-up in 1991 both actors issued large aid policies for supporting economic and democratic transition in the successor states. The EU titled its program from 1991 "Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States" (TACIS), while US support has been delivered under the Freedom Support Act (FSA) that has been signed in 1992.[49] The EU further formalized its relations to the countries of the region by the setting-up of relatively standardized Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) in the late 1990ies.[50] Further

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[45] State Department background note on Tunisia, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5439.htm, 08/10/2007.

[46] State Department press releases on Tunisia, http://www.state.gov/p/nea/ci/c13273.htm, 08/10/2007.

[47] State Department, Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, http://www.state.gov/g/drl/p/, 08/10/2007.

[48] MEPI, Countries, Tunisia, http://www.mepi.state.gov/c10163.htm, 08/10/2007.

[49] Both assistance programs have covered all successor states of the Soviet Union, except for the Baltic Republics, which have been made subject to the SEED Act by the US and to the PHARE Program of the EU.

[50] The PCAs display similarities in structure and many important features as regards common institutions or conditionality. The scope of cooperation envisaged however clearly varies from country to country apparently correlating with geopolitical importance and geographic proximity.

differentiation among the NIS has occurred with the introduction of the ENP.[51] For all these countries bilaterally negotiated Action Plans (APs) have been set up in order to further intensify relations. The commitment of the European Union to promote democracy in the NIS has only gradually developed during the 1990s. For example, the 1993 TACIS regulation only provided for supporting economic reforms with the idea of "thereby reinforcing democracy"[52] In contrast, the corresponding article in the 1996 reads differently: "technical assistance […] for measures aimed at bringing about the transition to a market economy and reinforcing democracy"[53]. At the same time, democratic principles and respect for human right have been made a condition for assistance.[54]

The PCAs emphasize a regular and institutionalized political dialogue as the central tool for addressing issues linked to democracy and human rights. In addition, they define respect for democratic principles and human rights as essential elements of the relationships and reserve the right to take 'appropriate measures' in cases of their serious violations. The PCAs further include an element of positive conditionality, linking technical assistance inter alia with reform progress. The recently concluded APs have further boosted democracy and good governance, making them top priorities on the commonly agreed agenda. Under the ENP framework positive conditionality has been strengthened. The APs emphasize that progress in implementing the commonly agreed agenda including those measures linked to common values that will influence the enhancement of future relations and levels of support (European Commission 2006b: 4). With regard to democracy assistance both the global program EIDHR and the regional TACIS (and now ENPI) program can be deployed for the Western NIS.

US democracy promotion in the region, on the other hand lacks such a relatively formalized framework. Bilateral relations are primarily pursued through meetings with US officials and the embassies. Declarations on issues related to democracy and democratization are likewise mainly issued with regard to specific countries and contexts. Conditionality, in particular with regard to assistance, plays a major role. The FSA of 1992 includes several constraints on the delivery of assistance. With regard to democracy promotion, it requires the President to take into account progress in democratic and economic reform, respect for human rights and international law when deciding on assistance. Furthermore, assistance is prohibited when countries engage "in consistent pattern of human rights violations".[55] As described above, democratic conditionality is further linked with the Millennium Challenge Account.[56] Democracy assistance, however, is only delivered through high levels of FSA funds, the phasing out of which has just begun.[57]

EU democracy promotion in Belarus

The EC recognized Belarus as an independent state in 1991. In line with the general development of the EU-NIS relations Belarus substantial TACIS-funds were provided by the EU in order to support economic and democratic transition. In 1995 a PCA was signed, which however has never entered into force, due to significant political changes in Belarus. Alexander Lukashenka, who was elected Belarusian president in 1994, by referendum extended its term

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[51] The Eastern dimension of the ENP originally included Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, but in 2004 Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were included.

[52] Council Regulation 2053/93 of 19 July 1993: Art.4.

[53] Council Regulation 1279/96 of 25 June 1996: Art.3.

[54] Ibid. Art 11.

[55] Freedom Support Act, Title II, 498A(b)(1).

