



MAPPING THE GLOBAL DEMOCRACY NARRATIVE LANDSCAPE:

Research Findings and Applications

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Metropolitan Group

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Authoritarian governments and their allies are skilled and effective at orchestrating and weaponizing narratives that legitimize their policies and rule, and that undermine democracy, democratic institutions, and democratic values. A narrative is a meta-story or organizing principle that helps people make sense of the numerous sources of information, data points, and stories they hear and interact with. Receptivity to a narrative is often driven by the closely held values that impact mindsets, social norms, expectations, action, and which stories, data, and “facts” are seen and believed.

Narratives are critical because they are an upstream element of the information ecosystem, which has become a battleground for narratives that seek to legitimize or delegitimize democracy. Prominent voices in countries ranging from the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the Russian Federation (Russia) to Hungary, Sweden, Italy, the United States, and many others, have become adept at orchestrating narratives to advance their political and geopolitical agendas. These narratives intersect in different countries and local environments, and intersect with more localized narratives. Identifying the upstream elements of the information ecosystem, as opposed to the downstream (digital and media literacy, for example), is crucial because it can create opportunities to apply more effective messaging for a range of pro-democracy and social impact campaigns and counter narratives that undermine democracy. In other words, if the stream is being polluted or dammed upstream, efforts to clean and impact its flow downstream are much more challenging; and if the upstream headwaters are protected, downstream is much more resilient against pollution.

This study seeks to understand and analyze the global and country level narratives that either advance authoritarianism or bolster democracy, democratic institutions, and democratic values; and then use that evidence and data to develop, test, and refine new narratives and message frames that can be customized. At the core of the study is a social and behavior change (SBC) methodology that identifies narratives, the closely held values that make narratives relevant and motivating, and the message framing that supports and advances narratives.

This global report maps 12 salient and dominant global narratives that either delegitimize or legitimize democracy, democratic institutions, and democratic values. In doing so, the report analyzes the narrative architecture or core components that compose each narrative, and highlights how the narratives are framed and which values they most frequently trigger.

All narratives were identified using a qualitative multi-method/multi-source landscape research scan at a global level, and customized in-depth scans in 12 country case studies: Ecuador, El Salvador, Indonesia, Kenya, the Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Nigeria, Perú, the Philippines, Serbia, Uganda, and the United States. (See the [METHODOLOGY](#) section below for more detail.) Metropolitan Group (MG) partnered with a local research organization to conduct research in each case study country, which was conducted in the dominant local language. MG then partnered with local strategic communications firms in El Salvador, Indonesia, and Serbia to develop, test, and refine a new narrative and message framework that can be customized and applied by civil society organizations across a wide range of democracy and social impact

sectors. In the United States, where MG is based, it conducted narrative development and testing independently of a local partner. Given the political context in many case study countries, MG has chosen to keep the partner organizations anonymous to protect their identity and in line with “do no harm” best practices.

MG’s local partners in each country led research across all methodologies in the relevant local languages. At the outset of the research, MG worked closely with local research partners and co-created country-specific research and methodology plans. MG’s local research partners validated all narratives and provided feedback on framing and context outlined in this report, and in test countries conducted focus groups, KIIs, and other testing methods. MG partners co-created and validated all findings and the recommended narratives and message frames.

Based upon this extensive body of research, a recommended set of four actionable narrative and messaging tools were developed and included in this report:

1. Five evidence-based guidelines for more effective messaging that can be incorporated into existing and future messaging
2. A set of 10 recommended closely held values that are important to trigger in pro-democratic narratives and messaging
3. A new recommended global narrative
4. A new preliminary U.S. evidence-based narrative

In addition, this report includes practical recommendations for building a democracy narrative infrastructure to apply the new narrative and messaging in real-time social impact and pro-democracy campaigns. Ultimately this research is intended to both bolster resilience against narratives that undermine democracy and legitimize authoritarianism, and identify opportunities to advance more effective narratives that bolster support for democratic principles.

Key Findings

The following research findings are important in understanding the salient and dominant narratives, and should be factored into the development of new narratives to bolster democracy and democratic values.

Global Narrative Findings

1. **All narratives can be orchestrated and organic, and many of the most effective are both.** Orchestrated narratives are designed, coordinated, and instrumentalized for specific objectives. Organic narratives tend to grow out of cultural, historical, or other social experiences. Many of the most effective pro-authoritarian narratives are orchestrated narratives built on existing organic narratives. At the same time, not all pro-authoritarian narratives are orchestrated.
2. **Many narratives can be used to promote either authoritarianism or democracy.** Authoritarians in particular are skilled at appropriating democracy narratives because they recognize that democracy appeals to the majority of people. When developing pro-democracy narratives and messaging, it is important to consider how they may be

appropriated or weaponized. For example, the narrative that democracy “is messy” or “a work in progress” is an honest acknowledgment that building democracy requires long-term investment and commitment. However, it can easily be twisted to argue that democracy creates instability and disorder, which contradicts core values of security and prosperity. “Democracy is in decline” is another narrative that has been used by pro-democracy proponents to raise alarms about democratic backsliding. But malign actors use the same narrative to delegitimize democracy as ineffective, outdated, and unable to meet people’s needs.

3. **Narratives don’t live in silos.** Narratives coexist in information ecosystems where they overlap and compete with other narratives, stories, sources of information, and information echo chambers, as well as lived experience. All of these factors shape a person’s receptivity or resistance to narratives. When developing new narratives and message frameworks, it is important to have a deep understanding of these additional factors and take them into consideration. Since narratives do not live in a vacuum and will be countered and often appropriated, it is important to ensure that pro-democracy narratives are authentic, trigger priority values, and are bolstered by stories and messengers that resonate with stakeholders.
4. **Upstream narratives create receptivity or inoculation to mis/dis/malinformation (MDM), and influence what grabs attention, is believed, and is organically repeated.** Highly orchestrated narratives can create fertile ground for belief of disinformation and inspire organic amplification of these narratives. Orchestrated narratives establish a frame of reference and impact what people see and believe. This is the key function narratives play in advancing disinformation and can also be used to counter and inoculate against it. Once people believe a narrative, it impacts their mindset (the lens through which they see, filter, and analyze information), and this frames what they see and do not see; what “facts” they credit as true; which messengers they listen to, grant credibility to, and believe; and how resistant they are to any information that counters disinformation and aligns with the narrative they believe.
5. **Research teams struggled to find salient and dominant pro-democratic narratives.** The research concluded that there are currently few effective salient and dominant pro-democracy narratives being used by pro-democracy proponents. Research at the global level and country level identified a baseline of pro-democracy narratives advanced by the U.S. government and allies, as well as human rights and pro-democracy advocates, NGOs, independent media, and opposition politicians. But, few pro-democracy narratives found in the study countries met the criteria for “salient and dominant” as part of this study.
6. **People make choices based on tangible benefits and their values, not necessarily in favor of democracy or autocracy.** People’s receptivity to narratives, or their attitudes and choices, in many cases are shaped by their assessment of tangible personal and communal benefits, such as economic factors, jobs, safety, etc., rather than a binary choice in favor of democracy or authoritarianism. Many people believe that democracy and democratic rights are important, but they may not believe they are a priority compared with other daily challenges; they can simultaneously hold beliefs about democracy and authoritarianism that may seem contradictory.

7. **The historical and cultural context and lived experience of most people have a significant impact on how they experience narratives and perceive messengers.** Historical and cultural context (including religion, tradition, customs, and gender roles) provides an important foundation for organic narratives that can be weaponized or orchestrated to advance pro-authoritarian narratives. A history of foreign intervention, civil war, economic crisis, shared history, or religion shapes people's receptivity to narratives and influences the messengers they believe. For example, country-specific research identified pro-authoritarian narratives that evoked nostalgia for the stability or prosperity of a time under dictatorship. Historical and cultural context should be a key factor in framing all pro-democratic narratives.
8. **Corruption is a dominant theme across all narrative categories.** While some narratives point out the challenges of corruption from a pro-democratic perspective, pro-authoritarian messengers are using anti-corruption narratives to erode trust in politics, government, and governing institutions.
9. **Security-related narratives reflect genuine concerns about safety, security, and violence.** Dominant and salient security-centered narratives were found across multiple countries. They are often instrumentalized for pro-authoritarian objectives and can bolster the pro-authoritarian "Security justifies all" and "Strong leader" narratives.
10. **Messengers are key to how narratives are used.** Many of the narrative themes are utilized by both pro-democracy actors and pro-authoritarian actors as a premise for their desired call to action—while their call to actions may differ, they may reference the same challenges in order to build their case. Messengers may reference themes or issues that have broad appeal or interest (such as corruption), but shift their message according to their specific objective or motivations.
11. **Enemies, outsiders, and others is a strong theme in pro-authoritarian narratives.** The notion that outsiders (including "outsiders" within the country) are threatening safety, security, prosperity, and national identity is found across all countries, either as a dominant narrative or as the driving theme in other dominant narratives. The narrative often uses dehumanizing language and enemy frames to justify anti-democratic actions.
12. **Neutral narratives are important to track as an authoritarian early warning.** Research identified neutral narratives that did not have an explicit pro-authoritarian or pro-democracy call to action. However, in most cases, the research found that neutral narratives are adapted and weaponized for authoritarian objectives and create a fertile environment for pro-authoritarian discourse. A key example is the neutral narrative "security demands action," which often bolsters the authoritarian narrative "security justifies all."

Democracy Narrative Findings

When comparing pro-authoritarian and pro-democracy narratives, the pro-authoritarian narratives are overwhelmingly more dominant and salient. Pro-authoritarian messengers trigger closely held values more effectively and frequently and use simple and emotive language. Pro-authoritarian narratives frequently use fear and threat framing to advance their narratives, which, while effective in driving action, is also damaging to social cohesion and undermines norms of inclusion. Pro-democracy narratives, by contrast, often take the principles and

understanding of liberal democratic principles for granted and fail to make the case for why democracy is important to people's lives. The pro-democracy narratives tended to use more technical language and triggered values less frequently. In some countries, research teams struggled to identify dominant pro-democracy narratives.

1. **Many pro-democracy narratives assume relevance, understanding, or support of democratic principles.** Many pro-democracy narratives use technical language and assume relevance and understanding of liberal democratic principles, while pro-authoritarian narratives center to a greater extent on triggering values and highlighting benefits.
2. **Some of the most dominant pro-democracy narratives have “deficit framing” (e.g., “Democracy is messy”) that can bolster authoritarian narratives.**¹ This can reinforce concerns for high-frequency values of stability and security that further advance authoritarian narratives. Some also directly contradict core values of stability and security that are seen in many dominant narratives. Two of the five dominant pro-democratic narratives were deficit-framed.
3. **Many pro-democracy narratives are more technical and philosophical, while pro-authoritarian narratives trigger more values and highlight benefits.**
4. **The brand and word “democracy” is powerful and holds value, and as a result is vulnerable to being co-opted by authoritarians.** Research found general support for democracy. However, this support for democracy also allows authoritarians to appropriate language around elections to legitimize their actions and rule, framing them as “democratic” while undermining other democratic principles and institutions. In some cases, concepts of democracy are defined primarily through the lens of elections. Despite appropriation, the power of the concept and “brand” merits pro-democracy advocates utilizing the term and better defining it as connected with democratic principles, rather than limited to elections.
5. **The “democracy promotes freedom” narrative has lost dominance in recent years.**² Despite “freedom” being identified as the value most associated with democracy, the “democracy promotes freedom” narrative has lost dominance in recent years and was not found among the current salient and dominant pro-democratic narratives. However, this narrative remains a powerful and motivating idea and value.

¹ A narrative with “deficit framing” centers challenges associated with a situation, scenario, or environment, rather than the benefits it may provide. These narratives highlight the elements weakening or threatening democracy, rather than the positive values or assets associated with democracy. One example of a deficit-framed narrative is “Democracy is in decline.”

² “Democracy promotes freedom” was a dominant narrative used by proponents of democracy in the early to mid-20th century, but it has been promoted less frequently in recent decades.

Values

Closely held values are a key element in narratives that impact mindsets, social norms, expectations, and actions; they determine which stories, data points, and “facts” people see, experience, and believe.³ MG distinguishes between closely held values (e.g., security, community, family, tradition) and “democratic values,” which are principles of liberal democracy (e.g., the rule of law, transparency, freedom of expression). The most effective narratives, which precipitate action and spark decision-making, utilize closely held values. This research identified 20 core closely held values repeatedly evoked in the salient and dominant narratives found in the existing narrative landscape. **Security/safety, honesty, prosperity, strength/fearlessness, representation, and stability** are the top values most often triggered in the existing narrative landscape. Most closely held values can be used to advance narratives that either delegitimize or legitimize democracy.

It should also be noted that the top values identified in this study are those being triggered in the dominant and salient narratives related to democratic principles and governance found throughout the research. They do not always correlate with top values identified by broad studies of closely held values (that are looking at values overall and not specifically connected to forms of governance). Moreover, the 20 values identified in the narrative landscape are differentiated from the 10 recommended values for pro-democracy messaging, which is highlighted in this report.⁴ (For more detailed values analysis and data, see the [VALUES](#) section below.)

Of the 20 closely held values identified in the global and country narratives, certain ones stood out for their frequent usage. In the global narratives, the value of prosperity was triggered the most in both pro-authoritarian narratives (seven times) and pro-democratic narratives (five times), and it was used in all 12 global narratives. In pro-authoritarian country-specific narratives, prosperity was also the most commonly triggered value (12 times).

Security was another common value in the global and country narratives. It was identified in six pro-authoritarian global narratives and four pro-democratic global narratives. In pro-authoritarian country-specific narratives, it was the second most common value, appearing 22 times. Strength was the third most common value used in global narratives, occurring seven times, followed by order and stability, which both appeared six times.

The 10 recommended values are drawn from a combination of high-frequency values (e.g. security and prosperity) found in the existing narrative landscape and values that were drawn from other surveys and analysis (e.g. fairness, freedom, family) that were tested in focus groups and surveys that showed high resonance. Throughout this document the values are color-coded in order to illustrate how they are triggered in the dominant and salient narratives.

³ MG’s approach to values is shaped in part by S.H. Schwartz’s [Refined Theory of Basic Values](#) (2017).

⁴ The values analysis and frequency information in this study is intended to provide a broad baseline of data to help inform the development of new narratives and message frameworks in future narrative change activities and campaigns. It is not intended as a definitive data set, but can complement existing data on attitudes, perceptions, and values.

10 Recommended Core Values

The ten evidence-based recommended core values shown below (of the many values identified in the research scan) reflect those identified in quantitative and qualitative research across both the narrative scan and testing phases of our work as being most important to evoke in pro-democratic narratives and messaging. In countries where narrative testing has been conducted (El Salvador, Indonesia, Serbia, and the United States), there are slight variations in the recommended values. For example, in the United States, eight out of the 10 recommended values were the same as the global recommended values.

Note: The color coding of the 10 recommended values in the global pro-authoritarian and pro-democracy narrative summaries below uses an updated set of colors that were developed following the initial research. There is slight color differentiation between the 10 recommended values and recommended narratives, and the 20 values identified on pages 24 to 29 (Values Findings and Definitions) and in the country-specific narrative landscape scan found on pages 62 through 94.

Core Values Color Key	Freedom	Fairness	Safety/ Security	Honesty	Representation
	Prosperity	Strength/ Fearlessness	Responsibility	Family/ Belonging	Tradition

Salient and Dominant Narratives

The global research scan identified seven pro-authoritarian narratives and five pro-democracy narratives that were the most salient and dominant. The total number of narratives included 44 pro-authoritarian narratives and 16 pro-democratic narratives globally and across the 12 countries. In most cases, the dominant global narratives found in individual countries were articulated in country-specific ways based on country trends and framing, but carried the same overarching narrative concept. For example, in the Kyrgyz Republic, the narrative “democratic institutions are corrupt” was expressed as “NGOs and independent media are corrupt, not accountable.”

As narratives are conveyed through messaging and stories by numerous stakeholders, and across multiple mediums, the narratives presented in this report are not word-for-word narratives. Rather, MG has crafted these narratives by aggregating them from the messages, stories, and quotes identified throughout the research activity. For purposes of this analysis, **dominant** relates to frequency and consistency of use, presence in multiple mediums, and use by stakeholders or messengers with positional and cultural power. **Salient** relates to the level of engagement, repetition, and use that demonstrates belief and relevance. (See the [METHODOLOGY](#) section below for additional detail.)

Pro-Authoritarian/Anti-Democratic Narratives

1. **Democracy appropriation:** *There has never been as much democracy as there is now. We have ensured that the voice of the people will be heard and acted upon to increase safety and prosperity.*
2. **Democracy doesn't deliver:** *Democracy has not and does not deliver the benefits it promised. It slows economic development, protects criminals, chips away at traditional values, and fosters chaos. We are losing jobs, living in fear, and plagued by dishonest and corrupt elites.*
3. **Democratic institutions are corrupt:** *Corrupt elites created systems and “democratic” institutions that are corrupt and benefit the few at the expense of honest, hard-working people. Corruption gets in the way of progress, protects criminals and terrorists, and weakens our nation. To solve our problems, we must take action without interference from illegitimate institutions.*
4. **Security justifies all:** *Our security is under constant threat—from our borders and physical safety, to our economic stability and our traditions, culture, and values. Democratic institutions are not up to the task of keeping us safe.*
5. **Democracy has gone too far:** *Democracy and its supporters among the press, human rights advocates, and social media influencers are creating conflict, disunity, and instability in our country and must be stopped. Only stability and order can create jobs, provide security, and maintain unity for our people and our country.*
6. **Enemies, outsiders, and others:** *The opposition and pro-democracy forces are enemies of the state who serve foreign interests and hate our country. They foster unrest and put our lives, families, livelihoods, values, and even national security in danger.*
7. **Strong leadership:** *Only strong leadership with the will to act can provide the stability and order the country needs to defend against threats and provide dignity, prosperity, and development.*

Pro-Democratic/Anti-Authoritarian Narratives

1. **Democracy is in decline:** *Democracy is under threat around the world. Democratic backsliding is being advanced by propaganda efforts from authoritarian actors, resulting in decreased and diminished freedoms, security, and opportunity for people everywhere.*
2. **Authoritarianism is harmful:** *Authoritarian states are weaker, more unstable, and less able to deliver prosperity, security, or growth to their people than democratic states can.*
3. **Democracy delivers:** *Democracy delivers economic growth and stability, strength, and security, and the means for a prosperous and healthy society.*

4. **Democracy promotes equity and fairness:** *Democracy promotes equity and fair treatment. Democratic systems are more inclusive and provide greater security and benefits for the most vulnerable populations.*
5. **Democracy is a work in progress:** *Democracy is a work in progress and an ongoing struggle toward building a better society. Democracies are not perfect and can be messy, but democratic systems are the most prosperous, stable, and best way to ensure freedom and opportunity for all citizens.*

Evidence Based Guidelines for More Effective Messaging

Narrative research identified five key evidence-based guidelines for more effective narrative and messaging application. Following these guidelines when creating talking points, speeches, and presentations, preparing for interviews, posting on social media, and writing pro-democracy communications generally, will help create more effective messaging.

VALUES-BASED: Center or highlight the recommended core values in all communications.

ASSET-FRAMED: Focus on opportunity and benefits (assets) instead of challenges and shortfalls (deficits).

RELATIONAL, NOT TRANSACTIONAL: Use language that focuses on what matters to people.

ACCESSIBLE: Use everyday, easy-to-understand language.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT: Use a cultural context lens when applying the narrative and messaging and in crafting stories.

Recommended Global Narrative

The recommended global pro-democracy narrative and supporting message framework were developed and co-created with local partners by applying research findings, data, and the five evidence-based guidelines. They were refined based on testing in three countries (El Salvador, Indonesia, and Serbia) using qualitative and quantitative methods. The narrative and message framework evoke priority core values such as security and prosperity; are primarily asset-framed; prioritize relatable (non-technical) language; incorporate key message components including freedom and security; and are informed by cultural, historical, and political context.

FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY LIVE IN ALL OF US	
Core Message (summary)	All people deserve to be both free and secure. True security is only possible when we all can live and speak freely, honor our traditions, and provide for our families. Freedom is both our right and a responsibility we share to participate and to respect the freedom of others. Freedom and democracy live in all of us. We expect and deserve an honest and open government that answers to the people and treats everyone fairly. When we stand together for freedom and democracy, we build strong communities and a safer world.
Problem	Denying the rights and freedom of anyone puts at risk the rights and freedom of everyone. Too often, we are told that security is only possible if we sacrifice some of our freedom or that democracy undermines traditional family values. Both are untrue and are used to deny our rights and protect those in power, paving the way for corruption and disinformation. This limits our ability to solve our collective challenges and promote shared prosperity while also limiting people's access to education, health care, and jobs that make it possible to support themselves and their families.
Solution	To be a truly democratic society, we must demand a government that is honest and open, treats people fairly, and provides opportunities for all people. That is only possible if we do our part to actively participate, defend freedom for ourselves and others, and hold our government accountable to the people.
Benefits	When people are free to live and speak their minds without fear and are treated fairly, they can provide for themselves and their families, and fully participate and contribute to their communities. This combination of freedom, fairness, and fearlessness is also why democracies can best find innovative solutions to our shared challenges and build strong communities and a safer world.
Call to Action*	Freedom and democracy live in all of us. To best ensure strong communities and a safer world, we need to stand together for honest and open government, treat all people fairly, and protect our freedom.

The recommended narrative tested the strongest among stakeholders, standing out with the highest levels of agreement, relevance, and willingness to share across all audience segments. Respondents' intention to take civic action increased after exposure to the narrative. Even authoritarian-leaning respondents showed high agreement with the narrative—reducing the potential for backlash. Based upon the findings from message testing, the messaging was refined to increase the prevalence of the highest-performing message components.

Core Values Color Key	Freedom	Fairness	Safety/ Security	Honesty	Representation
	Prosperity	Strength/ Fearlessness	Responsibility	Family/ Belonging	Tradition

Preliminary U.S. Narrative

The U.S. narrative was constructed based on formative research (including a review of existing quantitative and qualitative data gathered globally and domestically) and was tested with focus groups in the U.S. (with moderate Republicans, independents, and moderate Democrats) in October of 2024 and again in January of 2025. Quantitative testing is being conducted in the summer of 2025, and the U.S. narrative will be updated/refined based on testing results. The testing findings will be shared with the updated narrative.

FREEDOM MATTERS	
Narrative Frame	In America, our freedoms matter. This country was built on the right to have our voices heard , to make our own decisions , to be treated fairly by the justice system, and to vote in free and fair elections. These freedoms are at the heart of democracy and our security . But, they require checks and balances on power and government that is open , honest , and responsive to the people . Our country hasn't fully lived up to these freedoms . But, a strong democracy isn't afraid to admit that and do the hard work of being better tomorrow than it is today .
Challenge	These days, it can feel like Americans can't find common ground on anything. Healthy debate and working toward compromise are a good thing in a strong democracy . But, there are some who are working every day to weaken American democracy and further divide us to serve their own interests. Defending freedom and fairness —and finding solutions to the challenges we face—doesn't have to mean fighting each other . Instead, we need to find a way to work together .
Solution	Protecting our freedoms has always been up to all of us , not just our elected representatives . But, democracy is about more than voting . It's about securing freedom and fairness for all Americans , ensuring all voices are heard , and demanding a government that is honest , open , and responsive to the people . Fearless and free people working together can find solutions that make our lives better and our democracy stronger .
Benefits	A democracy where freedoms are protected , fairness is something everyone can expect, and government is open and accountable to the people is better able to advance freedom , safety , opportunity , and justice for every one of us and our families .
Call to Action	None of this will happen on its own. It will take all of us working together to protect our freedoms and improve our democracy so it works better for everyone . It won't be easy. But we've done hard things before and we can do them again .

The Freedom Matters narrative tested strongest (for relevance, increased understanding, and motivation to support across both rounds of focus groups. It was effective at increasing support for and belief in the possibility of improving liberal democracy and connecting people to the idea of it. The narrative also met the “bridging benchmark” through the Pluralytics platform, indicating that it was likely to resonate with a bipartisan audience. Including a specific reference to democracy involving more than voting was also seen as an important reminder to people who otherwise struggle to identify ways in which democracy is put into action.

Recommendations Summary

The research findings and data on salient and dominant narratives and high-frequency values provide important guidance for immediate application. MG has identified **four core areas for more effective pro-democracy messaging and narrative change in addition to the five guidelines highlighted above**. Each recommendation area includes guidance to adapt the language, framing, and values of existing (and future) pro-democracy narratives; opportunities for dissemination by democracy advocates, NGOs, and other social impact organizations; launching proactive narrative initiatives; and a set of recommendations for further testing of potential narratives and values. (For more detailed recommendations see the below section, [RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NARRATIVE INTERVENTIONS](#).)

Recommendation 1: In all democracy communications, apply the five guidelines for more effective messaging.

Recommendation 2: Build a pro-democracy narrative infrastructure to apply and increase currency for a new narrative.

Recommendation 3: In countries that were not part of this research, conduct stakeholder analysis and testing to better prioritize stakeholder segments most open to pro-democracy narratives and stakeholders most concerned with authoritarian actions.

INTRODUCTION

Democracy around the world is under attack. Authoritarian leaders and governments from the smallest countries to the largest and most well resourced are orchestrating and weaponizing narratives that legitimize their policies and rule, while undermining democracy, democratic institutions, and democratic values. They are watching each other, learning from each other's successes and shortcomings, and manipulating the information ecosystem to advance their narratives.⁵ Some leaders and governments seek narrow local objectives to consolidate their rule, silence opposition, and capture state institutions and resources. In other states, like the Russian Federation (RF) and People's Republic of China (PRC), leaders are driven by ideological and geopolitical competition to legitimize their model of governance. Regardless of the objectives, the result is a weakening of democracy and democratic values, and the growing appeal of authoritarian models of governance.

Narratives are critical because they are an upstream element of the information ecosystem, which has become a battleground for narratives that seek to legitimize or delegitimize democracy and put forward alternative authoritarian models of governance. A narrative is a meta-story or organizing principle that helps people make sense of the numerous sources of information, data points, and stories they hear, see, and experience. An individual's or community's receptivity to a narrative is often driven by the closely held values that impact mindsets, social norms, expectations, and action, and which stories, data, and "facts" are seen, experienced, and believed. In this global contest for legitimacy, the side that can craft narratives that most effectively resonate with people's closely held values will have the advantage.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, as democracy experienced a surge globally, hundreds of millions of people were lifted out of poverty, participated in free elections, advocated for and won increased freedoms, and had greater access to independent sources of information. However, the benefits of democracy were distributed unevenly, and in some countries, democratic transitions reopened long-dormant violent conflicts. Increasingly, in countries that have transitioned to more democratic systems after decades of dictatorship or military rule, there is a creeping nostalgia for the perceived stability, order, and prosperity of the *ancien régime*. Polling shows that while many people still acknowledge that democracy and many democratic principles are important, they increasingly question whether democracy can help meet their most pressing and basic needs.⁶ This trend affects both newer democracies and long-established democratic states.

