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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Advantages and disadvantages of inclusive multilateral venues: The rise and fall of the United Nations General Assembly resolution on new or restored democracies

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Abstract Are the factors that lead states to increase their support for an international norm in a particular multilateral venue similar to or different from those that influence states to decrease their support? This article presents a case study of the rise and fall of a recurring United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution on UN support for new or restored democracies. Domestic and international influences on the rise in support for the resolution from 1994 to the early 2000s include states' interests in preventing destructive effects of authoritarianism, attracting resources, improving security, the UN's flexible understanding of democracy, procedural legitimacy, and regional influences. However, the puzzle of states' decreased support for the resolution after the mid-2000s is better explained by the emergence of an alternative, more exclusive venue, leading actors concerned with substantive outcomes to shift political attention away from the movement associated with the UNGA.

Keywords United Nations General Assembly · International norms · Changes in foreign policy orientations · Democratic governance · Co-sponsorship

Introduction

International relations (IR) scholarship has paid much more attention to the emergence or rise of international norms than to their decline. Are factors that lead states to increase their support for a norm in a particular venue similar to or distinct from the factors that influence states to decrease their support? Through a case study of a recurring United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution, "Support by the United Nations (UN) system for the efforts of Governments to promote and

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consolidate new or restored democracies"[1] (referred to hereafter as the *new or restored democracies resolution*), this article examines trends in states' foreign policy orientations during the rise and fall of an important recurring UNGA resolution which, beginning in 1994, helped to galvanize the UN system's support for democratic development.

This article highlights a resolution comprising norms specifying standards of behaviour for an international organization (e.g. how the UN system should support democratic development in new or restored democracies). Changes in states' orientations towards the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution are puzzling in part because the resolution has received support from states that are generally considered to have non- or partially democratic regimes. Evidence challenges some domestic-level explanations of foreign policy change and international norm development.

To the findings of this special issue, this article illustrates a case in which some important determinants of changes in foreign policy orientations towards a resolution are found at the international level. In particular, this study shows how the characteristics of a venue in which norms are negotiated can affect states' positions (see also Coleman 2013). Although procedural legitimacy in an inclusive multilateral venue can contribute to support for a norm set, if an alternative, more exclusive venue offers prospects for more substantial agreements and implementation, a group of states may shift their foreign policy orientations on the norms in question away from the inclusive multilateral venue.

The following section highlights advantages and disadvantages of inclusive multilateral venues, which are key to explaining the decline in states' support for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution after the mid-2000s. The initial rise in states' support from 1994 to the early 2000s was influenced by a few additional domestic-level (push) and international-level (pull) factors, which complement those proposed by Brazys et al. (2017, in this issue). After a brief introduction to trends in the International Conferences on New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD) movement, the article analyses the rise and fall in states' co-sponsorship of the recurring UNGA resolution, in comparison with developments in the Community of Democracies (CD). The final section presents the article's conclusions.

Advantages and disadvantages of inclusive multilateral venues

The venue in which norms are negotiated has had both positive and negative effects on states' support for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution under different conditions. The concept of inclusiveness employed here conveys the UNGA's nearly universal membership and principle of sovereign equality, as well as transcending a particular basis of stratification in an international organization (see Viola 2015). Although this article examines participation of like-minded and non-like-minded states in the particular issue area of UN support for democratic

[1] This UNGA resolution was considered annually in 1994–2000 and then biennially until 2012.

development, parts of the argument may be extended to venues that transcend other historical distinctions in IOs.

States' foreign policy orientations towards international norms in the UNGA are affected by tensions between procedural and substantive legitimacy. Norms developed in inclusive multilateral venues, such as the UNGA, typically benefit from procedural legitimacy, i.e. the perception that a rule or rule-making institution is legitimate if "it has come into being and operates in accordance with generally accepted principles of right process" (Hurrell 2007, p. 80; Franck 1990, p. 24; Clark 2005, pp. 18–19). The UNGA's moral authority is derived in part from its broad membership. Moreover, the idea that each state has the right to participate in UNGA decision-making has particular salience for states that had been previously denied membership as colonies (see Krisch 2003, pp. 145–146) and is important for attenuating inequalities (Viola 2015). This echoes democratic ideals that all those potentially affected by decisions should be included equally in decision-making processes (Young 2000; Habermas 1994; Viola 2015). Yet, the domestic analogy is flawed in the UN context, in part because there are wide variations in the sizes of UN member states (Panke 2013) as well as the degree to which these states represent their citizens. Thus, there are significant tensions between procedural legitimacy and achieving substantive goals, i.e. moral purposes of the UN for individuals, including peace, development, and human rights (Reus-Smit 2000, pp. 307–308; Viola 2015; Hurd 2007, pp. 70–73).