[56] Three countries of the region, Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine, have so far qualified for Compact Agreements. The Kyrgyz Republic is eligible for a Threshold Agreement

[57] One major reason for the gradual withdrawal of US assistance have been increasing doubts whether high levels of assistance really met the objective of improving the democratic state of affairs. See Department of State, Annual Reports on U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia, FY 2000-2004 . Hereafter referred to as FY <year>.

in office and amended the constitution in order to heavily concentrate power in the executive branch in 1996. The EU expressed its serious concerns about the situation of democracy in various declarations and considered the constitutional changes to be illegitimate. By referring to lacking commitment of the Belarusian authorities in 1997 the Council of General Affairs finally decided to "neither conclude the interim agreement nor the partnership and cooperation agreement", to only provide regional, humanitarian, and democracy assistance and to limit bilateral contacts.[58] This turn in the EU's stance towards Belarus marked the beginning of a steadily downgrading of the relations. Democracy promotion at the same time has become the main focus of the EU.

The almost only tool that was applied for these purposes between 1997 and 2004, however, were declarations on various occasions.[59] The Presidency of the Council for example criticized the conduct of the 2000 parliamentary elections[60], the 2001 presidential elections[61] and the 2004 parliamentary elections[62]. On other occasions, the EU repeatedly demanded the release of political prisoners[63], investigations in cases of disappeared persons[64], or displayed serious concern about the human rights situation or media freedom.[65] Since 2004 the EU has developed an increasingly conflictive approach, leaving, however, the door to dialogue and negotiations open. In 2004 a visa ban has been imposed for those four officials of Belarus that have been accused to be involved in the cases of disappeared persons and subsequent the investigation processes.[66] After the 2004 parliamentary elections and a referendum that potentially extended President Lukashenko's term of office for an indefinite amount of time, these sanctions have been applied against two more officials that were responsible "for the fraudulent elections and referendum [...] and for severe human rights violations"[67]. In the light of the heavily criticized 2006 presidential elections the visa ban has been extended to a total of 31 officials including the president.[68] Additionally, the EU has imposed an asset freeze against most of these and some other officials.[69] At the end of 2006 Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy Ferrero-Waldner published a non-paper, which outlines the advantages Belarus could enjoy, provided the Belarusian authorities move towards democratization. In the light of the whole political development of independent Belarus a return to the traditionally emphasized 'positive' approach of the EU that is based on political dialogue, formalized relations and assistance seems to be unlikely as long as the Lukashenko regime keeps in place.

With regard to democracy assistance that has been emphasized in 1997 (see above), some peculiarities of EU-democracy promotion efforts in authoritarian states become visible. In fact, since 1997 almost no TACIS funds could have been used for these purposes, because the implementation of TACIS projects requires consent with the government of the target country.[70] According to EuropeAid between 1995 and 2005 only in 1997 (€5 million), in 2000

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[58]   Council of the EU 1997: Council conclusions on Belarus, 09/15/1997.
[59]   Many of these declarations included a kind of general positive conditionality, meaning that improvements in criticised sectors could help improving the relationship. However, since the whole relationship up to now lacks a legal basis, the typical formalized conditionality (essential elements clause) has not been deployed.
[60]   Council of the EU 2000: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 10/18/2000.
[61]   Council of the EU 2001: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 09/14/2001.
[62]   Council of the EU 2004: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 10/20/2004.
[63]   See for example the Declarations of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union as of 09/12/2000; 08/08/2000 or 03/31/1998.
[64]   Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 05/07/2001 or 12/02/1999.
[65]   Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 10/16/2002 or 06/23/2000.
[66]   Council Common Position 2004/661/CFSP.
[67]   Council Common Position 2004/848/CSFP.
[68]   Council Common Position 2006/276/CSFP.
[69]   Council Common Position 2006/362/CSFP.
[70]   In fact this consent has often been difficult to achieve. Moreover, the Belarusian government more than once restricted activities of external actors that aimed at promoting democracy in a wide sense.