Ultimately, this environment creates an opening for authoritarians, demagogues, and populists to weaponize and orchestrate narratives that delegitimize and sow doubt about democracy and

⁵ Metropolitan Group. "Voice: Shifting Narratives to Create a Just and Sustainable World," <https://www.metgroup.com/ideas/voice-shifting-narratives-to-create-a-just-and-sustainable-world/>.

⁶ For example, when asked in the World Values Survey to choose between freedom and security, the majority of people globally (nearly 70%) chose security. The World Values Survey (WVS): 2017–2019 provides data on the social, political, economic, religious and cultural values held by people globally, See "World Values Survey Wave 7: 2017–2022," *World Values Survey*, <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSOnline.jsp>.

democratic values. Authoritarian messengers promote narratives that legitimize authoritarianism and authoritarian tendencies, restricting equal rights, silencing freedom of expression, and dismantling the institutions that protect basic freedoms. Orchestrated or instrumentalized narratives often intersect with powerful existing organic narratives that are shaped by historical and cultural experiences. Both organic and orchestrated narratives contribute to and fuel the growing disillusionment with and indifference to democracy worldwide.

Identifying the upstream elements (narrative and messaging) of the information ecosystem, as opposed to the downstream elements (digital and media literacy, for example), is crucial because it can create a more fertile enabling environment for liberal democracy while increasing the efficacy of efforts to counter narratives that undermine democracy. In other words, if the stream is being polluted or dammed upstream, efforts to clean and impact its flow downstream are much more challenging. If the upstream headwaters are protected, downstream is much more resilient against pollution.

This study seeks to understand and analyze the global and country level narratives that either advance authoritarianism or bolster democracy, democratic institutions, and democratic values. Based on this understanding, it also seeks (through development, testing, and refinement) to identify effective evidence-based narratives to bolster understanding and support of liberal democracy. At the core of the study is a social and behavior change methodology that identifies narratives, the closely held values that make narratives relevant and motivating, and the message framing that supports and advances narratives. It also connects and contextualizes stories and data points in ways that shape people's receptivity to the narrative and facilitates telling a shared story.

The report maps 12 salient and dominant global narratives that either delegitimize or legitimize democracy, democratic institutions, and democratic values. In doing so, the report analyzes the narrative architecture or core components that compose each narrative, and highlights how the narratives are framed and what values they most frequently trigger. These findings emerged in the course of global research and from cross-cutting findings and research conducted in 12 country case studies: Ecuador, El Salvador, Indonesia, Kenya, the Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Nigeria, Perú, the Philippines, Serbia, Uganda, and the United States. The narratives were identified using a qualitative multi-method/multi-source landscape research scan at a global level and the case study countries. (See the [METHODOLOGY](#) section below for more detail.)

MG worked closely with local research partners in all countries, except for the United States, where MG is based. MG's local research partners in each of the case study countries led research across seven methodologies in the relevant local languages and helped MG interpret the research findings.⁷ At the outset of the research, MG and local research partners co-created country-specific research and methodology plans in each country. MG worked closely with each partner to ensure they were applying SBC methodology to their research and in identifying

⁷ As MG is headquartered in the United States with a diverse staff in diverse regions, it did not engage a local partner in the United States. However, MG interviewed and sought feedback from other research, narrative, and messaging professionals in the U.S. throughout the process.

salient and dominant narratives. Moreover, local research partners validated all narratives, and provided feedback on framing and context.

The report includes preliminary recommendations for applying the research findings in future pro-democracy and social impact campaigns and activities aimed at: 1) identifying opportunities to advance more effective upstream narratives that bolster support for democratic principles, and 2) identifying opportunities to advance more effective upstream narratives that bolster support for democratic principles and bolster resilience against narratives that undermine democracy and legitimize authoritarianism.

Based upon this extensive body of research, a recommended set of four actionable narrative and messaging tools were developed and included in this report:

1. Five evidence-based guidelines for more effective messaging that can be incorporated into existing and future messaging
2. A set of 10 recommended closely held values that are important to trigger in pro-democratic narratives and messaging
3. A new recommended global narrative
4. Customized narratives for the four narrative testing countries: new preliminary U.S. narrative, and new recommended narratives for El Salvador, Indonesia, and Serbia.

In addition this report includes practical recommendations for building a democracy narrative infrastructure to apply the new narrative and messaging in real-time social impact and pro-democracy campaigns.

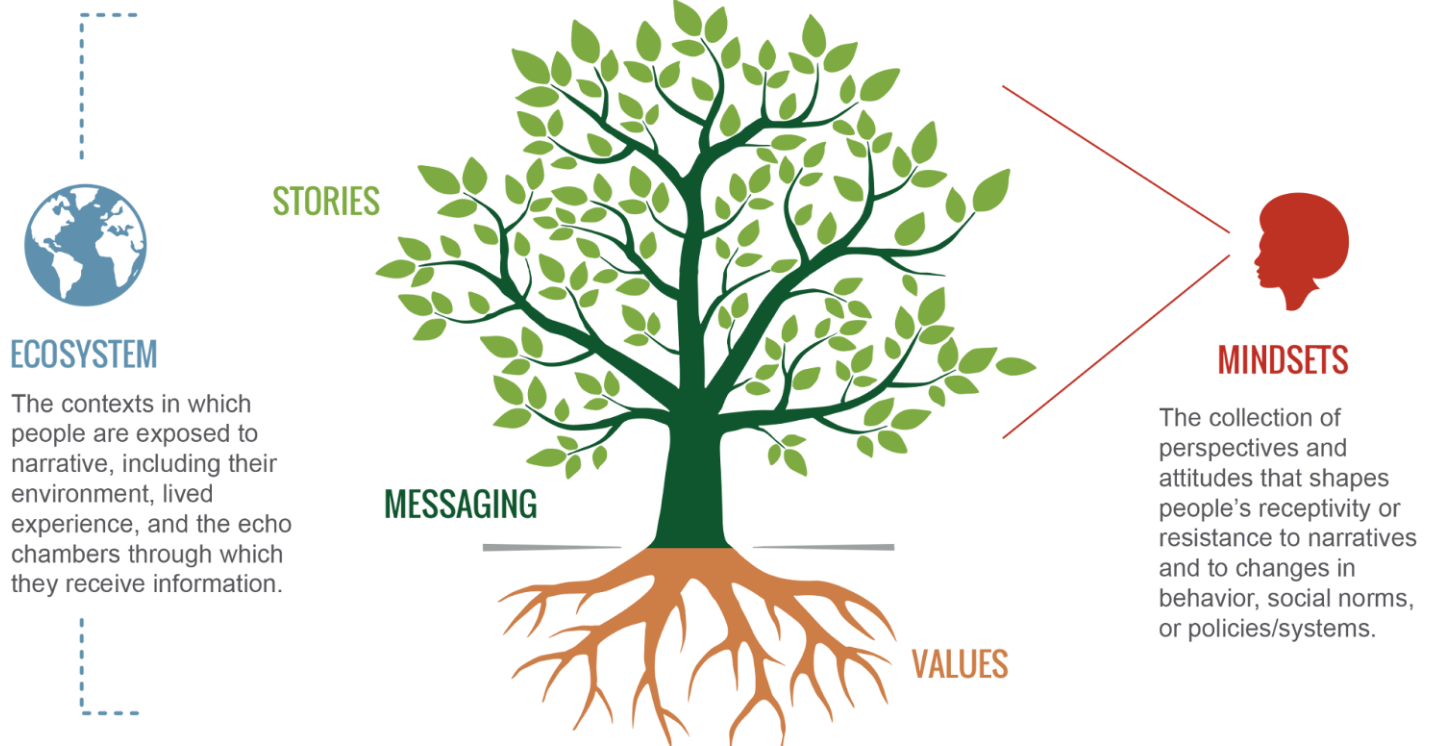
METHODOLOGY

NARRATIVES AND THE POWER THEY HOLD TO CHANGE THE WORLD

For those seeking to advance a more just, healthy, and sustainable world, narrative can be one of the most powerful tools. The narratives we accept—and the narratives we reject—reveal something about ourselves, the world we see, and the change we seek to create or the status quo we strive to protect. No narrative exists in a vacuum. It is deeply influenced by—and in turn can influence changes in—the social, cultural, environmental, and political ecosystems all around us. Similarly, while the mindsets people hold shape their receptivity or resistance to narratives, narratives can also influence changes in people's mindsets.

NARRATIVE

The articulation of a particular way of understanding the world and how it works that shapes what people think, believe, and do.



STORIES: What people experience over time both literally (e.g., through social media, oral tradition, etc.) and figuratively (e.g., through policy, the built environment, etc.) that aggregates to create or reinforce a particular narrative.

MESSAGING: The core ideas that provide the foundational structure for the narrative.

VALUES: The deeply held beliefs that ground the narrative, connect it to what people care about, and increase their likelihood of attention, adoption, and action.

Criteria and Description of Research Methodologies

For the purposes of this activity, MG defines **dominant narratives** as those with the greatest prominence, the greatest reach, and the most frequency. They are often utilized or referenced in connection to policy, political power, and widespread disinformation. **Salient narratives** are defined here as those that are shown to be widely believed as true; are accepted by significant population segments; and are engaged with by the public (in available public opinion research). The dominant and salient narratives identified by this research activity can either create barriers that erode popular support for democracy and the legitimacy of democratic institutions, or bolster the legitimacy of authoritarianism. MG also identified dominant and salient narratives that bolster support for democratic principles and institutions and that increase resilience against authoritarian narratives.

For the initial global research scan, MG created parameters around the datasets by focusing on governance narratives related to three core areas: the 2021 Summit for Democracy, COVID-19 lockdowns, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

For the country research, MG and the research partners in each country conducted a (largely) qualitative multi-method/multi-source landscape research scan and analysis at country-specific levels. MG used these different methodologies to identify, deconstruct and evaluate the most salient and dominant narratives, and to garner preliminary information on stakeholders, messengers, and SBC opportunities and challenges. The research included the following methodologies (see [APPENDIX IV](#) for a list of the sources reviewed for each methodology):

Global Narrative Scan Methodology

1. **Literature review:** The research process started with an open-source scan to identify relevant literature from academia, think tanks, research organizations, NGOs, and other policy institutions. MG developed a list of global and country-specific keywords related to narratives and messages that influence perceptions of democratic values or that legitimize authoritarianism. In total across the global research scan and the 11 countries, MG accessed over 830 sources, including academic articles, books, reports, and policy papers.
2. **Global and country indices analysis:** The research teams consulted over 40 national and international indices that track democratic institutions, rule of law, press freedom, corruption, indices that track closely held values, etc. These included V-DEM, Freedom House, Transparency International, World Values Survey, Afrobarometer, Latinobarómetro, Asia Barometer, and others. The purpose of the indices analysis was to illustrate multi-year trend lines and compare data across countries, as well as triangulate the findings with existing international data.
3. **Key informant interviews:** Country research partners conducted approximately 150 key informant interviews with a wide range of local experts, journalists, academics, activists, civil society and NGOs, private sector, and former government officials who provided

insights into narratives connected to democratic values and/or authoritarianism. The purpose of the interviews was to provide additional insights into narratives beyond what is uncovered in the literature scan and other qualitative methodologies. Due to the political context in many case study countries, the names of organizations and interviewees have been kept anonymous in adherence with "do no harm" good practices.

4. **Media analysis:** The research teams combined reviewed more than 5,000 articles and posts from more than 130 media outlets, using keyword search terms to identify narratives that promote or undermine democratic values and institutions. MG conducted sweeps of the general discourse and narrative and time-specific searches around flashpoint moments of political importance in each country. For the global scan, MG focused on three core areas: COVID-19 lockdowns, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the 2021 Summit for Democracy. For each country, MG identified (in cooperation with local research partners) a selection of national and regional media sources and ensured that the sampling of media sources covered a wide range of political perspectives. In the analysis of media stories that promote or undermine democratic values and institutions, MG captured key messages, comparative prevalence of narratives, frequently cited data, and prevalence of quoted people and institutions by stakeholder segment. This informed the selection of key sources for the political discourse analysis and social media analysis.
5. **Social media analysis:** The social media scans helped uncover and validate the pro-authoritarian and pro-democratic narratives being used globally. Each of the country-based research partners conducted a robust scan and analysis of the most popular social media platforms in their respective countries, and typically scanned content posted within a one year time period. Country partners used media scanning tools to analyze messages, hashtags, and keywords pertinent to the research objective, using over 1,000 search terms. For the global social media scan, MG used the social media listening tool Meltwater to scan three identified issue areas: COVID-19, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the Summit for Democracy (December 2021). Using search terms related to these categories, MG identified democracy-related conversations happening around these themes on social media, and filtered the search by date (August 4, 2021–August 4, 2022).
6. **Global, regional, and country-level public opinion and perception polling and surveys:** MG reviewed approximately 45 international and country surveys identified through the literature scan, indices scan, and key informant interviews. MG's team reviewed relevant polling conducted around elections and important national or international moments, as well as general polling and surveys on democracy and democratic values, national issue priorities, social norms, and values. MG captured relevant findings and benchmark data and evidence (e.g., current perceptions of democratic values) to inform identification of dominant and salient narratives; to identify

formative data for narrative development (values); and, where available, to inform identification of priority stakeholder segments.

7. **Political discourse analysis:** Based upon the data gathered in the literature scan, media scan, initial social media scan, and key informant interviews, MG's country research partners analyzed speeches and social media posts from almost 90 politicians, government officials, opposition leaders, and presidents. For each, MG used a combination of keyword searches to identify potential relevant political discourse (speeches, media interviews and statements, campaign communication, etc.). This analysis targeted prevalence, key framings, and narratives related to democratic principles and democracy. For the global scan, MG used a combination of keyword searches for 25 U.S. and world leaders (including proponents of liberal democracy and proponents of autocracy) and then looked at selected speeches and statements related to three key areas: COVID-19 lockdown, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the Summit for Democracy (January 2021). In each of these research areas, MG analyzed a sampling of speeches and political discourse by the selected leaders to identify the narratives being used and the values being triggered.

GLOBAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING METHODOLOGY

During the **Narrative Development and Testing Phase**, MG and our local strategic communications partners in three countries (El Salvador, Indonesia, and Serbia) conducted formative research to inform the development of pro-democracy narrative concepts, followed by a multi-methodology message testing process to test these narrative concepts and to explore the prioritized stakeholder categories in greater depth.

The **formative research process** included the following methodologies:

1. **Focus groups:** Research partners conducted a total of 15 focus groups in urban and rural areas.
2. **Surveys:** Research partners in one country conducted a survey with over 600 respondents.
3. **Key informant interviews:** Research partners conducted a total of 38 interviews with key stakeholder segments in geographically diverse regions.
4. **Indices, surveys, and literature scan:** Partners reviewed relevant research, surveys, and polling, as well as academic, media, and social media coverage related to stakeholders and democratic issues.

The **message testing process** included the following methodologies:

1. **Focus groups:** Research partners conducted a total of 19 focus groups in urban and rural areas, with identified stakeholder segments.

2. **Surveys:** Research partners conducted national surveys with over 3,100 respondents across three countries.
3. **Key informant interviews:** Research partners conducted 18 interviews with key stakeholder segments in geographically diverse regions of their respective countries (in two countries).

U.S. NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING METHODOLOGY

U.S.-based work included the following:

- Review for relevant findings the global narrative research conducted in 11 countries (described above)
- Identification, coding, and analysis of pro-democracy and pro-authoritarian narratives and messaging showing up in the United States using ATLAS.ti in the following:
 - More than 1,000 social media posts
 - Political discourse analysis of statements, speeches, and online activities originating from leaders (e.g., presidents, opposition leaders, government officials, politicians, etc.) across the political and ideological spectrum
 - Articles published in traditional legacy media outlets
- A literature review of publicly available research, presentations, reports, and other source materials (e.g., podcasts). This review also included dozens of national and international indices that track democratic institutions, rule of law, press freedom, and corruption, as well as surveys on elections, democracy and democratic values, national issue priorities, social norms, and closely held values
- Development of narrative and messaging concepts tested using Pluralitytics ValuesFinder platform. The purpose of this testing was to gauge the likelihood that existing or draft narratives or messaging components would resonate across a bipartisan audience
- Three focus groups (virtual) with moderate Democrats, independents, and moderate Republicans were conducted in October 2024 (prior to the 2024 presidential election) to test the three narrative frames and other messaging elements
- Based on feedback from the first round of focus groups, two narratives were refined for further testing (again using the Pluralitytics ValuesFinder platform) to assess their likelihood of resonating across a bipartisan constituency
- Another round of three virtual focus groups with moderate Democrats, independents, and moderate Republicans was conducted in January 2025 to test the revised narrative frames and messaging elements
- Key informant interviews with thought leaders, researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and others were conducted in January–February 2025 to gather input on the narrative frames and messaging elements
- Refinement of narrative and messaging concepts based on input from the focus groups

For more detailed information on testing results, see the [GLOBAL TESTING FINDINGS](#) section below.

Note: Quantitative research on the narrative and message framework was not funded in the fall 2024–winter 2025 cycle. Funds have been secured and the U.S. narrative quantitative testing is being conducted in July and August of 2025. The findings and narrative refinements based on the polling are anticipated in fall 2025.

VALUES

Closely held values are a key element in narratives that impact mindsets, social norms, expectations, and actions and determine which stories, data points, and “facts” people see and believe.⁸ MG distinguishes between *closely held values* and *democratic values*. Examples of closely held values are security, community, family, and tradition. Democratic values are defined as principles of liberal democracy, such as the rule of law, transparency, and freedom of expression. The most effective narratives, which precipitate action and spark decision-making, utilize closely held values.⁹

This research identified 20 core values (listed and defined below) evoked in the salient and dominant narratives that were found in the existing narrative landscape across all 12 countries. The 15 most frequent values were then analyzed and tested in four countries (El Salvador, Indonesia, Serbia, and the United States) for how important and effective they are to advancing pro-democracy narratives. In addition to the 15 high-frequency values that were tested in formative research, there were a set of values that were not frequent in the existing narrative landscape, for example, family, freedom, and responsibility. In direct formative research and narrative testing, these (low-frequency) values were found to resonate with audiences, and had clear benefits for increasing support for democracy. MG also analyzed global and individual country research on what values are priorities in general (not specific to forms of governance). This research demonstrated high priority for several of the low-frequency values. Based upon this analysis, MG identified a set of 10 recommended values that should be incorporated into democracy messaging that combined the high-frequency values from the narrative landscape and the high-impact (low-frequency) values.

The 10 global* evidence-based recommended values are:

Core Values Color Key	Freedom	Fairness	Safety/ Security	Honesty	Representation
	Prosperity	Strength/ Fearlessness	Responsibility	Family/ Belonging	Tradition

*While we recommend this set of 10 values as the most broadly applicable for global framing of democracy and with significant overlap for each test country, we also found culturally specific nuances in each country, and have recommended values sets for each that strongly overlap with the global values and that include specific differences relevant to their country context. Please see APPENDICES I-III for country-specific recommended value sets.

⁸ MG's approach to values is shaped in part by S.H. Schwartz's [Refined Theory of Basic Values](#) (2017).

⁹ There is an element of subjectivity involved when assessing and determining the closely held values of any narrative. Initial values research and analysis is intended to provide a broad baseline of data to help inform the development of new narratives and message frameworks in future SBC activities and narrative change. The assessment is based upon reviewing narratives as they are expressed in messaging and stories, and identifying values these narratives likely trigger. Thus, this values assessment is not intended as a definitive set of quantitative data, but can complement other data on attitudes, perceptions, and values.

Most closely held values can be used both to advance narratives that delegitimize democracy and for narratives that legitimize democracy. Subsequent formative research including KII, focus groups, and polling (conducted January to May 2023 and October 2024–February 2025) provided additional research-based evidence for the most effective values triggers for pro-democracy narratives and messaging.

It should also be noted that the top values identified in this study are the top values being triggered in the dominant and salient narratives related to democratic principles and governance found in this research. They do not always correlate with top values identified by broad studies of closely held values that are not connected to forms of governance.

Values Findings and Definitions

Metropolitan Group identified a total of 44 salient and dominant pro-authoritarian narratives and 16 pro-democratic narratives globally and across the 12 countries. Within these narratives, the research identified 20 values that appeared repeatedly; they are listed below in order of frequency. The values are color-coded throughout this report in order to highlight how they are triggered in the narratives. MG counted each value only once regardless of how many times it appeared in a narrative.

Of the 20 closely held values identified in the global and country narratives, certain ones stood out for their frequent use. In the global narratives, security/safety was the most frequent of the values, and was triggered the most in pro-authoritarian narratives (38 times). It also appeared in pro-democratic narratives (10 times), and was used in 11 of the 12 global narratives. Honesty was the second most triggered value, which appeared in both pro-authoritarian narratives (20 times) and pro-democracy narratives (15 times). Additionally, prosperity was a commonly triggered value in country-specific, pro-authoritarian narratives (20 times), pro-democracy narratives (12 times), and all 12 global narratives.

Strength/fearlessness (27 times in pro-authoritarian and 3 times in pro-democratic), representation (15 times in pro-authoritarian and 14 times in pro-democratic), and stability (21 times in pro-authoritarian and 6 times in pro-democratic) also showed up frequently in the existing narrative landscape.

1. **Security/Safety** is defined in a broad sense in terms of personal security and safety, economic security, and cultural/identity security.
 - Security is one of the most important values found globally. According to the World Values Survey (WVS), nearly 70% of people surveyed answered that security is more important than freedom when asked which is more important. In case study countries, such as Indonesia (95%) and Perú (82%), the percentage

choosing security was even higher.¹⁰ WVS analysis of the data concluded that “the desire for free choice and autonomy is a universal human aspiration, but it is not top priority when people grow up feeling that survival is uncertain. As long as physical survival remains uncertain, the desire for physical and economic security tends to take higher priority than democracy.”¹¹

- Identity and cultural security also increases in importance with perceived threats to traditional roles and power, for example, from increased immigration and demographic changes or from changes in gender roles, gender identity, or marriage equality.
2. **Honesty** is associated with truth, trust, trustworthiness, openness, and transparency, and is often triggered in contrast to concerns about corruption, accountability, and disinformation.
 3. **Prosperity** conveys benefits for the individual and community. These benefits could be economic, such as jobs and increased family income, or could be related to more macroeconomic progress for a community or country such as economic growth.
 - Both democratic and autocratic narratives trigger prosperity, but it appears proportionally more frequently in pro-democratic narratives.
 4. **Strength/Fearlessness** is closely connected to stability, action, decisiveness, and effectiveness. This value also aligns with people’s desire for stable and resilient communities and nations.
 5. **Representation** conveys a sense of inclusion (political and communal), having personal agency or a voice, and actively participating in governance.¹²
 - According to a 2020 Pew Research Center study, 65% of people in a global survey said that it was very important to have regular elections, and 67% of respondents agreed that “voting gives people like them some say about how the government runs things.”¹³
 6. **Stability** is closely connected to order, yet differs in that it conveys predictability.

¹⁰ World Values Survey: 2017–2022, Findings and Insight, <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Having voice is the ability to express one’s views and opinions, and inclusion is an environment in which every person feels and experiences being valued, respected, safe, equipped, and supported to successfully contribute to their society and community, and is able to access the full spectrum of opportunity.

¹³ Richard Wike and Shannon Schumacher. “Democratic Rights Popular Globally but Commitment to Them Not Always Strong.” *Pew Research Center*, February 27, 2020. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/02/27/democratic-rights-popular-globally-but-commitment-to-the-m-not-always-strong/>.

7. **Patriotism** conveys pride, honor, and sovereignty both at an individual level and at a group or national level.
8. **Fairness** reflects the ideas of equality, that everyone receives the same benefits or opportunities and is treated fairly under the law regardless of position, power, or identity.
 - Eighty-two percent of respondents in a survey across 34 countries said that having a fair judiciary was “very important to have in their country.”¹⁴
9. **Order** conveys a sense of social stability, unity, and respect for authority.
10. **Justice** connects to accountability and the rule of law.
11. **Dignity** emphasizes moral integrity, national and individual pride, self-respect and self-reliance, and the esteem accorded by others.
12. **Unity** emphasizes territorial integrity, social and political cohesion, and the importance of bringing people together amidst differences under a shared vision for the country’s future, including themes of reconciliation, national cohesion, harmony, and collective progress.
13. **Tradition** is a multifaceted core value associated with family, culture, heritage, and national, religious, and ethnic identity.
14. **Family** connects people to their most important relationships, including family, kinship, and community, what they want for their children, and their sense of connection to, and responsibility for, each other.
 - According to WVS research, globally and in five of the case study countries—Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Perú, and Serbia—approximately 90% of respondents answered that the value of “family” was very important in their lives.¹⁵
15. **Transparency** conveys accountability and trustworthiness of systems and institutions.
16. **Freedom** connects with the broad range of freedoms that are important to people, including the right to think and speak freely, to act and live their lives, to worship as they choose, to make choices, and express their views about their government without fear of reprisal. It connects to core democratic principles, including freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, etc.
 - According to the Pew Research Center, in a 2020 survey of 35 countries, 64% of people believe that it is “very important” to have free speech and press freedom; 59% of respondents said that freedom on the internet was “very important”; and

¹⁴ Wike and Schumacher. “Democratic Rights Popular Globally but Commitment to Them Not Always Strong: Most Say Elected Officials Are Out of Touch.”

¹⁵ The World Values Survey: 2017–2022.

55% of respondents said that it was “very important” for human rights groups to be able to operate freely.¹⁶

17. **Sociability** emphasizes harmony and interpersonal relationships by prioritizing group cohesion and consensus over individual preferences.

18. **Faith** relates specifically to religion, but can also be connected to tradition.

- Sixty-eight percent of people in the same survey of 35 countries said that “free religion” was “very important.” In Indonesia and Nigeria, the importance of freedom of religion ranked much higher, 79% and 88% respectively.

19. **Love** conveys empathy, compassion, and a deep sense of care for others, emphasizing the importance of understanding and addressing the needs of marginalized and vulnerable people.¹⁷

20. **Responsibility** connects to the widely held belief that freedom is not just a right, but also comes with the responsibility to respect and help protect the freedom of others. It also reflects the importance of being civically active, people’s sense of duty, and the responsibility of governments to their people.

Additional research and surveys on global and country-level values can be useful in ground-truthing the research findings, complementing the research, and providing additional insights. The WVS data in many places confirms the distribution and frequency of values listed above.