Under what conditions do inclusive multilateral venues affect states' foreign policy orientations towards international norms? As Katharina Coleman states, "norm leaders are by definition committed to the norm they advocate, and thus prefer venues where this norm is likely to be adopted" (2013, p. 171). Decision-makers often face a trade-off between maximizing procedural or substantive legitimacy, which is sometimes analysed as a tension between legitimacy and efficiency, or between obtaining widespread support for a (potentially weak) norm versus obtaining more limited support for a stronger international norm (Coleman 2013, pp. 171–172; Pouliot and Thérien 2015, pp. 228–237). Counter-intuitively, changes in states' foreign policy orientations towards a particular resolution may not reflect shifts in policy regarding the core content of the norms. Rather, changes in foreign policy orientations can reflect shifts in perceptions about advantages and disadvantages of the multilateral venue in which norm development takes place (see Coleman 2013).

A venue viewed as obstructing the codification or elaboration of norms builds frustration among highly committed diplomats and activists. Critics of large, heterogeneous multilateral venues often find fault with procedural inefficiencies, which can lead to minimalist normative agreements and policies (Downs et al. 1998). These scholars argue that it is more advantageous for smaller groups of states to negotiate highly substantive agreements and to gradually expand membership with accession criteria (see Olson 1965; Acharya and Johnston 2007, pp. 16–17). Thus, state representatives committed to specific policy outcomes may withdraw support for a recurring resolution in a venue with a large, heterogeneous composition if they perceive an alternative (either a bilateral or a more restricted multilateral venue) to operate more efficiently (see Cameron et al. 1998; Coleman 2013; Reus-Smit 2000). One example is the international campaign to ban

landmines, or "Ottawa Process", which circumvented the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in favour of a strong agreement among a smaller group of "like-minded" countries, in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations (Coleman 2013, pp. 173–176; Cameron et al. 1998). However, this resulted in an international treaty, despite non-universal ratification, and a recurring UNGA resolution.[2] The following sections illustrate that while a multilateral venue's legitimacy derived from inclusiveness is one of the several influences initially supporting the rise in states' support for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution, tensions between procedural and substantive legitimacy are key to explaining decreases in states' support for the resolution over time.

Social psychological approaches also provide insights into advantages and disadvantages of inclusive multilateral venues. When states qualify to participate in a more exclusive group, that group is likely to become more attractive to them (see Tajfel and Turner 1986). In the UNGA, with its minimal membership criteria and large, heterogeneous composition, there is pressure for states to form smaller groups (Viola 2015; Hecht 2012). As Marilynn Brewer explains: "Association with groups that are too large or inclusive should leave residual motivation for greater differentiation of the self from that group identity" (1993, p. 4). Yet Brewer's theory of optimal distinctiveness conveys an ominous warning for large, heterogeneous international organizations: subgroupings "will engage social identification of their members, *to the potential detriment of the superordinate collective"* (1993, p. 15, italics added).

The following analysis is innovative in its use of co-sponsorship data. Co-sponsorship "registers agreement on a proposal; therefore, the longer the list of co-sponsors, the greater is the political impact of the proposal", argues Mower (1962, p. 662). Moreover, co-sponsorship data provide different insights into changes in foreign policy orientations than data on UNGA voting patterns, in part because co-sponsorship data are available for resolutions on which no vote is taken (see also Panke 2013; Rai 1977). Resolutions that pass without a vote are typically less controversial, as states generally do not have major reservations against the content. Yet significant shifts in foreign policy orientations towards a resolution can be captured with indicators of co-sponsorship. To assess these trends, I created an original data set documenting all instances and changes in co-sponsorship for the recurring UNGA new or restored democracies resolution over time. I also conducted content analysis through process tracing of archival data, provisional verbatim, and summary records of statements made in UNGA meetings and drew on semi-structured interviews with UN officials and diplomats to the UN in New York and Geneva in 2014.

