## AFFIRMATIVE

## solvency – general

### conditioning fails

#### Conditioning assistance rarely changes behavior

Stephen Tankel, assistant professor at American University and Melissa Dalton, senior fellow and the deputy director of the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2017 “How to Improve Return on Investment for Security Assistance,” Lawfare, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-improve-return-investment-security-assistance>, (accessed 5-24-2022)

Wielding influence and securing tactical cooperation is the second. This may translate into trading assistance for access to bases, airspace, or other transit routes. The United States sometimes uses assistance to incentivize short-term tactical cooperation against shared threats. In other cases, assistance is intended to reassure allies and partners of America’s commitment to its security, either in general or against common enemies. Here it is worth noting that plans to slash the State Department’s budget and cut foreign assistance compound concerns about U.S. abandonment and further reduce American influence. Finally, the United States has tried, often without success, to use assistance as a lever to shape a recipient’s behavior either domestically or internationally. Some U.S. objectives overlap with one another. Others conflict. And lest we forget, our partners also get a vote. American objectives for security assistance often do not align with theirs, due in large part to differences in how the United States and a recipient prioritize and perceive threats. The number of different objectives at play complicates efforts to condition assistance; enforcing conditions to achieve one set of objectives could hamper efforts to achieve another set. For example, after the Bahraini government’s security forces launched a major crackdown on protesters during the Arab uprisings, the United States temporarily restricted arms sales to the country. Some members of the Obama administration also argued for placing conditions on security assistance. Others worried that this would undermine Bahrain’s support for U.S. basing and access, which is important for Afghanistan, Iran deterrence, and counterterrorism operations. As a result of competing priorities, the United States often chooses not to condition assistance, as was the case with Bahrain, or attempts to do so in an ad hoc manner. Worst of all, the United States sometimes imposes conditions, but then blinks first and backs down when they are not met.

#### Countries will not allow intrusive monitoring

Andrew Boutton, assistant professor of political science at the University of Central Florida, 2018 “POLICY ROUNDTABLE: THE PROS AND CONS OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE,” Texas National Security Review, <https://tnsr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/The-Future-of-Security-Assistance-PDF.pdf>, (accessed 5-24-2022)

Positive conditionality requires the United States to verify the efforts undertaken by the partner government, which in turn necessitates more intrusive monitoring. Many countries will balk at this as a violation of sovereignty, but the United States should insist upon it as a condition of military assistance. A larger presence will not only enable better monitoring of the host government’s coup-proofing actions, but may also mitigate the internal security dilemma that drives such behavior. The worst paranoid excesses of the Maliki regime did not occur until after 2011, when the United States was no longer present on the ground as a safety net protecting his regime.

#### Positive conditionality fails because recipients pretend success

Samiratou Dipama, PhD Candidate at Marmara University and Emel Parlar Dal, Professor at Marmara University, 2015 “The Effectiveness of Political Conditionality as an Instrument of Democracy Promotion by the EU: Case Studies of Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast and Niger,” Perceptions, Volume 10, No. 1, (accessed 5-24-2022)

Negative conditionality is generally criticized to be ineffective because sanctions imposed as a result of conditionality might hit the poor instead of the targeted government25 and the recipient country’s government might easily find access to alternative funding resources. In contrast, the application of positive conditionality is much less contested in the critical discussion. The EU’s enlargement strategy is generally used as a clear example of the effectiveness of positive conditionality to boost the democratic space in the Eastern European countries. In fact, the desirability of EU membership appears to have prompted candidate countries to adhere to a host of conditions contained in the so-called Acquis Communautaire. Yet, there are still problems with the way EU uses positive conditionality: it does not always deliver the incentives promised (extra aid, for example), or at least it does not deliver them quickly. Governments may even pretend progress without actually achieving a policy change.26

### uneven enforcement

#### Uneven enforcement [holding some allies accountable, but not others] damages broader democratic cred

Barone 22, MA in Public Management @ JHU (John, “A PROPOSAL FOR THE REVISION OF THE LEAHY LAWS TO ALIGN HUMAN RIGHTS AND SECURITY COOPERATION POLICIES WITH NATIONAL STRATEGY,” https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/66912/Barone-Capstone%20Project-2022.pdf?sequence=1)//BB

Enforcement of human rights initiatives will often damage relations when the US finds that a foreign partner has violated them and then imposes military aid restrictions or sanctions on the guilty units or nations. The issue is compounded when the US does not hold states equally accountable to the US code on foreign aid and policy standards. Until recently, many US embassies did not share vetting results with partner nations, despite legal requirements to share the data with the host nation to avoid damaging relationships.2 As of 2017, the DOS publishes an annual list of suspended units on its website.3 This year, an advisor to the Supreme Court of Bangladesh disclosed that the country is debating whether it should follow procedures established by the Leahy Laws that would remediate Bangladeshi units sanctioned from receiving aid, noting that Bangladesh would then go to the PRC for support. The advisor identified inconsistencies in how the US administered its human rights policies to close allies such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, and others.4 The US must stand up for human rights abroad but must evenly enforce a policy that does not damage relations, ultimately preventing the US from influencing partners to adhere to human rights concepts.

## solvency – say no

### backlash – general

#### Conditional aid on human rights is counterproductive – causes retaliation from partner nations

Allendoerfer 10 – Michelle Giacobbe Allendoerfer, assistance professor of political science at George Washington University, program coordinator of International Politics at the Women’s Leadership Program at George Washington University, Ph.D. in philosophy in political science at the University of Michigan, M.A. in political science at the University of Michigan, B.A. in political science and international relations at Carleton College (“When Do Human Rights Matter? Finding a Place for Human Rights in Foreign Policy”, University of Michigan Doctoral Dissertation, <https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/78938/mallendo_1.pdf?sequence=1>) FGY