The table below lists the 20 core values triggered by the salient and dominant narratives identified in the research, and the rate at which they showed up in both globally identified narratives and country-specific narratives. The table is sorted top to bottom from highest number of appearances to lowest number of appearances in pro-democratic and pro-authoritarian narratives. The number indicates how many times each value was triggered in the salient and dominant narratives identified in this study (only counting each value once in each narrative regardless of the number of times it was triggered). Thus, the numbers provide a way of illustrating how high-frequency values are triggered in narratives. They are not intended as a quantitative analysis of high-frequency values.¹⁸

¹⁶ The World Values Survey: 2017–2022.

¹⁷ The value of love was only found in the Philippines research.

¹⁸ Note that there is no corresponding values frequency for the United States, because narrative articulations of the dominant and salient narratives were not developed.

Table 1. Global Values Table

Core Values	Appearances in Pro-Authoritarian Narratives	Appearances in Pro-Democratic Narratives	Total Appearances Across Country Scans
Security/Safety	38	10	51
Honesty	20	15	36
Prosperity	20	12	35
Strength/Fearlessness	27	3	32
Representation	15	14	31
Stability	21	6	30
Patriotism	22	1	23
Fairness	5	12	18
Order	14	2	16
Justice	5	8	14
Dignity	7	4	11
Unity	6	3	10
Tradition	8	2	10
Family	5	1	8
Transparency	3	2	5
Freedom	2	2	4
Sociability	3	1	4
Faith	4	0	4
Love	1	1	2
Responsibility	0	2	2

The cross-country values table below demonstrates the frequency with which 20 identified values appeared in the case study country-specific narratives (both pro-democratic and pro-authoritarian). The table is sorted top to bottom, from highest number of appearances to lowest number of appearances in pro-democratic and pro-authoritarian narratives (the values are in the same order as the Global Values Table). The table does not include values connected with the potential pro-democratic narratives and counternarratives identified in El Salvador and Indonesia, nor does it include values connected to neutral narratives. (For more on neutral narratives see Global Narrative Context Findings 12: Neutral narratives are important to track as an authoritarian early warning on page 50.)

Table 2. Country Values Table

Core Values	Ecuador	El Salvador	Indonesia	Kenya	Kyrgyz Republic	Libya	Nigeria	Perú	Philippines	Serbia	Uganda
Security/Safety	9	3	3	3	7	6	5	4	3	3	5
Honesty	5	1	2	3	6	4	2	4	4	2	3
Prosperity	7	1	4	4	2	5	4		2	3	3
Strength/ Fearlessness	4	5	2	1	2	4	2	2	4	2	4
Representation		7	1	6	1	4	2	2	3	2	3
Stability	6		3	1	6	4	3	1		3	3
Patriotism	1	2	2	1	4	1	2		4	3	3
Fairness	2			4	2	3	2	1	2	2	
Order				1			6	1		2	3
Justice	1	2	2	5			1	2		1	
Dignity		3		1	2	2			2		1
Unity					1	5			4		
Tradition	1		2	1	1	1		1		2	1
Family	4				1	1			2		
Transparency		1		1				1			2
Freedom					2					2	
Sociability				1					2	1	
Faith		1	1			1		1			
Love									2		
Responsibility	1										1

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following research findings provide insights to understand the salient and dominant narratives. They should be factored into the development and application of new narratives and supportive message frameworks, and the design of related SBC and dissemination strategies. The findings have been distilled to include existing knowledge about narratives that was validated in the research, and new findings that represent what MG learned through this research activity about how narratives are experienced.

Global Narrative Context Findings

1. All narratives can be orchestrated or organic, and many of the most effective are both.

Many of the most effective narratives are both orchestrated and organic. Orchestrated narratives are those that are designed, coordinated, and instrumentalized for specific objectives. Organic narratives tend to grow out of cultural, historical, or other social experiences. Many of the most effective pro-authoritarian narratives identified in the research are orchestrated narratives built on existing organic narratives. At the same time, not all pro-authoritarian narratives are orchestrated. When analyzing pro-authoritarian narratives and considering developing counter narratives, it is important to understand how orchestrated narratives build on existing organic narratives.

Examples:

Serbia There is a long history of organic narratives that bind Serbia with Russia through their shared history, Orthodox Christianity, and Slavic identity. Orchestrated narratives that advance Russian agendas often build on these existing organic or historical narratives.	<i>"For any Serb with a heart and mind, there can be no doubt that without Russia we would not have been born, would not have become what we are today, and we should not forget that Russia was our only guarantee in this world."</i> ¹⁹ (Miroslav Spalajković, Serbian Ambassador to the Russian Empire, 1913–1919)
Perú There is a strong organic anti-corruption (and anti-politics) narrative that has been shaped by decades of corruption prosecutions against elected officials. In polling by the	<i>"... They have all been congressmen and have done nothing. And today they have said that they are going to change Perú, but Peruvians no longer believe them. How are</i>

¹⁹ "Дневник ратног хирурга Аријуса ван Тиховена" (2016). Историјске свеске, бр. 27, Андрићев Институт, Андрићград (in Serbian), <https://www.andricevinstitut.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/istorijske-sveske-27.pdf>.

<p>AmericasBarometer, 88% of Peruvians consider more than half or all politicians to be corrupt.²⁰ Orchestrated narratives by political outsiders or other populists can orchestrate new narratives that build on these existing anti-politics and anti-corruption narratives.</p>	<p><i>you going to be the solution if you are really the problem? Your time is over.</i>²¹ (George Forsyth, 2021 presidential candidate, Perú)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">PRC</p> <p>President Xi Jinping described U.S. elections as a "song and dance." This orchestrated narrative implies that in the United States, voters have no control over their government apart from an electoral system that does not work or truly represent people's interests.</p>	<p><i>"Whether a country is a democracy or not depends on whether its people are really the masters of the country. If the people are awakened only for voting but enter a dormant period soon after, if they are given a song and dance during campaigning but have no say after the election, or if they are favored during canvassing but are left out in the cold after the election, such a democracy is not a true democracy."</i>²² (President Xi Jinping, 2021)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Russia</p> <p>President Putin often orchestrates anti-U.S. and anti-democracy narratives by accusing the U.S. and NATO of imperialism. This plays on existing organic narratives in many parts of the world where people perceive that the United States and other Western European states do not respect the sovereignty of other countries and act as imperial powers.</p>	<p><i>"The leading countries of NATO want ... to assert their hegemony, their imperial ambitions. The call for Ukraine to continue fighting and refuse negotiations only confirms our assumption that Ukraine and the good of the Ukrainian people is not the goal of the West and NATO, but a means to defend their own interests."</i>²³ (President Vladimir Putin, 2022)</p>

²⁰ Julio F. Carrión, Patricia Zárate and Mariana Rodríguez (Eds.), *Cultura política de la democracia en Perú y en las Américas 2021: Tomándole el pulso a la democracia*, Vanderbilt University: Appleton Press, March 2022,

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/peru/AB2021PER-Country-Report-Spanish-Final-220411.pdf>.

²¹ Debate presidencial JNE: Fujimori, Mendoza, Forsyth, Beingolea, Acuña y Arana debaten, *Diario Gestión*, (2:19:33), March 29, 2021,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4-UH9nnX5Y>.

²² Xi Jinping, *True Democracy: People are the masters of their country*, XinhuaNet, October 18, 2021, http://www.news.cn/english/2021-10/18/c_1310253228.htm.

²³ "Vladimir Putin blasts NATO 'imperialism' over Western military shake-up plan," *Euronews*, June 6, 2022, <https://www.euronews.com/2022/06/30/vladimir-putin-blasts-nato-imperialism-over-western-military-shake-up-plan>.

2. Many narratives can be used to promote both authoritarianism and democracy.

Like most values, many of the same narratives can be used to promote either authoritarianism or democracy. The research identified this in two key sets of narratives. First, messaging that suggests that democracy requires a long-term commitment, is a work in progress, or can sometimes be messy. This set of narratives is used in a sincere way to defend the shortcomings of democracy; however, it is increasingly used by authoritarians to delegitimize democracy. Second is the narrative that democracy is in decline or that countries are backsliding on democracy. This is intended as a genuine attempt to raise awareness of how democratic institutions and values are eroding and should not be taken for granted, but it is also advanced by pro-authoritarian states, including the PRC and Russia in particular, to delegitimize democracy and legitimize their own forms of government.

Examples:

Democracy is messy and a work in progress	
Pro-democracy	Pro-authoritarian
<i>"Democracy—government of the people, by the people, for the people—can at times be fragile, but it also is inherently resilient. It's capable of self-correction and it's capable of self-improvement."</i> ²⁴ (President Joseph Biden, Summit for Democracy, 2021)	<i>"Like all true democracies, ours is a work in progress."</i> ²⁵ (Embassy of Turkey in the United States statement, 2021)
Democracy is in decline	
Pro-democracy	Pro-authoritarian
<i>"It is of urgent concern that democracy is presently under threat and for 15 years [has] been on the decline. Around the world, autocrats have become emboldened, human rights violations have multiplied and corruption is undermining progress, and</i>	<i>Fifty-seven percent of people outside the United States said that democracy in the United States "used to do well, but it has not done well in recent years." Another 23% said that the United States has never been a model of democracy for other countries."</i> ²⁷

²⁴ Joseph Biden. *Remarks By President Biden At The Summit For Democracy Opening Session*, [Speech text]. The White House, December 9, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/12/09/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-summit-for-democracy-opening-session/>.

²⁵ Tom O'Connor. "Not Just China and Russia, U.S. Ally Turkey Says 'Many are Questioning' Biden's Democracy Summit." *Newsweek*, December 18, 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/not-just-china-russia-turkey-many-questioning-democracy-summit-1660893>.

²⁷ Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China (RDCY), *Ten Questions for American Democracy*, December 6, 2021, <http://download.people.com.cn/waiwen/eight16388399461.pdf>.

<i>misinformation is undermining public confidence.</i> ²⁶ (Vice President Kamala Harris, Summit for Democracy, 2021)	(Ten Questions for American Democracy, Renmin University of China, 2021)
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3. Narratives don't live in silos, but exist in an ecosystem where they overlap and can reinforce or counter one another. These ecosystems influence a person's receptivity to narratives.

Narratives coexist in information ecosystems where they overlap and compete with other narratives, stories, and sources of information and information echo chambers, as well as lived experience. All of these factors shape a person's receptivity to narratives. When developing new narratives and message frameworks, it is important to have a deep understanding of these additional factors and take them into consideration. Since narratives do not live in a vacuum, and will be countered and often appropriated, it is important to ensure that pro-democracy narratives are authentic, trigger priority values, and are bolstered by stories and messengers that resonate with stakeholders.

Examples:

Democracy doesn't deliver	
The "Democracy doesn't deliver" narrative is one of the strongest examples of how some narratives might not align with people's experience. For example, it is counterproductive to advance the narrative "democracy delivers" in a society or community that is suffering from violence and poverty.	
<p>Nigeria</p> <p>Here, the "What has democracy done for me" narrative is seen as an authentic organic narrative. Citizens are displeased with the way democracy is functioning within Nigeria. According to a 2019 Pew Research Center report, 60% of Nigerians were "not satisfied" with "how their democracy works." Furthermore, 57% of respondents believe that "no matter who wins an election, things</p>	<p><i>"The 1999 Constitution fails to provide a just and fair formula for allocation and control of resources to geopolitical regions of the country, largely providing for the central government without fairly distributing resources back to the states they came from."</i>²⁸ (Report from <i>Global Journal of Politics and Law Research</i>, 2020)</p>

²⁶ Kamala Harris. "Remarks by Vice President Harris at the Summit for Democracy." [Speech text], Whitehouse.gov, December 9, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/12/09/remarks-by-vice-president-harris-at-the-summit-for-democracy/>.

²⁸ Empire Hechime Nyekwere and Dr. Nuleera Ambrose Duson. "Fiscal Federalism, Resource Control, And Restructuring in Nigeria: The Contending Issues." *Global Journal of Politics and Law Research*, 1–7, 2020, <https://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Fiscal-Federalism-Resource-Control-and-Restructuring-in-Nigeria.pdf>.

do not change very much.” This narrative is also amplified by pro-authoritarian politicians.	
Strong Leadership	
The “Strong leadership” narrative is especially effective in countries that have experienced deep polarization and violence. In these situations, people want the stability, order, and security that strong leadership or even military rule can impose, despite the potential negative impact on human rights and democratic freedoms.	
<p style="text-align: center;">Indonesia</p> <p>In the run-up to the 2024 election, the central government and President Jokowi’s cabinet have proposed extending the presidential term limit to three terms in order for Jakowi to complete his “ambitious infrastructure agenda.” ²⁹</p>	<p><i>“A very strong leader who is able to manage the situation is needed, otherwise the state could be chaotic.”³⁰ (Mahfud MD, Coordinating Minister for Politics, Law and Security, 2022)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Uganda</p> <p>Prosperity and development are fundamental components of President Museveni and the NRM’s image of strong leadership. President Museveni references prosperity and peace, saying that only through his strong leadership can peace be maintained.</p>	<p><i>“The NRM Party manifesto is the best. Only the NRM party can guarantee you peace and stability. We have the surest plan for economic transformation and prosperity. Uganda is on course to middle income status. It explains why most Ugandans agree with us and why we are certain of victory.”</i></p> <p>Facebook post by presidential campaign (January 2021)³¹</p>

²⁹ Faris Mokhtar. “Jokowi Could Run for Vice President in Indonesia’s 2024 Election.” *Yahoo News*, September 14, 2022, <https://news.yahoo.com/jokowi-could-run-vice-president-080655236.html>.

³⁰ Christina Kasih Nugrahaeni. “Indonesia Butuh Pemimpin Kuat.” April 23, 2022, <https://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/nasional/pr-014328293/mahfud-md-ungkap-indonesia-butuh-pemimpin-kuat-pernyataan-menkopolhukam-dianggap-sinyal-soal-jokowi>.

³¹ Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. ““The NRM Party manifesto Is the best. Only the NRM party can guarantee you peace and stability. We have the surest plan for economic transformation and prosperity. Uganda Is on course to middle income status. It explains why most Ugandans agree with us and why we are certain of victory. Vote for the Old Man with a Hat and vote for the NRM party. #SecuringYourFuture”. Facebook, 2021. www.facebook.com/KagutaMuseveni/photos/a.402141949921235/2175065525962193/?paipv=0&eav=AfYi20zLpQtjD5nFo0dj66afCROwDg4jL80Fn6rhv8Hjg-27vuhmENh38vY9f66Uzg0&_rdr. Accessed 27 Apr. 2023.

4. Upstream narratives create receptivity or inoculation to mis/dis/malinformation (MDM) and influence what grabs attention, is believed, and is organically repeated.

Highly orchestrated narratives can create fertile ground for belief of disinformation and inspire organic amplification of these narratives. It has been well documented that a key tactic of authoritarians is to create narratives that advance disinformation and confusion.³² Orchestrated narratives establish a frame of reference and impact what people see and believe. This is the key function narratives play in advancing disinformation, and can also be used to counter and inoculate against it. Once people believe a narrative, it impacts their mindset (the lens through which they see, filter and analyze information), and this frames what they see and do not see; what “facts” they credit as true; which messengers they listen to, grant credibility to, and believe; and how resistant they are to any information that counters disinformation and aligns with the narrative they believe. For example, if a person believes the story advanced by many nationalist leaders that migrants are criminals and invaders who make communities insecure, crime data that may dispute that narrative will be ignored or dismissed as false news, while disinformation about perceived threats is believed. This strategy of spreading deliberate mis/dis/malinformation is increasingly adopted across many of the case study countries in this research.

Examples:

Disinformation examples	
<p>Russia</p> <p>“Firehose of Falsehood”: A propaganda model in which a large number of channels and messages disseminate partial truths and outright lies. This model spreads information quickly and repetitively.³³</p>	<p><i>“We will seek to demilitarise and denazify Ukraine, as well as bring to trial those who perpetrated numerous bloody crimes against civilians ... The current events have nothing to do with a desire to infringe on the interests of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. They are connected with defending Russia from those who have taken Ukraine hostage and are trying to use it against our country and</i></p>

³² The PRC’s “wolf warrior diplomacy” and Russia’s disinformation campaigns (what some have called a “firehose of falsehood”) are particularly adept at weaponizing and orchestrating narratives that promote falsehoods and disinformation. See Christopher Paul and Miriam Matthews, “The Russian ‘Firehose of Falsehood’ Propaganda Model: Why It Might Work and Options to Counter It,” RAND Corporation, 2016, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PE198.html>, and Shashank Bengali and Alice Su, “‘Put on a mask and shut up’: China’s new ‘Wolf Warriors’ spread hoaxes and attack a world of critics,” The Los Angeles Times, May 4, 2020, <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-05-04/wolf-warrior-diplomats-defend-china-handling-coronavirus>.

³³ Paul and Matthews. “The Russian ‘Firehose of Falsehood’ Propaganda Model: Why It Might Work and Options to Counter It.”

	<i>our people.</i> ³⁴ (Russian President, Vladimir Putin, 2022)
<p>Perú</p> <p>Presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori has spread disinformation in an attempt to delegitimize the presidential election.</p>	<p><i>"We are here to give a clear and forceful message. They say that in a few hours or a few days they are going to confirm the fraud at voting stations [fraude en mesa] and we tell them that we are not going to accept it."</i>³⁵ (Keiko Fujimori, presidential candidate, 2021)</p>
<p>PRC</p> <p>"Wolf warrior diplomacy": This is a recent shift in the way in which China conducts their diplomacy. Traditionally, Chinese diplomacy has been low profile, moderate, and cautious in the ways in which it engages with other countries.³⁶ "Wolf warrior diplomacy" is much more assertive and aggressive and has manifested recently in Chinese ambassadors "attacking foreign officials on social media and peddling misinformation—amplified by the state-controlled press—to deflect blame for the [COVID-19 pandemic]."³⁷</p>	<p><i>"When did patient zero begin in [the] US? How many people are infected? What are the names of the hospitals? It might be [the] US Army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! [The] US owe[s] us an explanation!"</i>³⁸ (PRC Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian, tweet, March 2020)</p>

³⁴ Vladimir Putin. Full text of Vladimir Putin's speech announcing "special military operation" in Ukraine, [Speech text], The Print, February 24, 2022, <https://theprint.in/world/full-text-of-vladimir-putins-speech-announcing-special-military-operation-in-ukraine/845714/>.

³⁵ Keiko Fujimori. Keiko Fujimori y su plancha presidencial denuncia un "fraude en mesa, planificado y sistemático," [Speech video], YouTube, June 7, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVUI9-zRJfE>.

³⁶ Joanna Nawrotkiewicz. "Understanding Chinese 'Wolf Warrior Diplomacy'," Interview with Peter Martin, The National Bureau of Asian Research, October 22, 2021, <https://www.nbr.org/publication/understanding-chinese-wolf-warrior-diplomacy/>.

³⁷ Bengali and Su, "Put on a mask and shut up." 2020.

³⁸ Lijian Zhao, [@zlj517]. "When did patient zero begin in US? How many people are infected? What are the names of the hospitals? It might be US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! US owe us an explanation!" Tweet, Twitter, March 12, 2020, <https://twitter.com/zlj517/status/1238111898828066823?lang=en>.

5. Research teams struggled to find salient and dominant pro-democratic narratives.

The research concluded that there are currently few effective salient and dominant pro-democracy narratives being used by pro-democracy proponents. Research at the global level and country level identified a baseline of pro-democracy narratives advanced by the U.S. government and allies, as well as human rights and pro-democracy advocates, NGOs, independent media, and opposition politicians. But few pro-democracy narratives found in the study countries met the criteria for "salient and dominant" as part of this study. In three of the countries, El Salvador, Indonesia, and Perú, researchers found no pro-democracy narratives that met the criteria for dominance and salience. In these cases, MG and the local research partner developed potential pro-democracy narratives based on aggregations of existing non-dominant, non-salient pro-democracy messaging.

Examples:

<p style="text-align: center;">Indonesia</p> <p>The research partner in Indonesia did not find any examples of pro-democratic narratives that met the criteria for dominance or salience—this is likely due to the fragmentation of pro-democratic voices, a lack of organized narrative drivers, and laws limiting free speech. Despite these barriers, the research uncovered several prominent pro-democratic narratives with limited salience.</p>	<p><i>"We must protect and follow the spirit of reform in our constitution and our democratic institutions and independent media to ensure rights and freedoms and to combat corruption."</i> (Potential pro-democracy narrative developed by local research team and MG)</p> <p><i>"Indonesia's democracy needs real checks and balances to ensure our leaders are accountable to all Indonesians, and that everyone's freedom of expression is protected."</i> (Potential pro-democracy narrative developed by local research team and MG)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">El Salvador</p> <p>In El Salvador, the term "democracy" does not resonate with average citizens, so dominant and salient narratives using the word "democracy" are not prominent in public discourse. Further, the level of dominance of pro-authoritarian narratives, amplified with the apparatus of the state and a sophisticated communications program, also reduces opportunities and space for pro-democracy narratives. Additionally, freedom of expression to dissent is growing increasingly limited.</p>	<p><i>"Strong leaders have humility and respect for human rights. They support the rights of the opposition and critics to question and offer alternatives because they are committed to finding the best solutions and to ensuring El Salvador supports the rights and dignity of all people."</i> (Potential pro-democracy narrative developed by local research team and MG)</p> <p><i>"Authoritarian actions are undermining democracy, diminishing our rights and freedoms, and making us less safe."</i></p>

<p>The research identified several prominent pro-democratic counternarratives with limited salience and dominance; these counternarratives are not widely expressed and tend to use technical and theoretical language that resonates with limited audiences.</p>	<p>(Potential pro-democracy narrative developed by local research team and MG)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Perú</p> <p>The research team in Perú identified several potential pro-democratic narratives and counternarratives with limited salience.</p>	<p><i>"We must be active participants to create a democracy with strong and independent institutions, and competent and accountable political representatives and organizations, to ensure fair and equal treatment and that our resources benefit the people and not just an elite few."</i> (Pro-democracy counter narrative identified by local research partner)</p> <p><i>"We need strong, independent institutions to protect the rights of women and children to be free from violence; their safety is an essential human right to guarantee in our democracy."</i> (Pro-democracy counter narrative identified by local research partner)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">United States</p> <p>MG's research scan found some dominant pro-democratic narratives in the U.S., but they are not necessarily highly salient in terms of motivating people to act in support of democracy. For example, "Democracy is messy," "Democracy takes time," and "Democracy is backsliding/under threat around the world" are all commonly used narratives by the U.S.</p>	<p><i>"Democracy is sometimes messy, so sometimes it requires a little patience. But that patience has been rewarded now for more than 240 years with a system of governance that has been the envy of the world."</i>³⁹ (President Joseph Biden, 2021)</p> <p><i>"We have to show people that democracies can do better, that they can deliver what people want and what people need."</i>⁴⁰ (Secretary of State Antony Blinken, 2022)</p>

³⁹ Joseph Biden [@POTUS]. "Democracy is sometimes messy, so sometimes it requires a little patience. But that patience has been rewarded now for more than 240 years with a system of governance that has been the envy of the world." [Tweet], Twitter, November 15, 2021.

⁴⁰ Antony Blinken. *Secretary Blinken's remarks at a Summit of the Americas Reception for Foreign Ministers*. [Speech video], YouTube: U.S. Department of State, June 8, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXFR-jnepLc>.

6. Many people make choices based upon tangible benefits and their values, not necessarily in favor of democracy or autocracy.

People's receptivity to narratives, or their attitudes and choices, in many cases are shaped by their assessment of tangible personal and communal benefits, such as economic factors, jobs, safety, etc., rather than a binary choice in favor of democracy or authoritarianism. Many people believe that democracy and democratic rights are important, but they may not believe they are a priority compared with other daily challenges; they can simultaneously hold beliefs about democracy and authoritarianism that may seem contradictory. This dynamic can also foster a sense that democracy is important, but does not help improve one's life, or advance the crucial values of prosperity, security, and stability. This can lead to a "What has democracy done for me lately" or a "Democracy doesn't deliver" narrative that creates openings for pro-authoritarian "strongman" narratives.

Examples:

<p style="text-align: center;">Perú</p> <p>In Perú, there is a strong anti-politics sentiment that is not necessarily pro-democratic nor pro-authoritarian. Rather than a bend toward anti-democracy, people have a more anti-government and anti-elected officials stance in general. According to the 2021 AmericasBarometer report on Perú, 88% of Peruvian citizens consider more than half or all politicians to be corrupt. Thus, Perú is the country with the highest perception of corruption in the entire region.⁴¹ The IDEHPUCP Team notes that today, the level of frustration and disgust of the government has reached an apex. A primary narrative is "Que se vayan todos!" - "Out with them all!" It's similar to "Drain the swamp." [IDEHPUCP report]</p>	<p><i>"Whatever form of government, we just want justice!"⁴² (Perú, stakeholder interview)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Nigeria</p> <p>Many Nigerians see ethnicity or local identities as preferable to relying on the democratic federated state to provide for them.</p>	<p><i>According to the 2021 Africa Polling Institute's Social Cohesion Survey, 77% of Nigerians reported feeling a negative association with their Nigerian identity. Meanwhile, when asked whether they felt more Nigerian versus their ethnic group, 33% of respondents answered that they identified more strongly with their ethnic group, compared with only 9% who</i></p>

⁴¹ Carrión et al. "Cultura democrática en Perú," 2020.

⁴² Key Informant Interview, Perú, 2022.

	<i>answered that they identified as Nigerians first and foremost.</i> ⁴³ (Africa Polling Institute, 2021)
<p style="text-align: center;">El Salvador</p> <p>From March to September 2022, El Salvador's legislative assembly approved a State of Exception in which many constitutional rights related to privacy, judicial representation, and freedom were suspended, with the justification of cracking down on gang violence in the country. Although there are countless claims of human rights abuses by the Salvadoran government during this time, others justify the State of Exception as being necessary for the safety and security of El Salvador.</p>	<p><i>"We made it right for the people of El Salvador. We approved a state of emergency to allow the Government to protect the life of the people of El Salvador and to tackle criminality head on."</i>⁴⁴ (Ernesto Castro, President of Legislative Assembly, 2022)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Kenya</p> <p>Due to frustrations with Kenya's endemic corruption and service delivery issues, many Kenyan citizens have expressed wishing for a strong leader who will address these issues, regardless of whether the leader is elected democratically or not. Other authoritarian leaders, such as Paul Kagame and John Magufuli, are often referenced with praise for their ability to deliver results on corruption and development, despite their authoritarian tendencies.</p>	<p><i>"If Rwanda is where it is, because of its leadership, I think Africa needs this type of leader. This is what Kenya needs. Call Paul Kagame a dictator, but on the ground his development track is conforming with what he envisioned."</i></p> <p>(Ali Manzu, Journalist, Deputy News Editor Swahili/News Anchor at KTNNewsKE)⁴⁵</p>

⁴³ "The Nigeria Social Cohesion Survey (Report)." Africa Polling Institute, August, 2021, <https://africapolling.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/API-Social-Cohesion-Report.pdf>.

