

Developing Democracy for the Short and Long Term

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Introduction: Hope is not a Strategy

Democratisation in Bhutan, best known as the birthplace of the Gross National Happiness Index, began a protracted and stepwise transition to constitutional democracy in 1998, when the King devolved the executive powers vested in the throne.

Seeing Bhutan as a unique example of democratisation, compared with the sudden collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, Gallenkamp argues that the subsequent reforms towards the first free elections to the National Council in 2007 and the National Assembly in 2008, were carefully sequenced and preceded by local elections in 2002 – elections that functioned as a “trial run” for participation.¹

Since the parliamentary elections, Freedom House, a non-partisan advocacy organisation, has assessed that Bhutan is a partially free polity and society with respect to political rights and civil liberties.² This implies that Bhutan still has some way to go in developing democracy but also that, with three elections, it has managed to steer clear of the rocks and continuously navigate the boat in open sea.

Almost two decades before Bhutan’s transition began, the democratisation of Central and Eastern Europe that followed the collapse of communism in the late 1980s and early 1990s, had brought hope to Europe. Finally, the torn continent could become a continent of democracies and, with the later enlargement of the European Union to include these new democracies, heal the wound created by war and the Iron Curtain.

¹ Gallenkamp, M. (2010). *Democracy in Bhutan: An analysis of constitutional change in a Buddhist Monarchy*. IPCS Research Papers, New Delhi.

² Freedom House. freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world (accessed February 7th, 2022). See also V-Dem, *Varieties of Democracy*. V-Dem Institute, University of Gothenburg (<https://www.v-dem.net/>) (accessed February 3rd, 2022).

Much ink has been spilled over whether the transition from communism constitutes a fourth distinct wave of democratisation, or is part of the third wave that, according to Huntington, began with the Portuguese revolution in 1974.³ Certainly, the transitions were more difficult than the third wave transitions in southern Europe, in that democratisation in post-Communist Europe also entailed marketisation and, for some, also the establishment of new states that had never experienced independence before.⁴ Later, hope began to dwindle when liberal democracy only took root in some countries, and among those who tried, not all have managed to remain democracies. The current debate about democracy, in Europe and globally, is somewhat alarming. The thrust of the debate is that democracy is in danger, retreat, and under siege in Europe, and that COVID-19 has amplified executive aggrandisement in the countries where democracy was already in decline prior to the pandemic.⁵

Gerrymandering —that is, the manipulation of constituency boundaries or the electoral system —is not only an American phenomenon but part of the reason why Victor Orbán maintains a majority in the Hungarian parliament. Moreover, the populist governments in Poland and Hungary have curbed the free press and, in other countries, the freedom of the press, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been restricted.⁶

Leaving aside the fact that the freedom of the press is part of the very definition of democracy, transparency cannot be achieved, nor can civic values and behaviour be taught or learned without press freedom. In other words, democracy cannot deepen. In short, gloominess has once again propelled a debate about the endurance, decline, and breakdown of democracy and, in a parallel and interwoven track, also a debate concerning the deepening — that is, the quality of democracy.⁷

³ Huntington, S.P. (1991). *The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century*, London: University of Oklahoma Press; Kuzio, T. (2008). Democratic breakthroughs and revolutions in five postcommunist Countries: Comparative perspectives on the fourth wave. *Demokratizatsiya*, 16(1), 97–109; Bunce, V. (1995). Should transitologists be grounded? *Slavic Review*, 54(1), 111–127.

⁴ Johannsen, L., Pedersen, K. H. (2009). After the wall: Political development trajectories in selected post-Communist countries, in Johannsen, L., Pedersen, K. H. (eds), *Pathways: A Study of Six Post-Communist Countries*, Aarhus University Press, pp. 9–29.

⁵ Guasti, P. (2020). The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Central and Eastern Europe: The rise of autocracy and democratic resilience. *Democratic Theory*, 7(2), 47–60.

⁶ See Press Freedom Index (<https://rsf.org/en>) by Reporters without Borders.

⁷ Diamond, L., & Morlino, L. (2004). The quality of democracy: An overview. *Journal of democracy*, 15(4), 20–31; Schedler, A. (1998). What is democratic consolidation? *Journal of democracy*, 9(2), 91–107; Diamond, L. (1999). *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*. JHU Press.