Origins and evolution of the recurring new or restored democracies resolution in the UNGA

The recurring UNGA new or restored democracies resolution was adopted without a vote on 14 occasions between its launch in 1994 and 2012, yet despite consensus over its content, the resolution has experienced a distinct increase and decrease in

[2] See UNGA, A/RES/54/54B, A/RES/70/55.

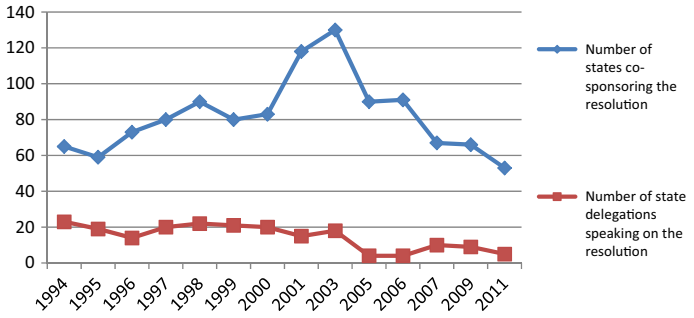

Fig. 1 UN General Assembly consideration of "Support by the United Nations system for the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies"

the number of co-sponsoring states over time, as illustrated in Fig. 1[3], as well as shifts in the co-sponsors' characteristics, as will be discussed.

The bottom line in Fig. 1 illustrates the number of states speaking on the agenda item and in response to the UN Secretary-General's reports on the subject during related UNGA plenary meetings, with a notable decline after 2003. This statistic is raised to provide a second indicator of the level of enthusiasm and engagement among UN member states for the recurring resolution in these years. This number under-represents support, however, since some states speak on behalf of larger numbers of states, such as for all European Union member states.

The new or restored democracies resolution (A/RES/49/30) was first launched in the UNGA in connection with the International Conferences on New or Restored Democracies movement in 1994. The first ICNRD conference was held in 1988 in Manila, the Philippines, where 13 participating states[4] drafted the Manila Declaration, and endorsed "international cooperation in the pursuit of democratic goals", but rejected external interference.[5] Although the first ICNRD conference was not held under the UN umbrella, the second conference, held in Managua, Nicaragua in July 1994 with 55 participating states and 25 observers, generated the Managua Declaration and Plan of Action that called for UN support and led to the General Assembly debate and resolution, which connected the ICNRD movement with the UN system (see Newman 2004, p. 194; Dumitriu 2003, p. 8). These conferences made visible an important and growing constituency interested in

[3] *Sources for co-sponsorship* UNGA, A/49/L.49/Add.1; A/50/L.19.Rev.1/Add.1; A/51/L.20/Rev.1/Add.1; A/52/L.28/Add.1; A/53/L.38/Add.1; A/54/L.33/Add.1; A/55/L.32/Rev.1/Add.1; A/56/L.46/Add.1; A/58/L.15/Add.1; A/60/L.53/Add.1; A/61/L.51/Add.1; A/62/L.9/Add.1; A/64/L.12/Add.1; A/66/L.52/Add.1. For the number of state delegations speaking on the agenda item: UNGA, A/49/PV.79-80; A/50/PV.55-56; A/51/PV.61; A/52/PV.51; A/53/PV.66-67; A/54/PV.64; A/55/PV.70-71; A/56/PV.83; A/56/PV.86; A/58/PV.57; A/58/PV.59; A/58/PV.62; A/60/PV.63; A/60/PV.78; A/61/PV.84; A/62/PV.44; A/62/PV.46; A/64/PV.41; A/66/PV.60; A/66/PV.121

[4] Argentina, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Greece, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Spain, and Uruguay (see footnote 5).

[5] UNGA, 16 August 1988, The Manila Declaration of 1988, issued on 6 June 1988, A/43/538, p. 4. See also Fineman, Mark. 7 June 1988. First Meeting Held in Manila: 13 "New Democracies" Confer on Goals, Woes. *Los Angeles Times.* http://articles.latimes.com/1988-06-07/news/mn-3860_1_manilaconference. Accessed 8/2016.

greater UN system support for democratic governance. Participants expressed interest in addressing major obstacles facing new and restored democracies such as unresolved conflicts, threats of social instability, and challenges of raising standards of living. The UNGA resolution in 1994 requested that the UN Secretary-General report on ways in which the UN system could support states in addressing these threats. The recurring resolution helped to galvanize UN efforts to support democratic development (see Dumitriu 2003), especially in the late 1990s and early 2000s, for example, through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Unlike other recurring UNGA resolutions which typically have a consistent primary sponsor or a fixed group of authors, primary sponsorship for the new or restored democracies resolution *rotated between the states hosting the respective ICNRD conferences*. In other words, Nicaragua chaired the ICNRD movement and sponsored the recurring resolution between 1994 and 1997, a responsibility which Romania assumed between 1997 and 2000, followed by Benin (2000–2003), Mongolia (2003–2006), Qatar (2006–2009), and Venezuela (2009–2012). This rotation among the resolution's primary sponsors has contributed to some interesting patterns in co-sponsorship.