⁴⁴ Stefano Pozzebon "El Salvador proclaims state of emergency as homicides soar." CNN, March 27, 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/27/world/el-salvador-state-of-emergency-homicides-intl-latam/index.html>.

⁴⁵ Ali "Mwamvita" Manzu [@Ali_Manzu]. "If #Rwanda is where it is because of it's [sic] leadership, I think #Africa needs this type of a leader. I mean this is what #Kenya needs. Call President Kagame a dictator but on the ground his development track is conforming with what he envisioned." Tweet, Twitter, November 4, 2019, https://twitter.com/Ali_Manzu/status/1191353373838266368.

7. The historical and cultural context and lived experience of most people have a significant impact on how they experience narratives and perceive messengers. This includes a perception that the United States and other Western European states do not respect the sovereignty of other countries.

Historical and cultural context (including religion, tradition, customs, and gender roles) provides an important foundation for organic narratives that can be weaponized or orchestrated to advance pro-authoritarian narratives. For example, a history of dictatorship, foreign intervention, civil war, economic crisis, shared history, or religion shapes people's receptivity to narratives and influences the messengers they believe. The PRC and Russia, in particular, use the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the NATO bombing of Libya in 2011 to advance narratives that frame U.S. and Western policy as imperialistic and aggressive, particularly in countries and regions that have directly experienced their negative impacts. Moreover, country-specific research identified pro-authoritarian narratives that evoked nostalgia for the stability or prosperity of a time under dictatorship. This "authoritarian nostalgia" was observed in multiple countries, meaning that certain narratives are used to juxtapose current social, political, and economic challenges with a seemingly safer or more prosperous past. This authoritarian nostalgia is often connected to "Strong leadership" narratives. Historical and cultural context, including countering authoritarian nostalgia, should be a key factor in framing all pro-democratic narratives.

Examples:

Historical Context	
<p>El Salvador</p> <p>Nayib Bukele tweeted at the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee in response to their critique of El Salvador's adoption of Bitcoin. The tweet read:</p>	<p><i>"OK boomers ... You have 0 jurisdiction on a sovereign and independent nation. We are not your colony, your back yard or your front yard. Stay out of our internal affairs. Don't try to control something you can't control."</i>⁴⁶</p> <p>(Nayib Bukele, 2022)</p>
<p>Serbia</p> <p>In Serbia, there is a narrative that foreign powers threaten national security. The hostility of the West is often pointed out by the media, some state officials, and right-wing politicians, who claim that foreign secret</p>	<p><i>"As a country, we face an offensive of different secret services for a long time. And we can divide them into two groups—one from the most developed countries and one from the regional states which have strong</i></p>

⁴⁶ Nayib Bukele, [@nayibbukele], OK boomers ... You have 0 jurisdiction on a sovereign and independent nation. We are not your colony, your back yard or your front yard. Stay out of our internal affairs. Don't try to control something you can't control, [Tweet], Twitter, February 16, 2022, <https://twitter.com/nayibbukele/status/1494066643625988107?lang=en>.

<p>services are to blame for trying to influence government policies. [ISS report]</p> <p>The legacy of NATO bombing in Serbia also shapes attitudes toward the West and Russia. Serbian attitudes toward NATO, Europe, the U.S., and the West are shaped by a historic relationship with Western imperialism, the Kosovo myth, Ottoman invasion, and the NATO bombing. Support for joining NATO is declining, reaching a “historic low.”⁴⁷ (New Serbian Political Thought poll)</p>	<p><i>interests on Serbia’s soil against our country.”</i>⁴⁸ (President Aleksandar Vučić, 2019)</p> <p><i>“Serbs don’t like Russia as much as they hate NATO.”</i>⁴⁹ (Đorđe Vukadinović, New Serbian Political Thought, 2022)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">PRC</p> <p>In response to Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan in August 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the People’s Republic of China released two statements that said:</p>	<p><i>“China is not the old China of 120 years ago, and we are not Iraq, Syria or Afghanistan—we will not allow any foreign force to bully, suppress or enslave us.”</i>⁵⁰ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Hua Chunying, 2022)</p> <p><i>“[Pelosi’s visit] seriously infringes upon China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. It gravely undermines peace and stability.”</i>⁵¹ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Hua Chunying, 2022)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Russia</p> <p>The U.S. Department of State identified the most persistent disinformation narratives coming out of Russia. One of these narratives</p>	<p><i>“Russia has accused the United States of either instigating uprisings or plotting “color revolutions” in Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Ukraine, and</i></p>

⁴⁷ Đorđe Vukadinović. “Фијаско политике притисака или не воле Срби баш толико Русију, колико мрзе САД и НАТО.” *Nova srpska politička misao*, August 7, 2022, <http://www.nspm.rs/kolumne-djordja-vukadinovica/fijasko-politike-pritisaka-ili-ne-vole-srbi-bas-toliko-rusiju-koliko-mrze-sad-i-nato.html?alphabet=l>.

⁴⁸ Julijana Mojsilović. “Vucic on spy affair: I only asked Russian envoy ‘Why?’” N1, November 21, 2019, <https://rs.n1info.com/english/news/a545967-vucic-says-serbia-targeted-by-many-foreign-intelligence-services/>.

⁴⁹ Vukadinović. “Фијаско политике притисака или,” August 7, 2022.

⁵⁰ David Rising. “China’s response to Pelosi visit a sign of future intentions.” AP News, August 18, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/taiwan-china-beijing-congress-8857910a1e44cefa70bc4dfd184ef880>.

⁵¹ Hua Chunying. “Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China. August 2, 2022, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202208/t20220802_10732293.html.

is that “popular movements are U.S.-sponsored ‘Color Revolutions.’”	<p><i>throughout the Middle East and Africa.</i>⁵² (U.S. Department of State, 2022).</p> <p><i>“In October 2020, Director of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service Sergei Naryshkin accused the U.S. of planning to start a “color revolution” in Moldova. Naryshkin pointed out in a statement that the U.S. has brutally interfered in the internal affairs of Russia's neighboring countries.”</i>⁵³ (Director of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, Sergei Naryshkin, 2020)</p>
Cultural Context	
Pro-Authoritarian	
<p>El Salvador</p> <p>In El Salvador, 45% of the population identifies as Roman Catholic.⁵⁴ President Bukele uses faith-based language in many of his speeches, often citing his leadership as the will of God.</p>	<p><i>“We are never going to return to the system that for two centuries plunged us into crime, corruption, inequality and poverty ... As long as God gives me strength, I will not allow it.”</i>⁵⁵ (Nayib Bukele, 2021)</p>
Anti-Authoritarian	
<p>El Salvador</p> <p>Those in opposition to Bukele also invoke religion when countering his statements. Pastor Mario Vega, a Christian Pentecostal preacher, said in reference to Bukele:</p>	<p><i>“No one should be trusted, there is no human being who deserves such trust. Thus it is written: ‘There is not one righteous man, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. They have all gone astray, together they have corrupted themselves. There is no one who does good; there is not one!’ (Romans 3:10-12).”</i> Pastor Mario Vega of Elim Church)</p>

⁵² “Russia’s Top Five Persistent Disinformation Narratives.” U.S. Department of State, January 20, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/russias-top-five-persistent-disinformation-narratives/>.

⁵³ “GT Staff Reporters. “GT Investigates: US wages global color revolutions to topple govts for the sake of American control.” *Global Times*, December 2, 2021, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202112/1240540.shtml>.

⁵⁴ El Salvador 2018 International Religious Freedom Report, Office of International Religious Freedom: United States Department of State, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-report-on-international-religious-freedom/el-salvador/>.

⁵⁵ Merlin Delcid. “El presidente de El Salvador Nayib Bukele dice que no habrá ‘marcha atrás’ en las destituciones de magistrados de la Corte Suprema.” *CÑÑ*, June 2, 2021, <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2021/06/02/presidente-el-salvador-bukele-destituciones-orix/>.

Nostalgia Narrative

Indonesia

In Indonesia, the narrative of democracy not delivering is related to a feeling of political and economic instability. Although Suharto, the former dictator of Indonesia, is remembered for his human rights abuses including killings, disappearances, and arrests of political opponents, he is also remembered as the “father of development” for providing consistent growth in education, healthcare, and the economy. Every year, around the anniversary of his resignation, a meme resurfaces on Indonesian social media and is printed on the backs of trucks and vans around the country showing former President Suharto waving. The photo shows a smiling Suharto and the text beneath reads: “Pripun kabare? Enak Jamanku To?” [How are you? It [was] better during my rule, right?]⁵⁶



⁵⁶ Tomi Soetjipto. “Indonesia: 20 years on from downfall of General Muhammad Soeharto.” Al Jazeera, May 12, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2018/5/21/indonesia-20-years-on-from-downfall-of-general-muhammad-soeharto>.

8. Corruption is a dominant theme across all narrative categories.

While some narratives point out the challenges of corruption from a pro-democratic perspective, pro-authoritarian messengers are using anti-corruption narratives to erode trust in politics, government, and governing institutions. A pro-authoritarian corruption narrative (“Democratic institutions are corrupt”) or corruption themes were found in 9 out of 12 case study countries. Additionally, corruption was a theme found in certain neutral narratives.

Examples:

Ecuador In Ecuador, the local research partner found a narrative that identifies corruption as a challenge facing the country that was neither pro-authoritarian or pro-democratic. This neutral narrative, that corruption is everywhere in Ecuador, frames corruption as an epidemic that plagues every level of government in the country.	<i>“... [W]e have corrupt judges, corrupt prosecutors, police who served drug trafficking, patrol paid by a drug trafficker, something that we have been denouncing about the presence of a narco-state in Ecuador ... ” (Andersson Boscán, Journalist in Dec. 2023)</i>
Libya Similarly, the Libyan research team identified a neutral narrative that the Libyan state is corrupt and that anyone connected to the government is using their position to enrich themselves.	<i>“This tragedy once again reminds us of the billions squandered and looted, and the corrupt political factions that have attempted to cover up their failures with cheap theatrics, mocking and disrespecting the Libyan people, while continuing their march of corruption over the bodies of martyrs and innocents, while the army and the people are retrieving bodies with one hand and burying them with the other.”⁵⁷ (Khalifa Haftar, in a speech delivered in Derna, as reported in Alwasat on October 4, 2023)</i>
Indonesia The Corruption Eradication Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi or KPK) has been blamed by government supporters for hindering economic progress and causing political instability. On social media, widespread disinformation and misinformation claimed that	<i>“KPK institutions can hinder investment efforts. This is what the public does not understand.”⁵⁹ (Presidential Chief of Staff Moeldoko, 2019)</i>

⁵⁷ Khalifa Haftar, October 24, 2023. <https://alwasat.ly/news/libya/414421>

⁵⁹ Moeldoko. “KPK institutions can hinder investment efforts.” *Tempo*, September 23, 2019, <https://bisnis.tempo.co/read/1251471/moeldoko-kpk-bisa-hambat-investasi>.

the KPK was a hotbed of the Taliban. ⁵⁸	
Kyrgyz Republic A dominant narrative that NGOs and independent media are corrupt was found in the Kyrgyz Republic. Specifically, NGOs are accused of pocketing grant money from the West and then offering support to Western/foreign interests.	<i>"NGOs that have been working in our country for 30 years were not registered anywhere. They were not accountable to anyone. They just opened bank accounts, took money from foreign donors and used it as they saw fit, including for personal purposes."</i> ⁶⁰ (Sadyr Japarov, political speech, April 2, 2024)

9. Security-related narratives reflect genuine concerns about safety, security, and violence.

Dominant and salient security-centered narratives were found across multiple countries. They are often instrumentalized for pro-authoritarian objectives and can bolster the pro-authoritarian "Security justifies all" and "Strong leader" narratives.

Examples:

Philippines Violence is a dominant theme in former President Rodrigo Duterte's discourse. He was a primary messenger of the "Security justifies all" narrative, and uses themes of security, strength, enemies, and outsiders to frame violent and existential threats and justify his policies including violence.	<i>"If you think that I can be dissuaded from continuing this fight because of [your] demonstrations, your protests, which I find, by the way, misdirected, then you got it all wrong. Your concern is human rights, mine is human lives."</i> ⁶¹ (Rodrigo Duterte, State of the Nation Address, July 23, 2018)
	<i>"There is a place for Martial Law. During times of war, Martial Law is indeed necessary. This is because the one in motion, the one we follow, is the military."</i> (Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, speech on January 26, 2022)
Uganda	<i>"Security will always come in if the political</i>

⁵⁸ Abdil M. Mdhoifir. "Indonesia demonstrates that civil society as a backbone of democracy is a myth." *Jakarta Post*, December 5, 2022, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/opinion/2022/12/05/indonesia-demonstrates-that-civil-society-as-a-backbone-of-democracy-is-a-myth.html>.

⁶⁰ "Kyrgyzstan's president signs law on "foreign agents" amid NGO transparency push." *Daryo*, April 2, 2024. <https://daryo.uz/en/2024/04/02/kyrgyzstans-president-signs-law-on-foreign-agents-amid-ngo-transparency-push>

⁶¹ "State of the Nation Address of Rodrigo Roa Duterte, President of the Philippines, to the Congress of the Philippines." July 23, 2018. <https://pco.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018-State-of-the-Nation-Address-of-Duterte.pdf>

Uganda's history of instability, civil war, and violence has a deep impact on governance and political processes. Uganda's relative stability since 1986 is attributed to the rule of the National Resistance Movement and President Yoweri Museveni, which influences public perception of the government. The President often dresses in military fatigues for public appearances, providing a constant reminder that he guarantees the country's stability and security, while the military plays a key role in the government and controls designated seats in Parliament.	<i>actors are indisdisciplined [sic].</i> ⁶² (President Museveni on the subject of torture, The Independent, 2018)
El Salvador The narrative that security justifies all is prevalent in El Salvador due to the mounting violence driven by criminal gangs in the post-Civil War era. Policies under President Nayib Bukele utilize the armed forces and justify security measures that violate the basic human rights of citizens.	<i>"If there is someone who thought that crime could defeat El Salvador, he was wrong. And if there is someone who thought that we were not going to be able to face this great challenge of giving security to our population, he was wrong. And we show that today, with this brave group that is here in front of me, demonstrating that the State respects itself, that the Armed Forces have the constitutional power to defend the sovereignty of the State."</i> ⁶³ (President Nayib Bukele, 2019)

10. Messengers are key to how narratives are used.

Different messengers may use the same narrative with different messaging to advance different agendas. Many of the narrative themes are utilized by both pro-democracy actors and pro-authoritarian actors as a premise for their desired call to action. While their call to action may differ, they may reference the same challenges in order to build their case. Messengers may reference themes or issues that have broad appeal or interest (such as corruption, jobs, or security), but shift their message according to their specific objective or motivations: for example, a messenger may acknowledge corruption, but different messages will offer different solutions, ranging from doing away with democratic institutions to bolstering democratic institutions as a bulwark against corruption.

Examples:

Indonesia There have been widespread efforts to discredit the Corruption Eradication	<i>"The issues of the Radicalist or Taliban have been produced in such a way that it seems as if the KPK is controlled by right-wing</i>
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⁶² "Museveni slams 'petty' opposition parties." *The Independent*, December 12. 2018.

<https://www.independent.co.ug/museveni-slams-petty-opposition-parties/>

⁶³ Bukele, N., [1060 Nuevos Soldados]. Facebook.com, July 30, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/nayibbukele/videos/354327391903265/>

<p>Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi or KPK), especially on social media, where there has been widespread disinformation and misinformation related to the KPK, including claims that the KPK is a hotbed of the Taliban. Pictures of KPK investigators and their families, including men maintaining long beards and women wearing burqas which are commonly considered symbols of Islamic conservatism, were broadly spread online by buzzers and fake accounts.</p>	<p><i>conservative groups.”</i> (Former Senior member of KPK, 2022)</p>
<p>Libya Pro-Gaddafi and pro-Haftar voices typically use corruption themes to attack and undermine the legitimacy of the current UN-backed government, while other messengers—for example, the Grand Mufti Sadiq Al-Ghariani—condemn corruption from an ethical perspective, though not necessarily in a pro-democracy way.</p>	<p><i>“Government corruption is unacceptable to us and we speak out against it, especially in the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Health, and the Medical Supply Agency. Corruption within them has reached its peak.”</i>⁶⁴ (Sadiq Al-Ghariani, speech posted on the February Channel, February 2, 2024)</p>
<p>Ecuador In Ecuador, the “Politicians aren’t delivering” narrative is frequently used neutrally across the political spectrum to accuse leaders of opposing viewpoints of not delivering on their promises. Messengers often highlight that politicians are not transparent, and/or that they are members of the elite class who do not understand the struggles of everyday Ecuadorians. Pro-authoritarian-leaning actors such as Rafael Correa can instrumentalize this narrative to weaken democratic institutions, or to consolidate power in the name of efficiency by focusing on the frustrations of the democratic system and/or using strong “dog-whistle” language.</p>	<p><i>“... Poverty in all its forms is the country's main enduring problem. It is a problem that hinders, conditions, and later resigns Ecuador. Unfortunately, this poverty is caused by governments chosen by the Ecuadorian people.”</i> (Marco Flores T., Economist in Jan. 2024)</p> <p><i>“But it’s difficult for things to be worse [than they are now]. The situation of the country is serious, and the problem is an absolutely inept government and a president who is tremendously limited in all areas, even physically ... They [the opposition] took over the entire state with soft coups in 2018, with an alleged referendum that was absolutely unconstitutional.”</i> (Rafael Correa, former President, in June 2023)</p>

⁶⁴ Sadiq Al-Ghariani, Speech posted on the February Channel, February 2, 2024.
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1434588847461088>

11. Enemies, outsiders, and others is a strong theme in pro-authoritarian narratives.

The notion that outsiders are threatening safety, security, prosperity, and national identity is found in some form in nearly every case study country, and aligns with the “Enemies, outsiders, and others” dominant global narrative. This narrative is either a dominant narrative or a core theme within dominant narratives used to strengthen pro-authoritarian narratives. The narrative often uses dehumanizing language and enemy frames to justify anti-democratic actions.

Examples:

<p>Ecuador</p> <p>Rising violence and insecurity in the country are dominant themes that shape narratives around governance. These conditions provide openings for political leaders to exploit, including advancing narratives that frame Ecuadorians as having a choice between security or democratic freedoms.</p>	<p>“The emergency will be to urgently equip the police ... I am going to take back control of the State from the central government, to take back control of the prisons, which is fundamental ... I also have to protect what is my territory, retake with the Public Force, with the Armed Forces, the control of the borders.” (Luisa González, presidential candidate, in Sep. 2023)</p>
	<p><i>“President Noboa must do what El Salvador did ... The situation has gotten out of control. And it is because of lack of extreme measures ... [the government needs] a firmer hand, to have no mercy, no tolerance or (respect for) the human rights of criminals.”</i> (Humberto Poggi del Salto, businessman, in Jan. 2024)</p>
<p>Kyrgyz Republic</p> <p>In the Kyrgyz Republic, the local research partner found a narrative that claims Western-funded NGOs are subverting and corrupting Kyrgyz values and traditions by promoting LGBTQ+ “propaganda” and imposing women’s rights.</p>	<p><i>“In Kyrgyzstan there are tens of thousands of NGOs, pro-Western media financed by the United States and Great Britain. They do subversive work in society. They spread nonsense about the third gender, lobby for pro-Western interests, destroy family values and the cultural foundations of the Kyrgyz people ... They lobby for pseudo-values that are alien to our mentality and culture.”</i> (Amantur Manapbayev, article in Vecherniy Bishkek, March 9, 2024)</p>
	<p><i>“On March 8th, they claim to defend women’s rights, but the ultimate goal is to impose feminism and monogamy. Thus, they promote things that are incompatible with Kyrgyz culture.”</i> (ELTR Broadcast, April 7, 2024)</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Kenya</p> <p>Since independence, numerous Kenyan leaders have portrayed certain groups, including the Kenyan media and NGOs, as serving foreign interests and undermining Kenya's values, customs, prosperity, and governance. President Ruto has been particularly virulent in his speech against the media and LGBTQ+ communities/those who support them.</p>	<p>"... It won't happen in Kenya. I ask all religious leaders in the country to stand firm and educate our children and Kenyans so that we do not lose our customs ... to platforms that are preaching foreign concepts. We have Kenyan law, we have Kenyan constitution, we have our tradition, customs."⁶⁵ (President William Ruto in an address during International Women's Day, March 2023)</p>
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12. Neutral narratives are important to track as an authoritarian early warning.

Research identified multiple neutral narratives in several countries that reflected genuine concerns about security, corruption, prosperity, and other issues that did not have an explicit pro-authoritarian or pro-democracy call to action. However, in most cases, the research found that neutral narratives are adapted and weaponized for authoritarian objectives and create a fertile environment for pro-authoritarian discourse, depending on the messenger and context. Several of the neutral narratives also have a strong correlation to, and bolster elements of, the global pro-authoritarian narratives ("Security justifies all," "Strong leader," and "Democratic institutions are corrupt").

This neutral narrative category connects to and supports the global research finding that many narratives can be used to promote both democracy and authoritarianism, depending on the framing, messengers, and context of how values are triggered. This also connects to and reinforces the global finding that people often make choices based on their tangible needs and experiences, rather than a binary choice in favor of governing systems (democracy or authoritarianism) or ideology. Identifying and tracking neutral narratives can be an important early warning indicator for authoritarian narratives because neutral narratives can be easily weaponized.

Examples:

<p style="text-align: center;">Libya</p> <p>Three neutral narratives were found in Libya: "Libya is a weak state that is divided and fragmented," "The Libyan government is corrupt," and "Foreign intervention is further dividing Libya."</p>	<p><i>"The reason for corruption in Libya is the division supported by some interfering countries in Libya and the division of oversight institutions."</i>⁶⁶ (Aguila Saleh, Al Masar TV, Public Affairs Program, January 21, 2023)</p>
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⁶⁵ Nation Africa. "Ruto, Raila United in Dismissing Supreme Court LGBTQ Ruling." *Monitor*, March 3, 2023, <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/ruto-raila-united-in-dismissing-supreme-court-lgbtq-ruling-4144246>.

⁶⁶ "برنامج شأن عام في حوار استثنائي مع رئيس مجلس النواب المستشار عقيلة صالح" YouTube. January 1, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNJ-jgRdPXk>

	<p><i>“The presence of armed groups outside the framework of the state, whether in the east, west, or south, and other foreign forces, are only part of the reasons for the failure of the elections.”⁶⁷ (Khaled al-Mishri, in a Facebook post on November 5, 2021)</i></p>
<p>Ecuador</p> <p>In Ecuador, four neutral narratives were elevated by the local research partner: “Increasing violence from gangs and organized criminals calls for action by the military and police,” “Corruption is endemic to every institution—courts, government, military, academia, etc.,” “Narco-terrorists have infiltrated and weakened the Ecuadorian government,” and “Politicians don’t deliver on their promises.”</p>	<p><i>“Today Ecuador is controlled by Jalisco Nueva Generación, the Sinaloa Cartel—both from Mexico—as well as the Albanian mafia ... [it is a] narco-state.”⁶⁸ (Fernando Villavicencio, former presidential candidate, in May 2023)</i></p>
<p>Kenya</p> <p>President Ruto coined the phrase “Hustler Nation” to represent people like him who do not come from wealthy or well-connected families. In the 2022 election, Ruto presented himself as a “hustler” in opposition to his “dynasty” opponent.</p> <p>The “Hustler” narrative has not been instrumentalized by authoritarians; however, it potentially creates an “us vs. them” dichotomy that can be deployed and instrumentalized by authoritarians. It also has the potential to vilify democratic institutions by implying that they are part of a dynastic “deep state”, and can work to diminish the trust placed in these institutions.</p>	<p><i>“Some people are telling us sons of hustlers cannot be president. That your father must be known. That he must be rich for you to become the president. We are telling them that even a child of a boda boda or a kiosk operator or cart pusher can lead this country.”⁶⁹</i> (President Ruto in a campaign speech in Nyamira County, 2020)</p> <p><i>“It is a race between the common wananchi and the alliance of the few wealthy families who have dominated and monopolised political competition at the expense of the majority of Kenyans.”⁷⁰</i> (Former Senator Johnson Muthama, July 2020)</p>

⁶⁷ “جزء من لقائي على قناة الجزيرة مباشر” Facebook. November 5, 2021.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=890322831620527>

⁶⁸ Torrea, A. “Today Ecuador is controlled by Jalisco Nueva Generación.” *KION News Channel 46*, August 10, 2023.

<https://kion546.com/news/2023/08/10/fernando-villavicencio-promised-to-crack-down-on-ecuadors-narco-state-it-made-him-powerful-enemies/>

⁶⁹ Kahura, D. Akech, A. “Hustler mentality.” *Africa is a Country*, November 6, 2020.

<https://africasacountry.com/2020/11/hustler-mentality>

⁷⁰ “Ruto crafts 2022 strategy to woo Uhuru, Raila strongholds.” *The Star*, July 16, 2020.

https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2020-07-18-ruto-crafts-2022-strategy-to-woo-uhuru-raila-strongholds?utm_term=Autofeed&utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter

Pro-Democracy Narrative Findings

When comparing pro-authoritarian and pro-democracy narratives in the existing narrative landscape, the pro-authoritarian narratives are overwhelmingly more dominant and salient. Pro-authoritarian messengers trigger closely held values more effectively and frequently and use simple and emotive language. Pro-authoritarian narratives frequently use fear and threat framing to advance their narratives, which, while effective in driving action, is also damaging to social cohesion and undermines norms of inclusion.

Pro-democracy narratives, by contrast, often take the understanding of liberal democratic principles for granted and fail to define liberal democracy or to make the case for why democracy is important to people’s lives. The pro-democracy narratives tended to use more technical language and triggered values less frequently. In some countries, research teams struggled to identify dominant pro-democracy narratives.