(€6 million) and in 2005 (€8 million) TACIS funds were allocated, mainly for supporting civil society development, media and education (CSP/NIP Belarus 2005: 15ff.). For the period between 2007 and 2010 a sum €20 million shall be allocated through ENPI supporting social and economic development (70%) and democratization and good governance (30%) (CSP/NIP Belarus 2007). Since 2005, Belarus is also eligible for EIDHR funding, which has essentially opened up the possibility to bypass the Belarusian government.[71]

US democracy promotion in Belarus

Similarly to the EU, with which political action towards Belarus is well-coordinated[72], the US have relied on increasingly conflictive approach. Initially, independent Belarus has been recognized by the US in 1991, followed by the establishment of diplomatic relations. In 1993 a bilateral trade treaty entered into force and in 1994 a bilateral investment treaty has been signed. Between 1992 and 1995 a sum of $455 million of military, humanitarian, and development assistance had been provided through various sources.

Since 1994, however, the relations between both states have rapidly worsened largely due to stalled democratic transition with great impact on the application of various tools for democracy promotion. In ad-hoc declarations, FSA monitoring reports and regular human rights reports criticism inter alia focused on the same events as it has been described in the case of the EU. These include the referenda (Human Rights Reports 1996, 2004) and the elections that have neither been internationally recognized nor free and fair (Human Rights Reports 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006). Moreover the US have been consistently concerned about the human rights situation, in particular with regard to freedom of expression, assembly, and information. The crackdown of demonstrations, the sentencing of opposition candidates and journalists, cases of disappeared persons, the closing of independent media and government pressure on civil society organization are among the long list of examples, which the US openly condemned and for which Belarusian authorities have been made responsible in US monitoring reports. Shortly before having been nominated Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice even labeled Belarus an "outpost of tyranny" together with Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Burma.[73]

Apart from declarations, quite similar to the EU, the US have applied negative conditionality and sanctions in the case of Belarus, that have been justified by pointing to the political situation in Belarus. First changes became visible with regard to aid provided under the FSA from 1995 onwards, where levels of aid had sharply been reduced. In 1997 the US announced a strategy of 'selective engagement', essentially meaning that no funds should be channeled through Belarusian government agencies. At the same time support for civil society organizations as well as independent media has been extended. Although human rights abuses in particular had been increasingly condemned in Belarus, the latter has never lost its eligibility with regard to the respective human rights clause of the FSA.

Sanctions have been officially invoked with the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004 and confirmed by the Belarus Democracy Reauthorization Act of 2006. Both legal documents summarize the main points of criticism towards the Belarusian regime in section 2. With regard to sanctions, entry to the US has been denied for senior officials of Belarus.[74] Furthermore, with a few exceptions US financial assistance should not be delivered to government agencies and the US should oppose "any extension" of similar funds by multilateral organizations. These sanctions are only to be lifted, if significant progress in the conduct of elections,

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[71] Prior 2005 Belarus was not regarded a focus country of EIDHR. The EU however conducted some projects in Belarus funded by EIDHR as for example a training seminar in 1998. In 2005 €2 Million were transferred from TACIS to EIDHR due to the difficulties described.

[72] See for example: Plassnik, Ursula 2006 cited in: Presseaussendungen der EU-Präsidentschaft Österreich, www.ue2006.at/de/News/Press_Releases/June/0106Plassnik.html?month=4&day=1&null=, 06/01/2006.

[73] BBC NEWS 2005: Rices names 'outposts of tyranny', 01/19/2005.

[74] Only humanitarian, agricultural or medical goods have been excluded from the list.

improvements of the human rights situation and penal prosecution can be observed and political prisoners are released from jail. Thus, just as the EU, the US rely on imposing costs by the application of sanctions as long as central features of the Lukashenko-regime continue to persist. These diplomatic tools are complemented by prescriptions for democracy assistance that inter alia further emphasizes support for the development of democratic parties and non-governmental human rights organizations and their respective leaders as well as for independent media. In sum, both by imposing costs through diplomatic means and by openly supporting opposition forces and independent media through external assistance, the US displays a confrontational approach aiming at a regime change rather than encouraging and supporting partial reforms carried out by the Lukashenko government.