Between 1988 and 2006, six ICNRD conferences took place in different world regions (the Philippines in 1988, Nicaragua in 1994, Romania in 1997, Benin in 2000, Mongolia in 2003, and Qatar in 2006). Venezuela was selected in 2009 to host the seventh ICNRD conference, but this conference did not take place, and as of this writing (September 2016), a subsequent Chair of the ICNRD movement has not been elected. Even more ominous for the fate of the ICNRD movement, although the recurring resolution was scheduled to be discussed in the 68th session of the UNGA (2013–2014) and remained on the provisional agenda in the 70th session of the UNGA (2015–2016), the agenda item has not been considered by the UNGA membership since 2012.

Rise in support for the new or restored democracies resolution: 1994–2003

This section analyses factors at international and domestic levels that contributed to states' support for the recurring UNGA new or restored democracies resolution. In the 1990s, co-sponsors of the resolution were typically a subset of the states which had participated in the ICNRD conferences. The ICNRD conferences were initially not open to all UN member states; rather, the Nicaraguan and Romanian conference hosts in 1994 and 1997 extended invitations to new or restored democracies as participants and to established democratic states as observers. In 1997, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appealed for all UN member states to be invited to the fourth ICNRD conference in Cotonou, Benin, in 2000.[6] Thus, in 2000 the ICNRD could be considered a fully inclusive movement.

[6] Report of the Secretary-General, UNGA, Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies, 21 October 1997, A/52/513, para. 52, p. 8.

In 2000, the same year that the International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies became open to all UN member states, a new democracy grouping—the Community of Democracies (CD)—emerged with more selective participation (see Dumitriu 2003, p. 16). The CD was an initiative proposed by Polish Foreign Minister, Bronisław Geremek, and US Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, with strong support from the Clinton Administration, yet the idea dated back several decades. While the CD has been viewed by many as a US-led initiative, the ICNRD movement stemmed from new or restored democracies themselves. The CD's membership is fluid; invitations are considered by its Governing Council (previously the convening group) prior to each Ministerial conference and issued to states committed to democratic values. This process has been criticized from both sides—by those viewing selection as too exclusive and by those viewing selection as not stringent enough. For example, in 2007 the CD's convening group excluded Venezuela and downgraded Russia to observer status, while inviting Iraq and Afghanistan, with some questioning the US role and politics in the process (Barrios 2008, p. 1; Piccone 2008, pp. 6–7, 16–20). Figure 2[7] compares the number of states participating in (and observing) ICNRD conferences and CD Ministerial Conferences between 1988 and 2013.

What roles have characteristics of these multilateral venues played in the changes in foreign policy orientations observed in Figs. 1 and 2? For an issue area like democracy, with wide variations in values and visions of what is desirable, inclusive multilateral venues help to ensure that policies incorporate a broad range of perspectives.[8] Several delegates expressed that the UN's inclusiveness conferred a legitimacy that made it highly appropriate to provide support for democratic development. For example, in 1999, Ms. Tuya, delegate of Mongolia, stated in the UNGA: "With its impartiality and universal legitimacy as well as its Charter-based purpose of promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, the United Nations is, in our view, uniquely placed to provide such [democracy] assistance at the request of Member States".[9] Mr. Bossière, delegate of France, on behalf of the EU, added: "It is indeed important that the United Nations, because of its universal dimension, should be the primary forum for reflection by the international community in this area and that, with its wealth of varied experience, the United Nations system should support the efforts of States that are now engaged in processes of democratization".[10] Similarly, Mr. Mubarez, delegate of Yemen, stated: "We would like to reaffirm once again the importance of the role of the United Nations in promoting the path of democracy, since the Organization alone represents

[7] *Sources* See the UNGA Provisional Verbatim records listed at Fig. 1 and Dumitriu (2003). Number of observers at the ICNRD conference in 1988 is unknown. Council for a Community of Democracies, www.ccd21.org (Accessed 2/2015) and list of Confirmed Heads of Delegation, Ministerial Conference in Ulaanbaatar, as of 25 April 2013. The number of states participating in CD conferences is lower than the number of states *invited* to participate. Information on participants at the 2007 CD Ministerial in Bamako was unavailable (127 were invited as participants, 20 as observers) (Barrios 2008, p. 1)

[8] On procedural legitimacy in other issue areas, see Finnemore (1996) and Coleman (2007).