1. Many pro-democracy narratives assume relevance, understanding, or support of democratic principles.

Many pro-democracy narratives assume relevance and understanding of liberal democratic principles, while pro-authoritarian narratives center to a greater extent on triggering values and highlighting benefits. For example, many pro-democracy narratives don’t sufficiently make the case of why democratic principles like transparency and the rule of law are important to people’s lives, and assume that people already understand principles of liberal democracy. Moreover, few pro-democracy narratives define democracy or directly connect principles of liberal democracy to the concept of democracy. Additionally, in many of the pro-democracy narratives identified in the research, there is the assumption that universal human rights are valued or understood globally in the same way. However, in some case study countries, this assumption is untrue. For example, in Perú, the research identified a narrative that human rights groups defend terrorist groups. Pro-democracy narratives frequently frame democracy as “good,” without directly connecting to the specific benefits of democracy within these narratives.

Examples:

United States	<i>“Citizen-responsive governance is also a critical factor in development, and we believe it is not possible for any country to rise to its full potential without it ...”⁷¹</i>
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⁷¹ USAID. “Democracy Is.” <https://www.usaid.gov/democracy-is#:~:text=The%20ongoing%20quest%20by%20people,to%20strengthen%20resilient%20democratic%20societies>.

	(USAID, Democracy Is)
	<i>“Freedom House reports, in 2020, that it marked the 15th consecutive year of global freedom in retreat. Another recent report, from the International Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance, noted that more than half of all democracies have experienced a decline in at least one aspect of their democracy over the last 10 years, including the United States. We have to stand for justice and the rule of law, for free speech, free assembly, a free press, freedom of religion, and for all the inherent human rights of every individual.”⁷² (President Joseph Biden, 2021)</i>

2. Some of the most dominant pro-democracy narratives have deficit framing that can bolster authoritarian narratives, and reinforce concerns for high-frequency values of stability and security that further advance authoritarian narratives.

Many of the dominant pro-democracy narratives identified at the global and country level have a deficit framing, meaning that they highlight the weaknesses and threats facing democracy, rather than promoting the positive values associated with democracy. This can reinforce concerns for high-frequency values of stability and security that further advance authoritarian narratives. Two prevalent examples of this are the narratives “Democracy is backsliding” and “Democracy is a work in progress.” Though these narratives have the intention of catalyzing action to strengthen and promote democracy worldwide, the inverse can happen; the framing of democracy being in decline or not a fully fledged reality creates an opportunity and opening for authoritarians to criticize democracies as not being able to deliver stability and security; fomenting disorder; and stymieing critically needed action. Authoritarians then use these deficit-framed narratives against democracies by framing their governments as being able to compensate for the shortcomings of democratic countries.

Examples:

<p>PRC</p> <p>China was a vocal critic of the United States’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the PRC emphasized how democracy had created an “overload of freedom” that led to a “cultural war” within the U.S. around vaccine and mask mandates.</p>	<p><i>“The current cultural war caused by “overloaded freedom” [has] “held back the country’s pandemic response.”⁷³ (RDCY, 2021)</i></p> <p><i>“The Chinese people of all ethnic groups have united as one under the strong</i></p>
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⁷² Joseph Biden. *Remarks By President Biden*, December 9, 2021.

⁷³ Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies (RDCY), *Ten Questions for American Democracy*, December 6, 2021.

China then amplified the narrative that their COVID-19 response was the best in the world and that centralized and strong leadership was necessary in fighting the spread of the pandemic.	<i>leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core. Together, we have launched a massive, [nationwide] response. The heroic acts of the Chinese people in fighting the epidemic have won admiration and support from the international community.”⁷⁴ (PRC Foreign Minister Wang Yi, speech, March 2020)</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">United Nations</p> <p>António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in a press briefing for the International Day of Democracy, espoused some of the benefits of democracy, but mostly focused on the perilous situation of global democracy.</p>	<i>“Today is the International Day of Democracy. In a message, the Secretary-General notes that across the world, democracy is backsliding, civic space is shrinking, distrust and disinformation are growing, and polarization is undermining democratic institutions. He notes that this year’s theme focuses on a cornerstone of democratic societies—free, independent, and pluralistic media. He points out that attempts to silence journalists are growing more brazen by the day—from verbal assault to online surveillance and legal harassment—especially against women journalists. The Secretary-General stresses that without a free press, democracy cannot survive, without freedom of expression, there is no freedom. He calls on all to join forces to secure freedom and protect the rights of all people, everywhere.”⁷⁵ (Spokesperson for UNSG António Guterres, 2022)</i>

3. Many pro-democracy narratives are more technical and philosophical, while pro-authoritarian narratives trigger more values and highlight benefits.

Pro-democracy narratives often include a technocratic “laundry list” of democracy’s benefits and principles (rule of law, citizen-responsive governance, transparency, etc.), rather than effectively connecting to core values that demonstrate specific tangible benefits. Pro-authoritarian narratives, on the other hand, more often trigger values such as security, strength, and order, and highlight the specific benefits of non-democratic governance. For example, the use of

⁷⁴ Wang Yi. “Resolutely Defeating the COVID-19 Outbreak and Promoting the Building of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind—Wang Yi.” PRC Foreign Ministry, March 2, 2020, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/2461_663310/202003/t20200303_468755.html.

⁷⁵ Stephani Dujarric. “Highlights of the Noon Briefing.” Office of the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, September 15, 2022, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/highlight/2022-09-15.html>.

phrases and concepts like transparency and the rule of law may resonate with pro-democracy activists in the democracy field, but are not understood by most people, while authoritarians are triggering widely held values like fairness.

Examples:

Pro-democratic	<i>"Democratic institutions have a positive effect on increasing public expenditures on social protection policies, in favor of poor and vulnerable groups in society." "Democracies produce more ambitious climate policies—the difference between closed autocracies and democratic equals a difference in the Paris Agreement reduction policy targets of 1.6°C."</i> ⁷⁶ (V-Dem, Case for Democracy, 2022)
	<i>"[There is] a troubling pattern of democratic decline and erosion of the separation of powers, silencing of the free press, persecution of critics, manipulation of elections, jailing of opponents. You know what is happening."</i> ⁷⁷ (USAID Administrator Samantha Power, 2022)
Pro-authoritarian	<i>"We should vigorously advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are the common values of humanity, and work together to provide the right guiding philosophy for building a better world. Peace and development are our common cause, equity and justice our common aspiration, and democracy and freedom our common pursuit."</i> ⁷⁸ (President Xi Jinping, 2021)

4. The brand and word “democracy” is powerful and holds value, and as a result is vulnerable to being co-opted by authoritarians.

Across the study, the word “democracy” is used repeatedly by actors across the ideological spectrum and appropriated to such an extent that it is clear that actors from the United States to the PRC see the value and power of the democracy brand. This is a potential asset because the word can still inspire a positive reaction. However, it is also being manipulated and appropriated extensively by pro-authoritarian actors and messengers. Across the global and country case

⁷⁶ V-Dem. “Case for Democracy Conference.” January 2022, https://www.v-dem.net/static/website/files/vdem_casefordemocracy_report.pdf.

⁷⁷ Samantha Power, Administrator Samantha Power’s Keynote Speech at Summit of the Americas Civil Society Forum, [Speech text], USAID, June 8, 2022, <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/speeches/jun-08-2022-administrator-power-keynote-speech-summit-americas-civil-society>.

⁷⁸ Xi Jinping, Speech by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China at the Conference Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Restoration of the Lawful Seat of the People’s Republic of China in the United Nations,” [Speech text], Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, October 25, 2021, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202110/t20211025_9982254.html.

study research conducted by MG and partner institutions, “Democracy appropriation” narratives emerged repeatedly. Pew Research Center data shows that globally there is broad support for democracy, with 78% of respondents in a survey of 34 countries saying that representative democracy would be a good way to govern their country.⁷⁹ Around the world, in non-democratic and autocratic-leaning countries, leaders are claiming that their countries are in fact democracies. MG’s assessment is that there is recognition of the power that the word “democracy” has, and non-democratic and authoritarian leaders have co-opted it in order to advance their narratives and to sow confusion about the core principles that define democracy.

In addition to authoritarians appropriating the term “democracy” in order to advance their narratives, they are also redefining democracy and democratic values to legitimize autocratic rule, undermine universal human rights, and delegitimize core democratic principles and institutions. A key component in many leaders’ redefinition of democracy is a shift from the core construct of Universal Human Rights as a foundation of liberal democracy, to the construct of rights exclusively for the “real,” “honest,” and “good people.” Often, these “real” or “good” people exclude immigrants, political adversaries, and civilians who oppose the government. Additionally, leaders claim that their democracies are legitimate by citing elements of democratic institutions, elections, or the right to protest. For example, such leaders often claim that because their country holds elections, it is therefore a democracy; or that if they have high approval ratings, then their country must be a democracy.

In some cases, concepts of democracy are defined primarily through the lens of elections. Despite appropriation, the power of the concept and “brand” merits pro-democracy advocates utilizing the term and better defining it as connected with democratic principles, rather than limited to elections.

U.S. testing showed that both Democrats and Republicans value democracy. Prior to the 2024 general election in the U.S., more than three-quarters of Americans agreed that democracy was at risk in the election. Democrats were more likely to agree (84%), but Republicans’ agreement was not far behind (77%) and 73% of independents also agreed.⁸⁰ When asked what most influenced their vote (in the 2024 presidential election), about half of voters identified the future of democracy as the single most important factor. (That was higher than the share who answered the same way about inflation, the situation at the U.S.-Mexico border, abortion policy, or free speech.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Richard Wike, Katie Simmons, Bruce Stokes, and Janell Fetterolf. “Globally, Broad Support for Representative and Direct Democracy.” *Pew Research Center*, October 26, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2017/10/16/globally-broad-support-for-representative-and-direct-democracy/>.

⁸⁰ PRRI. Threats to American Democracy Ahead of an Unprecedented Presidential Election: Findings from the 2023 American Values Survey. Washington, DC: PRRI, 2023, 37.

⁸¹ PBS News. “Economy ranked as a top issue, but concerns over democracy drove many voters to polls, AP VoteCast shows.” November 5, 2024, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/economy-ranked-as-a-top-issue-but-concerns-over-democracy-drove-many-voters-to-polls-ap-votecast-shows>.

Examples:

Claiming democracy	
<p>Nigeria Celebrates a “Democracy Day” every year.</p>	<p><i>“Today, we are privileged to mark the longest period of unbroken democratic leadership and 5th peaceful transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another in Nigeria. My commitment to bequeathing a sustainable democratic culture remains resolute, my pursuit of a fair society remains unshaken, and my desire to see that Nigeria remains a country for each and every one of us has never been stronger.”</i>⁸²(President Buhari, 2021)</p>
<p>Russia & PRC Both lay claim to being established and historic democracies.</p>	<p><i>“Russia and China as world powers with rich cultural and historical heritage have long-standing traditions of democracy, which rely on [a] thousand years of experience of development, broad popular support and consideration of the needs and interests of citizens. Russia and China guarantee their people the right to take part through various means and in various forms in the administration of the State and public life in accordance with the law. The people of both countries are certain of the way they have chosen and respect the democratic systems and traditions of other [states].”</i>⁸³ (Russia & China joint statement, 2022)</p>
<p>Russia Russian officials, including President Putin, often refer to democracy and democratic principles as a fundamental part of Russia’s governing system.</p>	<p><i>“Russia is a democratic federative law-governed state with a republican form of government. Democracy is the fundamental principle of its political system. The democratic institutions were further strengthened by the amendments to the Constitution adopted through a referendum</i></p>

⁸² Muhammadu Buhari, Text of President Muhammadu Buhari’s 2022 Democracy Day Speech, [Speech text], *The Guardian*, June 12, 2022, <https://guardian.ng/features/text-of-president-muhammadu-buharis-2022-democracy-day-speech/>.

⁸³ “Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development,” The Kremlin: President of Russia, February 4, 2022, <http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5770>.

	<i>in 2020. In Russia, the development of democracy is closely connected to culture and traditions. Traditions of its parliamentarianism go back over a hundred years. Russia's political system is evolving steadily and needs a stable and calm environment that guarantees the rights and interests of its people.</i> ⁸⁴ (Anatoly Antonov, Russian Ambassador to the U.S., 2021)
PRC Chinese government officials often refer to their system of government as democratic.	<i>"In China, the concept of democracy has taken root in the people's minds, and the practice of democracy has become an integral part of daily life and work, resulting in wide and sustained democratic participation. Democracy has become the norm, injecting great vitality into Chinese society."</i> ⁸⁵ (China: Democracy That Works, State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2021)
El Salvador President Bukele claims that El Salvador is the most democratic it has ever been.	<i>"We have only been here for a short time, but we are building a true democracy. We are not building a false democracy like the one established by the forces of the status quo ..."</i> ⁸⁶ (President Nayib Bukele, 2020) <i>"We have never had as much democracy as now, because it is the people who make the decisions through their president."</i> ⁸⁷ (CSO Key Informant Interview, July 2022)
Serbia In Serbia too, President Vučić has claimed that there is an excess of democracy in	<i>"There is an excess of democracy in Serbia. Here everyone can block roads, which is not possible in your countries."</i> ⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Anatoly Antonov, and Qin Gang. "Russian and Chinese Ambassadors: Respecting People's Democratic Rights." *The National Interest*, November 26, 2021, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/russian-and-chinese-ambassadors-respecting-people%E2%80%99s-democratic-rights-197165>.

⁸⁵ "China: Democracy That Works," *The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China*. 37, 2021, <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202112/04/WS61ab0795a310cdd39bc7957e.html>.

⁸⁶ Gloria Olivares. "'Quinto paso: La batalla del pueblo salvadoreño contra el aparato ideológico': Bukele." *GatoEncerrado*, June 2, 2021, <https://gatoencerrado.news/2021/06/02/quinto-paso-la-batalla-del-pueblo-salvadoreno-contra-el-aparato-ideologico-bukele/>.

⁸⁷ Key Informant Interview with CSO representative, July 2022.

⁸⁸ Lidija Valtner, Danas. "Vučić: U Srbiji ima viška demokratije." November 28, 2021, <https://www.danas.rs/vesti/politika/vucic-u-srbiji-ima-viska-demokratije/1>.

Serbia. His evidence for this statement is that citizens are allowed to protest in the streets.	(President Aleksandar Vučić, 2021)
Redefining Democracy	
Hungary Prime Minister Viktor Orbán redefined the government he is trying to create as an illiberal democracy.	<i>"The new state that we are building is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state. It does not deny foundational values of liberalism, as freedom, etc. But it does not make this ideology a central element of state organization, but applies a specific, national, particular approach in its stead."</i> ⁸⁹ (Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, 2014)
El Salvador President Bukele defines his approach as democratic because he has high popularity ratings, was democratically elected, and is the "voice of the people," all while undermining the legislative and judiciary branches and consolidating executive powers (going against the constitution's ban on running for a second term and imposing a state of exception).	<i>"We have only been here for a short time, but we are building a true democracy. We are not building a false democracy like the one established by the forces of the status quo ..."</i> ⁹⁰ (President Nayib Bukele, 2020)
	<i>"With the help of God and you, we will reach the Executive with awareness of the power they confer on us and with the courage to exercise it, to move our people forward once and for all."</i> ⁹¹ (President Nayib Bukele, 2018)
Serbia President Vučić claims that his administration is the harbinger of democracy in Serbia, "especially regarding media freedoms, and defending the rights of honest people." [Quote from ISS report]	<i>"It is a complete falsehood that [the] media network became a subject of a disruptive state monopoly—on the contrary, we created a strategy, and after so many years of so many reforms—we were the first government which, to the greatest extent, renounced its own involvement in media."</i> ⁹² (President Aleksandar Vučić, 2018)
Indonesia	<i>"Acting as opposition is very noble ... As long as that opposition does not create</i>

⁸⁹ Viktor Orbán, Full text of Viktor Orbán's speech at Băile Tușnad (Tusnádfürdő), July 26, 2014, [Speech text], *The Budapest Beacon*, July 29, 2014,

<https://budapestbeacon.com/full-text-of-viktor-orbans-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014>

⁹⁰ Gloria Olivares. "Quinto paso: La batalla del pueblo salvadoreño."

⁹¹ Nayib Bukele. "Ayer en la UES, presentamos 15 propuestas puntuales para la educación y nuestros jóvenes, y una mega propuesta para todo nuestro país: La Reforma Integral del Sistema de Pensiones." Facebook, November 15, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/nayibbukele/videos/497243297447201/On>.

⁹² Aleksandar Vučić. "Media freedom in Serbia - President Vucic responds." EU Observer, November 6, 2018, <https://euobserver.com/opinion/143289>.

President Jokowi claims that Indonesians can oppose political candidates; however, opposing Pancasila, a set of five principles that are critical components of Indonesia's politics, should not be allowed.	<i>resentment and hatred, much less coupled with insults and curses ... There is zero tolerance for those who disturb and take issue with Pancasila.</i> ⁹³ (President Jokowi, 2019)
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5. Despite “freedom” being identified as the value most associated with democracy, the “Democracy promotes freedom” narrative has lost dominance in recent years and was not found among the current salient and dominant pro-democratic narratives. However, this narrative remains a powerful and motivating idea and value.

For decades, freedom was the central promise of democracy and the core value of pro-democratic narratives. American leaders of the 20th century, like Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and Ronald Reagan, all used freedom either in the context of democracy promoting freedom, or as a way of critiquing totalitarian countries for their lack of freedom. Democracy was distinct from totalitarianism, authoritarianism, and communism because of its support for freedom. However, in this research activity, the value of freedom appeared in a total of three pro-democratic narratives, but “Democracy promotes freedom” did not appear as a standalone narrative or dominant theme in the country scans or the global scan. Our study scope did not include historical research on the reason for the decline, but several hypotheses have been put forward by researchers and colleagues, including:

- The tangible increases in freedoms that followed the fall of the Soviet Union and the changes from authoritarian governments in the 1990s and early 2000s resulted in the value of freedom being taken for granted
- The negative associations of “freedom” with U.S. imperialism and unilateral action
- The association of the “freedom agenda” with the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq⁹⁴
- The “security versus freedom” dichotomy that many authoritarians frame as a choice for people to justify authoritarian and “strongman” leadership

⁹³ Joko Widodo. “We can be one of strongest countries in world”: Jokowi's full speech.” [Speech text], *The Jakarta Post*, July 15, 2019, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/07/15/we-can-be-one-of-strongest-countries-in-world-jokowis-full-speech.html>.

⁹⁴ White House. “FACT SHEET: President Bush’s Freedom Agenda Helped Protect the American People.” 2009, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/infocus/freedomagenda/>; James Traub. *The Freedom Agenda: Why America Must Spread Democracy (Just Not the Way George Bush Did)*. Picador Press, October 27, 2009.

Examples:

<p>Historic examples</p>	<p><i>"Freedom has many difficulties and democracy is not perfect, but we have never had to put a wall up to keep our people in, to prevent them from leaving us."</i>⁹⁵ (President John F. Kennedy, 1963)</p> <p><i>"It is the Soviet Union that runs against the tide of history by denying human freedom and human dignity to its citizens. It also is in deep economic difficulty. The rate of growth in the national product has been steadily declining since the 1950s and is less than half of what it was then. Democracy is not a fragile flower; still, it needs cultivating. If the rest of this century is to witness the gradual growth of freedom and democratic ideals, we must take actions to assist the campaign for democracy."</i>⁹⁶ (President Ronald Reagan, 1982)</p>
<p>Current examples</p>	<p><i>"JFK's remark that the most powerful force in the world is humankind's eternal desire to be free and independent is as true today as it was back then."</i>⁹⁷ (USAID Administrator Samantha Power, 2021)</p> <p><i>"As the President—as our President made clear in Philadelphia last week, the threats we face as a nation are great: threats to our freedom, threats to our very democracy. And we need to speak truth about that. And so, today, we all, by coming together, reaffirm that we refuse to let extremist, so-called leaders dismantle our democracy."</i>⁹⁸ (Vice President Kamala Harris, 2022)</p>

⁹⁵ John F. Kennedy. "Remarks of President John F. Kennedy at the Rudolph Wilde Platz, Berlin, June 26, 1963." [Speech text], John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, June 26, 1963, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/archives/other-resources/john-f-kennedy-speeches/berlin-w-germany-rudolph-wilde-platz-19630626#:~:text=nach%20Berlin%20kommen-,Let%20them%20come%20to%20Berlin.,prevent%20them%20from%20leaving%20us.>

⁹⁶ Ronald Reagan. "Text of President Ronald Reagan's Westminster Address." [Speech text], National Endowment for Democracy, June, 1982, <https://www.ned.org/promoting-democracy-and-peace/>.

⁹⁷ Samantha Power. "Administrator Samantha Power on a New Vision for Global Development." [Speech text], USAID, November 4, 2021, <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/speeches/nov-4-2021-administrator-samantha-power-new-vision-global-development>.

⁹⁸ Kamala Harris. "Remarks by Vice President Harris at the 2022 Democratic National Committee Summer Meeting." [Speech text], The White House, September 10, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/09/10/remarks-by-vice-president-harris-at-the-2022-democratic-national-committee-summer-meeting/>.

DOMINANT AND SALIENT GLOBAL NARRATIVES

MG and our country-based research partners used the research methodology detailed above in order to identify the dominant and salient global narratives and country level narratives. MG's country partners led research across all methodologies in the relevant local languages and helped MG interpret the research findings. MG then reviewed, analyzed, and synthesized the country partners' findings to identify the most salient and dominant narratives from across the research. Country-based research partners validated all narratives, and provided insights on framing and context.

Each salient and dominant narrative below includes several core components: 1) an articulation of the core narrative statement; 2) the values that are triggered by the narrative; 3) a list of the country case studies where the narrative was found; 4) context and analysis for how the narrative is used or weaponized, and the message frame, which includes the articulation of the problem, solution, benefits, and call to action; and 5) exemplar stories and quotes from the research that support the narrative.

Many of the narratives below intersect with each other in that they overlap, trigger similar values, and reinforce each other. For example, the "Enemies, outsiders, and others" narrative is both a standalone narrative and an element within most of the other narratives that bolsters their emotional and values triggers. In another example from Kenya, a narrative centering on "Strong leadership" also intersects with a frequent narrative relating to endemic corruption.

Note on color coding: As previously stated, the values identified in this section represent the values and color coding identified in the existing narrative landscape; they differ slightly from the color coding of the 10 recommended values and those shown in the narrative summary in the executive summary.

PRO-AUTHORITARIAN NARRATIVES

EXISTING LANDSCAPE OF PRO-AUTHORITARIAN NARRATIVES BY COUNTRY

Pro-Authoritarian Narratives	Ecuador	El Salvador	Indonesia	Kenya	Kyrgyz Republic	Libya	Nigeria	Perú	Philippines	Serbia	Uganda	United States
Democracy Appropriation		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Democracy Doesn't Deliver	✓		✓			✓	✓					
Democratic Institutions Are Corrupt	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*			✓
Security Justifies All	✓	✓	✓			*			✓		✓	✓
Democracy Has Gone Too Far			✓		*	✓		✓				
Enemies, Others, and Outsiders	✓			✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓
Strong Leadership	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

A ✓ on the graph indicates that the global narrative was identified in the country; a * indicates that a strong narrative theme that carried this same narrative was identified.

Pro-Authoritarian Narrative #1 (Democracy appropriation):

There has never been as much democracy as there is now. We have **ensured** that the **voice of the people** will be heard and acted upon to increase **safety** and **prosperity**.

Values: **Representation**, **Security**, **Prosperity**, **Strength**

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: El Salvador, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Nigeria, Philippines, Serbia, Uganda.

Context and Impact:

In this narrative, authoritarian-leaning regimes attempt to bolster their legitimacy by appropriating the word and positive associations of democracy and select democratic values. In specific contexts, this narrative also includes other values and triggers, such as defending the constitution, protecting honest people, ensuring the rule of law, and democratic representation as evidenced by elections. As discussed in the key findings section, authoritarians understand the value of the democracy brand and use it to both further their legitimacy and redefine democratic values to fit their political and policy agendas. There is no way to prevent appropriation of narrative—however, there is opportunity to demonstrate which actors are more authentic in their use of the “democracy brand” and who amongst these actors can trigger dominant emotions and values.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was identified in political discourse analysis and media analysis surrounding the Summit for Democracy; particularly, in the PRC’s, Russia’s, and Turkey’s response to not being invited to the gathering. MG identified articles, reports, and press releases published by ambassadors and government officials, as well as speeches by President Xi and President Erdoğan, denouncing the Summit and bolstering their countries’ claims to democracy. This narrative was also identified as dominant and salient in the country case studies for El Salvador, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Nigeria, Philippines, Serbia, and Uganda.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Western leaders trying to hurt our nation say that we do not have democracy, when in reality, we have a thriving democracy.

Solution Articulation: We must stand up to corrupt advocates and outsiders who do not respect our sovereignty and culture. We must be steadfast in ensuring the voice of the people is acted upon to continue to grow our prosperity and security.

Benefits Articulation: Because we act on the voice of the people, under our democratic government, people increasingly live in prosperous communities and are safe from internal and external threats.

Call to Action: Don’t believe corrupt critics and outsiders who degrade our democracy and want to hurt our nation! Support/vote for/demand another term for [*Name of leader*] who is the only one ensuring the voice of the people is acted upon.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
Turkey	<p><i>"Turkey is a democratic state and has a rule of law. Turkey is a big state in which sovereignty unconditionally belongs to the people. Turkey, with its economy, foreign policy, vision, history and most importantly with its 85 million people, is a very strong state."</i></p> <p>(President Recep Erdoğan, speech at Yassıada Court commemoration, May 2022)⁹⁹</p>
PRC	<p><i>"What China has is an extensive, whole-process socialist democracy. It reflects the people's will, suits the country's realities, and enjoys strong support from the people. In China, the people have the right to elections, and they can get deeply involved in national governance, exercising their power through the People's Congresses at the national and other levels."</i>¹⁰⁰ (Jointly published article by the Chinese and Russian ambassadors to the United States, November 2021)</p>
Russia	<p><i>"Russia is a democratic federative law-governed state with a republican form of government. Democracy is the fundamental principle of its political system."</i>¹⁰¹ (Jointly published article by the Chinese and Russian ambassadors to the United States, November 2021)</p>
Serbia	<p><i>"Serbia is fully committed to European values, democratic principles, and the rule of law. There is an excess of democracy in Serbia. Here everyone can block roads, which is not possible in your countries. I guess we will also reach that level of democracy."</i>¹⁰² (President Aleksander Vučić, Summit for Democracy, December 2021)</p>
Nigeria	<p><i>"My commitment to bequeathing a sustainable democratic culture remains resolute, my pursuit of a fair society remains unshaken, and my desire to see that Nigeria remains a country for each and every one of us has never been stronger."</i></p> <p>(President Buhari 2021, Democracy Day speech)</p>

⁹⁹ Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "We've defeated every attempt against our democracy: Erdoğan." *Hürriyet Daily News*, May 27, 2022,

<https://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/weve-defeated-every-attempt-against-our-democracy-erdogan-174126>

¹⁰⁰ Antonov and Gang. "Russian and Chinese Ambassadors." November 26, 2021.

http://us.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/dshd/202111/t20211127_10454275.htm

¹⁰¹ Antonov and Gang. "Russian and Chinese Ambassadors." November 26, 2021.

http://us.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/dshd/202111/t20211127_10454275.htm

¹⁰² Aleksandar Vučić. "Vucic at Summit for democracy: Serbia ready to be reliable partner." *Euractiv*, December 9, 2021,

https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/vucic-at-summit-for-democracy-serbia-ready-to-be-reliable-partner/.