EU democracy promotion in Ukraine

In contrast to Belarus the EU has integrated Ukraine to full extent into the policy frameworks for the successor states of the Soviet Union and for its immediate neighbors respectively. Ukraine has been recognized as an independent state by the EC in 1991. It was the first state with which a PCA was concluded. It was signed in 1994 and entered into force in 1998. Financial and technical assistance for Ukraine through TACIS between 1991 and 2005 steadily rose up to more than €1 billion, making it the largest recipient behind Russia. The particular importance the EU attached to Ukraine has further been underlined by the development of a Common Strategy towards Ukraine. Ukraine has signaled since the end of the 1990s great interest in deepening its relations with the EU in order to finally accede it.[75] While refusing a membership perspective at least in the medium term, the EU currently negotiates an enhanced agreement with Ukraine. This also indicates that the EU today perceives Ukraine as one of the best performing ENP countries with regard to political and economic reforms.[76]

For the time being, however, the PCA is the legal basis for the EU-Ukraine relations. With its conclusion the Ukraine became subject to the essential elements clause included. Negative conditionality or sanctions have never been applied in the case of Ukraine. During the 1990ies the EU displayed relative satisfaction with the democratization process in Ukraine, criticizing if at all, slow progress in implementing economic reforms. To what extent democracy and human rights have been made an issue of the political dialogue behind closed doors can unfortunately not be answered. However, between 2001 and the Orange Revolution in 2004 the EU more than once publicly voiced concern about increasingly authoritarian rule under President Kuchma. These declarations included critics with regard to the freedom of media and in particular to the disappearance of the journalist Georgi Gongadze and the subsequent investigation that was deemed neither sufficient nor transparent.[77] However, the EU did not raise substantial doubts on the general commitment of the Ukrainian government to democratic reforms as it has been the case in Belarus. And indeed, in contrast to Belarus little improvements could still be observed, for example in the conduct of the 2002 parliamentary elections that were consequently recognized in a declaration.[78] In the run-up of the 2004 presidential elections the EU partially changed its tone, inter alia expressing deep concerns over the increasing intimidation policies towards independent media and its significance for Ukraine's international reputation.[79] During the elections that have been marked by massive electoral fraud and the subsequent political crisis the EU however played a rather cautious or

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[75] Bulletin EU 6-1998; Yushchenko, Victor, Address before Joint Session of U.S. Congress, 04/06/2005.

[76] Ferrero-Waldner, Benita 2007: The European approach to democracy promotion in post-communist countries, speech delivered at an international conference at the Institute for Human Science, Vienna,(SPEECH 07/29).

[77] Council of the EU 2001: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 02/05/2001; Council of the EU 2003: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 09/16/2003; Council of the EU 2004: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 09/16/2004.

[78] Council of the EU 2004: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 03/31/2002

[79] Council of the EU 2004: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 03/18/2005

at best an ambiguous role. The Council for example regretted that the conduct of the first round of the elections did not correspond to international standards.[80] With regard to the mass protests following the second round of the elections the Council remained remarkably quiet, leaving the initiative to the High Representative for the CFSP Javier Solana, the Polish President Kwasnievski and the Lithuanian President Adamkus, who engaged in negotiations with the Ukrainian authorities. The European Parliament at the same time called on the Ukrainian authorities to declare the outcome of the second round null and void. Moreover, it appealed to the Commission and the Council to declare that the use of force by the Ukrainian Government would directly lead to a suspension of the PCA and to sanctions.[81] The European Council as well as the Council of the EU only issued a new declaration after the severe political crisis had been solved and a repetition of the second round had been declared.[82] Since in the repeated second round of the elections in 2005 real improvements had been observed, the Council congratulated the newly elected President Yushchenko for his victory and emphasized its further support to the country.[83] In fact, despite the dramatic events in the run-up of and during the elections in 2004 the bilateral relations have not been damaged. In the same year the EU and Ukraine negotiated a Draft Action Plan that was formally adopted in early 2005. The first monitoring report of 2006 confirmed significant progress in particular with regard to elections, human rights, freedom of the media and the judiciary (PR Ukraine 2006). As already described, based on this assessment the ongoing negotiations of a new 'enhanced agreement' can be understood as the application of positive conditionality in the framework of the neighborhood policy.[84] Moreover, it seems to be an open secret that Ukraine will be among the first countries to be rewarded with additional finances through the Governance Facility to be established.