In this alarming debate, Lührmann and Lindberg posit that the wave of democratisation has rescinded and that we have entered a process of autocratisation.⁸ Perhaps this is of little surprise, since it was argued early on that the enabling conditions may turn into the confining conditions of democracy.⁹

This perspective links to the quality of democracy, as the inclusion of new actors and social mobilisation in emerging democracies may simply overwhelm the political institutions and organisations, causing a breakdown.¹⁰ Hence, democracy and the deepening of democracy may be a trade-off with the stability of democracy.

This does not imply that countries who wish to democratise should abstain from doing so just because they are either too poor, too fragmented, or too polarised between ethnic groups or classes. Advising to abstain from developing democracy will not only be normatively wrong but will also prevent said countries from gaining experience with democracy.

Navigating Troubled Waters: Why You Cannot Depend on International Conditionalties and Assistance

Supporting the establishment, consolidation and deepening of democracy was promoted by a host of international actors from governments to international NGOs. In academia it was debated if, how, and under what conditions democracy can be promoted from the outside.¹¹ Giving massive aid and setting conditionalities such as the Acquis Communautaire and the Copenhagen Criteria for membership, the European Union tried to change the incentives of the elites to develop and maintain democracies.¹²

⁸ Lührmann, A., & Lindberg, S. I. (2019). A third wave of autocratisation is here: What is new about it? *Democratisation* 26(7), 1095–1113.

⁹ Karl, T. L., & Schmitter, P. C. (1995). From an iron curtain to a paper curtain: grounding transitologists or students of postcommunism? *Slavic Review*, 54(4), 965–978.

¹⁰ Huntington, Samuel P. (1968). *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

¹¹ Carothers, T. (1997). Democracy assistance: The question of strategy. *Democratisation*, 4(3), 109–132; Carothers, T., Elshtain, J. B., Diamond, L. J., Ibrahim, A., & Bangura, Z. H. (2007). A quarter-century of promoting democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, 18(4), 112–126.

¹² Pridham, G. (2009). Securing the only game in town: The EU's political conditionality and democratic consolidation in post-Soviet Latvia. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61(1), 51–84; Vachudova, M. A. (2005). *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage, and Integration after Communism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press; Schimmelfennig, F. (2007). European regional organisations, political conditionality, and democratic transformation in Eastern Europe. *East European politics and societies*, 21(1), 126–141.

However, as is evident from the latter years' rise of populism in Hungary and subsequent decline of democracy, these conditionalities failed to have a lasting effect once the two countries had joined the European Union.¹³

This is not to disagree with the argument that certain periods in time appear to be more conducive for democracy, hence the wave analogy, but it has become blatantly clear that international influence need not be positive for democracy. The fact that the collapse of democracy in a nearby country may spill over is one aspect, but another is the great-power autocrats, such as Russia, that meddle in the internal affairs of some countries.¹⁴

Do It Yourself: Responsive and Responsible Democracy

In the case of Bhutan, Turner et al. argue that foreign influence in the initial transition to democracy was largely negligible, making the democratisation domestically driven.¹⁵ Democracy deepening and consolidation is a never-ending quest,¹⁶ and both in the short and long term perspective, it is also in Bhutan that resources and support for the sustained effort to develop and consolidate democracy must be found.

In the short term this can involve compromises or, more rightly, a pact between political actors over the institutions that aggregate interests and distribute power. However, such a pact requires careful consideration by the elite(s) in that encompassing pacts may foreclose meaningful political competition.¹⁷

¹³ Ágh, A. (2016). The decline of democracy in East-Central Europe: Hungary as the worst-case scenario. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 63(5–6), 277–287; Berman, S., & Snegovaya, M. (2019). Populism and the decline of social democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, 30(3), 5–19; Bogaards, M. (2018). De-democratisation in Hungary: Diffusely defective democracy. *Democratisation*, 25(8), 1481–1499; Drinóczi, T., & Bień-Kacała, A. (2019). Illiberal constitutionalism: The case of Hungary and Poland. *German Law Journal*, 20(8), 1140–1166.