3.4 At What Cost? The Salience of Donor-Recipient Relations

Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2009) assert that leaders use foreign aid to buy policy concessions. Further, they argue that the salience of these policy concessions is one key determinant of whether a donor provides aid to a potential recipient and, if aid is provided, how much aid is allocated. I argue that donors consider the salience of these concessions when deciding whether to punish human rights violators. If a donor decides to punish a potential recipient by withholding or reducing aid, the opportunity cost of such action is losing the policy concession. I expect, therefore, that as the value of the concessions increases, the probability that a donor decides to punish a violator decreases. 27 I conceptualize the salience of policy concessions using two dimensions: security and economic ties. 3.4.1 Security Ties Many scholars place national security at the top of any list of foreign policy goals (c.f. Morgenthau 1951; Waltz 1979; Kennan 1985). It would be **too idealistic to assume that human rights concerns can trump national security concerns** in making foreign policy. In fact, punishing human rights violators may be **counterproductive** to security goals. For example, **violators may respond to being punished by retaliating** in such a way that hurts the donor’s national security interests. For example, a recipient may restrict donor access to military bases or air space. In a 1979 lecture on foreign policy and human rights, Morgenthau states: We have a great interest in continuing the normalization of our relations with mainland China, and for this reason we are not going to hurt her feelings. On the other hand South Korea is an ally of the United States, it is attributed a considerable military importance, and so we are not going to do anything to harm those relations. (Morgenthau 1979: 7). Another example of the strategic importance of foreign aid lies in Cold War foreign policy. In particular, western donors were concerned that cutting foreign aid could precipitate a fall to communism. For example, the United States used its foreign aid program during the Cold War to prop rightist regimes in the western hemisphere to contain communism (c.f. Carleton & Stohl 1986; Apodaca & Stohl 1999; Regan 1995). In addition, foreign aid often directly or indirectly supported repressive regimes over leftist opposition (Regan 1995). In these cases, cutting aid would have clear negative implications for the donor’s strategic interests. Morgenthau’s concern – and he is not alone (c.f. Gillies 1996) – is that **criticizing or punishing a human rights violator would very likely harm relations** with that country and, in turn, the soured relationships could **hurt the strategic or material interests of the donor**. When donors use foreign aid to punish human rights violators, that foreign aid cannot be used to buy important policy concessions. This represents the opportunity cost for using foreign aid as a punishment tool. If a donor has an interest in buying a policy concession from a recipient, then it is unlikely to manipulate its aid policy to punish human rights violations when, instead, it needs to provide aid to buy the policy concession. One way to conceptualize the strategic importance of potential donors is security alignment. **Donors are more inclined to buy policy concessions from states with which they are closely aligned** than enemies. Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2009) find that “recipients who are moderately aligned with the donor receive the most aid” (331). If security alignment signifies the presence of important policy concessions, then it follows that close allies are unlikely to be punished for human rights violations because these countries can offer the donor valuable policy concessions. For example, until the mid1970s, the United States consistently turned a blind eye to rights violations by South American dictators with whom the U.S. was allied. Hypothesis 1: Donors are less likely to punish recipients as the strategic alignment between them increase, all else equal.

#### The counterplan promotes backlash, which undermines alliance solidarity

Rachel Ellehuus, deputy director and senior fellow with the Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Pierre Morcos, visiting fellow with the Center for Strategic and International Studies’ Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program, 2021

“NATO Should Finally Take its Values Seriously,” War on the Rocks, <https://warontherocks.com/2021/06/nato-should-take-its-values-seriously/>, (accessed 6-1-2022)

Admittedly, pursuing a tougher course of action on values and principles comes with risks. Even measured steps could create serious rifts among allies, with the potential of paralyzing the alliance. Because NATO operates by consensus, any punitive action on an ally could provoke retaliatory action on other NATO business. In reaction to Norway’s stark criticisms against the Portuguese and Greek regimes at a June 1971 foreign ministers meeting, then-NATO Secretary General Manlio Brosio warned that “if we undermine our solidarity, we run the risk of undermining the substance of our alliance.” Overcoming this dilemma between prioritizing values and preserving unity requires a graduated, collective, and dispassionate approach. First, NATO will need to be proportionate when dealing with an ally violating trans-Atlantic values. Allies should start with discussions behind closed doors rather than publicize the dispute. Open and frank dialogue among allies should always be the first step before adopting restrictive measures. If NATO moves too quickly or aggressively, it risks being counterproductive by widening divisions in the alliance. At the end of the day, this progressive approach should have a deterrent effect on NATO countries, especially on those that value their membership in the alliance and do not want to be singled out as “bad allies.”

#### Countries can’t easily democratize in response to political conditionality

Samiratou Dipama, PhD Candidate at Marmara University and Emel Parlar Dal, Professor at Marmara University, 2015

“The Effectiveness of Political Conditionality as an Instrument of Democracy Promotion by the EU: Case Studies of Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast and Niger,” Perceptions, Volume 10, No. 1, (accessed 5-24-2022)

Finally, the one-model-fits-all approach commonly used by the EU in the application of political conditionality limits the effectiveness of conditionality policy and can no longer be used. Indeed, in the context of democratizing a country, several factors might infuence the outcome other than just the willingness of the government. These include the presence or absence of a strong opposition and civil society, the degree of development of the country, the socio-economic situation in the country, and the country’s history.80 The complexity of these intervening factors clearly indicates that a countrybased democracy promotion’s approach appears a must in order to enhance the effectiveness of political aid as an instrument of democracy promotion in SSA. A great step has been made in this sense by the EU in the revised CPA (in 2010), where more attention is given to flexibility and to the individual circumstances of each ACP country.

#### Strategic interests, not human rights, should guide US policy

Oleg Svet, PhD and Defense Analyst, 2017

“When Pushing Democracy On Others Backfires,” The American Conservative, <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/when-pushing-democracy-on-others-backfires/>, (accessed 6-2-2022)

In her July 13 op-ed in Foreign Affairs, “How U.S. Officials Can Craft Innovative Human Rights Policy,” former Ambassador Sarah Mendelson recalls her work as a senior, politically-appointed foreign policy official in the Obama administration. Her personal mission, as she recalls, was to “elevate human rights”–first within USAID, and later when she worked for the US Mission to the United Nations. Her initiatives to promote civil society and human rights within small powers such as post-Ben Ali Tunisia are admirable. However, her implicit suggestion that we ought to elevate human rights in our relations with great powers such as China and Russia is strategically incorrect. Our country’s policies vis-a-vis great powers (and to some extent medium powers, such as Turkey) must be guided, first and foremost, by a grand strategy rooted in our strategic interests, not one that aims to reflect our values.

### --- gwinn rehighlgiht

#### Conditioning fails – delays critical cooperation with partner countries, causes Russia and China to fill in – we’re green

* “security assistance” and “security cooperation” used interchangeably

Gwinn 22 – Jeremy Gwinn, director of Army and Special Missions Team at OSC-I at the United States Department of Defense, Ph.D. in international law from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, B.A. in military science from Penn State University (“Sweeter Carrots and Harder Sticks: Rethinking US Security Assistance”, 4/19/2022, <https://warontherocks.com/2022/04/sweeter-carrots-and-harder-sticks-rethinking-u-s-security-assistance/>) FGY

Hard Is Not Impossible

These failings notwithstanding, there exists no shortage of arguments in favor of the status quo and against shifting America’s focus in security assistance to security-sector reform and conditional aid. In an **era of great-power competition, Russia, China, or regional competitors may simply step in to fill the gap** with the partner nation if the United States insists upon unwelcome reforms in exchange for aid. I know this is a valid concern because I have sat in meetings where **partners made thinly veiled reference to other nations which may provide assistance if the United States is unable or unwilling**. Still, the quality and technological edge of **U.S.** kit and the total-package approach which includes **training and follow-on support do provide the United States a competitive advantage**. But the bureaucratic apparatus responsible for delivering aid is far too slow and, as a result, is a liability. To outcompete, the **security assistance enterprise itself requires major reform to shorten typical lead times** from years to months. The Pentagon and State Department need the agility to turn aid on and off like a switch or rheostat.