Uganda	<i>“Uganda's current rule of law is rooted in Museveni and the NRM's commitment to the culture of human rights and democratic practice. This leadership opted for the creation of the 1995 Constitution, a most consultative eight year process, rather than retaining the autocratic 1967 Republican Constitution.” (Kintu Nyago, second deputy principal private secretary to President Museveni, February 2011)¹⁰³</i>
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Pro-Authoritarian Narrative #2 (Democracy doesn't deliver):

Democracy has not and does not deliver the benefits it promised. It slows **economic development**, **protects criminals**, chips away at **traditional values**, and **fosters chaos**. We are losing jobs, **living in fear**, and are plagued by **dishonest and corrupt elites**.

Values: **Stability**, **Security**, **Prosperity**, **Honesty**, **Order**, **Tradition**

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Ecuador, Indonesia, Libya, Nigeria.

Context and Impact:

This narrative delegitimizes democracy by questioning its tangible benefits. “Democracy delivers” is one of the most dominant pro-democratic narratives, which leaves democracies open to further attack when they don't deliver the benefits they've promised. This is both an organic and orchestrated narrative that emerges from the legitimate experiences and concerns of people who have not experienced the benefits they expect from democracy; this narrative is reinforced and instrumentalized by authoritarian and authoritarian-leaning governments and leaders. According to Pew Research Center, 78% of global respondents consider democratic governance as a “good way to govern,” yet 52% of those surveyed remain “unsatisfied” with the way democracy is working. In Nigeria and Perú, dissatisfaction with the way democracy is working is even higher, at 58% and 73% respectively.¹⁰⁴

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative arose in nearly every research methodology, but especially in political discourse analysis, media analysis, and social media analysis. This narrative was used by the PRC, Russia, and Turkey, specifically around the Russian invasion of Ukraine and COVID-19

¹⁰³ “Uganda Enjoys the Rule of Law under Museveni.” New Vision, Feb. 2011, www.newvision.co.ug/news/1016536/uganda-enjoys-rule-law-museveni. Accessed 3 May 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Wike et al. “Globally, Broad Support for Representative and Direct Democracy,” October 26, 2017.

lockdowns. The messaging by government officials and leaders of these countries in press statements, speeches, and social media posts framed the U.S. and other democracies as not being capable of containing the spread of COVID-19.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Democracy does not and has never delivered on the benefits it promised. In fact, democracy causes problems: slowing economic development, protecting criminals, eliminating traditional values, corrupting the government, and creating chaos and conflict in society.

Solution Articulation: In order to ensure that we are secure and prosperous and that our traditional values are respected, we need strong and incorruptible leaders with the ability to take action to meet the needs of the people.

Benefits Articulation: Strong governments and leaders, undeterred by and unafraid to replace corrupt institutions and elites, deliver faster economic growth, more secure communities, and improved lives and livelihoods.

Call to Action: Don't believe the lies and excuses of the journalists, protectors of criminals, and critics who want to stop our progress and protect corrupt institutions.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
PRC	<i>"The fragility of American democracy is exposed in the face of disaster. By the beginning of December 2021, about 50 million people in the United States had been infected with the COVID-19, and the death toll is approaching 800,000. The number of infections and deaths ranks first in the world ... The inefficiency of democracy in the United States has made the country full of partisan disagreement for a long time after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic."</i> ¹⁰⁵ (Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China, December 2021)
Nigeria	<i>"Healthcare, education, good roads, constant electricity supply, better housing, improved water supply, better infrastructure generally, corruption-free licensing process, good town planning, etc. were expected by Nigerians when the country voted in civilian leaders in 1999. But these are lacking, leading to strikes by health workers,</i>

¹⁰⁵ Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies (RDCY), *Ten Questions for American Democracy*, December 6, 2021.

	<p><i>teachers and labor unions in general.” (Anonymous researcher, Nigeria, 2021)</i></p> <p><i>“Yes, we are slow because the system is slow. It’s not Baba that is slow but it is the system so I am going by this system and I hope we will make it ... I told you what I did when I was in uniform, but now when I have to go by this system [democracy] where people have to be arrested and then prosecuted, taken to court and then with evidence.”¹⁰⁶ (President Muhammadu Buhari, 2018)</i></p>
Indonesia	<p><i>“In the past, when the government was heavily authoritarian, investment came. Once we became democratic, our ability to create a good investment climate lessened ... We should learn from China, in which politics are ‘controlled,’ yet investment is guaranteed.”¹⁰⁷ (Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Taxpayer Award Ceremony, July 2019)</i></p>

¹⁰⁶ “Baba go slow,” The Economist, October 8, 2015, <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2015/10/08/baba-go-slow>.

¹⁰⁷ Sri Mulyani. “Sri Mulyani: When the Government is Very Authoritarian, Investment Comes.” *Tempo.co*, July 16, 2019, <https://bisnis.tempo.co/read/1225109/sri-mulyani-saat-pemerintah-sangat-otoriter-investasi-datang>.

Pro-Authoritarian Narrative #3 (Democratic institutions are corrupt):

Corrupt elites created systems and “democratic” institutions that are **corrupt** and **benefit the few at the expense of honest, hard-working people**. Corruption gets in the way of **progress**, **protects criminals and terrorists**, and **weakens our nation**. To solve our problems, we **must take action** without interference from **illegitimate** institutions.

Values: Representation, Strength, Order, Prosperity, Honesty

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Ecuador, El Salvador, Indonesia, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Nigeria, Perú, Philippines. United States.

Context and Impact:

This narrative delegitimizes democratic values and institutions and legitimizes autocratic action, executive control, centralization of power, and the dismantling of laws and institutions. This narrative also triggers the “enemy/otherization” narrative frame by centering blame on corrupt elites, who are framed as stealing from the rest of the people and, at times, as serving foreign interests. It also triggers the “enemies, outsiders, and others” narrative by blaming democratic systems for weakening the country, and protecting criminals and terrorists. With this narrative, authoritarians in power often seek to frame a distinction between the current government, which is working hard for the people, and previous regimes, which are framed as corrupt and illegitimate.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was identified through the analysis of media, political discourse, and literature review. This narrative was also identified when scanning the discourse and writings of PRC spokespeople, President Xi Jinping, and Chinese academics, as well as Russian state media.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Democratic institutions are corrupt because they were created by corrupt people to keep themselves in power and to benefit elites at the expense of everyone else. These corrupt institutions stand in the way of progress and protect criminals and terrorists.

Solution Articulation: Strong and honest leaders need to replace corrupt institutions and take action without allowing these institutions to get in the way of doing what is right for our people and our nation.

Benefits Articulation: We can advance economic development, create jobs, and prosecute criminals and terrorists to ensure safety and prosperity, and we can do this now without the delays caused by corrupt institutions.

Call to Action: Do not be fooled by the corrupt elites and critics who hide behind democratic institutions. Only a strong and honest leader can create the progress we need.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
Russia	<i>"In Russia, people engaged in high-level corruption are jailed, including governors, ministers, including from the federal government. ... But we hear nothing of imprisonment at such level from the U.S., the UK [and] Europe. Isn't there any corruption? There absolutely is, there is no imprisonment."</i> ¹⁰⁸ (Russia 24, January 2021)
	<i>"Appointment of Joe Biden's son to the board of Ukrainian gas company Burisma is a traditional example of the U.S. looting its colonies. At times, families of high-ranking U.S. officials benefited not only from colonies but [also] from Washington's political opponents. Given the revenues that the American politicians received from the ruins of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Ukrainian economies, all those who believe in the U.S.'s intention to fight corruption in foreign countries, are naive."</i> ¹⁰⁹ (Sputnik, February 2020)
PRC	<i>"In recent years, the degree of corruption in the United States has increased each year, reaching the highest level since 2012. Now there is an "ever-increasing influence of special interests in government." "American political practice makes American democracy a 'minority democracy,' a 'money-controlled democracy,' a 'corrupted democracy,' a 'democracy destroyer,' a 'world bully,' an 'international rule trampler,' and more."</i> ¹¹⁰ (Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China, December 2021)
	<i>"The electoral democracy of Western countries [is] actually democracy ruled by the capital, and they are a game of the rich, not real democracy."</i> ¹¹¹ (Jiang Jinqun, Director of the Central Policy Research Office, Press Conference, 2021)

¹⁰⁸ DISINFO: RUSSIA JAILS PEOPLE FOR HIGH-LEVEL CORRUPTION ... EU vs. Disinfo, January 24, 2021, <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/russia-jails-people-for-high-level-corruption-whereas-the-us-uk-and-europe-dont/>.

¹⁰⁹ DISINFO: US OFFICIALS LOOT THEIR COLONIES INCLUDING UKRAINE, EU vs. Disinfo, February 2, 2020. <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/us-officials-loot-its-colonies-including-ukraine>.

¹¹⁰ Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies (RDCY). *Ten Questions for American Democracy*, December 6, 2021.

¹¹¹ Evelyn Cheng. "China slams U.S. democracy as a 'game of the rich,' at an event promoting Xi's growing power." CNBC, November 15, 2021, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/11/12/china-criticizes-us-democracy-while-promoting-xis-growing-power.html>.

Perú	<i>"Eighty-eight percent of Peruvian citizens consider more than half or all politicians to be corrupt."</i> ¹¹² (AmericasBarometer, Latin America Public Opinion Project [LAPOP], 2021)
Kyrgyz Republic	<i>"We see that most activists have long turned into, at best, 'clicktivists'. They consider conversations with each other and mutual likes to be the essence and meaning of their work and of civil society as a whole. Some so-called NGOs only exist for loud press conferences and outright accusations and condemnation on social media."</i> (Edil Baisalov, in political speech, November 15, 2021)
El Salvador	<i>"Dirty politics tires, the country's disgusting politics tires, a policy that has kept the country in underdevelopment for a long time and note that I am not talking about a political party, I am talking about the entire political system."</i> ¹¹³ (President Nayib Bukele, 2022)

¹¹² Carrión et al., *Cultura política de la democracia en Perú*, 2022.

¹¹³ Oscar Picardo Joao, Luis Enrique Amaya, Jorge Arturo Colorado, et al., *El humor social y político, cosmovisión e ideología de los salvadoreños*, Instituto de Ciencia Tecnología e Innovación (ICTI) de la Universidad Francisco Gavidia (UFG), 2021.

Pro-Authoritarian Narrative #4 (Security justifies all):

Our **security** is under constant threat—from our borders and **physical safety, to our economic stability**, and to our **traditions, culture and values**. Democratic institutions are not up to the task of keeping us **safe**.

Values: **Security**, **Strength**, **Prosperity**, **Tradition**

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Ecuador, El Salvador, Indonesia, Libya, Philippines, Uganda, United States.

Context and Impact:

This narrative delegitimizes democratic values and institutions, portraying them as weak, unstable, and incapable of ensuring security. It triggers values across different aspects of security (personal/physical, economic, identity/cultural). It also legitimizes autocratic action, executive control, centralization of power, expanded roles for the military, political violence, and the suspension/violation of rights as needed and justified in the name of stability and security. This narrative also triggers the “enemies, outsiders, and others” narrative and the strongman/strong ruler narrative by stoking fear of outside threats.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative appeared in the political discourse, media, social media, and indices methodologies in multiple countries. It was also found prominently in Russian state media speeches by President Putin, especially connected to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Additionally, polling from Pew Research Center supported the salience of the narrative.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Our national security, personal safety, economic security, and our identity as a country is under threat. From migrants taking our jobs, to Western outsiders undermining our sovereignty, from human rights groups protecting criminals to traditional family values being undermined, democratic institutions are not keeping us safe.

Solution Articulation: Only a strong and decisive government with the courage to act can keep us safe.

Benefits Articulation: Our strong and decisive government is taking the needed actions to ensure our people, our economy, our traditional values, and our nation are secure now and in the future.

Call to Action: To ensure our security and protect ourselves in these dangerous times, we must support strong leaders who will take the necessary actions to keep us safe.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
El Salvador	<i>"This war is going to continue for as long as necessary and to the extent that the public continues to demand it ... We are going to continue to confront this cancer, and we have said it before and we stand by it, this war will continue until the gangs are eradicated from the territory of El Salvador."</i> ¹¹⁴ (Minister of Justice Gustavo Villatoro, May 2022)
Russia	<i>"We will seek to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine, as well as bring to trial those who perpetrated numerous bloody crimes against civilians ... The current events have nothing to do with a desire to infringe on the interests of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. They are connected with defending Russia from those who have taken Ukraine hostage and are trying to use it against our country and our people."</i> ¹¹⁵ (President Vladimir Putin, Speech announcing "special military operation" in Ukraine, February 2022)
Perú	<i>"In 2019, 53% of Peruvian citizens considered it justified that the military take power because there is a lot of crime in the country. Fifty-seven percent of Peruvian citizens consider it justified that the military take power because there is a lot of corruption."</i> ¹¹⁶ (AmericasBarometer, LAPOP, 2019, note that this was not a dominant narrative in Perú)
Philippines	<i>"I'll take my revenge. I'll arrest you all. For the swaddling of the Filipino people, you committed fraud. You wasted our money. People's initiative does not involve buying ... the vote or the signature of the Filipino, talagang. You have no principles, you motherf***ers."</i> (Rodrigo Duterte, YouTube video, January 28, 2024)

Pro-Authoritarian Narrative #5 (Democracy has gone too far):

¹¹⁴ "El Salvador extends state of emergency amid gang crackdown," *Al Jazeera*, May 26, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/26/el-salvador-extends-state-of-emergency-amid-gang-crackdown>.

¹¹⁵ Vladimir Putin, *Full text of Vladimir Putin's speech announcing 'special military operation' in Ukraine*, February 24, 2022.

¹¹⁶ Carrión et al., *Cultura política de la democracia en Perú*. 2022.

Democracy and its supporters among the press, human rights advocates, and social media influencers are creating **conflict**, **disunity**, and **instability** in our country and must be stopped. Only **stability** and **order** can **create jobs**, provide **security**, and maintain **unity** for **our people and our country**.

Values: **Security**, **Prosperity**, **Order**, **Patriotism**, **Stability**

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Perú.

Context and Impact:

This narrative triggers the “stabilocracy” frame—the willingness to trade rights and freedoms for certainty, order and security, serving to both delegitimize democratic values and to legitimize autocratic governance. Like “Security justifies all,” this narrative reinforces and provides opportunities for strongman or authoritarian rule to limit perceived excesses of democracy, in particular freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly. Authoritarians also weaponize this narrative to target not only political opposition, but also journalists, human rights groups, LGBTQ+ activists, and other marginalized segments of the population. In doing so it reinforces the “otherization” of pro-democracy advocates, and characterizes democratic principles as a threat to local and national traditions, values, and beliefs.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was identified primarily in country political discourse and media and was found in discourse surrounding the Summit for Democracy, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and COVID-19 lockdowns. Specifically, this narrative was present in PRC and Russian state media, and in speeches by President Putin.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: The advocates for democracy have gone too far. Unlimited and dangerous freedom of speech, false news, and undermining of traditional values create conflict and instability and undermine our security, economy, and culture.

Solution Articulation: Setting common sense standards and enforcing laws that stop unethical journalists, agitators, protectors of criminals, and organizations who corrupt our youth, is needed to ensure order, unity, and prosperity.

Benefits Articulation: By supporting unity we will have order in our streets, support for our traditions and values, and the stability needed for economic growth.

Call to Action: Don't believe false news or be pressured to question your values. We need to support strong leaders setting and enforcing standards that protect our culture, our children, our economy, and our safety.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
Russia	<i>"We will never give up our love for the country, faith, traditional values, ancestral customs and respect for all peoples and cultures. As for the West, it seems to be determined to cancel these millennia-old values."</i> ¹¹⁷ (President Vladimir Putin, Victory Day Parade speech, May 2022)
Perú	<i>"The gender approach included in the [school] curriculum 'homosexualizes students and promotes sexual relations at an early age.'"18</i> (Congressman and President of the Congressional Education Commission Esdras Medina Minaya, campaign speech, 2021)
Libya	<i>"... Western organizations affiliated with civil society institutions are the most malicious international organizations ... These organizations allocate large sums to recruit Libyan youth and girls to promote mixing with them for purposes of dissolution, proselytizing, homosexuality, and atheism ..."</i> ¹¹⁹ (Sadiq Al-Ghariani, August 10, 2022)
PRC	<i>"The United States is a federation of 50 states. Democracy should promote unity among them. However, now the two parties in the United States are constantly using the system's design to attack each other, leading to severe political polarization, social disorder, and contradictions."</i> ¹²⁰ (Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China, December 2021)
Indonesia	<i>"Democracy, and specifically freedom of expression, has gone too far; this level of freedom [of] expression is counter to tradition and un-Indonesian."</i> (Anonymous researcher assessment, Indonesia)

¹¹⁷ "Russian people will never give up love for country, traditional values—Putin," TASS, May 9, 2022, <https://tass.com/politics/1448669>.

¹¹⁸ Robert Orihuela. "Esdras Ricardo Medina, congresista de las contrarreformas en educación." *La República*, May 9, 2022, <https://larepublica.pe/politica/2022/05/08/arequipa-esdras-medina-congresista-de-contrarreformas-en-educacion-sunedu-lrsd/>.

¹¹⁹ "الشيخ د. #الصادق_الغرياني: المنظمات الغربية التابعة لمؤسسات المجتمع المدني هي أخطر المنظمات الدولية" Facebook, August 10, 2022. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=401349698651542>

¹²⁰ Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies (RDCY), *Ten Questions for American Democracy*, December 6, 2021.

	2022) “Political freedom has paved the way for extreme political practices, such as liberalism, radicalism, sectarianism, fundamentalism and other ideologies that are against Pancasila. ... Many people have asked me if our democracy has gone too far. My answer is yes, it has.” ¹²¹ (President Joko Widodo, speech for Hanura political party, February 2017)
Kyrgyz Republic	“On March 8th, they claim to defend women’s rights, but the ultimate goal is to impose feminism and monogamy. Thus, they promote things that are incompatible with Kyrgyz culture.” (ELTR Broadcast, April 7, 2024)

Pro-Authoritarian Narrative #6 (Enemies, outsiders, and others):

The opposition and pro-democracy forces are **enemies of the state** who serve foreign interests and **hate our country**. They **foster unrest** and **put our lives, families, livelihoods, values, and even national security** in danger.

Values: Security, Prosperity, Order, Patriotism, Tradition

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Ecuador, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Nigeria, Perú, Philippines, Serbia, Uganda, United States.

Context and impact:

This narrative establishes an existential threat and dehumanizes/otherizes the political opposition or creates and frames “out groups” as enemies: immigrants, members of other racial, ethnic or social groups, LGBTQ+ community, and others. It frames protestors, anti-corruption officials, the independent media, and other human rights activists not as opposition, but as enemies of the state. Oftentimes, those named as enemies of the state are characterized as serving foreign interests or forces. This othering seeks to legitimize autocratic governance, eliminate rights, and dismantle democratic institutions, while further increasing polarization. It creates boundaries between an in group that may be more deserving of rights and benefits and an out group that may be less deserving. This narrative often connects to and triggers the

¹²¹ Nural Fitri Ramadhani. “Jokowi warns against ‘excessive democracy’.” *The Jakarta Post*, February 22, 2017, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2017/02/22/jokowi-warns-against-excessive-democracy.html>.

“Security justifies all” narrative. This narrative is also used to dehumanize critics and population groups by weaponizing messaging and stories that legitimize and justify violence against them.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was found primarily in political discourse, media, and social media across most countries. Even in countries where the “enemies, outsiders, and others” narrative was not explicit, significant elements of messaging that otherizes were present.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: We are under attack by enemies of the state, from the liberal media and illegal immigrants, to human rights groups and corrupt “democratic” institutions that protect criminals. They are funded and supported by foreign interests to sow disunity, unrest, and violence in our communities. These outside forces hate our country and will not stop attacking us until our economy, our culture, and our nation are destroyed.

Solution Articulation: We must stand up to and defeat our enemies with strong and decisive leadership willing to fight for the rights of honest people.

Benefits Articulation: When we stop letting enemies and outsiders steal our future, our jobs, communities, and traditions will be protected and our nation will prosper.

Call to Action: Don’t believe their lies or let them hide behind claims of democracy. Support the only leader who will stand up to our enemies and protect us.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
Russia	<p><i>"I spoke about our biggest concerns and worries, and about the fundamental threats which irresponsible Western politicians created for Russia consistently, rudely and unceremoniously from year to year. I am referring to the eastward expansion of NATO, which is moving its military infrastructure ever closer to the Russian border."</i>¹²² (President Vladimir Putin, speech announcing “special military operation” in Ukraine, February 2022)</p> <p><i>Speaking about Ukraine’s army, Vladimir Putin said, “In effect, it is no longer an army but a foreign legion—in this case NATO’s foreign legion—which does not of course pursue Ukraine’s national interests. They have a completely different agenda that is connected with</i></p>

¹²² Vladimir Putin, *Full text of Vladimir Putin’s speech announcing ‘special military operation’ in Ukraine*, February 24, 2022.

	<i>achieving the geopolitical objective of containing Russia.</i> ¹²³ (President Vladimir Putin, speech to students at University of St. Petersburg, January 2022)
Serbia	<i>"Tomorrow, once again, we will show what the majority of Serbia is like—democratic, tolerant and decent. To show the hypocrisy of foreigners who support those who create chaos in Serbia and terrorize the people. May Serbia continue to strengthen and win!"</i> ¹²⁴ (Prime Minister Ana Brnabic via Twitter, December 2021)
Nigeria	<i>"Most of the instances of inter-communal and inter-religious strife and violence were and are still as a result of sponsorship or incitements by ethnic, political or religious leaders hoping to benefit by exploiting our divisions and fault lines, thereby weakening our country."</i> ¹²⁵ (President Muhammadu Buhari, Inaugural Democracy Day speech, June 2019)
Perú	<i>"Peruvians are fed up with the aggression of foreigners who are carrying out hired killings, murders or petty theft."</i> ¹²⁶ (2021 presidential candidate Rafael López Aliaga of the Popular Renewal Party)
Libya	<i>"#Very serious ... After the discovery of some international and foreign-funded local organizations disguised under the guise of (civil society organizations), which it turned out some of them were promoting other religions in #Libya, some promoting homosexuality and deviance, and some were a cover for foreign intelligence agencies."</i> ¹²⁷ (The Black Box of Corruption, Facebook, February 3, 2024)
Uganda	<i>"Bobi Wine in particular is an agent of foreign interests. ... The foreigners, especially Europeans, are full of arrogance. Uganda is very successful and strong. ... There is opposition to longevity in government. They [foreigners] jump up and down about that. They</i>

¹²³ Brian Whitmore, *Putin's Fantasy Island*, RadioFreeEuropeRadioLiberty, January 27, 2015, <https://www.rferl.org/a/putins-fantasy-island/26816242.html>.

¹²⁴ Ana Brnabic, [@anabrnabic], Da sutra, ponovo, pokažemo kakva je većinska Srbija - demokratska, tolerantna i pristojna. Da pokažemo licemerje stranaca koji podržavaju one koji prave haos u Srbiji i terorišu narod, Da Srbija nastavi da jača i pobeđuje! [Tweet], Twitter, December 3, 2021, <https://twitter.com/anabrnabic/status/1466747267914903557>.

¹²⁵ Muhammadu Buhari, *Full Speech Of President Muhammadu Buhari At The 2019 Inaugural June 12 Democracy Day*, [Speech text], Sahara Reporters, June 12, 2019, <https://saharareporters.com/2019/06/12/full-speech-president-muhammadu-buhari-2019-inaugural-june-12-democracy-day>.

¹²⁶ Rafael Lopez Aliaga. "RAFAEL LOPEZ ALIAGA expulsará delincuentes venezolanos !!!" Información Perú y el mundo, YouTube, February 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEU-WTIIIBNY>.

¹²⁷ "الصندوق الأسود للفساد" Facebook. February 3, 2024. https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0c5fbtDyhTMZqrtXb5zsnUVVCSYVAuyLRnKJ2fzoE1TVwGypMtX2cPECA7oQU4aQsl&id=100044376436123

	<i>[opposition] get a lot of encouragement from the foreigners, from the homosexuals, from I don't know what.</i> " (President Museveni, Channel 4 interview, January 2021) ¹²⁸
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Pro-Authoritarian Narrative #7 (Strong leadership):

Only **strong leadership with the will to act** can provide the **stability** and **order** that the country needs to **defend against threats** and provide for **dignity, prosperity, and development**.

Values: Security, Prosperity, Order, Stability, Strength

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Ecuador, El Salvador, Indonesia, Libya, Nigeria, Perú, Philippines, Serbia, Uganda, United States.

Context and Impact:

This narrative justifies a strong executive leader consolidating power and ruling by decrees without the courts or legislature in order to take decisive action. The narrative is not just about strong leaders (who in truly democratic governance can take courageous stands), but is also about unfettered leaders with the ability to take unilateral action due to a lack of constraints from democratic institutions. Such leaders use this narrative to legitimize actions—from disbanding parliaments and replacing judicial magistrates, to ignoring constitutions and taking extrajudicial actions that ignore the rule of law. This narrative triggers the “Security justifies all” narrative and often the “Enemies, outsiders, and others” narrative.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was identified in the political discourse of multiple case study countries. It was also found in rhetoric surrounding the Russian invasion of Ukraine and COVID-19 lockdowns, including in speeches by President Putin and PRC officials.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Decades of corrupt and ineffective institutions and leaders have made our country weak. Our economy is in decline, progress is slow, infrastructure promised by the

¹²⁸ Channel 4 News. “Uganda Election: President Museveni Says Opposition Are Agents of ‘Foreign Interests’ | Uganda’s President Museveni Claims Main Opposition Leader Bobi Wine Is an ‘Agent of Foreign Interests’, in an Interview with Lindsey Hilsum in Kampala.” Facebook, Jan. 8, 2021, www.facebook.com/watch/?v=224346479238874. Accessed 3 May 2023.

government is never built, criminals and terrorists operate with impunity, and the will of the people is not heard.

Solution Articulation: Only a strong leader with the courage and ability to make decisions unencumbered is the solution to solving our country's problems.