¹⁴ Diamond, L. J. (2000). Is Pakistan the (reverse) wave of the future? *Journal of Democracy*, 11(3), 91–106; Lebanidze, B. (2014). What makes authoritarian regimes sweat? Linkage, leverage and democratisation in post-Soviet South Caucasus. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 14(2), 199–218; Tolstrup, J. (2015). Black knights and elections in authoritarian regimes: Why and how Russia supports authoritarian incumbents in post-Soviet states. *European Journal of Political Research*, 54(4), 673–690; Kagan, R. (2015). The weight of geopolitics. *Journal of Democracy*, 26(1), 21–31.

¹⁵ Turner, M., Chuki, S., & Tshering, J. (2011). Democratisation by decree: The case of Bhutan. *Democratisation*, 18(1), 184–210.

¹⁶ Przeworski, A. (2016). Democracy: A never-ending quest. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19, 1–12.

¹⁷ Karl, T. L. (1987). Petroleum and political pacts: The transition to democracy in Venezuela. *Latin American Research Review*, 22(1), 63–94; McFaul, M. (2002). The fourth wave of democracy and dictatorship: Noncooperative transitions in the postcommunist world. *World politics*, 54(2), 212–244.

In the long run, these institutions must become routine, and civic values must be taught and accepted and political participation encouraged. Moreover, a core lesson from the European transitions is that the State must not dwindle away, but that it is critical to process the capacity to make and implement political decisions. Along the way, hard decisions must be made since democracy is not a specific form, such as parliamentarism and presidentialism, but a family of different forms of government that mirrors different strengths and weaknesses.¹⁸

Bhutan's democracy was not a result of a pact between opposing elites but rather the King's democratisation "from above." However, three facts stand out in support of a sustained compromise. First, democracy carries the symbolic support of the throne. Second, Bhutanese elites were relatively small at the time of transition and, thus, "grew up" with democracy. Finally, Buddhist traditions and rules carry a strong preference for consensus – a consensus that moderates the extent of polarisation and political conflicts.¹⁹

The Bhutanese electoral systems fit well into the majoritarian family of democracies, but it is a peculiar variant of single-member plurality systems with two-round elections where only the two parties that received the highest number of votes proceed to the runoff. Research has pointed out that the plurality system on the one hand, through manufacturing and voter dispositions, ensures a working majority in parliament but, on the other hand, risks excluding significant political and ethnic minorities.²⁰

For example, if women are grossly under-represented in the parliament and government, and if female values and political experiences differ from those of men, the lack of descriptive representation can translate into lack of trust in the political institutions.²¹ Moreover, what may appear to be neutral provisions in Bhutan's electoral law, such as the electoral registration system, may hinder voters from voting. In sum, excluded or

¹⁸ Johannsen, L. 2000, *The Constitution and Democracy: The Choice and Consequence of the Constitution in Post-Communist Countries*, Politica: Aarhus

¹⁹ Turner, M., Chuki, S., & Tshering, J. (2011). Democratisation by decree: the case of Bhutan. *Democratization*, 18(1), 184–210.

²⁰ Johannsen, L. 2000, *The Constitution and Democracy: The Choice and Consequence of the Constitution in Post-Communist Countries*, Politica: Aarhus; Johannsen, L. 2002, 'Modernisation and Democracy: Electoral Systems as Intermediate Variables', in Elgström, O., Hyden, G. (eds), *Development and Democracy: What have we learned and how?*, Frank Cass Publishers, London, pp. 106–121.

²¹ Piscopo, J. M. (2011). Rethinking descriptive representation: Rendering women in legislative debates. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 64(3), 448–472.

hindered voters may be alienated if their concerns are not represented in the political system.²²

Aside from working consciously and continuously to remove hindrances and encouraging minorities to participate and cast their vote, a possible route to mitigate this is to strengthen political parties and civil society organisations.

In many of the East European countries political parties had to be built from scratch, and where umbrella organisations that had mobilised against communist rule existed, these began to splinter and never achieved the form of significantly large member organisations.