Another argument against placing preconditions on security assistance is that the **stakes are too high to deny a partner a critical capability** while waiting for reform to happen. This is the “we can’t let them fail” mentality. It is also valid — but only in certain crisis situations where aid is needed immediately, and reform truly cannot wait. Ukraine today is a good example. Rather than ceasing aid writ large until a condition is met, **place conditions on** discrete **packages of aid**. The **intent should be to provide sufficient incentive to the host-nation government to modify behavior**, not threaten national survival. During the years I spent in Afghanistan, the security threats faced by the government never appeared to afford the breathing space to withhold aid while institutional reform took place. In hindsight, doing so may have required coalition forces to carry a greater operational burden while the Afghan forces sorted themselves out, but it also would have been worth it. As the events of August 2021 demonstrated, 20 years of unconditional capacity-building built shockingly little capacity. Implementing this change requires a recurring review of Defense Department-led train and equip programs to determine which truly qualify as crisis situations. Those which do not should be moved under State Department control for more deliberate, reform-focused approach.

There is also the simple argument that **instituting meaningful reform in a recalcitrant partner nation is hard**. This is true. But hard is not impossible. The security assistance enterprise should approach reform not in broad, sweeping terms but incremental steps. Rather than requiring the partner to eliminate corruption wholesale across the security forces, perhaps require that a particularly corrupt commander be removed before providing assistance to that unit. In the case of Iraq in the late 2000s, the United States might have required Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to fire certain commanders guilty of sectarian excesses or modify the personnel policy to make the armed forces more broadly inclusive. In other cases, reform measures may be as mundane as switching to an electronic pay system to reduce the opportunity for graft. Such a change in approach would also require a change in how the United States prepares officers for security assistance duties. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency has made great strides in its educational program to professionalize the security assistance workforce in recent years. It could further improve this program by embedding security sector reform more deeply into the curriculum.

Better Rewards, Tougher Inducements

The United States is **not getting the most for its security assistance dollars**. Programs intended to build partner capacity tend to underperform because **they fail to address underlying weakness in defense institutions** or take principal-agent problems into account. To build meaningful, long-lasting capacity in partners and better align security assistance with policy goals, the United States should shift from a “building partner capacity” **approach to a reform focus using conditional aid as leverage**. Doing so in an environment where security assistance is yet another **arena for strategic competition** with Russia, China, and others will require internal reform of the U.S. security assistance apparatus. Rather than a slow-moving bureaucracy, the United States needs an agile and streamlined security assistance enterprise able to deliver aid rapidly when needed and be paused or turned off just as easily when conditions require. In short, the **United States needs sweeter carrots and harder sticks**.

While the current U.S. effort to arm and equip Ukrainian forces is the most visible example today, it is not representative of the day-to-day work of security assistance which the United States carries out around the world. In most cases, the greater threat facing these partners is not an invading army but rather defense institutions for which reform is needed but not properly incentivized. **Modifying the U.S. approach to security assistance is one way to create that incentive and better align aid with policy goals.**

### backlash – russia

#### The counterplan gets perceived by Putin as another US-backed bid for democratic expansion – Russia responds with military intervention

Person & McFaul 22 – Robert Person, associate professor of international relations at the United States Military Academy, director of West Point’s International Affairs curriculum, term member at the Council on Foreign Relations, faculty affiliate at West Point’s Modern War Institute; Michael McFaul, former U.S. ambassador to Russia, professor of political science at Stanford University, director of the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Peter and Helen Bing Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution (“What Putin Fears Most”, *Journal of Democracy*, 2/22/2022, <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/what-putin-fears-most/>) FGY

Putin’s True Fear

The **more serious cause of tensions has been a series of democratic breakthroughs** and popular protests for freedom throughout the 2000s, what many refer to as the “Color Revolutions.” Putin believes that Russian national interests have been threatened by what he portrays as U.S.-supported coups. After each of them—Serbia in 2000, Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004, the Arab Spring in 2011, Russia in 2011–12, and Ukraine in 2013–14—Putin has pivoted to more hostile policies toward the United States, and then invoked the NATO threat as justification for doing so.

Boris Yeltsin never supported NATO expansion but acquiesced to the first round of expansion in 1997 because he believed his close ties to President Bill Clinton and the United States were not worth sacrificing over this comparatively smaller matter. Through Partnership for Peace and especially the NATO-Russia Founding Act, Clinton and his team made a considerable effort to keep US-Russian relations positive while at the same time managing NATO expansion. The 1999 NATO bombing of Serbia to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo severely tested that strategy but survived in part because Clinton gave Yeltsin and Russia a role in the negotiated solution. When the first post-communist color revolution overthrew Slobodan Milosevic a year later, Russia’s new president, Putin, deplored the act but did not overreact. At that time, he still entertained the possibility of cooperation with the West, including NATO.

However, the next round of democratic expansion in the post-Soviet world, the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia, escalated U.S.-Russian tensions significantly. Putin blamed the United States directly for assisting in this democratic breakthrough and helping to install what he saw as a pro-American puppet, President Mikheil Saakashvili. Immediately after the Rose Revolution, Putin sought to undermine Georgian democracy, ultimately invading in 2008 and recognizing two Georgian regions—Abkhazia and South Ossetia—as independent states. U.S.-Russian relations reached a new low point in 2008.

A year after the Rose Revolution, the most consequential democratic expansion in the post-Soviet world erupted in Ukraine in 2004, the [Orange Revolution](https://www.amazon.com/Revolution-Orange-Ukraines-Democratic-Breakthrough/dp/0870032216). In the years prior to that momentous event, Ukraine’s foreign-policy orientation under President Leonid Kuchma was [relatively balanced between east and west](https://www.csis.org/analysis/ponars-policy-memo-291-paradoxes-kuchmas-russian-policy), but with gradually improving ties between Kyiv and Moscow. That changed when a [falsified presidential election](https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/McFaul-16-3.pdf) in late 2004 brought hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians into the streets, eventually sweeping away Kuchma’s—and Putin’s—handpicked successor, Viktor Yanukovych. Instead, the prodemocratic and pro-western Orange Coalition led by President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko took power.

Compared to Serbia in 2000 or Georgia in 2003, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004 was a much larger threat to Putin. First, the Orange Revolution occurred suddenly and in a much bigger and more strategic country on Russia’s border. The abrupt pivot to the West by Yushchenko and his allies left Putin facing the prospect that he had “lost” a country on which he placed tremendous symbolic and strategic importance.

To Putin, the Orange Revolution **undermined a core objective of his**[**grand strategy**](https://www.csis.org/blogs/post-soviet-post/four-myths-about-russian-grand-strategy): to establish a privileged and exclusive sphere of influence across the territory that once comprised the Soviet Union. Putin believes in spheres of influence; that as a great power, Russia has a right to veto the sovereign political decisions of its neighbors. Putin also demands exclusivity in his neighborhood: Russia can be the only great power to exercise such privilege (or even develop close ties) with these countries. This position has hardened significantly since Putin’s conciliatory position of 2002 as Russia’s influence in Ukraine has waned and Ukraine’s citizens have repeatedly signaled their desire to escape from Moscow’s grasp. Subservience was now required. As Putin explained in a [recent historical article](http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181), in his view Ukrainians and Russians “were one people” whom he is seeking to reunite, even if through coercion. For Putin, therefore, the loss of Ukraine in 2004 to the West marked a major negative turning point in U.S.-Russian relations that was far more salient than the second wave of NATO expansion that was completed the same year.