Democracy assistance has been delivered to Ukraine TACIS and EIDHR since the mid 1990s. TACIS funds were both provided for capacity building efforts in various state agencies and improving regulation and to a smaller extent for the support of non-state actors. However, it is difficult to give a clear account of the resources committed to the support of democratic reforms. In programming documents democracy assistance can be found under very different headings. The biggest portion of democracy assistance was included in the priority area 'support for institutional, legal, and administrative reform', that accounted for about €223 million between 1998 and 2006 and made up 43% of the resources provided in this period of time.[85] This very general heading however embraced for the most part projects that were not related to democracy promotion. It is not possible to determine the exact amount of actual democracy assistance or, but their have been projects aiming at strengthening the capacity of central and regional government agencies, of the judiciary, but also of media and non-state organizations (See e.g. CSP/NIP Ukraine 2002; NIP Ukraine 2004). The CSP 2007-2013 more explicitly promotes democracy under the heading 'Support for Democratic Development and Good Governance'. This priority area accounts for 30% of the total budget (€494 million) between 2007 and 2010 and mainly addresses the public administration, the judiciary, educational system and the institutional framework for local-self government and public participation (CSP/NIP Ukraine 2006). EIDHR complemented TACIS by almost continually supporting civil society organizations and the development of independent media. Its projects inter alia focused on human rights, good governance, the rule of law and combating corruption. EIDHR

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[80]   Council of the EU 2004: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 11/05/2005.
[81]   European Parliament 2004: Resolution on Ukraine, P6_TA(2004)0074.
[82]   European Council 2004: Presidency Conclusions, 12/17/2004; Council of the EU 2004: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 12/14/2005
[83]   Council of the EU 2005: Declaration of the Presidency on behalf of the European Union, 01/11/2005.
[84]   The European Commission repeatedly emphasized the differentiated approach of the ENP. According to its communications the gradual development of deeper relations between the EU and its neighbours is conditional upon progress in implementing the action plans. See for example European Commission 2006b: 4.
[85]   Own calculation based on different statistics of EuropeAid and the European Commission.

funds allocated for Ukraine between 1999 and 2006 however only add up to €5.95 Million (CSP/NIP Ukraine 2006).

In sum, the EU has adopted a very cooperative approach towards Ukraine that only has been endangered during the presidential elections of 2004. It remains open, whether the EU would have applied negative conditionality or sanctions or would significantly changed the focus of its assistance programs in case Ukraine had further gone the authoritarian way.

US democracy promotion in Ukraine

Like Belarus, Ukraine has been recognized an independent state by the US in 1991. In 1992 the US consulate in Kiev has been upgraded to an embassy in 1993. In 1992 a bilateral trade treaty and in 1994 a bilateral investment treaty were concluded. Among the NIS Ukraine has been a major recipient of US assistance, receiving more than $3 billion. In general, the US have attached great strategic importance to the second largest successor state of the Soviet Union. The US-Ukraine relations, however, have developed unevenly since Ukraine's independence, mainly due to slow progress in economic reforms and a stalled democratization process, particularly between the late 1990ies and the Orange Revolution in 2004.[86] The regular US human rights country reports bluntly described Ukraine's human rights record still as 'mixed' in 1999, as 'poor in some areas' in 2000, as 'poor' with 'some improvements' in 2001 and as 'poor' and 'in some cases worsened' in 2002. Critics inter alia focused on the inefficient judiciary, increasing intimidation and harassment of media (including the Gongadse case), limited freedom of association and assembly, but also on the conduct of the elections in 1999 and 2002. As the US had emphasized in their respective US Human Rights and Democracy Promotion Strategy Reports these issues have frequently been set on the agenda in regular diplomatic meetings. Since 2002 the US democracy promotion efforts in Ukraine, both diplomatically and with regard to assistance, drew particular importance to the run-up of the presidential elections in 2004 that were more and more interpreted as the decisive test for Ukraine's government commitment to democratic reform. With regard to diplomacy, this meant that US officials increasingly appealed to Ukraine's government to do their best in ensuring free and fair elections.[87] Furthermore, at the latest in 2004, these appeals were combined with direct references to the potential impacts on future US-Ukraine relations. The US even threatened to impose sanctions against those, who would be engaged in potential electoral fraud.[88] Conventional conditionality as given in the FSA had not been applied at that time, despite the increasing concerns about the human rights situation in Ukraine.[89] Nevertheless, levels of FSA funding were constantly shrinking between 2000 and 2004, but it is difficult to estimate whether this tendency already reflects the gradual phasing out of FSA or whether it had been linked to the perceived bad performance of Ukraine in these years.