Benefits Articulation: A strong leader with the power to act will immediately improve the wellbeing of our people and nation. From putting criminals in jail, to removing obstacles to economic development, they will ensure that the will of the people is heard and that the country is safe and prosperous.

Call to Action: Support [leader/administration/party's] patriotic and decisive leadership and ensure they are able to continue to take actions to protect us from threats and ensure increased stability and prosperity.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
El Salvador	<p><i>"We will never again go back to the system that for two centuries plunged us into crime, corruption, inequality, and poverty, never again. Do not have any illusions, as long as God gives me strength, I will not allow it."</i>¹²⁹ (President Nayib Bukele via Twitter, June 2021)</p> <p><i>"I'm announcing to the Salvadoran people that I've decided to run as a candidate for president of the republic ... Developed countries have re-election, and thanks to the new configuration of the democratic institution of our country, now El Salvador will too."</i>¹³⁰ (President Nayib Bukele, September 2021)</p>
Perú	<p><i>"There is no better example of an efficient government than that of a mother who raises her children with love and firmness because what we love most is what we care for the most ... Democracy cannot be weak. It must be based on a solid principle of authority. What is required is a strong democracy that makes itself respected."</i>¹³¹</p>

¹²⁹ "El Salvador: Cable companies to be fined for allegedly blocking Bukele's speech," *The Rio Times*, June 3, 2021, <https://www.riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/mercosur/central-america/el-salvador-cable-companies-to-be-fined-for-allegedly-blocking-bukeles-speech/>.

¹³⁰ "Despite prohibition, El Salvador President Bukele says he will seek re-election," *Reuters*, September 16, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/despite-prohibition-el-salvador-president-bukele-says-he-will-see-k-re-election-2022-09-16/>.

¹³¹ "'Mano dura,' el plan de gobierno de Keiko Fujimori para Perú," *Chicago Tribune*, January 25, 2021, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/espanol/sns-es-keiko-fujimori-propone-mano-dura-para-gobernar-peru-20210125-epwtnei77je47bdf2olkrop3m-story.html>.

	(Presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori, daughter of the former President, Alberto Fujimori, presentation video, January 2021)
Russia	<i>"In this situation, I consider it necessary to take the following decision, which is fully adequate to the threats we are facing. More precisely, I find it necessary to support the proposal of the Defense Ministry and the General Staff on partial mobilization in the Russian Federation to defend our Motherland and its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to ensure the safety of our people and people in the liberated territories."</i> ¹³² (President Vladimir Putin, 2022)
Philippines	<i>"You know, I will not hesitate to use the military and the police. To go after the drug lords, the criminals—those robbers, kidnappers, including those corrupt policemen. If they're in the crime, they're dead."</i> (Rodrigo Duterte, speech on May 7, 2016)
Uganda	<i>"I am in politics for the prosperity of our people. Parties are only focusing on elections. Have elections, new MPs, a new President, so that they do what? Instead of the political class talking about the destiny of Africa, you are talking about petty things, elections. ... That is why I have said if I still have strength, I will put my point of view, not to retire when the original issues of why Africa nearly perished are not addressed."</i> (President Museveni, 2018) ¹³³

¹³² Vladimir Putin. "Address to the Nation on Partial Reservist Mobilization for Conflict in Ukraine." [Speech text], *American Rhetoric Online Speech Bank*, September 21, 2022, <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/vladimirputincitizenmobilization.html>.

¹³³ The Independent. "Museveni Slams 'petty' Opposition Parties." *The Independent Uganda*, December 12, 2018, sec. The News Today, <https://www.independent.co.ug/museveni-slams-petty-opposition-parties/>.

PRO-DEMOCRATIC NARRATIVES

EXISTING LANDSCAPE OF PRO-DEMOCRATIC NARRATIVES BY COUNTRY

Pro-Democracy Narratives	Ecuador	El Salvador	Indonesia	Kenya	Kyrgyz Republic	Libya	Nigeria	Perú	Philippines	Serbia	Uganda	United States
Democracy is in Decline					*					✓		✓
Authoritarianism is Harmful	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Democracy Delivers				✓		✓						
Democracy Promotes Equity and Fairness		✓			*		✓					
Democracy is a Work in Progress						✓	✓		✓			

Pro-Democratic Narrative #1 (Democracy is in decline):

Democracy is **under threat** around the world. Democratic backsliding is being advanced by **propaganda efforts** from authoritarian actors, resulting in decreased and diminished **freedoms**, **security**, and **opportunity** for **people** everywhere.

Values: **Security**, **Prosperity**, **Honesty**, **Freedom**, **Representation**

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Kyrgyz Republic, Serbia, United States.

Context and Impact:

The U.S. Government advances this core narrative when discussing democracy and authoritarianism; it also appears in EU-and UN-driven narratives. This narrative describes the danger and impact of democratic backsliding in countries around the world. It places the blame for democratic weakening on authoritarian actors and platforms, including those coming from Russia and China. This narrative also emphasizes that the backsliding of democracy results in the curtailing of fundamental freedoms and rights. It is important to consider the negative impact of this as a dominant narrative. Such messaging reinforces the pro-authoritarian narratives “Democracy doesn’t deliver” and “Democracy is in decline” by highlighting its failures and

shortcomings. This narrative establishes a deficit frame, and illustrates how a narrative that is appropriate and can motivate specific stakeholders (international organizations, democratic governments, CSOs) might have unintended negative impacts when used as a broader narrative with general stakeholders.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This pro-democratic narrative was identified through the analysis of political discourse, indices, reports, and polling. Most apparently, this narrative is common in the political discourse surrounding the 2021 Summit for Democracy. Speeches by President Biden, Vice President Harris, Secretary of State Blinken, and Secretary-General of the U.N. Guterres were analyzed and contained this narrative. Additionally, reports by Pew Research Center and Freedom House provided data that supported the salience of this narrative.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Around the globe, democracy is in decline. Not only in autocratic countries like China and Russia, but also in countries that used to be democratic, we are seeing a steep rise in the support for autocratic leaders, nationalist parties, and the dismantling of institutions that protected human rights and civil liberties.

Solution Articulation: In order to reverse democratic backsliding, we need to strengthen democratic institutions and ensure the people of the world know the benefits of democracy, the harms of authoritarianism, and the need to actively participate in advancing the promises of democracy.

Benefits Articulation: When we support and strengthen democratic values and institutions, we increase stability, security, opportunity, and freedoms for all people.

Call to Action: We must not take democracy for granted. We must stand up to authoritarians by investing in democratic institutions and supporting advocates for democratic values at home and around the world.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
Many nations are experiencing decreased freedoms, increased threats to press freedom, and more attacks on civil society.	
United States	<i>“[There is] a troubling pattern of democratic decline and erosion of the separation of powers, silencing of the free press, persecution of critics, manipulation of elections, jailing of</i>

	<i>opponents. You know what is happening.</i> ¹³⁴ (USAID Administrator Samantha Power, speech at Summit of the Americas Civil Society Forum, June 2022)
United Nations	<i>"Today is the International Day of Democracy. In a message, the Secretary-General notes that across the world, democracy is backsliding, civic space is shrinking, distrust and disinformation are growing, and polarization is undermining democratic institutions."</i> ¹³⁵ (Office of the Spokesperson for the UN Secretary General, Press Briefing, October 2022)
Serbia	<i>"A country in which the president's father, son, brother, or godfather owns the largest state resources and companies cannot be a democratic and civil state, nor is it characterized by the rule of law."</i> ¹³⁶ (Social media post, September 1, 2020)
Authoritarian actors are actively advocating for the decline of democratic values and principles.	
Freedom House	<i>"The leaders of China, Russia and other dictatorships have succeeded in shifting global incentives, jeopardizing the consensus that democracy is the only viable path to prosperity and security, while encouraging more authoritarian approaches to governance."</i> ¹³⁷ (Freedom House report, February 2022)
United States	<i>"Around the world, autocrats have become emboldened, human rights violations have multiplied, and corruption is undermining progress and misinformation is undermining public confidence."</i> ¹³⁸ (Vice President Kamala Harris, remarks at the Summit for Democracy, December 2021)
Data from the Pew Research Center shows that although democracy remains popular, many people consider non-democratic alternatives.	
Pew Research Center	<i>"Seventy-eight percent of respondents globally answered that 'a democratic system where representatives elected by citizens decide what becomes law' is a 'very good' or 'somewhat good' way to govern</i>

¹³⁴ Power, Administrator Samantha Power's Keynote Speech at Summit of the Americas, June 8, 2022

¹³⁵ Dujarric, HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NOON BRIEFING, October 24, 2022.

¹³⁶ Twitter, Zivan Miric. <https://mobile.twitter.com/ZivanMiric/status/13007137798277038131>

¹³⁷ Sarah Repucci and Amy Slipowitz, *Freedom in the World 2022: The Global Expansion of Authoritarian Rule*, Freedom House, 1, February 2022, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2022/global-expansion-authoritarian-rule>.

¹³⁸ Harris. "Remarks by Vice President Harris at the Summit for Democracy." December 9, 2021.

	<p><i>their country.</i>”¹³⁹ (Pew Research Center, 2021)</p> <p><i>“In Indonesia and Nigeria, over half of respondents expressed that ‘military rule’ or ‘autocratic rule’ would be ‘very good’ or ‘somewhat good’ systems to govern their country.”¹⁴⁰ (Pew Research Center, 2021)</i></p>
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Pro-Democratic Narrative #2 (Authoritarianism is harmful):

Authoritarian states are **weaker**, more **unstable**, and less able to deliver **prosperity**, **security**, or **growth** to their **people** than democratic states can.

Values: Prosperity, Stability, Security, Strength, Representation

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Ecuador, El Salvador, Libya, Philippines, Serbia, Uganda, United States.

Context and Impact:

This narrative emphasizes that authoritarian states are less stable and secure than democratic states due to their susceptibility to corruption, violence, and oppression. It articulates the harm caused to people living in authoritarian states, from gross human rights violations, persecution of vulnerable populations, loss of rights and freedoms, to the impacts of corruption and inequitable application of the rule of law. This narrative also emphasizes that authoritarian governments are harmful to the security and stability of the region around them and to broader geo-political and economic stability. This narrative serves as a counternarrative to the pro-authoritarian narrative that authoritarianism is more capable of providing people with security and economic growth than democracy.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was identified primarily through the analysis of political discourse, indices, and literature. Specifically, it was discovered in political discourse by senior U.S. government officials and by proponents of democracy, as well as in reports and statements by leading democracy research organizations.

¹³⁹ Wike and Fetterolf. “Global Public Opinion in an Era of Democratic Anxiety.” Pew Research Center, December 7, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2021/12/07/global-public-opinion-in-an-era-of-democratic-anxiety/>.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem articulation: Authoritarianism is on the rise, which is destabilizing the global community. Authoritarian states are the most susceptible to corruption, violence, economic instability, and oppression. They fail to provide their own people safety, prosperity, and freedom, while being a destabilizing threat to their neighbors and the world.

Solution Articulation: We need to strengthen democratic institutions and ensure the people of the world know the benefits of democracy and the harms of authoritarianism.

Benefits Articulation: When we stand up to authoritarians and strengthen democratic values and institutions, we increase stability, security, opportunity, and freedoms for all people.

Call to Action: We must stand up to authoritarians by investing in democratic institutions and supporting advocates for democratic values at home and around the world.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
Authoritarian states fail to deliver on their promises and cause global disruption and in-country insecurity.	
United States	<i>“Making these kinds of investments helps puncture the myth that authoritarian governments like to tell about themselves: that they are better at delivering for people’s basic needs. Autocrats offer people a false choice: you can either have basic civil and political rights, or you can have a higher standard of living. But for all the promises autocrats have made about improving people’s welfare, their track record, that tells a different story.”¹⁴¹ (Secretary of State Antony Blinken, remarks at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito, October 2021)</i>
	<i>“Vladimir Putin’s brutal war on Ukraine has shown us exactly where despotic power leads. It also reminds us just how insecure dictators who don’t deliver often are. So threatened was Putin by the [Ukrainian] people’s embrace of democracy, by their rejection of corrupt oligarchs, by their desire for deeper integration with their peaceful, European neighbors, that the Russian leader rained down steel and death on its</i>

¹⁴¹ Antony Blinken, *Making Democracy Deliver for the Americas: Universidad San Francisco de Quito*, [Speech text], U.S. Department of State, October 20, 2021
<https://www.state.gov/making-democracy-deliver-for-the-americas/>.

	<i>neighbor—on a people he claims are his own.</i> ¹⁴² (USAID Administrator Samantha Power, remarks at the National Press Club, June 2022)
Philippines	<i>“Many have been tortured, disappeared, killed during martial law; our national debt grew and until now we are paying for it; poverty was massive. Democratic institutions were destroyed. Corruption and abuse of power became second nature to those who are in government.”</i> (Leni Robredo, public statement, September 21, 2020)
Ecuador	<i>“Wake up, Ecuador! The correísmo turned us into a narco-state, and our international image is disastrous. Robberies, murders, and human rights violations are the result of the ties between drug trafficking and the #Correa regime and its gang. Thank you, Mrs. Prosecutor @DianaSalazarM2, we support and applaud your courage. Your work must continue; it is necessary to clean everything and start afresh. With hard work and determination, we will move forward.”</i> (Cléver Jiménez, politician; former Member of the National Assembly in Dec. 2023)
United Nations	<i>“[The] Russian invasion in Ukraine ... threatens to tip tens of millions of people over the edge into food insecurity, followed by malnutrition, mass hunger and famine, in a crisis that could last for years.”</i> ¹⁴³ (UN Secretary-General António Guterres, May 2022)
Authoritarian regimes are weakened by corruption, kleptocracy, and state capture.	
United States	<i>“Countries with ineffective government institutions, rampant corruption, and weak rule of law have a 30% to 45% higher risk of civil war and a higher risk of extreme criminal violence than other developing countries.”</i> ¹⁴⁴ (USAID, website, statement of purpose, October 2021)

¹⁴² Samantha Power. “Administrator Samantha Power Remarks at the National Press Club: ‘A Global Revolution of Dignity’.” [Speech text and video], USAID, June 7, 2022. https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/speeches/jun-7-2022-administrator-power-remarks-global-revolution-dignity?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

¹⁴³ António Guterres. “Secretary-General’s remarks to the Global Food Security Call to Action Ministerial.” United Nations, May 18, 2022, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2022-05-18/secretary-generals-remarks-the-global-food-security-call-action-ministerial%C2%A0>.

¹⁴⁴ USAID: Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance. “What we do.” October 4, 2021, <https://www.usaid.gov/democracy>.

	<i>“Corruption corrodes public trust; hobbles effective governance; distorts markets and equitable access to services; undercuts development efforts; contributes to national fragility, extremism and migration; and provides authoritarian leaders a means to undermine democracies worldwide.”¹⁴⁵ (White House, memorandum, June 2021)</i>
Uganda	<i>“I am not satisfied with the way democracy works in Uganda because freedoms have been stepped upon by the security forces; leaders are not accountable to the citizens they serve.”</i> (Key informant interview, journalist, April 2023)

Pro-Democratic Narrative #3 (Democracy delivers):

Democracy delivers **economic growth** and **stability, strength, and security**, and the means for a **prosperous and healthy society**.

Values: Prosperity, Stability, Strength, Security

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Kenya and Libya.

Context and Impact:

This narrative frames the benefits of democracy and democratic institutions, arguing that democratic states are more stable, secure, and prosperous than autocratic ones. In contrast to the unstable, corrupt, and violent autocratic states presented in the above narrative, democratic governments are more likely to be healthy and effective. It is important to note that this narrative establishes democracy as being transactional. By setting an expectation that democracy should be delivering benefits, the narrative may lead people to question if democracy is truly delivering for them. This can obfuscate or diminish the role and responsibility people and communities must play to build up successful democracies. When people feel that democracy is not delivering or meeting their expectations, it creates an easy target for authoritarians to attack democracy, and erode public support for democracy.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

¹⁴⁵ “Memorandum on Establishing the Fight Against Corruption as a Core United States National Security Interest.” *The White House*, June 3, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/03/memorandum-on-establishing-the-fight-against-corruption-as-a-core-united-states-national-security-interest/>.

This narrative was identified through political discourse analysis in country case studies, around the 2021 Summit for Democracy, public statements by U.S. government officials, and various reports by V-Dem.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Autocratic regimes cannot compete with the power of democracy to ensure stability, safety, and opportunity.

Solution Articulation: Democracy is the best governance structure to deliver the economic stability, security, and fair systems that make societies strong and healthy.

Benefits Articulation: Democracies benefit everyone—providing opportunity, economic growth and stability both for societies and for people and families.

Call to Action: Stand up for and actively participate in democracy. Support leaders who strengthen democratic values.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
United States	<i>"In this new era, I believe that democracy is our world's best hope not because it is perfect but because of its principles, because it delivers for the people. Democracy protects human rights and promotes human dignity. It is a means to create peace and prosperity. It is a means to solve our greatest challenges, from COVID-19 to the climate crisis."</i> ¹⁴⁶ (Vice President Kamala Harris, remarks at the Summit for Democracy, December 2021)
	<i>"Democracy is the "best way to unleash human potential and defend human dignity and solve big problems."</i> ¹⁴⁷ (President Joseph Biden, summary of proceedings from the Summit for Democracy, December 2021)
	<i>"History shows that strong democracies tend to be more stable and less prone to conflict—and that poor governance, exclusion, and corruption inherent in weak democracies [make] them more vulnerable to extremist movements as well as to foreign</i>

¹⁴⁶ Harris, December 2021.

¹⁴⁷ "Summit for Democracy Summary of Proceedings," *The White House*, December 23, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/23/summit-for-democracy-summary-of-proceedings/>.

	<i>interference.</i> ¹⁴⁸ (Secretary of State Antony Blinken, speech on Sub-Saharan Africa Strategy, August 2022)
V-Dem	<p><i>“Economic growth is higher in democracies than autocracies.”</i></p> <p><i>“Democracy leads to more education—increases secondary education enrollment by almost 70%.”</i></p> <p><i>“Democracies produce more ambitious climate policies.”</i>¹⁴⁹ (V-Dem, Case for Democracy Report, January 2022)</p>
Kenya	<i>“I have reason to believe a democratic system works for Kenya, because it is empowering the voiceless in society, opens up the governance space to many, and gradually institutionalized leadership.”</i> (KII, CSO 3, January 2023)
Libya	<i>“The electoral laws are a solid foundation that can be relied upon to accomplish the electoral process, and to form a unified government whose task is to fulfill the Libyan people's desire for fair elections, allowing them to choose their leaders freely.”</i> (Aguila Saleh, in a statement released on December 1, 2023, published in Alwasat)

Pro-Democratic Narrative #4 (Democracy promotes equity and fairness):

Democracy promotes **equity** and **fair treatment**. Democratic systems are more **inclusive** and provide greater **security** and **benefits** for the most vulnerable populations.

Values: **Fairness**, **Justice**, **Representation**, **Security**, **Prosperity**

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: El Salvador, Kyrgyz Republic, Nigeria.

Context and Impact:

¹⁴⁸ Antony Blinken, *Vital Partners, Shared Priorities: The Biden Administration's Sub-Saharan Africa Strategy*, [Speech text], U.S. Department of State, August 8, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/vital-partners-shared-priorities-the-biden-administrations-sub-saharan-africa-strategy/>.

¹⁴⁹ “Case for Democracy.” V-Dem, January 2022. https://www.v-dem.net/documents/20/vdem_casefordemocracy_report.pdf.

This narrative emphasizes that democratic institutions are inherently fair and equitable, and built on the values of opportunity and protection for all. It emphasizes equity and recognizes the need to support and protect the most vulnerable. It triggers fairness as a key value. This narrative is unique in that it is not appropriated often in pro-authoritarian narratives, which generally do not trigger the fairness value. Democracy proponents can find opportunity in this narrative, due to liberal democracy's authentic claim to be committed to advancing equity, fairness, and protections of universal human rights. However, there are also challenges implicit in this narrative, due to stakeholder segments with bias toward vulnerable populations, the effectiveness of pro-authoritarians using "otherizing" narratives, and their redefining of human rights as the protection of criminals.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was identified in political discourse and in the literature review. Expressly, this narrative was found in the discourse of key U.S. political figures and in V-Dem reports, in addition to the country case studies.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: In nearly every community, there are inequities that impact people's lives and livelihoods. In autocratic and nationalist regimes, the most vulnerable people are often targeted, discriminated against, and blamed, to stoke fear and bolster unchecked power.

Solution Articulation: Democracy seeks to be fair and equitable, and is built on the values of opportunity and protection for all. Democracy ensures that people from all segments of society have a voice in the decision-making processes of the government.

Benefits Articulation: Democratic societies provide greater safety, economic opportunities, and freedoms to all people, including the least powerful.

Call to Action: Stand up for fair and inclusive leaders and for inclusive systems that protect and create opportunity for everyone in our communities.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
United States	<i>"It is the American creed, the idea that America guarantees that everyone be treated with dignity, it gives hate no safe harbor, it installs in everyone the belief that no matter where you start in life there is nothing you can't achieve."</i> ¹⁵⁰ (President Joseph

¹⁵⁰ Joseph Biden, *Remarks by President Biden on the Continued Battle for the Soul of the Nation*, [Speech text], The White House, September 1, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/09/01/remarks-by-president-bidenon-the-continued-battle-for-the-soul-of-the-nation/>.

	Biden, remarks on the Continued Battle for the Soul of the Nation, September 2022)
V-Dem	<i>"Gender equality is both a dividend of and fundamental aspect of democracy. Democracy leads to higher levels of female political participation and representation. Democracy also produces substantial improvements in women's civil liberties. Civil liberties, in turn, provide the opportunity for women's movements to effectively promote gender equality."</i> ¹⁵¹ (V-Dem, report, March 2022)
Kyrgyz Republic	<i>"Almost everything that is done in the country today to combat gender-based violence, protect the rights of girls, women, people with disabilities, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups, happens with the active participation of NGOs. It is these NGOs that provide government bodies with objective, reliable information about the problems faced by these citizens and offer recommendations on how to improve their situation."</i> (Kaktus Media Online News, October 17, 2023)
Perú	<i>"Democratic politics with strong and independent institutions, competent and accountable political representatives, can ensure fair and equal treatment and that the resources of the nation benefit the people and not just an elite few."</i> (non-dominant and non-salient counternarrative identified during in country research)

Pro-Democratic Narrative #5 (Democracy is a work in progress):

Democracy is a **work in progress**, and an ongoing **struggle** toward building a better society. Democracies are not perfect and can be **messy**, but democratic systems are the most **prosperous**, **stable**, and best way to ensure **freedom** and opportunity for all citizens.

Values: **Prosperity**, **Stability**, **Strength**, **Freedom**, **Order**

Country case studies where this narrative also appears: Libya, Nigeria, Philippines.

Context and Impact:

¹⁵¹ "Democracy Report 2022: Autocratization Changing Nature?" V-Dem Institute and University of Gothenburg, 39, March 2022, https://v-dem.net/media/publications/dr_2022.pdf.

This narrative emphasizes that democracy is not perfect, but it is the best system for people, stability, and fairness. Democracy is also a work in progress and a long-term effort—with challenges, moments in which its stated ideals are not yet reality, and areas where some democratic values are not yet applied. That being said, democracy should never be counted out, because it is resilient due to its ability to grow, adapt, and change. This narrative can be seen as a deficit frame, and is used to bolster a key pro-authoritarian narrative that democracy is messy. It is worth considering whether this is an effective counternarrative to attacks on democracy that claim it is not living up to its promises. This same framing has also been used as justification for authoritarian rule in countries like Turkey.

Rationale for Identification as a Dominant And Salient Narrative:

This narrative was identified through the political discourse analysis in country case studies, literature review, and surrounding the 2021 Summit for Democracy. Speeches by key figures and reports by Freedom House were also examined in identifying this narrative.

Sample Supporting Message Framework:

Problem Articulation: Authoritarian leaders say that democracy takes too long to get things done or invites in too many voices. They point to places where democracies are not perfect and have inequities and injustices. They are working hard to discredit democracy to justify their unfair and autocratic actions.

Solution Articulation: Democracy takes time because it is fair and is a work in progress. It requires the engagement and action of all people, and is the one system that creates opportunities to constantly improve and to increase access to freedom, justice, and opportunity.

Benefits Articulation: Democracies are more stable, prosperous and free. The opportunity to join in the work of increasing shared opportunity and benefits is what makes democracies strong and offers hope for the future.

Call to Action: Do not be distracted by the attempts of authoritarian leaders to undermine democracy. Recognize that we have improvements to make and have the ability to make them. Together, we can create more just and prosperous communities and a safer world.

EXEMPLAR STORIES AND QUOTES	
United States	<i>“At its best, democracy protects human rights, promotes human dignity, and upholds the rule of law. It is a means to establish peace and shared prosperity. It should ensure every citizen, regardless of gender, has an equal voice, and free and fair elections that will respect the will of the people. At the same time, democracy requires constant vigilance, constant improvement. It</i>

	<i>is a work in progress.</i> ¹⁵² (Vice President Kamala Harris, speech to the UN, March 2021)
Freedom House	<i>"No democracy in the real world is perfect, and those demanding democracy in places like Cuba and Hong Kong are not demanding perfection. What they desire are the freedoms and the institutions that will allow them to create a better life and a more just society over time."</i> ¹⁵³ (Freedom House report, February 2022)
The Catholic Church	<i>"Democracy requires participation and involvement on the part of all; consequently, it demands hard work and patience. It is complex, whereas authoritarianism is peremptory and populism's easy answers appear attractive."</i> ¹⁵⁴ (Pope Francis, address, December 2021)
Nigeria	<i>"Nigerian democracy has come a long way. For a country that was trapped in political instability, fought a civil war and went through coups and counter-coups and now could sustain some modicum of democracy for two decades is, for sure, laudable."</i> ¹⁵⁵ (Guardian Nigeria Editorial Board, 2019)
Libya	<i>"Perhaps we have not achieved the great accomplishments that Libyans aspire to, but we have started to address their problems, whether in sanitation or in building destroyed roads. In contrast, previous governments with the same budgets did not address a single sanitation station or build a single road."</i> ¹⁵⁶ (Interview with Al-Dbeibah, on the Atheer Platform, January 25, 2024)

¹⁵² Kamala Harris, *Remarks by Vice President Kamala Harris to the 65th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women*, [Speech Text], United States Mission to the UN, March 16, 2021. <https://usun.usmission.gov/remarks-by-vice-president-kamala-harris-to-the-65th-session-of-the-un-commission-on-the-status-of-women/>

¹⁵³ Repucci and Slipowitz, February 2022.

¹⁵⁴ Jorge Bergoglio. "MEETING WITH AUTHORITIES, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS." *Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana*, December 4, 2021, <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2021/december/documents/20211204-grecia-autorita.html>.