Second, those Ukrainians who rose up in defense of their freedom were, in Putin’s own assessment, Slavic brethren with close historical, religious, and cultural ties to Russia. If it could happen in Kyiv, [why not in Moscow](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/480974)? Several years later, it almost did happen in Russia when [a series of mass protests](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/480973) erupted in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other cities in the wake of fraudulent parliamentary elections in December 2011. They were the largest protests in Russia since 1991, the year the Soviet Union collapsed. For the first time in his decade-plus in power, ordinary Russians showed themselves to have both the will and the capability to threaten Putin’s grip on power. That popular uprising in Russia, occurring the same year as the Arab Spring, and then followed with Putin’s return to the Kremlin as president for a third term in 2012, marked another major negative turn in U.S.-Russian relations, ending the [reset](https://www.amazon.com/Cold-War-Hot-Peace-Ambassador/dp/0544716248) launched by Presidents Obama and Medvedev in 2009. **Democratic mobilization**, first the Middle East and then Russia—not NATO expansion—**ended this last chapter of U.S.-Russian cooperation**. There have been no new chapters of cooperation since.

But U.S.-Russian relations deteriorated ever further in 2014, again because of new democratic expansion. The next democratic mobilization to threaten Putin happened a second time in Ukraine in 2013–14. After the Orange Revolution in 2004, Putin did not invade Ukraine, but wielded other instruments of influence to help his protégé, Viktor Yanukovych, [narrowly win the Ukrainian presidency](https://www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/understanding-ukraines-presidential-shift/) six years later. Yanukovych, however, turned out not to be a loyal Kremlin servant, but tried to cultivate ties with both Russia and the West. Putin finally compelled Yanukovych to make a choice, and the Ukrainian president chose Russia in the fall of 2013 when he reneged on signing [an EU association agreement](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/ukraine-under-pressure-from-russia-puts-brakes-on-eu-deal/2013/11/21/46c50796-52c9-11e3-9ee6-2580086d8254_story.html) in favor of membership in Russia’s Eurasian Economic Union.

To the surprise of everyone in Moscow, Kyiv, Brussels, and Washington, Yanukovych’s decision to scuttle this agreement with the EU triggered mass demonstrations in Ukraine again, bringing [hundreds of thousands](https://euromaidanpress.com/2016/02/20/the-story-of-ukraine-starting-from-euromaidan/2/) of Ukrainians into the streets in what would become known as the [Euromaidan](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/how-modern-ukraine-was-made-on-maidan/) or “Revolution of Dignity” to protest Yanukovych’s turn away from the democratic West. The street protests lasted several weeks, punctuated by the killing of dozens of peaceful protestors by Yanukovych’s government, the eventual collapse of that government and Yanukovych’s flight to Russia in February 2014, and a new [pro-Western government](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/27/world/europe/ukraine.html) taking power in Kyiv. Putin had “lost” Ukraine for the second time in a decade.

This time, **Putin struck back with military force** to punish the alleged American-backed, neo-Nazi usurpers in Kyiv. Russian armed forces seized Crimea; Moscow later annexed the Ukrainian peninsula. Putin also provided money, equipment, and soldiers to back separatists in eastern Ukraine, fueling a simmering war in Donbas for eight years, in which [approximately 14,000 people have been killed](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2022/russia-ukraine-conflict-photos-2014/). After invading, not before, Putin amped up his criticisms of NATO expansion as justification for his belligerent actions.

In response to this second Ukrainian democratic revolution, Putin concluded that cooption through elections and other nonmilitary means had to be augmented with greater coercive pressure, including military intervention. Since the Revolution of Dignity, Putin has waged [an unprecedented war](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Putin_s_War_Against_Ukraine/frfXAQAACAAJ?hl=en) against Ukraine using a full spectrum of military, political, informational, social, and economic weapons in an attempt to [destabilize and eventually topple Ukraine’s democratically elected government](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/10/06/heres-why-putin-wants-to-topple-ukraines-government-not-to-engineer-a-frozen-conflict/). Ukraine’s relationship with NATO and the United States is just a symptom of what Putin believes is the underlying disease: a sovereign, democratic Ukraine.

Putin’s Real Casus Belli: Ukrainian Democracy

Amazingly, eight years of unrelenting Russian pressure did not break Ukraine’s democracy. Just the opposite. After Putin’s annexation and ongoing support for the war in Donbas, Ukrainians are now more united across ethnic, linguistic, and regional divides than at any other point in Ukrainian history. In 2019, President Volodymyr Zelensky won in a landslide, winning popular support in every region of Ukraine. Not surprisingly, Putin’s war also has fueled greater popular support among Ukrainians for joining NATO.

So now, Putin has decided on a new strategy for ending Ukrainian democracy: **massive military intervention**. **Putin** **claims that his purpose is to stop NATO expansion. But that’s a fiction**. Nothing in the past year in Ukraine-NATO relations has changed. It is true Ukraine aspires to join NATO someday. (The goal is even embedded in the Ukrainian constitution.) But while NATO leaders have remained committed to the principle of an open-door policy, they have also clearly stated that Ukraine today is not qualified to join. Putin’s casus belli is his own invention.

Putin has fabricated this crisis about NATO expansion to undermine Ukrainian democracy even more directly. Already, the Russian military mobilization on Ukraine’s borders has triggered [significant damage to the Ukrainian economy](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/putin-has-seriously-wounded-ukraines-economy-without-firing-a-single-shot/) and fueled new divisions among Ukraine’s political parties over how Zelensky has handled the crisis. Some argue that Zelensky should have created a new grand coalition or unity government; others lament his alleged inadequate preparations for war. And some contend that Zelensky showed his diplomatic inexperience by arguing with U.S. president Joe Biden about the probability of a Russian invasion at a time when unity with the West is most needed. In other words, Putin’s military mobilization already achieved some early successes in his war against Ukrainian democracy.

Paradoxically, Putin’s use of force may have strengthened Ukrainian democracy in the short term. His [decision to invade Ukraine](http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67836) by sending Russian forces into the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (still recognized as sovereign Ukrainian territory under international law) has united Ukrainians and strengthened Zelensky’s popularity and image as a leader of the nation. But the long-term survival of Ukraine’s democracy hangs in the balance, and Putin’s [bellicose rhetoric](http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/67828) suggests that Moscow’s assault is just beginning. A blitzkrieg invasion and rapid encirclement of Kyiv could result in Zelensky’s forcible removal from power. New elections held at gunpoint could deliver the desired government, just as they did in [post–World War II Eastern Europe](https://ipn.gov.pl/en/digital-resources/articles/7193,Rigged-elections-19-January-1947.html) in the shadow of Soviet tanks. It is too early to predict the outcome. But Putin’s objective is clear.