[9] Statement by Ms. Tuya, Mongolia, UNGA, 29 November 1999, A/54/PV.64, p. 8.

[10] Statement by Mr. Bossière, France, on behalf of the EU, UNGA, 21 November 2000, A/55/PV.70, pp. 5–6.

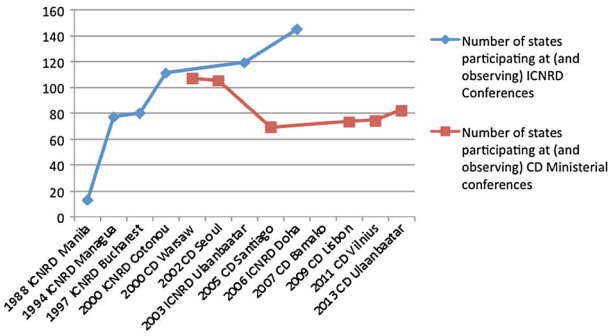

Fig. 2 States participating at (and observing) ICNRD conferences, 1988–2006, and CD Ministerial Conferences, 2000–2003

international legitimacy and the collective will of the peoples and States of the world".[11] UN support for democratic development also benefits from having fewer material interests than bilateral actors in particular results in host countries (Newman and Rich 2004, p. 29).

An oft-repeated passage has underscored the flexibility with which the UN system has understood and operationalized the concept of democracy, as conveyed by UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in 1997:

> The United Nations system, in assisting and supporting the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies, and democratization in general, does not endorse or promote any specific form of government. Democracy is not a model to be copied but a goal to be attained. Furthermore, the pace at which democratization can proceed is dependent on a variety of political, economic, social, and cultural factors proper to the circumstances of a particular culture and society.[12]

As Mr. Yel'chenko, delegate of Ukraine, noted in 2000, "One could hardly find a country in the world that would call itself undemocratic. But let us recognize that we may still mean different things when we say 'democracy.'"[13]

Illustrating regional influences, many Latin American states were supportive of the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution at its inception. In December 1994, Latin American states comprised 48% of those speaking on the UNGA agenda item prior to adopting the first new or restored democracies resolution,[14] and comprised 29% of the resolution's co-sponsors,[15] also reflecting the ICNRD

[11] Statement by Mr. Mubarez, Yemen, UNGA, 11 December 2001, A/56/PV.83, p. 24.

[12] Report of the Secretary-General, UNGA, 21 October 1997, A/52/513, para. 27, p. 5. On the role of the Secretary-General in supporting democratic norm development, see Haack (2011).

[13] Statement by Mr. Yel'chenko, Ukraine, UNGA, 21 November 2000, A/55/PV.70, p. 7.

[14] UNGA, 7 December 1994, A/49/PV.79, pp.15–25; A/49/PV.80, pp. 1–26.

[15] UNGA, 7 December 1994, A/49/L.49/Add.1.

conference's location in Nicaragua in 1994. The ICNRD brought together states concerned about harsh economic conditions or conflicts adversely affecting the survival and longevity of their democratic regimes. Several speakers mentioned the interrelation of democracy, peace, and development and appealed for increased UN resources to support consolidation in new and restored democracies (see footnote 14).

Regional influences have affected additional co-sponsorship patterns. Returning to Fig. 1, the number of co-sponsors of the recurring UNGA new or restored democracies resolution jumped in 2001, due in part to the increased number of African states co-sponsoring the resolution for the first time after the 2000 ICNRD conference in Cotonou, Benin. Sixteen African states became co-sponsors of the resolution for the first time in 2001.[16] As one interviewee explained, "to get co-sponsors, a state needs effective groundwork; it needs to explain what the resolution brings".[17] The number of co-sponsors peaked at 130 in 2003. Beyond the content of a resolution, Rai highlights that a sponsor's influence may contribute to states' support (1977, pp. 294–296). The final year in which the United States co-sponsored the resolution was 2001 (the US preferred to support the more exclusive CD rather than the ICNRD); thus, the resolution's peak and increase in co-sponsorship between 2001 and 2003 were clearly *not* a result of US pressure.

