

# **The Global Democratic Decline: the Rise of new wave of Non-Democratic World**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Democracy is not only essential for any countries but it is also necessary for the peaceful co-existence of the nations in the world. In this decade of 21st-century global democracy has been blockaded in many parts of the world. The expansion of dictatorial and authoritarian rule in the world has faded the inconsistent presence of democracy on the international stage. In the current situations more than 55 countries government's which are in cruelest dictatorships and authoritarian regime. Apart from that, the democratic environment has been declining day by day in this world. According to Freedom House's report, withering blows have marked the 15th consecutive year of decline in global freedom in the year 2020. In 2021, as of now, countries like Sudan, Myanmar, and recently Afghanistan have lost their democracy. Taliban's breakneck seizure of power in Afghanistan has stunned the world and created a new wave of democratic decline.

**KEYWORDS:** Democratic decline; world democracy; non-democratic world; new wave

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## **DEMOCRACY**

Democracy, this word comes from the Greek word's "demos", meaning people, and "kratos" meaning power; so, democracy can be thought of as "power of the people": a way of governing which depends on the will of the people. In general terms, there are so many different models of democratic government around the world that it is sometimes easier to understand the idea of democracy in terms of what it definitely is not. Democracy, then, is not autocracy or dictatorship, where one person rules; and it is not oligarchy, where a small segment of society rules. Properly understood, democracy should not even be "rule of the majority", if that means that minorities' interests are ignored completely. A democracy, at least in theory, is government on behalf of all the people, according to their "will".

In modern world, one thing that unites modern systems of democracy, and which also distinguishes them from the ancient model, is the use of representatives of the people. Instead of taking part directly in law making, modern democracies use elections to select representatives who are sent by the people to govern on their behalf. Such a system is known as representative democracy. It can lay some claim to being "democratic" because it is, at least to some degree, based on the two principles above: equality of all (one person – one vote), and the right of every individual to some degree of personal autonomy.

When talking about the importance of democracy it is important to define it accurately. Democracy is popular sovereignty – in Abraham Lincoln's words, 'government of the people, by the people, for the people'. At its heart is the concept of the population choosing a government through regular, free, and fair elections.

Democracy has played a vital role in the story of civilization, helping transform the world from power structures of monarchy, empire, and conquest into popular rule, self-determination, and peaceful co-existence. A direct form of democracy was initially practiced in ancient Greece, but there were many slaves in that society, and hardly anyone was a citizen and able to participate. Democracy then vanished until its re-emergence as 'representative democracy' in the late 18th century. Since then, it has been generally understood that modern human history follows a trend towards greater democracy, with some scholars describing the phenomenon taking place in three waves.

## **DEMOCRATIC DECLINE**

Democratic decline which can be also known as autocratisation and de-democratisation. It is basically stands for a gradual decline in the quality of democracy and the opposite of democratization. If unchecked, democratic backsliding results in the state losing its democratic qualities, becoming an autocracy or authoritarian regime.

Democratic decline is mainly caused by the state-led weakening of political institutions that sustain the democratic system, such as the peaceful transition of power or free and fair elections. Although these political elements are assumed to lead to the onset of backsliding, other essential components of democracy such as infringement of individual rights, especially freedom of expression, question the health, efficiency and sustainability of democratic systems over time.

American Political scientist Nancy Bermeo argues that blatant forms of democratic decline, such as classic, open-ended coups d'état and election-day fraud, have declined since the end of the Cold War, while more subtle and "vexing" forms of backsliding have increased. The latter forms of backsliding entail the debilitation of democratic institutions from within. These subtle forms are especially effective when they are legitimized through the very institutions that people expect to protect democratic values.

As one of the few researchers, Erdmann (2011) has theoretically conceptualised the decline of democracy. He terms the reverse process of democratisation that is the transformation from democracy, starting with the loss of quality—as decline of democracy. Erdmann defines the decline of democracy as “[...] a deterioration of quality in one of the two central dimensions of democracy—freedom and equality—and in one additional one, that is the (horizontal) control of power; it describes a negative variation within the democratic regime type” (Erdmann 2011, p. 24).