**Putin may dislike NATO expansion, but he is not genuinely frightened by it.** Russia has the largest army in Europe, now much more capable after two decades of lavish spending. NATO is a defensive alliance. It has never attacked the Soviet Union or Russia, and it never will. Putin knows that. But Putin is threatened by a successful democracy in Ukraine. He cannot tolerate a successful, flourishing, and democratic Ukraine on his borders, especially if the Ukrainian people also begin to prosper economically. That undermines the Kremlin’s own regime stability and proposed rationale for autocratic state leadership. Just as Putin cannot allow the will of the Russian people to guide Russia’s future, he cannot allow the people of Ukraine, who have a shared culture and history, to choose the prosperous, independent, and free future that they have voted for and fought for.

Though the chance of deescalation is remote, further negotiations and the [threat of sanctions](https://nationalinterest.org/feature/sanctioning-russia-over-ukraine-no-silver-bullet-200031) could still—in theory—prevent a Russian invasion beyond Ukraine’s Donbas region in the coming days or weeks. But regardless of where Putin finally orders his troops to halt—be it Luhansk and Donetsk or Kharkiv, Odessa, Kyiv, or Lviv—the Kremlin will remain committed to undermining Ukrainian (and Georgian, Moldovan, Armenian, etc.) democracy and sovereignty for as long as Putin remains in power and maybe longer if Russian autocracy continues. Tragically, George Kennan’s warning in his 1947 Foreign Affairs article on “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” still holds true today:

“[The] Kremlin is under no ideological compulsion to accomplish its purposes in a hurry … Here caution, circumspection, flexibility and deception are the valuable qualities … And being under the compulsion of no timetable, it does not get panicky under the necessity for such retreat. Its political action is a fluid stream which moves constantly, wherever it is permitted to move, toward a given goal.”

There should be no illusions about Putin’s long-term strategic goal of stopping democratic expansion, in Ukraine and the rest of the region.

#### Putin lashes out to boost self-preservation – he fears democratic expansion, not NATO

Tafuri 22 – David Tafuri, international lawyer at Arent Fox, opinion contributor to The Hill, served as the US Department of State’s Rule of Law Coordinator for Iraq at the US Embassy in Baghdad and an outside foreign policy advisor to President Barack Obama (“**Putin doesn’t fear NATO or Ukraine – he fears democracy**”, 2/10/2022, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/593627-putin-doesnt-fear-nato-or-ukraine-he-fears-democracy/>) FGY

As the world waits to learn if [Putin](https://thehill.com/people/vladimir-putin/)will order a full-scale military offensive in Ukraine, Washington seems to be stumbling over a simple question: How much does Russian aggression in Europe matter to U.S. interests? One [view](https://thehill.com/opinion/international/584619-why-the-us-shouldnt-try-to-deter-a-russian-invasion-of-ukraine) is that Ukraine’s status is more important to Russia than to us, especially because Ukraine is not a part of NATO. Others go further, questioning whether even NATO members, guaranteed protection by [Article 5](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm), are worth defending.

Media have [noted](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/01/27/tucker-carlson-support-putin-republicans/) Tucker Carlson’s growing influence in Republican circles on this question. Two years ago, he previewed his stance when I [debated](https://video.foxnews.com/v/5989829150001#sp=show-clips) him on his show. He argued that NATO members Estonia and Latvia, are, like Ukraine, not worth defending if invaded by Russia. I countered, as I explain in more detail here, that it’s in America’s vital interest to support these sovereign nations — precisely because Putin is targeting them for their decision to turn away from the governance model on offer from Russia.

To understand why Putin’s threat to invade Ukraine — or any other independent state in Europe — matters, consider why he might do it. Putin wants you to believe it’s because NATO expansion to Ukraine threatens the Russian people and Russia’s security. He doesn’t genuinely believe this. It’s propaganda.

NATO is a defensive alliance. No member of NATO, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, has conveyed a credible threat to peoples or places inside Russia’s current borders. In fact, NATO sought a constructive [relationship](https://carnegiemoscow.org/2021/10/20/why-russia-officially-broke-with-nato-pub-85611) with Russia after the dissolution of the U.S.S.R., until Putin steered the country onto its present course. Putin is a careful study and knows that NATO isn’t interested in gobbling up Russian territory or subjugating Russian people. Similarly, a sovereign and independent Ukraine presents no actual threat to Russian lands.

Putin fears an independent Ukraine with strong ties to the West for the same reason he [sent troops](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/russia-sends-troops-into-kazakhstan-as-protests-turn-deadly/) to Kazakhstan last month to put down peaceful protests, [poisoned and imprisoned](https://time.com/6140102/alexei-navalny-russia-profile/) Alexei Navalny, his political opponent in Russia, and [directed Russian spy services](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/senate-committee-unanimously-endorses-spy-agencies-finding-that-russia-interfered-in-2016-presidential-race-in-bid-to-help-trump/2020/04/21/975ca51a-83d2-11ea-ae26-989cfce1c7c7_story.html) to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. There’s one **common thread** running through each of these endeavors — and nearly every other foreign policy initiative now championed by Putin: He **wants to undermine democracy**, wherever it is, or can take root, especially in countries on Russia’s border that he’s worried he can’t control.

Why does he fear democracy so much? Sure, Putin is a Cold War enthusiast, but his main priority is not to restore the eminence of old U.S.S.R. in Eastern Europe. It’s to **boost his own prospect for self-preservatio**n. To Putin, this means [consolidating](https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/how-putin-controls-russia) all political powers in Russia inside his office and carefully **guarding against the appeal of democratic challengers to his “forever presidency.”** Last year, Putin [amended](https://www.theweek.co.uk/106126/putin-s-plan-to-rule-for-longer-than-stalin) the Russian constitution so he can remain President until at least 2036. This will make him Kremlin’s [longest serving](https://nationalpost.com/news/world/putin-signs-law-that-could-make-him-russias-longest-serving-ruler-since-stalin) leader since Peter the Great, even longer than Stalin.

NATO has never posed a real threat to Putin’s supremacy inside Russia. But a **well-functioning democracy on Russia’s border, which could inspire new democratic movements within Russia**, would. And this **threat could be especially dangerous for Putin** if it re-focused Russians inward, at their own lamentable [economy](https://www.economist.com/briefing/2021/04/23/the-kremlin-has-isolated-russias-economy), instead of on Putin’s outward bluster that NATO is the greatest threat to their well-being.

Because the true source of Putin’s ire is the adoption of more democratic institutions by sovereign states in Russia’s neighborhood, **Putin is actually challenging not a particular nation or alliance, but the spread of democracy and rule of law.**

When the sovereignty of nations striving for more stable democracies is threatened, U.S. commitment to democracy in general is at stake.

The U.S. cheered Ukraine during three defining events in its democracy: first, when it held a referendum in 1991 and [90 percent](https://www.ft.com/content/0cbbd590-8e48-4687-a302-e74b6f0c905d) of its population voted in favor of independence; second, during [the “Orange Revolution”](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/how-ukraines-orange-revolution-shaped-twenty-first-century-geopolitics/) in the winter of 2004, when people took to the streets of Kyiv to protest an election clearly rigged to benefit the Kremlin-backed candidate (the pro-Western candidate [survived an attempted assassination by poison](https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-43611547)), and third, when a groundswell of democratic protests in 2013 [forced](https://www.vox.com/2022/1/30/22908600/ukraine-crisis-putin-russia-one-people-myth-nato-europe) former President Viktor Yanukovych from power after his decision to back out of a popular trade agreement with the EU in fealty to Moscow. All three were clear rejections of Russia, in favor of democracy.