The swing of the pendulum at elections with large turnovers sent previously dominating parties out in the cold, and newly formed parties received high proportions of seats in the parliament. While the turnover itself increased instability, it was further exacerbated when the new parties achieved their predominance by massive “blitz campaigns” in the media, showing that it was quicker and easier to finance these campaigns than spending efforts on building a solid member base.²³

Moreover, to finance the campaigns, the political parties became more dependent on large contributions from special interests. As demonstrated in the case of Slovenia, it was also the established parties that failed to deliver desired policies. Despite the fourfold transition to democracy, market economy, independence and EU membership, the political preferences and values of the electorate have not changed substantially over 30 years, but shifting political parties have failed to deliver.²⁴

Without responsiveness, the desired stability may not be achieved, so it must be a priority to make political parties more responsive and inclusive

²² For example, Kinley argues that the civil registry rules in the Bhutanese election law give obstacles for people who work outside their places of civil registry. See Kinley (2018), Socio-economic Status and Electoral Participation in Bhutan, *The Druk Journal: A Journal of Thought and Ideas*, Vol. 4, issue 1. pp. 46–58.

²³ Houghton, T., & Deegan-Krause, K. (2015). Hurricane season: Systems of instability in central and east European party politics. *East European Politics and Societies*, 29(1), 61–80; Pop-Eleches, G. (2010). Throwing out the bums: Protest voting and unorthodox parties after communism. *World Politics*, 62(2), 221–260.

²⁴ Johannsen, L., & Krašovec, A. (2017). Democratic critique and development: In search of responsiveness. *Teorija in Praksa*, 54(Special Issue), 45–59.

through the development of their organisations. This is not easy. In Eastern Europe volatile elections with constant changing winners and losers, simultaneous with the constant creation of new political parties, imply that the efforts by the political parties themselves may never be sustained. State support for political parties, either in the form of tax exemptions or, as in Denmark a fixed amount per vote, make the political parties less dependent on contributions from special interests but instead of spending funds on organisational development many parties use these funds to top-up the budget and spend it on advertising. In this situation support for youth organisations, political or interest organisation, may be the better option for the long haul.

The strengthening of civil society is somewhat different. It has been shown that including civil society organisations in the preparatory phase of policymaking increases responsiveness, and as argued by Pek-Dorji, civil society allows for citizens to engage in democracy by testing and exercising their civic senses.²⁵

Policy consultations with civil society organisations need not be full-fledged corporatism as found in Denmark and Austria, but by giving access, the lack of proportional representation can be mitigated. When Slovenia democratised in the early 1990s, the constitutional fathers deliberately set up a bicameral system in which the upper house – the National Council (Državni svet) – was elected by civil society organisations.

The rationale was that by providing an alternative route of interest aggregation, the weaknesses of the recently established political parties could be offset.²⁶ However, as the Slovene National Council proved by and large without powers, it has never performed this role, and instead, the government has included trade unions and business organisations in encompassing tripartite negotiations.²⁷

As everything was controlled by the party, civil society did not exist under communism. Hence, the insistence of Brussels to include civil society in

²⁵ Johannsen, L., & Pedersen, K. H. (2008). The responsive state: Openness and inclusion in the policy process, in Dani, A. A., & de Haan, A. (eds.), *Inclusive States: Social Policy and Structural Inequalities* (pp. 73–95). World Bank Publications; Pek-Dorji, S. S. (2017). Nurturing civil society – building legitimacy, ensuring Relevance. *The DRUK Journal: A Journal of Thought and Ideas*, 3(2), 39–46.

²⁶ Johannsen, L. (2008). Slovensk succes: Korporatisme og konsensus, *Nordisk Østforum*, 22(1), 55–70.

²⁷ Krašovec, A., & Johannsen, L. (2017). Social dialogue between transition and the Great Recession. *Teorija in Praksa*, 54(Special Issue), 30–44.

the negotiations over the chapters in the *Acquis Communautaire* initially created a form of “AstroTurf” grassroots that should ideally strengthen over time to provide for meaningful participation.

However, when inclusion is demanded from the top, the nagging question becomes who to include. As this will often be the traditional and powerful economic and social interests, inclusion becomes conservative. Thus, civil society organisations that represent new interests such as environmental interest in the 1980s and, presently, LGBTQIA+, will initially lack recognition and have fewer economic resources than, say, labour and business organisations. Therefore, inclusion of civil society is no panacea to representation.