Domestic-level structures and politics interact with the above-mentioned international influences on states' foreign policy orientations. Some representatives expressed an interest in preventing destructive effects of authoritarianism, which their countries had experienced. For example, Mr. Popescu, delegate of Romania, stated in the UNGA in 1996: "My country has recovered its democratic traditions after 45 years of totalitarianism…Romania wants to bring its own contribution to the continuation and deepening of the international dialogue aimed at making democracy a main factor for the overall progress of nations and the positive development of international relations".[18] Over the years, Romania has been highly active in advocating democracy-related resolutions in the UNGA and served as host of the 1997 ICNRD conference and Chair of the movement between 1997 and 2000. In these years, Romania was also eager to distance its positions from Ceauşescu's foreign policies and to align with EU values.[19]

In some cases, strong support was expressed for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution within a few years of a state's democratic transition and pride in domestic democratization successes corresponded with dissemination of states' experiences. For example, in 1996, Mr. Wensley, delegate of South Africa, stated in the UNGA: "The dark days of racial domination, tyranny and authoritarianism have indeed been relegated to the dustbin of history in my country

[16] Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Seychelles, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania.

[17] Author's confidential interview with a diplomat to the UN, New York, 25 February 2014.

[18] Statement by Mr. Popescu, Romania, UNGA, 20 November 1996, A/51/PV.61, p. 18.

[19] Author's confidential interview with a diplomat to the UN, Geneva, 21 May 2014.

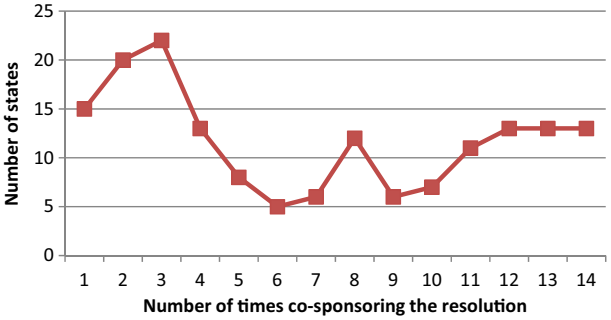

Fig. 3 Frequency of states' co-sponsorship of the recurring UNGA resolution "Support by the UN system for the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies"

and South Africa is committed to contributing actively to the promotion of the ideals of democracy in other parts of the world".[20] South Africa co-sponsored 8 of the 14 resolutions, all between 1996 and 2005/6. Several co-sponsoring states identified as a "new or restored democracy", although interest in being included in such a loosely defined group has varied over time.

Figure 3 illustrates the frequency of co-sponsorship, that is, the number of states co-sponsoring the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution between 1 and 14 times. In addition to a large number of states that co-sponsored the resolution 1–3 times, there is also a sizeable number of highly committed states: 13 states co-sponsored the recurring UNGA resolution in each of its 14 iterations (Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Luxembourg, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Moldova, Romania, Spain, and Sweden) and 13 states co-sponsored the resolution 13 times (Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Uruguay). In general, domestic-level factors related to democratic transition experiences or self-categorization as a new, restored, consolidated, or established democracy are more compelling partial influences on the rise in support for the recurring UNGA new or restored democracies resolution than for decreases in states' support after the mid-2000s, to which we now turn.

Decline in support for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution after the mid-2000s

Returning to Fig. 1, the gradual decline in co-sponsorship of the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution in the mid- to late 2000s and 2010s corresponds with some states' decreased enthusiasm for the ICNRD movement for a few reasons, including disadvantages of the inclusive venue. After 2000, a distinction grew between the fully inclusive ICNRD movement and the more selective CD with similar objectives. In effect, a similar number of participants attended the two

[20] Statement by Mr. Wensley, South Africa, UNGA, 20 November 1996, A/51/PV.61, p. 13.

conferences in 2000: 111 governments attended the ICNRD conference in Cotonou and 107 attended the CD conference in Warsaw, yet issues of inclusion and exclusion became audible in the UNGA statements on the agenda item. Gradually, some democratic states distanced themselves from the ICNRD movement because of the increased participation of non- or partially democratic states. For example, "one [US] official said the participation of dictatorships such as Cuba was one reason Washington chose to limit its involvement" in the ICNRD conference in 2003.[21]