What Russia is posing to do now, after 30 years of Ukrainian independence, is a clear violation of international law. The lack of a response could **usher the collapse of a rules-based order** which the U.S. has nurtured since the end of WWII. The U.N. is already absent on the issue of Ukraine’s sovereignty because of Russia’s [veto](https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/why-united-nations-can-t-solve-ukraine-crisis-n1288480).

In 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait without any legal basis for doing so, the U.S. [organized](https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/gulf-war) a coalition and mobilized in Kuwait’s defense, with U.N. [authorization](http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/678). This sent a message to aggressors around the world that if they invade their neighbors, they could be destroyed.

If Putin successfully invades Ukraine without serious consequences, it would send the opposite message — and might lead Putin to believe he can do it again, including to one of those NATO democracies in Eastern Europe that [Tucker Carlson](https://thehill.com/people/tucker-carlson/)believes aren’t worth defending.

It would also signal to other nationalist regimes with extraterritorial aspirations — including China, Iran, and Turkey — that they too could orchestrate cross-border offensives to stamp out democratic tendencies in their region without repercussion.

#### Putin is uniquely emboldened by democratization

West 22 – John West, adjunct professor at Tokyo’s Sophia University, executive director of the Asian Century Institute (“Saving democracy from Russian rage”, *The Interpreter*, 3/14/2022, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/saving-democracy-russian-rage>) FGY

Much is being written about Russia’s invasion of the Ukraine, and much more will surely be said in the months and years ahead of this potentially epoch-defining event. But some of the most insightful and almost prescient analyses were made well before the conflict, such as in Larry Diamond’s excellent 2020 book, [Ill winds: Saving democracy from Russian rage, Chinese ambition, and American complacency](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/588987/ill-winds-by-larry-diamond/).

Diamond, a professor at Stanford University, documents the political transformation of the world through the “third wave of democratisation”, beginning in the 1970s and 1980s, followed by a big bang after the fall of the Berlin wall, with the democratisation of central and eastern Europe. But then began a global democratic recession.

Badly governed, poorly performing democracies are indeed accidents waiting to happen. It may be difficult to remember but there were hopes back in the 1990s that a nascent Russian democracy might mature under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin. But the country’s politics were then hijacked by Vladimir Putin. Putin led a backslide to authoritarianism.

Diamond begins the chapter “Russia’s global assault” by recalling the famous “Long Telegram” written in 1946 by George F. Kennan, the number two official at the US Embassy in Moscow. Kennan wrote of the “Kremlin’s neurotic view of world affairs” and “a traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity” and “a fear of more competent, more powerful, more highly organised” Western societies. The Soviet Union’s leaders knew that their “fragile and artificial” regime was “unable to stand comparison or contact with political systems of Western countries”. Kennan predicted a relentless Soviet campaign to “disrupt national self-confidence” in the United States and Europe and “to stimulate all forms of disunity” within Western democracies.

Diamond argues that Putin’s view of Russia and the world is strikingly similar to that of the Soviet leaders whom Kennan described in the Long Telegram. Putin believes that the **West is seeking to encircle Russia and keep it weak**. Despite his unrivalled power, Putin is deeply insecure about the legitimacy of his rule. And he **panics at the sight of popular demonstrations, which he blames on Western plots to unseat him**.

So **Putin has responded by vast military interventions, cyber-hacking, and other interference and influence operations** against the West and its interests. He is using the openness and pluralism of Western democracies to subvert them and taking advantage of the West’s reluctance for military engagement.

In sum, Putin’s Russia is “waging a global assault on democracy”, according to Diamond.

## competition

### perm do counterplan

#### Should does not mean absolutely mandatory, it’s a discretionary term

Judge Mulrroney, Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration Chief Administrative Law Judge and Katherine Legel, Judicial Law Clerk at the Drug Enforcement Administration, 2017

“CURRENT NAVIGATION POINTS IN DRUG DIVERSION LAW: HIDDEN ROCKS IN SHALLOW, MURKY, DRUG-INFESTED WATERS,” Marquette Law Review, p. 384

The Agency disagreed with the ALJ's interpretation of the Oklahoma provisions, and held that "should" does not really mean "should," at least in those provisions, but actually means "must," and connoted a mandatory obligation in the context of the provisions at issue. 292 The Agency based its decision on its interpretation of cases from the Seventh Circuit, the D.C. Circuit, a federal district court in Florida, and a dictionary definition of "should," as well as an analysis of the Oklahoma Medical Practice Act and a Policy Statement. 293 Interestingly, a Tenth Circuit (which includes Oklahoma) case which held that ""should' indicates a recommended course of action, but does not itself imply the obligation associated with "shall,'" received no mention in the Agency's decision in Pope. 294 Thus, contrary to the Agency's view, the pertinent Circuit Court of Appeals holds the view that the most reasonable interpretation of the word "should" is really "should" - a discretionary term. 295 The Agency did not discuss the fact that there is some level of conflict in the circuit courts about whether to treat "should" as mandatory or permissive, 296 but the Agency has apparently taken the position that, if the state law supplying the practice standard in a DEA case uses the word "should," the Agency is likely to read that word as "must," irrespective of federal circuit law on the issue. 297

#### The term “should” carries flexibility and discretion

Sam Foster Halabi, Assistant Professor, University of Tulsa College of Law. J.D., Harvard Law School, 2010

“ARTICLE: THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON TOBACCO CONTROL: AN ANALYSIS OF GUIDELINES ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES”, 39 Ga. J. Int'l & Comp. L. 121, 136

The purpose, scope, and applicability of the guidelines variously declare that States "should," "should consider," "should endeavour," "should ensure," and "should require" the measures adopted by the COP. 66The text of the FCTC uses the word "shall" as to certain of Parties' obligations. 67The use of the word "should," in most contexts, is "precatory, not mandatory." 68Yet the word "should" may also be used to express a duty or obligation albeit with a degree of flexibility or discretion. 69FCTC Article 11.1(b)(iv) illustrates this distinction, requiring that warnings and messages "should be 50% or more of the principal display areas but shall be no less than 30% of the principal display areas." 70Furthermore, many of the measures adopted without objection by the COP are styled "recommendations," the ordinary meaning of which does not entail mandatory action. 71In the following sections, the treaty language is juxtaposed with key language from the guidelines in an effort to sort out obligations imposed by the treaty language, obligations clarified by virtue of guidance from the guidelines, and non-obligatory provisions of the guidelines that are precatory or recommendatory. 72

#### Should means encouragement, not requirement

Ryan Williams, received his law degree in 2008 from Louisiana State University , graduating with honors. He was a member of the Law Review and served as a Senior Editor during his Senior year, 2008

“Reputation and the Rules: An Argument for a Balancing Approach under Rule 8.3 of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct”, 68 La. L. Rev. 931, p. 936

As in Canon 29, use of the permissive "should" implies that the Georgia Rule is merely hortatory; it encourages reporting misbehavior without requiring it. Georgia Rule 8.3 goes a step further than Canon 29, in fact, by explicitly disclaiming any threat of disciplinary proceedings for failure to comply.