In addition, there is a risk that powerful organisations or firms could capture the political system. The government and the public administration may not possess the capacity to prepare and implement decisions, thereby leaving an open avenue for the influence of special interests. As governments need not only be responsive but also responsible, investments are needed in the capacity to carry out policy planning from the preparatory phase over implementation to evaluation.

The parliament is even more exposed to special interests when the government is captured. This tames the parliament as it depends on the public to provide the necessary analyses before adopting legislation.

Despite being a plural society with independent think tanks, universities, and a capable administration, the US established the Congressional Budget Office in 1975 specifically to provide non-partisan analysis and advice. Thus, balancing off special interests and, in the case of the parliament, political parties and MPs requires access to qualified assistance, whether that be legal, economic, or political advice.

With respect to capacity building, universities have a key role. Some of the best universities are placed in Europe and North America. Social sciences, including political science, law, and economics, are not something only rich countries can afford or need. The civil service needs qualified applicants who are appointed and promoted by merit, and society needs independent, open, transparent and critical research that, at times, speaks against power. It is not a coincidence that the Hungarian government in 2017, enroute

to soft authoritarianism, introduced legislation that brought universities under political control and, in the end, forced the remaining independent and one of the best universities in Central and Eastern Europe – the Central European University – to relocate to Vienna, Austria.²⁸

Transparent Democracy

Transparent government and a civil service with public ethos deepen and stabilise democracy. All too often, bribery and other forms of corruption not only cost wealth and welfare but also bend the principle of equality before the law and introduces favouritism in the civil service.

In effect, corruption undermines democracy ex ante and ex post of political decisions.²⁹ Corruption also reduces trust between citizens and public servants, and between citizens and government and politicians. In Slovakia, widespread protest erupted in 2012 following the leak of a wiretap from the Slovak secret service, where politicians, public servants and business executives could be heard discussing kickbacks in return for procurement contracts.³⁰ Whether or not the tape could be verified is not the question. Given enduring corruption, citizens are likely to believe it – true or not.

Corruption is as old as the State, and international attention increased with the adoption of new international conventions (OECD and Council of Europe) in the late 1990s and, in 2003, the United Nations adopted an anti-corruption convention that recommended the establishment of anti-corruption agencies.³¹ Furthermore, international donors such as the World Bank introduced an anti-corruption reform among the conditionalities, and Romania and Bulgaria only became members of the EU in 2007 under the condition of a co-operation and verification mechanism (CVM) to monitor improvements in judicial reforms and corruption prevention.

²⁸ Enyedi, Z. (2018). Democratic backsliding and academic freedom in Hungary. *Perspectives on Politics*, 16(4), 1067–1074.

²⁹ Dahlström, C., Lapuente, V., & Teorell, J. (2012). The merit of meritocratisation: Politics, bureaucracy, and the institutional deterrents of corruption. *Political Research Quarterly*, 65(3), 656–668; Serritzlew, S., Sønderskov, K. M., & Svendsen, G. T. (2014). Do corruption and social trust affect economic growth? A review. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, 16(2), 121–139.

³⁰ Školkay, A. (2018). Partial state capture by a single oligarchic group: The Gorilla Case in Slovakia. *Středoevropské politické studie*, 20(2), 182–203.

³¹ OECD Convention on Combatting Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions. [oecd.org/corruption/oecdantibriberyconvention.htm](https://www.oecd.org/corruption/oecdantibriberyconvention.htm) (accessed February 3rd, 2022); Council of Europe (coe.int); Group of States against corruption (GRECO) (coe.int/Greco) (accessed February 3rd, 2022); UN Convention against corruption (unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/) (accessed February 3rd, 2022).

By royal decree, Bhutan established the Anti-Corruption Committee (ACC) in 2005 with the twin tasks of prevention and investigation. In 2021, according to Transparency International, a non-governmental organisation that developed the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), Bhutan was among the 25 least corrupted countries of the world and, in Asia, only Hong Kong and Japan fare better.³²

Whether the slight improvements in Bhutan's standing in the last decade are due to the work of the ACC will be difficult to assess. Internationally, research has yet to prove that anti-corruption agencies reduce corruption.³³ Some suggest that the proof of the pudding lies with political will and intentions when the agency is established or that we need to look beyond the scope of traditional reporting and investigation and introduce administrative reforms to counteract corruption.³⁴ Furthermore, if the last and best line of defence against corruption is public ethos and civic education, you are certainly in for the long haul.