Considering the outcome and the inadequate conduct of the elections in 2004, the US Secretary of State Colin Powell refused to accept the results and called for a full review just as the European Union did.[90] The repeated second round of the elections that in contrast was perceived as being free and fair, Powell praised as a "historic moment for democracy"[91]. Sub-

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[86]   But also other issues, like apparent Ukrainian arms sales to Macedonia and Iraq, negatively influenced the relations between the US and Ukraine. On the positive side, the US for example highly valued Ukraine's support of the Iraq war.

[87]   Pifer, Steven 2004: Ukraine's Future and U.S. Interests, Testimony before the House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Europe, Washington, 05/12/2004.

[88]   Armitage, Richard 2004: U.S. Watches Ukraine Elections with Concern, published in the Financial Times, 10/29/2004.

[89]   In 2002 assistance measures involving the central government in Ukraine have been temporarily put off, due to the apparent arms deal with Iraq.

[90]   Powell, Colin 2004, Briefing, Washington, 11/24/2004.

[91]   Cited in: Krushelnycky, Askold 2004: Ukraine's Opposition Wins Vote, But Rival To Contest Results, RFE/RL, 12/27/2004.

sequently, in official statements new opportunities for the development of the US-Ukraine relations have been enthusiastically celebrated, most visible in a joint statement of President Bush and President Yushchenko (2005) that was titled 'A New Century Agenda for the Ukrainian-American Partnership'. Referring the success of the Orange Revolution and to significant improvements in many democracy-related areas, the US have "dramatically"[92] deepened dialogue with Ukraine, heightened the level of assistance and supported Ukraine's NATO and WTO aspirations. These apparent rewards were further complemented by additional resources provided by the MCC, with which a threshold agreement has been signed and a compact agreement is being discussed.

As already indicated, democracy assistance had been a remarkable tool particularly in the run-up to the 2004 elections. Prior to 2002 it inter alia comprised support for judicial and legal reforms, structural reforms, improving (local) governance and legislative processes, media, party and civil society development and anti-corruption measures. While these issues have largely remained in the democracy assistance portfolio, between 2002 and 2004 particular importance has been attached to measures that were directly related to the preparation of the presidential elections in 2004. In doing so, the US apparently involved and addressed non-state actors to a greater extent than the EU had done. Specific measures aimed at voter education, training for media and independent watchdog organizations, training for political parties, but also on the administration of the elections and the legal framework. Undisputedly, in particular these measures also contributed to the civic upheaval and the Orange Revolution in 2004. Moreover, while declaring that this rather 'political' type of democracy assistance had been non-partisan (FY 2005), the US were alleged by the some observers to interfere in domestic matters. After the Orange Revolution, democracy assistance has further increased, both in absolute figures as well as compared to other assistance programs.[93] Its focus slightly changed again, now strengthening and improving governance capacities of the Ukrainian authorities to a greater extent.

Overall, US democracy promotion in Ukraine for the most part followed a cooperative approach. In comparison to the EU however, the US have apparently been more sensitive towards the worsening of the political situation in Ukraine in the period of 1999-2004 and gradually changed the application of some tools. With regard to diplomacy critics have been more consistently voiced, and even concrete sanctions have been considered. Regarding democracy assistance, it has rather been applied for building a democratic society than for strengthening the government. Perceived recent improvements had been similarly rewarded, as it was the case in the EU.

V   Conclusions

With this paper, we have aimed at contributing to the systematic analysis of international democracy promotion in general and of the European Union and the United States in particular. This ever growing field of research is still characterized by few comparable – and comparative – studies and even less attempts at theorization. The ultimate goal should be to explain why international democracy promoters are doing what they are doing – and with what effect. On the way to explaining variations in strategy and outcome, we hope the ideas and empirical findings outlined in this paper will add to the general debate on how to achieve these ambitious goals.

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[92] Fried, Daniel 2005: Ukraine's Future and U.S. Interests, Testimony before the House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats, Washington, 07/27/2004.

[93] In 2003 $55 million out of $227 million US government assistance were devoted to democracy promotion. Accordingly, in 2005 the democracy assistance share accounted for $62 million out of $211 million USG funds.