#### It’s not a mandatory obligation

Gil Fried, University of New Haven and Robin Ammon, Slippery Rock University, 2001

“What is Appropriate Signage for the Sport Industries?,” Journal of Legal Aspects of Sports, p. 190

The everyday use of signage affects the efficient and safe flow of vehicular traffic. Tort liability for traffic signage related issues is predicated upon standards established by each states' Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Under these guidelines government entities are required to develop uniformity in communicating safety concerns. Uniformity means that the same type of device should be used for the same type of road condition, which helps drivers to develop and maintain certain expectancies (Blashke, 1990). The MUTCD uses terms such as "shall," "should," and "may" to suggest or demand the application of traffic control devices. If the word "shall" is used it is a mandatory term and the state has to follow the guidelines. In contrast, the term "should" indicates only a strong recommendation, but not a mandatory recommendation. A good example of this difference can be seen with stop signs. The MUTCD states that stop signs "shall" be an octagon and further provides that when two highways intersect the stop sign "should" be posted on the minor street (Blashke, 1990). The difference between "shall" and "should" is very significant for traffic sign cases since liability is harder to prove if the state was not required to post a sign when compared with instances where the state failed to post a required sign.

## net benefit

### squo solves

#### The United States already did the counterplan under Trump

Jonathan Katz, director of Democracy Initiatives and a senior fellow with The German Marshall Fund of the United States, and Torry Taussig, research director for the Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center, 2018 “An inconvenient truth: Addressing democratic backsliding within NATO,” Brookings Institute, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/07/10/an-inconvenient-truth-addressing-democratic-backsliding-within-nato/>, (accessed 6-2-2022)

In developing the communiqué’s language, the United States and its NATO allies should use momentum from Assistant Secretary for Europe and Eurasia Wess Mitchell’s recent remarks at the Heritage Foundation, where he reaffirmed that when it comes to NATO, “[w]e have to be clear that we stand for strong democracy as the foundation of our security and prosperity.” Based on this positioning, Washington would likely support NATO allies if they insist that democracy, human rights, and rule of law be a focus of the NATO summit and its communiqué.

#### Countries other than the US solve

Jonathan Katz, director of Democracy Initiatives and a senior fellow with The German Marshall Fund of the United States, and Torry Taussig, research director for the Project on Europe and the Transatlantic Relationship at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center, 2018 “An inconvenient truth: Addressing democratic backsliding within NATO,” Brookings Institute, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/07/10/an-inconvenient-truth-addressing-democratic-backsliding-within-nato/>, (accessed 6-2-2022)

Regardless of U.S. leadership or support, other NATO states such as the Nordic countries, Canada, Germany, France, the United Kingdom and other members must play a role in prioritizing NATO’s core values at the Brussels Summit and strengthening democratic institutions. In speaking to diplomats from several member states, it is clear that they recognize the growing democracy deficit in the alliance, and that the United States will likely not lead the charge on championing democratic institutions. In response, officials from such member states can use bilateral meetings and sideline conversations with the Hungarians, Poles, and Turks to raise concerns. Already the European Union is pressing Poland on its violation of EU democratic principles with the threat of sanctions and suspension of voting privileges. The security implications of their transgressions give NATO a role in maintaining this pressure, too.

### us fails

#### Jan 6 ruined US demo-cred

Soare 21, PhD in Political Science, Senior Associate Analyst at EUISS from 2019 to end May 2021. Her research focused on United States security policy, transatlantic security and EU-NATO relations. Prior to joining EUISS, Simona served as advisor to the Vice-President of the European Parliament (2015-2019) and as an analyst with the Romanian Ministry of Defence, working on transatlantic and European security. She has also been a research associate with the Institut d’Études Européennes (IEE) at Université Saint Louis-Bruxelles (Simona, Biden’s Security Policy: Democratic Security or Democratic Exceptionalism?, <https://www.intereconomics.eu/contents/year/2021/number/1/article/biden-s-security-policy-democratic-security-or-democratic-exceptionalism.html)//BB>

More broadly, Biden's team will emphasise human rights and democratic principles and shift from a transactional to a more traditionally conditional US pressure on partners. This could take the form of leveraging US strategic relations with challenging allies like Poland, Hungary and Turkey to achieve concessions on respect for the rule of law and human rights (Harvard-DGAP, 2020, 4). However, following the 6 January 2021 storming of the US Capitol by pro-Trump rioters, experts argue: 'The power of America's example will be dimmer than it once was; American arguments will be harder to hear' (Applebaum, 2021). Some have called on President Biden to abandon the idea of an international Summit for Democracy and instead focus inwards on American democratic renewal e.g. (Goldgeier and Jentlesen, 2021).

#### US human rights pressure fails because of hypocrisy

Anna Rosario Malindog-Uy, Professor of Political Science, International Relations, Development Studies, European Studies, SEA and China Studies, April 17, 2022

“Human Rights: US’ Double Standards, Hypocrisy,” ASEAN Post, <https://theaseanpost.com/opinion/2022/apr/17/human-rights-us-double-standards-hypocrisy>, (accessed 6-2-2022)

Unimaginably, the US is like a loose cannon with its double standards and hypocrisy in lecturing and pillorying other countries’ human rights shortcomings as if it has the moral and ethical superiority on this matter. It is as if the US is the world’s human rights judge and role model. Truth be told, the US hardly befits a nation that is a role model of human rights to be emulated by other countries. Relative to its size and power, the US, at the moment, is one, if not the most brazen and impertinent guilty party or delinquent in the international human rights community. Nevertheless, it is unashamed to castigate other countries across the world for their human rights deficiencies as if it has the moral ascendancy and credibility to do so, given that the US does not practice what it preaches more often than not. To note, the US is the only major world power that has failed to fully ratify or adhere to any of the significant human rights instruments introduced by the United Nations (UN) or other human rights bodies.