Civic Education for the Future

There is much to be said about civic education in primary and secondary schools. In Denmark, it is clearly stated in legislation that one of the purposes of the primary school is to “prepare students for participation, co-responsibility, rights and duties in a society of freedom and democracy” and that “[t]he school's activities must therefore be characterised by freedom of thought, equality, and democracy [author's translation]”.³⁵

While this specific purpose is seldom criticised, there is a public debate on whether the primary schools become overwhelmed by all the good things that crowd out core subjects such as arithmetic and language.

The second, and academic, debate concerns whether teaching social science subjects and civic education is in fact effective in creating a civic culture

³² Transparency International ([transparency.org](https://www.transparency.org)) (accessed February 3rd, 2022).

³³ Mungiu-Pippidi, A. (2015). *The Quest for Good Governance: How Societies Develop Control of Corruption*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³⁴ Johannsen, L., & Pedersen, K. H. (2011). The institutional roots of anti-corruption policies: Comparing the three Baltic states. *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 42(3), 329–346; Pedersen, K. H. & Johannsen, L. (2018). Administrative processes as an anti-corruption tool? A view from public employees in the Baltic states. *Baltic Journal of Law & Politics*, 11(1), 131–157.

³⁵ § 1 in the law on primary public schools (LBK no. 1887 of October 10, 2021). /www.retsinformation.dk (accessed February 8th, 2022).

hallmarked by participation and democratic values. Because of the risk of being labelled as partisan, teachers may also be reluctant to encourage political participation.

With respect to civic, social and society knowledge, the overhaul of the educational system concerning civic education needs to include a heterogeneous character of instruction.³⁶ Based on my own experience, I recommend that instruction includes, but not solely, participatory pedagogy and the development of civic games.

Since participatory values learned locally can be transferred nationally, students should be allowed to participate in the governing structure of the school. In this sense, school politics and the space around education become the training ground for engagement in civil society and politics.

Concluding Priorities: The Never-Ending Story

With three free and fair elections for about 15 years, the process of democratisation in Bhutan, supported by the symbolic power of the King, appears to be well on the way.

Bhutan now faces the twin agenda of deepening and consolidating democracy – two processes that may not necessarily cohabit easily. Since the fall of communism, Europe has experienced similar processes of democratisation but, in some countries, democracy never took hold. In other countries, democracy is in reverse, but one should remember that Europe also espouses success cases in which democratic principles have been respected for a generation. Hence, despite differences compared to other parts of the world, the study of European democratisation and the reverse provide insights into issues of deepening and consolidating democracy.

Deepening and consolidating democracy must be seen in both the short and long term perspective. First, it is necessary that competing elites conclude a lasting compromise about constitutional principles and that, to them, democracy becomes the only game in town.

³⁶ Reichert, F., & Torney-Purta, J. (2019). A cross-national comparison of teachers' beliefs about the aims of civic education in 12 countries: A person-centered analysis. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 77, 112–125; Campbell, D. E. (2019). What social scientists have learned about civic education: A review of the literature. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 94(1), 32–47.

Second, majoritarian political systems must be balanced by including significant minorities who, without a stake, become alienated. Third, giving parliaments access to non-partisan advice and resources strengthens oversight and curbs the risk of executive aggrandisement and keeps the concentration of power in the government in check.

This requires an agency staffed with qualified personnel appointed independently of the government to serve the parliament. Fourth, although less corrupted countries might be tempted to rest on their laurels, a sustained trust in corruption prevention and detection is necessary when changing values and behaviour. Fifth, changing values and behaviour may take generations, so focused efforts to teach social science in the primary, secondary and tertiary schools is a priority.

Finally, the existence of and access to a free press is a necessary condition for deepening democracy. In short, developing and consolidating democracy is more than free and fair elections. It is a never-ending story in which inclusion, transparency and civic culture need to be nurtured constantly.