Thus, we have first sketched a framework for the analysis of the phenomenon of international democracy promotion. The design and the implementation of tools that serve this purpose reflect different approaches to democracy promotion. These approaches may add up to 'differentiated strategies', taking into account that different contexts may require different approaches to democracy promotion. Especially the commitment to and dynamics of reform in a regime determine the chances to exert influence through different tools, ultimately reflected in a more cooperative or conflictive approach. While the situation seems to be quite clear in democratic and authoritarian regimes, the greatest challenge to international democracy promotion lies in coping with the grey zone of semi-authoritarian states. In these contexts democracy promotion can at the most address 'limited progress' or 'setbacks' of democratic reform, if there is not even a stable equilibrium of democratic and undemocratic elements. In these cases, it is particularly interesting to see under what circumstances an external actor changes his way to promote democracy, possibly switching from a cooperative to a conflictive approach – or vice versa. On the search for 'differentiated strategies' of both the EU and the US, we have then focused on their global concepts for democracy promotion. Finally, we have compared their approaches to democracy promotion in four different countries that systematically vary with regard to their political context. Morocco and Tunisia are regarded as semi-authoritarian states, whereas Ukraine is seen as a consolidating democracy and Belarus as a fully fledged authoritarian state.

Our findings can be summarized as follows. On the conceptual level, neither actor has comprehensive strategies for democracy promotion and their attempts at differentiation have appeared only recently. In general, the EU emphasizes a cooperative approach that is part of a highly formalized and standardized framework for its external relations. By contrast, the US highlights both conflictive and cooperative approaches, linking them recently to democracy promotion in 'tyrannies' or states that pursue democratic reforms. The insistence on a cooperative approach of the EU and the US commitment to a real two-track approach is not really astonishing having in mind the 'Venus' and 'Mars' debate.

The results of our case studies however challenge this metaphor to a certain extent. Thus, both actors seem to adapt their democracy promotion efforts in a similar way to the political situation of the country addressed. The range of approaches becomes most visible in the two extreme cases of Belarus and Ukraine. While the EU and the US prefer a conflictive approach towards Belarus, Ukraine has been supported and rewarded through assistance and diplomacy, in particular after the Orange Revolution. With regard to Morocco and Tunisia, both actors stick to a cooperative approach, with some differences. Morocco is perceived to generally perform better than Tunisia and has benefited of rewards in recent years. By contrast, the case of Tunisia clearly illustrates a failed cooperative approach. Democracy promotion is mostly limited to political dialogue and democracy assistance, both the EU and the US only rarely resort to declarations and never to negative conditionality. However, both actors admit that it is difficult to provide democracy assistance, especially to non-state actors, due to obstruction by Tunisian authorities. These findings may partly be blurred by regional variation, in particular with regard to the switch from a cooperative to a conflictive approach that we have only found in the case of Belarus. The commitment of the EU and the US to promote democracy in the countries of the MENA region seems to be weaker than in the Western NIS-region. Coping with 'transition' countries in the NIS-region in which more political change is underway, the US and EU seem to attach greater importance to the political processes in these countries – and to have greater expectations. In general, both actors more strongly react to changes of the status quo, adopting their approach to democracy promotion in either direction (Ukraine, Belarus), whereas bad democratic performance as such and the apparent failure of cooperative measures do not necessarily trigger the switch to a conflictive approach (Tunisia).

In sum, both the EU and the US make use of cooperative and conflictive approaches to democracy promotion, but of the latter only towards countries that either perform extremely

bad and/or where the situation significantly worsens. Otherwise, both actors stick to a cooperative approach even when they are clearly limited in their scope for action and a positive effect seems unlikely. It is only the case of Ukraine prior the Orange Revolution that indicates some differences between US and EU democracy promotion efforts. Considering some backlashes in particular with regard to the freedom of speech, assembly and the media – the US diplomatically signaled negative consequences slightly stronger than the EU and channeled even more of its democracy assistance to non-state actors. These findings indicate, first, that in most situations, Mars is not very different from Venus and, second, that semi-authoritarian states indeed are the greatest challenge to the planning and implementation of external democracy promotion.

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