#### Domestic human rights violations prevent effective US pressure

Tanya Elahi, JD, assessment analyst at the Independent Office for Police Conduct, 2020

“Hypocrisy And Human Rights Abuses In The Land Of The Free,” Human Rights Pulse, <https://www.humanrightspulse.com/mastercontentblog/hypocrisy-and-human-rights-abuses-in-the-land-of-the-free>, (accessed 6-2-2022)

The US has faced accusations of voter suppression by introducing policies such as requiring citizens to show ID and prohibiting early votes, both of which disproportionately affect Black Americans and disabled people. The report highlights that people of colour and specifically Black Americans are “particularly vulnerable to abuses of every single right measured”. This highlights a worrying disregard for human rights which appears to affect vulnerable minority groups at a higher level. THE HYPOCRISY OF THE US America has taken a leading role in condemning human rights abuses worldwide. In December 2019, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo condemned Iran for violating human rights, including “the violent crackdown on protestors in November 2019”. This US subsequently placed sanctions on Iran. The current protests taking place in the US demonstrate the country’s outright hypocrisy. The death of George Floyd at the hands of US police officers has triggered worldwide protests against police brutality. American protestors have largely been met with further violence from the police. What began as a series of peaceful protests quickly became widespread chaos, with police cars driving into protestors, elderly men being pushed to the ground and seriously injured, and assaults on innocent reporters. Pompeo has also criticised Tehran for using violence against anti-government protestors. He stated that “we pray for a day when … all peoples can speak and assemble freely without fear of their own governments.” Whilst this violation of human rights should certainly be condemned, it is difficult to see how any country could learn lessons from the US, where the state is encouraging the use of violence against its own citizens during protests. For instance, Trump tweeted a controversial warning to protestors, stating that “when the looting starts, the shooting starts”. This statement was flagged by Twitter as violating their guidelines by “glorifying violence”. These protests are a clear example of the US committing the same violations it condemns overseas. THE EFFECTS OF HYPOCRITICAL POLICY The hypocrisy demonstrated by the US has a huge impact on the enforcement of international human rights. The US has a reputation for boasting about its citizens’ freedoms and claims to set an example for the rest of the world. US violations, however, of its own citizens freedoms have allowed countries such as China and Russia to undermine American efforts to condemn human rights abuses. America’s recent violations are likely to prohibit any effective intervention when encouraging other countries to respect human rights.

#### Global atrocities committed by the US undermine its ability to promote human rights

Anna Rosario Malindog-Uy, Professor of Political Science, International Relations, Development Studies, European Studies, SEA and China Studies, April 17, 2022

“Human Rights: US’ Double Standards, Hypocrisy,” ASEAN Post, <https://theaseanpost.com/opinion/2022/apr/17/human-rights-us-double-standards-hypocrisy>, (accessed 6-2-2022)

Externally, the war waged by America in countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria alone have already caused more than 20 million people to become either refugees or migrants. During the US withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan, a US drone killed 10 members of an Afghan family, including seven children, among which the youngest was only two years old. Also, to date, the US still holds 39 detainees at the Guantanamo high-security prison. Hence, given all these, it is imperative to ask if the US, a title-holder in pointing fingers at the human rights shortcomings of other countries, will take responsibility and address its dismal human rights record within its borders and beyond? Conclusion Indeed, “righteous indignation should be reserved for the truly righteous.” But America is far from being righteous given its blatant dismal human rights record within its borders and beyond. America lecturing the world on human rights is a farce, for it doesn’t have the moral ascendancy and integrity given its gloomy human rights record. Instead of schooling other countries on their human rights shortcomings, the US probably needs some self-introspection and should first address its human rights situation.

#### Failure to shore up democracy at home makes global democracy promotion impossible

Elisa Massimino, contributor to Washington Post, 2021

“America’s hypocrisy on democracy and human rights has a cost,” Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/letters-to-the-editor/americas-hypocrisy-on-democracy-and-human-rights-has-a-cost/2021/06/15/6f28fb3e-cd28-11eb-a224-bd59bd22197c_story.html>, (accessed 6-2-2022)

American diplomats have long understood that hypocrisy has a cost, especially for a nation that seeks to champion the ideals of democracy and human rights as the cornerstone of global peace and security. As E.J. Dionne Jr. rightly pointed out in his June 10 Thursday Opinion column, “Our national security now depends on civil rights,” failing to shore up our democratic institutions and uphold human rights at home deepens the United States’ credibility deficit and weakens its effectiveness as a champion of these values abroad. And that has serious national security implications, because we know — from hard data and grim experience — that Americans are safer when democracies set the rules of a global order. But though it’s true that our adversaries will use this hypocrisy to discredit the United States in the global struggle of ideas, there’s a deeper and more direct security threat posed by our failure to live up to those ideals at home. Societal divisions that result from systemic racism and other human rights violations left to fester, combined with weak institutions seemingly incapable of addressing these challenges, make us not just a weaker champion but also a weaker nation, increasingly vulnerable to attacks of all kinds from those with a different vision of the world.

### at: avoids politics

#### The counterplan threatens NATO allies. That links to politics.

Tamkin 18 [Emily Tamkin is a Reporter covering foreign affairs, "More than 8 in 10 Americans support NATO, study finds", Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/04/03/more-than-americans-support-nato-study-finds/] GBS-HW

NATO is a popular punching bag for President Trump. Days before coming into office, he called it “obsolete.” As president, he’s railed against European spending on defense and noted time and again that many NATO allies don’t meet the target of 2 percent of gross domestic product on defense. Other U.S. politicians — in Congress, for example — have rushed to make sure NATO allies know that the United States remains committed to the alliance. But as NATO approaches its 70th birthday Thursday, it’s worth asking — are Americans still behind NATO or have they been swayed by Trump’s arguments?

According to a new study by the Program for Public Consultation of the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland and released by the nonpartisan organization Voice of the People, the American people remain committed to NATO, too.

Respondents were put in the position of policymakers and presented with arguments for and against remaining in NATO. Just over 8 in 10, or 83 percent, of the roughly 2,400 respondents said that the United States should remain in NATO.

“The idea is that you’re putting the respondent in the shoes of the policymaker so they’ve really heard the essential side of the issue,” said Steven Kull, director of the survey.

President Trump speaks with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in the Oval Office of the White House, on Tuesday. (Evan Vucci/AP)

And support bridged the proverbial aisle, with 90 percent of Democratic respondents and 77 percent of Republicans saying the United States should remain in NATO. (Since at least 2009, according to the Pew Research Center, Democrats have taken a more favorable view of NATO.)

“Given that there is substantial discussion questioning whether NATO membership is necessary, and given that Russia has become relatively weak and that it’s been some years since the Cold War, I thought it was striking that support for NATO membership is as robust as it is,” said Kull, noting that, even in “very red districts,” 78 percent of respondents thought the United States should remain in NATO (and that millennials, many who do not remember the Cold War, overwhelmingly supported that option, with 77 percent opting to remain).

But it isn’t just that Democrats and Republicans alike think the United States should remain in NATO. Respondents were presented with three choices — press Europeans to spend more on defense and threaten to disengage if they do not; urge Europeans to spend more but do not threaten to disengage; or remain part of NATO but bring military investments in line with what Europeans spend.

The most popular option was actually to bring U.S. military investments in line with the investments Europeans are making.

“It wasn’t a conclusion we should necessarily spend less — it’s more to bring U.S. military investments in line with the European level,” Kull clarified, the thinking being that, “ ‘Well if the Europeans are comfortable at the level that they’re at, maybe we should adjust ours.’ ”

But the significant thing to Kull was that most people did not favor threatening NATO allies. For both Democratic and Republican respondents, threatening to disengage was the least popular option, with only 4 percent of Democrats and 21 percent of Republicans saying that they found it to be the most convincing.

It’s “one more indicator of how robust support is for the alliance,” Kull said. “That the threat to withdraw was so widely rejected.” A little something for NATO to celebrate, perhaps, on its 70th birthday.