A democratic political system can show a decline in quality and then turn into a defective democracy, a hybrid or an authoritarian regime. The process can be either slow and gradual, moving from quality loss to a hybrid regime, or fast and short, ending in an authoritarian or totalitarian regime without passing through the hybrid stage.

Moreover, young democracies are supposed to get more often caught in cycles of democratic gains and setbacks (Pickel 2012). But even established industrialized democracies such as the United States under president Trump (Freedom House 2020) have experienced declines in their quality of democracy since the end of the Cold War (Erdmann 2011). Thus, the decline of democracy mainly affects young democracies founded during the third wave of democratization but old democracies are also not immune to it (Diamond 2015, p. 142; Erdmann 2011, p. 28; Erdmann and Kneuer 2011, p. 12; Pickel 2012, p. 213). A reduction in quality is possible at any time and at any stage of the development of a democracy.

## **CONSECUTIVE ACCELERATION**

The global democratic decline is accelerating day by day. Freedom in the World 2021, published by US-based research and advocacy group Freedom House, finds that these withering blows marked the 15th consecutive year of decline in global freedom. The countries experiencing deterioration outnumbered those with improvements by the largest margin recorded since the negative trend began in 2006. The long democratic recession is deepening.

“This year’s findings make it abundantly clear that we have not yet stemmed the authoritarian tide,” says Sarah Repucci, vice president of research and analysis at Freedom House.

“Democratic governments will have to work in solidarity with one another, and with democracy advocates and human rights defenders in more repressive settings, if we are to reverse 15 years of accumulated declines and build a freer and more peaceful world.”

The report finds that the share of countries designated Not Free has reached its highest level since the deterioration of democracy began in 2006, and that countries with declines in political rights and civil liberties outnumbered those with gains by the largest margin recorded during the 15-year period. The report downgraded the freedom scores of 73 countries, representing 75 percent of the global population. In emerging Europe and Central Asia, 12 countries saw a decline in freedom in 2020, while just six improved their scores.

The impact of the long-term democratic decline has become increasingly global in nature, broad enough to be felt by those living under the cruelest dictatorships, as well as by citizens of long-standing democracies. Nearly 75 percent of the world’s population lived in a country that faced deterioration last year. The ongoing decline has given rise to claims of democracy’s inherent inferiority. Proponents of this idea include official Chinese and Russian commentators seeking to strengthen their international influence while escaping accountability for abuses, as well as antidemocratic actors within democratic states who see an opportunity to consolidate power. They are both cheering the breakdown of democracy and exacerbating it, pitting themselves against the brave groups and individuals who have set out to reverse the damage.

## **PANDEMIC EFFECT**

As COVID-19 spread during the year 2020, governments across the democratic spectrum repeatedly resorted to excessive surveillance, discriminatory restrictions on freedoms like movement and assembly, and arbitrary or violent enforcement of such restrictions by police and nonstate actors. Waves of false and

misleading information, generated deliberately by political leaders in some cases, flooded many countries' communication systems, obscuring reliable data and jeopardizing lives. While most countries with stronger democratic institutions ensured that any restrictions on liberty were necessary and proportionate to the threat posed by the virus, a number of their peers pursued clumsy or ill-informed strategies, and dictators from Venezuela to Cambodia exploited the crisis to quash opposition and fortify their power. Across the world in 2020, citizens experienced the biggest rollback of individual freedoms ever undertaken by governments during peacetime (and perhaps even in wartime). The willing surrender of fundamental freedoms by millions of people was perhaps one of the most remarkable occurrences in an extraordinary year.

Since it spread around the world in early 2020, COVID-19 has exacerbated the global decline in freedom. The outbreak exposed weaknesses across all the pillars of democracy, from elections and the rule of law to egregiously disproportionate restrictions on freedoms of assembly and movement. Both democracies and dictatorships experienced successes and failures in their battle with the virus itself, though citizens in authoritarian states had fewer tools to resist and correct harmful policies. Ultimately, the changes precipitated by the pandemic left many societies—with varied regime types, income levels, and demographics—in worse political condition; with more pronounced racial, ethnic, and gender inequalities; and vulnerable to long-term effects.