Insights into advantages and disadvantages of the ICNRD movement and the Community of Democracies have been provided by Petru Dumitriu, Secretary-General of the third ICNRD conference in Bucharest in 1997. He argues that although the inclusive ICNRD approach "put at some risk the clarity of the [UN's] own assessment on democracy", it also emphasized "the universal relevance of democratic principles" and enhanced the legitimacy of the UN to engage in democracy support, as well as "attracting interest" and making "democratic behaviour more appealing to those who are reluctant, for opportunistic or ideological reasons" (2003, pp. 15–16). On the other hand, the more selective CD approach "avoids the confusion that we may live in a world where all regimes are democratic…a spade should be called a spade" (Dumitriu 2003, p. 17).

The ICNRD movement appears to have become too inclusive for its well-being next to the more exclusive CD alternative. Over time, Community of Democracies Ministerial Conferences became more frequent than their ICNRD counterparts—taking place in Seoul, South Korea (2002), Santiago, Chile (2005), Bamako, Mali (2007), Lisbon, Portugal (2009), Vilnius, Lithuania (2011), Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (2013), and San Salvador, El Salvador (2015). This density of CD Ministerial Conferences indicates a more sustained level of political will among CD participants than within the ICNRD. Yet the CD's selectivity contributes to a different set of challenges, particularly when attempting to appeal to the broader audience of UN member states. In 2004, the Community of Democracies established a Democracy Caucus in the UN, but has had marginal success. As Thomas Carothers notes, "democracies, like all countries, base their foreign policies on multiple elements of their identity, not just the character of their political system" (2008, p. 2). In October 2015, a draft resolution on attaining "observer status for the Community of Democracies in the [UN] General Assembly" gained 20 co-sponsors and was discussed in the UNGA by 15 states, yet met with resistance,[22] and the sponsors subsequently proposed to defer a decision to the UNGA's 71st session (2016–2017).[23]

The recurring UNGA new or restored democracies resolution had 130 co-sponsors in 2003, yet by 2011–2012 this number dropped to 53 (see Fig. 1). In 2013–2014 and 2015–2016 (the UNGA's 68th and 70th sessions), the resolution

[21] Michael A. Lev, "Conferees aim to solve woes of democracy," *Chicago Tribune.* 14 September 2003. http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2003-09-14/news/0309140469_1_democracies-delegate-central-african-republic. Accessed 8/2016.

[22] UNGA, 19 October 2015, A/C.6/70/SR.11.

[23] UNGA, 11 November 2015, A/70/532.

was not discussed or considered as scheduled and the ICNRD movement lacked a Chair. Only five states' representatives (of Libya, Philippines, Qatar, Venezuela, and Tunisia) made statements during the UNGA debate on the agenda item in November 2011,[24] continuing the trend of decreased participation linked to the ICNRD movement in the UNGA. When states qualify to participate in a more exclusive group, that group is likely to become more attractive to them (see Tajfel and Turner 1986). This appears valid for some new or restored democracies, which have not advocated on-record in the UNGA debates on this agenda item to revive (or establish a new chairperson of) the ICNRD movement. However, the idea does not hold across the board, since some European states have been hesitant about the CD, given its strong American leadership (Barrios 2008, p. 7; see also Carothers 2008, p. 7).

It is also important to distinguish between states' support for the resolution and states' support for the norms contained within the resolution. Although states' interest in the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution decreased after the mid-2000s, norms related to UN support for democratic development encountered different trends elsewhere in the UNGA[25] and in the UN system (e.g. Human Rights Council).[26] One example is the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF), which was launched in 2005.[27] Moreover, states' support for a different, yet thematically related UNGA resolution, "Strengthening the role of the UN in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization" (hereafter the *elections resolution*) increased nearly monotonically, from 88.3% of voting UN member states in 1990 to 93.2% in 1999, to 98.8% in 2007.[28] The UNGA elections resolution was controversial when first adopted, with several states expressing concern that multilateral efforts in this area might be used as a pretext for US intervention,[29] yet the resolution gained greater support as concerns receded (see Ludwig 2004; Hawkins and Shaw 2006, pp. 31–33). The UNGA elections resolution gained support over time in part because states appreciated how the UN operationalized the norms in the resolution.[30] Operationalization of the ICNRD was more limited; ministerial-level meetings were occasionally held in New York, but, in contrast to the CD, it did not gain enough momentum or political will to establish a permanent ICNRD secretariat. Rather, initiatives generated from the six ICNRD conferences were integrated into the operations of several UN agencies, such as UNDP, UN peace-

[24] UNGA, 18 November 2011, A/66/PV.60, pp. 1–6.

[25] See UNGA, "Promoting and Consolidating Democracy," 4 December 2000, A/RES/55/96.

[26] For example, UN Human Rights Council, "Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law," 23 March 2012, A/HRC/Res/19/36.

[27] UNDEF, http://www.un.org/democracyfund/. Accessed 8/2016.

[28] Voting record search, www.unbisnet.org. Accessed 8/2016. The resolution was adopted without a vote in 1988, 1989, 2009, 2011, and 2013.

[29] UNGA, November 1989, A/C.3/44/SR.36, 40–42, 50.

[30] For more on this resolution, see Ludwig (2004), Kelley (2008), Hyde (2011). Kelley argues that states supported the spread of election observation because they sought legitimacy (2008, p. 249) and Hyde argues that states sought to send credible signals of regime type when international benefits supported democratic states (2011, pp. 13–19).

building missions, UNDEF, the UN Human Rights Council, and efforts of the UN Secretary-General.

Interviewees corroborated and extended the above explanations for the decline in states' support for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution. One interviewee stated that it became a routine resolution with no new content and there was a loss of significance of new or restored democracies, while the Community of Democracies became meaningful. As energy became focused on the CD, there was less activism to generate new content for the recurring UNGA resolution.[31] Another interviewee stated that when the Chair of the ICNRD passed to Venezuela, they were not able to plan much because of Chavez' illness, and added: "I doubt the ICNRD will re-emerge. It has lost its *raison d'être*".[32]

Conclusions

What explains changes in states' foreign policy orientations towards international norms in particular multilateral venues? Through a case study of the rise and fall of states' support for a recurring UNGA resolution on new or restored democracies, this article has highlighted how advantages and disadvantages of a multilateral venue's inclusiveness as well as additional factors at international and domestic levels can be influential. While the UNGA's procedural legitimacy initially contributed to states' support for the new or restored democracies resolution, after an alternative, more selective forum gained momentum, a group of democratic states placed greater priority on participating in the CD in the mid- to late 2000s, thus contributing to decreased political energy for the ICNRD movement and the associated resolution in the UNGA.

Contributing to the rise in states' support for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution in the 1990s and early 2000s were a few additional international and domestic influences. These included the flexible way in which democracy has been understood in the UN system, regional influences, states' interests in attracting resources and improving security, pride in domestic democratization successes, and interests in preventing the destructive effects of authoritarianism. Since the timing of many states' initial democratic transitions is receding farther into history, self-categorization as a "new or restored democracy" has become less salient for many states,[33] and therefore, this frame has reduced relevance for multilateral advocacy on democratic development.

A critic might suggest that the decline in support for the new or restored democracies resolution simply corresponds with the weaker normative environment for international democracy support in the mid- to late 2000s or the increased backlash against democracy promotion (see Carothers 2010). However, if this were true, non- and partially democratic states would have been the first to have withdrawn their support for the ICNRD movement, whereas, in fact, the opposite

[31] Author's confidential interview with a diplomat to the UN, Geneva, 21 May 2014.

[32] Author's confidential interview with UN official, New York, 25 February 2014.

[33] On the salience of democratic governance in the UNGA, see Hecht (2016).

occurred. The decline of the UNGA resolution stems more fundamentally from a decrease in political will among a group of democratic states in favour of a more selective alternative.

Decreased support for the UNGA new or restored democracies resolution is not necessarily correlated with a general decline in support for democracy among the UN membership. The extent to which there remains (or is waning) global support for international democracy assistance—or for democratic norms more broadly—are larger questions beyond the scope of this article. Rather, this article illustrated how tensions between procedural and substantive legitimacy can influence the fate of a resolution in a particular venue.

Future research might involve comparative analysis into how members of IOs with different membership constellations perceive potential advantages and disadvantages of inclusive multilateral venues in a range of policy areas. To the findings of this special issue, this article argues that it is fruitful to take into account the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive multilateral venues when explaining changes in foreign policy orientations towards international norm sets (and their corresponding resolutions, decisions, or agreements), particularly when the addressee of the norms is an international organization and an alternative, more exclusive venue exists.

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