## **DICTATORIAL AND AUTHORITARIAN RULES**

It is one of the main key factors of democratic decline. These rules include Military dictatorships, Single-party dictatorships, Personalist dictatorships, Monarchic dictatorships, Hybrid dictatorships. There are many adverse effects of dictatorship and authoritarian rules which mainly harm the norms of the democracy. That includes the unravelling of social organizations and democratic institutions, the prohibition of other political parties, and the replacement of the nation's constitution. Under a dictatorship, many people are persecuted for reasons, including their religion or their economic status. Some dictatorships may have secret police, indefinite arrests, and concentration camps. Dictatorships have shallow levels of freedom.

Even in today's modern world, where freedom is prized and respected, you will still find examples of dictatorship governments around the globe. According to research there are around 65 countries where still dictatorial and authoritarian rules are established and unfortunately, democracy is still shaky in these countries. In some cases, nations may have multiple ruling bodies or government types, meaning they're not exclusively countries that are governed by dictatorship.

## **RECENT TRANSITIONS**

These are the recent transitions of the governments, where democracy is totally faded. Guinea's Military Declared a Coup. On 5 September 2021, President of Guinea Alpha Conde was captured by the country's armed forces in a coup d'état after gunfire in the capital, Conakry. Special forces commander Mamady Doumbouya released a broadcast on state television announcing the dissolution of the constitution and government.

Recently, only days after the U.S. military withdrew from Afghanistan, the Taliban took control of major cities and installed themselves in the presidential palace in Kabul and day by day Taliban are going to capture all the province of the Afghanistan. This power transition has stunned the world.

Chadian President Idriss Déby died on April 2021 from wounds he sustained on the frontlines of fighting against the rebel group le Front pour l'alternance et la concorde au Tchad (FACT). Déby's death has put the internal vulnerabilities of his authoritarian government glaringly on display. Lacking legitimacy and unwilling to adhere to the constitution's succession plan, regime loyalists organized a military coup d'état dissolving the executive branch, the National Assembly, and the constitution. In effect, the military junta, led by Déby's son, General Mahamat Idriss Déby, is vying to perpetuate Déby's 30-year authoritarian rule.

Mutinuous soldiers surrounded the private residence of Mali's President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita on August 18, 2020 firing shots into the air and deepening fears of a coup attempt following several months of demonstrations calling for his resignation. Mali awoke on Wednesday to a new chapter in its troubled history after rebel military leaders forced President Boubacar Keita from office, prompting its West African neighbours to threaten border closures and sanctions against the coup leaders.

Myanmar's military staged a coup on February 01 2021, detained de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi and declaring it had taken control of the country for one year under a state of emergency. The intervention came after weeks of rising tensions between the military, which ruled the country for nearly five decades, and the civilian government over allegations of fraud in November's elections.

## CONCLUSION

In every region of the world, democracy is under attack by populist leaders and groups that reject pluralism and demand unchecked power to advance the particular interests of their supporters, usually at the expense of minorities and other perceived foes.

Rising dictatorial and authoritarian powers have given a challenge the global democracy. Democratic decline has been started rapidly in this world. The pandemic did not put a stop rising level of political engagement. Elections do not always lead to democratic progress. Although Mali held parliamentary elections in March 2020 that were broadly free and fair, the result was nullified when the country suffered a coup in August 2020 by military officers aggrieved by lack of progress against jihadist insurgents. This year is not yet off to a promising start yet, with an insurrection in America's Capitol and a military coup in Myanmar.

Recently, the world has seen Taliban's behaviour and Guinea's coup. These all incident started a new wave of democratic decline from the world. These recent incidents have boomed their expectations to many terrorist's organisation and military authoritarian who willing to coup and breakneck seizure of power. If democratic decline will still remain accelerated then, there will be times when democracy will be saturated and remain only in papers.

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