¹⁵⁵ Editorial Board. "Nigeria's 20 years of democracy." *The Guardian Nigeria*, June 18, 2019, <https://guardian.ng/opinion/nigerias-20-years-of-democracy/>.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Al-Dbeibah, on the Atheer Platform, YouTube, January 25, 2024. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBHARISK8zY>

GLOBAL TESTING FINDINGS

El Salvador Testing Findings

Four narrative concepts were tested reflecting the themes below. Paragraphs briefly articulating these themes were developed based upon framing and message learnings from the formative research and to intentionally trigger the recommended values. They were tested using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (as described in the narrative methodology section above). The narratives were developed and tested in Spanish first and then transcreated into English. The testing assessed agreement, relevance, and likelihood to share.

- CONCEPT A: Freedom to build the country we deserve
 - CONCEPT B: When there is no democracy, you can feel it
 - CONCEPT C: El Salvador belongs to all of us, and needs all of us
 - CONCEPT D: The Salvadoran Family.
1. All four narratives tested strongly on agreement, relevance and the likelihood to share. However, Narrative A scored highest in all three categories.
 2. The narratives were effective in improving attitudes toward democracy and governance.
 3. The majority of respondents expressed strong or moderate support for Bukele's leadership, policies (state of exception) and reelection. Most of these respondents also expressed their preference for a democratic system that respects the separation of powers and the rule of law.
 4. Salvadorans are not very politically active; most of them consider voting as their most likely future action. Two out of 10 consider seeking opportunities to learn more as their most likely action.
 5. Even if security is the main concern for Salvadorans, there are national issues (health, education, infrastructure, etc.) that are priorities for Salvadorans.
 6. All message components tested strongly. Messaging on transparency and democracy was the strongest among all respondents, followed by the messages on freedom and responsibility, and leaders should do more to promote democracy and protect freedom.
 7. Respondents identified political leaders, public intellectuals, and experts as the most trustworthy when discussing political or social issues, with parents and religious leaders just behind; 22.8% of respondents expressed that they trusted no one.
 8. Social media was identified by the vast majority of respondents as the preferred communication channel, followed by TV.

Narrative Recommendation Rationale

- The Freedom Narrative (Narrative A) stood out as the narrative with the greatest level of agreement (75%), relevance (54%), and the likelihood to be shared (41%) among full survey respondents, and more generally among priority stakeholder groups and audience segments.
- Key stakeholders liked that the narrative mentioned other important national issues for Salvadorans (health, education, and justice) beyond security.

- Key stakeholders also liked that it laid out the importance of freedom and the false dichotomy with security.

Narrative Recommendation: Narrative A (Developed in Spanish and transcreated into English)

Spanish: Libertad para construir el país que merecemos

Los salvadoreños necesitamos y merecemos ser libres. La libertad y la seguridad son igualmente importantes, van de la mano. La libertad es más que poder caminar sin miedo, es cuando la salud, la educación y la justicia no son una ilusión, sino una posibilidad. Ser realmente libres es poder tomar decisiones informadas sobre aquello que es mejor para nuestras familias y comunidades. Es poder pensar y expresar posturas diferentes sin miedo a ser etiquetados como alguien que no quiere lo mejor para El Salvador. Para lograr la libertad, la democracia y el país que merecemos, es crucial expresar nuestras opiniones y escuchar las opiniones de los demás, porque nada cambia si permanecemos en silencio.

English: Freedom to build the country we deserve

Salvadorans need and deserve to be free. Freedom and security are equally important, they go hand in hand. Freedom is more than being able to walk without fear, it is when healthcare, education, and justice are not an illusion, but a possibility. Being truly free is being able to make informed decisions about what is best for our families and communities. It is being able to think and express different views without fear of being labeled as someone who does not want the best for El Salvador. To achieve the freedom, the democracy, and the country we deserve, it is crucial that we voice our opinions and listen to the opinions of others, because nothing changes if we remain silent.

Indonesia Testing Findings

Four narrative concepts were tested reflecting the themes below. Paragraphs briefly articulating these themes were developed and tested using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The narratives were developed in Bahasa Indonesia first and then transcreated into English. The testing assessed agreement, relevance, and likelihood to share.

CONCEPT A: We all deserve to be free

CONCEPT B: Strong and true democracy

CONCEPT C: Rights and responsibilities

CONCEPT D: We/re all in this together (solidarity)

1. There is strong support for democracy in Indonesia: a high percentage (≈75%) of respondents preferred democracy to authoritarianism.
2. All narratives overall tested strongly across agreement, relevance, convincingness, and likelihood to share.
3. The We're All In This Together (Solidarity) Narrative (Narrative D) tested the strongest and has broad resonance across the population, including democratic supporters and even those with authoritarian preferences—it is the recommended narrative.

4. Exposure to the narratives and messaging resulted in more support for democracy and decreasing support for authoritarianism.
5. Exposure to the narratives and messaging was effective in motivating respondents in their willingness to take political and social action.
6. Messaging on freedom and responsibility tested strongly including: “Freedoms are both our right and our responsibility.”
7. In general, local government is more supported than the central government; although, only roughly half of respondents indicated some level of support for each.
8. Almost half of the respondents (48%) oppose a third term for President Jokowi.
9. Respondents identified public intellectuals as the most trustworthy when discussing political or social issues, with teachers and political leaders generally scoring high as well.
10. Social media was identified as the most preferred communication channel by far; TV and internet search engines were also regarded as important.
11. Testing validated our seven proposed priority stakeholder groups and demonstrated efficacy with broader population segments.

Narrative Recommendation Rationale:

- The We’re All in This Together (Solidarity) Narrative (Narrative D) stood out as the narrative with the greatest levels of agreement (88%), relevance (63%), convincingness (74%), and likelihood to share (79%) among full survey respondents, and more generally among priority stakeholder groups, audience segments, and target cities/regions.
- It received the highest percentages of response intensity (“very” or “strongly”), an important indicator of willingness to take action and/or deep-seated beliefs.
- It had broad resonance across the population—few significant demographic distinctions emerged, which suggests receptivity across gender, ages, etc.
- Even those with authoritarian preferences responded that the narrative is generally agreeable, relevant, convincing, and they are likely to share, suggesting a lower likelihood of backlash.
- The narrative’s values of solidarity, unity, responsibility, patriotism, and diversity resonate strongly with respondents.

Narrative Recommendation: Narrative A (Developed in Bahasa Indonesia and transcreated into English)

Bahasa Indonesia: Kebebasan itu penting / Kita semua berhak untuk bebas.

Rakyat Indonesia berhak mendapatkan kebebasan yang diberikan oleh demokrasi yang kuat. Dalam tradisi kita, sebagaimana disebutkan dalam Pancasila, sudah menjamin hak kita atas kebebasan. Di negara kita yang besar ini, kita semua berhak atas kebebasan untuk hidup aman, kebebasan untuk sejahtera, untuk diperlakukan dengan adil, dan kebebasan untuk mengekspresikan diri—termasuk mengkritik pemerintah—tanpa rasa takut. Hanya dengan melaksanakan kemerdekaan itu, persatuan Indonesia yang sejati dapat tercapai.

English: We All Deserve To Be Free

Indonesians deserve the freedoms provided by a strong democracy. Our tradition, as catalyzed in Pancasila, stipulates that public matters should be decided based on deliberation. It implies the right of each citizen to speak and to be heard. In our great country, we all deserve the freedom to live safely, the freedom to become prosperous, to be treated fairly, and the freedom to express ourselves—including criticizing the government—without fear. Only by defending and exercising this freedom, can Indonesian unity truly be accomplished.

Serbia Testing Findings

Four narrative concepts were tested reflecting the themes below. Paragraphs briefly articulating these themes were developed and tested using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The narratives were developed in Serbian first and then transcreated into English. The testing assessed agreement, relevance, and likelihood to share.

CONCEPT A: We all deserve to be free.

CONCEPT B: Strong and true democracy.

CONCEPT C: Rights and responsibilities.

CONCEPT D: We're all in this together.

1. All four narratives tested well, as reflected in high levels of agreement, relevance, and willingness to share.
 - a. Recommended Narrative: Narrative D (We're all in this together) stood out with the highest levels of agreement, relevance, and willingness to share across all audience segments. Even autocratic-leaning respondents showed high agreement with it.
2. Freedom (as both "our right and responsibility" and something Serbs deserve along with security) features prominently in the two strongest-performing message components.
 - a. These messages tested especially well with younger and middle-aged, higher educated and higher income Serbs from urban areas, Vojvodina, and Southeast Serbia.
3. Exposure to the tested narratives and messaging increased support for democratic governance and intention to take civil action in the future.
4. Seventy-nine percent of respondents self-identified as preferring democracy. (Note: this is a higher percentage than the 43% pro-democratic identified in a battery of psychographic questions.)
 - a. The majority of survey respondents do not agree with current leadership of Serbia.
5. Testing validated our proposed stakeholder segmentation and demonstrated efficacy with broader population segments, including respondents up to age 65 and those who lean authoritarian.
6. Respondents identified spouses and partners as the most trustworthy when discussing political or social issues, with public intellectuals and experts scoring next highest, along with other family members. Political and religious leaders scored significantly lower.

7. TV and social media (Facebook among older respondents; Instagram among 18–24 year olds) were identified as the communication channels where people expected to see pro-democracy messaging.

Narrative Recommendation Rationale:

- Highest levels of agreement (83%), relevance (75.8%), and willingness to share (54%) across all audience segments.
 - Even autocratic-leaning stakeholder segments showed high agreement.
 - Over half of respondents who lean authoritarian or are passive democratic-leaning agree with this narrative, with roughly one-third of those who lean authoritarian indicating a willingness to share it.
- Least amount of potential blowback and highest potential to motivate a shift toward preference for democracy.

Narrative Recommendation: Narrative D (Developed in Serbian and transcreated into English)

Serbian: Brinuci o drugima brinemo o sebi

U našoj tradiciji, porodica je svetinja—zato što imamo obavezu da brinemo jedni o drugima. I u tradiciji demokratije, briga o drugima je svetinja. Glavni zadatak onih koji nas vode je da brinu o pravima svih nas. Moramo da čuvamo prava drugih—da bi i oni čuvali naša prava: da budemo ne samo bezbedni, već i da slobodno živimo, mislimo i govorimo i svi učestvujemo u dobrobiti zemlje. Kada svako od nas bude brinuo o Srbiji kao što brine o svojoj porodici, nećemo morati da brinemo o budućnosti demokratije u našoj zemlji.

English: Caring about others is caring about us

In our tradition, family is sacred—because we have a duty to care for each other. In the tradition of democracy, caring for others is sacred as well. The main task of those who lead us is to care for the rights of every one of us. We have to protect the rights of others—so that they would protect our rights: to be not only safe, but also to live, think and talk freely and that we all participate in the well-being of the country. When each one of us cares for Serbia like we care for our own families, we will not have to worry about the future of democracy in our country.

U.S. TESTING FINDINGS

Findings from testing of new narratives and messaging to promote democracy in the United States

Drawing on the findings from the U.S. narrative scan, MG developed three narrative concepts and several components of messaging for testing. The testing process was conducted in two phases, both before (October 2024) and after (January 2025) the 2024 presidential election. Three narratives were tested: one (shown above) framed democracy through the lens of the freedom value and how it matters to each of us; a second expressed the sentiment that freedom and democracy are worth fighting for; and a third defined democracy in terms of action rather than identity or philosophy.

<p>FREEDOM MATTERS</p> <p>In America, freedoms matter. The freedom to speak our minds while protecting that same freedom for others. The freedom to make our own decisions for ourselves and our families. To expect fair treatment from our justice system no matter who we are and open government that is accountable to the people. And the freedom to vote in fair and honest elections that are essential to a functioning democracy in keeping us safe and protecting our freedoms. Our country has never fully lived up to these freedoms. But, a strong democracy isn't afraid to admit that and do the hard work of being better tomorrow than it is today.</p>
<p>FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY ARE WORTH FIGHTING FOR</p> <p>Protecting our freedoms has always been up to us. All of us. Speaking our minds while respecting the views of others, demanding fair treatment under the law for everyone and a government that is open and accountable to the people. And casting our votes in free and fair elections that are essential not just to the survival of our democracy, but to keeping us safe and protecting our freedoms. Fighting for our freedoms doesn't have to mean fighting each other, but fighting together to make our democracy stronger, more fair, and more prosperous for all our families and communities.</p>
<p>DEMOCRACY IS WHAT WE DO. FREEDOM IS WHY.</p> <p>In America, democracy is not just an idea. It's what we do. When we are free to speak our minds and stand up for the right of others to do the same. When we demand open and honest government, and a justice system that treats everyone fairly no matter who they are. When we protect the right of every American to decide what's best for themselves and their families. And when we cast our votes in free and fair elections. When we do all of this, we make our democracy stronger and better able to advance freedom, safety, opportunity, and justice for all.</p>

Finding: The Freedom Matters narrative frame tested strongest in increasing support for and belief in the possibility of liberal democracy, and connecting people to it.

NARRATIVE FRAME: FREEDOM MATTERS

In America, our freedoms matter. This country was built on the right to have our voices heard, to make our own decisions, to be treated fairly by the justice system, and to vote in free and fair elections. These freedoms are at the heart of democracy and our security. But they require checks and balances on power and government that is open, honest, and responsive to the people. Our country hasn't fully lived up to these freedoms. But a strong democracy isn't afraid to admit that and do the hard work of being better tomorrow than it is today.

1. The Freedom Matters narrative tested strongest (for relevance, increased understanding, and motivation to support) across both rounds of focus groups. The Freedom Matters narrative was effective at increasing support for and belief in the possibility of improving liberal democracy and connecting people to the idea of it.
2. The Freedom Matters narrative met the “bridging benchmark” through the Pluralytics platform, indicating that it was likely to resonate with a bipartisan audience.
3. The second narrative (Freedom and democracy are worth fighting for) was rejected in the first round of testing (October 2024) because it served to remind people of the polarization and specter of political violence that people identify as a threat to our democracy.
4. In the first round of testing (October 2024), the third narrative (Democracy is what we do. Freedom is why) tested well as an aspirational narrative that might be relevant in the future, but was not seen as reflective of the current reality. In the second round of testing (January 2025), however, moderate Republicans gravitated toward this narrative, likely reflecting the higher degree of satisfaction they felt about U.S. democracy based on the outcome of the November 2024 elections. Moderate Democrats and independents, however, did not share this sentiment, and moderate Republicans' reactions to Freedom Matters remained positive and sparked engagement.
5. Some elements of the other two narrative frames tested well individually (e.g., “Protecting our freedoms has always been up to us” from the Freedom and Democracy Are Worth Fighting For narrative frame and “We put democracy in action not just by voting” from the Democracy Is What We Do narrative frame. This content was subsequently incorporated into the final message framework.
6. The following reflect themes heard across the two rounds of focus groups about the Freedom Matters narrative frame:
 - a. “Freedom DOES matter. We are better than most countries out there, but I agree that we haven't fully lived up to these freedoms.” —Jennifer, female, age 55, moderate Republican
 - b. “I like the accountability implied in this paragraph. It needs to be said and it's a step in the right direction.” —Denzel, male, age 31, independent
 - c. “To me, this reads as aspirational. It SHOULD be true but it's not true right now.” —Shaili, age 29, moderate Democrat

FINDING: Lack of social cohesion and respect are seen as major obstacles to democracy in the U.S.

NATURE OF THE CHALLENGE:

These days, it can feel like Americans can't find common ground on anything. Healthy debate and working toward compromise are a good thing in a strong democracy. But, there are some who are working every day to weaken American democracy and further divide us to serve their own interests. Defending freedom and fairness—and finding solutions to the challenges we face—doesn't have to mean fighting each other. Instead, we need to find a way to work together.

1. Across the focus groups and interviews conducted by MG, a consistent theme was the lack of social cohesion and respect for one another, a desire to change that, and a belief that democracy shouldn't be as polarizing as it has become. The following reflect consistent themes we heard across the focus groups:
 - a. "If you're able to base conversation off commonalities, you can build from there. But we're so divided we can't figure out where those commonalities lie."
—Gibran, age 42, male, moderate liberal
 - b. "Trust should resonate with everyone. In order to make this right we need to trust each other. It boils down to trusting each other." —Kevin, age 44, male, independent
 - c. "Of course, we won't all agree because we have different ideas about policy. What matters is coming together to do what is best for the country. Lately we are too divided and can't seem to get along. People in Congress shout and almost brawl. It shouldn't be that way." —Jessica, age 40, female, moderate conservative
2. The reference to "defending freedom and fairness" resonated across groups, while "fighting for our democracy" was seen as reinforcing the aggressive nature of political and civic discourse.
3. Discussion in the focus groups illustrated the widespread recognition that the deep division in the United States is not a naturally occurring phenomenon, but is being intentionally orchestrated by forces inside and outside the United States to serve their own interests.

FINDING: Reminding people that protecting freedom is a shared responsibility is key to the solution to the challenges our democracy faces.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE SOLUTION:

Protecting our freedoms has always been up to all of us, not just our elected representatives. But democracy is about more than voting. It's about securing freedom and fairness for all Americans, ensuring all voices are heard, and demanding a government that is honest, open, and responsive to the people. Fearless and free people working together can find solutions that make our lives better and our democracy stronger.

1. The solution identified in the message framework (as shown above) was seen as positive and aspirational.
2. Including a specific reference to democracy involving more than voting was also seen as an important reminder to people who otherwise struggle to identify ways in which democracy is put into action.
3. Feedback from focus groups to the solution statement included the following:
 - a. “This statement reminds me of what happens when people remember that there's strength in numbers.” —Allison, age 30, female, moderate Republican
 - b. “If this happened it would be a big thing. I think it has happened in moments in history. In WWII people came together, and after 9/11 too.” —Elliot, age 35, male, independent
 - c. “I think there are a lot of screwed up things in this country, but at its core I think we have an opportunity to do something about that, do something about some of the problems. Democracy allows us to fix some of the things we want to fix. Makes me optimistic because it's what I want.” —Alan, age 27, male, moderate Democrat

FINDING: A strong democracy is seen as better able to advance freedom, safety, opportunity, and justice.

BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH DEMOCRACY:

A democracy where freedoms are protected, fairness is something everyone can expect, and government is open and accountable to the people is better able to advance freedom, safety, opportunity, and justice for every one of us and our families.

1. Focus group participants across the board endorsed the benefit statement, believing that a democracy is better able to deliver when it functions well, although they don't necessarily believe that democracy in the United States is effectively doing so.
2. “Trust in the justice system” resonated with all three segments, while some benefits of living in a democracy worked better with specific audience segments, as shown below:

LIBERALS	INDEPENDENTS	CONSERVATIVES
A justice system everyone can trust.		
Access to the health care, education, housing, and opportunities every person and every family needs and deserves.		
The opportunity to earn a living or start a small business to provide for your family.	Living in communities safe from violence.	Increasing trust in each other and in our government.

3. The following comments reflect themes we heard across the focus groups:

- a. “This reads like a goal statement to me. If America were a well-oiled machine this would be what it would look like.” —Arik, male, age 39, moderate Democrat
- b. “I’m going to be Pollyanna here. I would LOVE to live in a country where there’s a ‘justice system everyone can trust’ and ‘earning a living to provide for your family.’ These feel like things we can actually work on.” —Jacqueline, female, age 46, independent
- c. “I like what this says. When we work together, we can do a lot and it makes a difference.” —Kierra S., female, age 29, moderate Republican

FINDING: Conveying a sense of optimism that together we can improve our democracy is key to inspiring action.

CALL TO ACTION:

None of this will happen on its own. It will take all of us working together to protect our freedoms and improve our democracy so it works better for everyone. It won’t be easy. But we’ve done hard things before and we can do them again.

1. The call to action was seen by focus groups as being “important” and “unifying” and most participants appreciated the acknowledgement of the challenge and the aspirational framing about the possibility of positive change. Some participants expressed concern about how feasible this would be.
2. Importantly, the call to action inspires questions and conversations about specific actions that people can take in response. Among the actions identified by the focus groups were educating oneself about our democracy, staying informed about current events, taking part in protests, and writing to an elected representative.
3. Feedback from focus groups to the call to action included the following:
 - a. “Inspiring but it leaves me hanging. You have my attention ... what do I have to do?” —Jacqueline, age 46, female, independent
 - b. “I agree with it overall. I feel empowered to do something about the things I complain about.” —Alan, age 27, male, liberal
 - c. “I like the part about working together.” —Jonathan, age 39, male, conservative

FINDING: Other messaging elements tested strongly across all audience segments.

1. Across the content tested, some ideas resonated with all focus groups and were identified as key components of messaging to promote democracy in the U.S., as shown in the table below.

Tested Message Content	Rationale for Why it Works
We put democracy in action not just by voting , but by standing up for the freedom of every American .	Defines democracy as more than elections. Clearly addresses the mindset that democracy is only about elections and voting.

<p>Our country hasn't fully lived up to these freedoms. But a strong democracy isn't afraid to admit that and do the hard work of being better tomorrow than it is today.</p>	<p>Acknowledges the disconnect people perceive between the ideal and reality of democracy, thereby minimizing rejection of the messaging for being too naive. Moves quickly to an asset frame, communicates the Fearlessness value associated with democracy, and expresses optimism for the future of democracy.</p>
<p>Open and honest government.</p>	<p>Articulates the Honesty value and reflects transparency that is central to a functioning liberal democracy.</p>
<p>Ensuring a justice system everyone can trust.</p>	<p>Across the political spectrum, this is perceived to be a key benefit of a democracy.</p>
<p>Protecting our freedoms has always been up to us; not just our elected representatives, but all of us.</p>	<p>Minimizes the default to assuming that responsibility to protect and strengthen our democracy rests only with elected representatives.</p>
<p>Fighting for our freedoms doesn't have to mean fighting each other.</p>	<p>Confronts the major challenge identified in the focus groups (extreme polarization and disrespect) that people perceive to be a barrier to a functioning democracy.</p>
<p>It will take all of us working together to expand and protect our freedoms and improve our democracy so it works better for everyone.</p>	<p>Delivers a clear and compelling case for shared responsibility in addressing the challenges we face so our democracy can be stronger.</p>
<p>It won't be easy. But we've done hard things before and we can do them again.</p>	<p>Reminds people that the people of the United States have found common ground on important issues before and can do it again. Reflects the hope and optimism people need and want to feel.</p>

EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDELINES FOR MORE EFFECTIVE MESSAGING

The research and testing phases of this work identified five key guidelines for narrative and messaging. Following these guidelines when creating talking points, speeches, and presentations; preparing for interviews, posting on social media, and developing pro-democracy communications generally, will help create more effective messaging that is:

VALUES-BASED

Center or highlight core values in all communications.

People make decisions about what to believe and what (if anything) to do based on the extent to which they connect what they're hearing (including facts and data) with their deeply held values and perceptions about how the world works. So, it's important that communication be designed to evoke core values that are widely held and authentic in terms of their connection to priority values for governance (e.g., security and prosperity), the idea and practice of democracy (e.g., freedom and fairness), and those that are important in people's personal lives (e.g., family).

TIPS: Recommended pro-democracy core values to evoke are: Freedom; Fairness; Security; Honesty; Representation; Prosperity; Strength; Responsibility; Family; and Tradition.

ASSET-FRAMED

Focus on opportunity and benefits (assets) instead of challenges and shortfalls (deficits).

Deficit framing for broad audiences can reinforce pro-authoritarian narratives about democracy not meeting people's needs and can be demoralizing. At the same time, acknowledging the challenges confronting democracies maintains credibility, demonstrates awareness of current realities, and offers solutions that are only possible in democracies. People want and need to understand what democracy means in the context of their lives. For most audiences, communication should focus on filling that gap while also drawing a contrast between democracy and authoritarianism.

TIPS: Avoid using deficit-based language, like "Democracy is in decline." Instead, lead with the strengths of democracies—for example, "The combination of freedom, fairness, and fearlessness is why democracies can best solve our shared challenges and build strong communities and a safer world."

RELATIONAL, NOT TRANSACTIONAL

Use language that focuses on what matters to people.

Utilize language that is relational (focusing on what matters to people) and avoid language that is transactional (focusing on quantifiable or immediate-term comparisons). For example, the phrase “Democracy delivers” implies outcomes or impacts on people’s lives that might not have been fully manifested, inviting identification of all the ways in which democracies have not yet delivered for the people they serve. As a result, one of the most dominant and salient pro-authoritarian narratives is “Democracy doesn’t deliver.”

TIPS: Talk about the ways in which democracies create opportunities to make a difference in people’s lives—for example, “When people are free to live and speak their minds without fear and are treated fairly, they can pursue an education, access health care, and provide for themselves and their families.”

ACCESSIBLE

Use everyday, easy-to-understand language.

Use everyday, easy-to-understand language with tangible references that connect the idea and practice of democracy with what matters to people instead of relying on jargon or technical terminology that can easily be misunderstood and can be off-putting. Communication should describe what democracies look like in practice and how they help to manifest what people care about in order to bolster support for democracy.

TIPS: When possible, avoid using words or expressions that might be unclear or confusing, like “transparent,” “accountability,” or “rule of law.” Instead, use words that are more clear, like “honest and open,” “answers to the people,” or “treats everyone fairly.” See Accessible Language below for more examples.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT

Use a cultural context lens when applying narrative and messaging, and in crafting stories.

To be effective in reaching and engaging audiences, narrative and messaging must be tailored to specific communities or populations and grounded in cultural relevance, reflecting both the cultural heritage and the contemporary lived experience of your audiences. Messaging that fails to be grounded in cultural context or disregards current realities will raise concerns about credibility and is bound to be rejected.

TIPS: Incorporate localized, culturally rooted metaphors and imagery to connect with audiences and establish relevance. Determining when to use or not use metaphors is also an important part of respecting cultural context. When communicating with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, some metaphors may not have relevance or could feel exclusionary.

RECOMMENDED GLOBAL NARRATIVE

The recommended pro-democracy narrative and supporting message framework were developed by applying research findings, data, and the five evidence-based guidelines. They were refined based on testing in three countries (El Salvador, Indonesia, and Serbia) using qualitative and quantitative methods. The narrative and message framework evoke priority core values such as security and prosperity; are primarily asset-framed; prioritize relatable (non-technical) language; incorporate key message components including freedom and security; and are informed by cultural, historical, and political context.

In the Narrative Development and Testing Phase, MG and partners created four narratives that were tested with focus groups and surveys in each country. The recommended narrative tested the strongest among stakeholders, standing out with the highest levels of agreement, relevance, and willingness to share across all audience segments. Respondents' intention to take civic action increased after exposure to the narrative. Even authoritarian-leaning respondents showed high agreement with the narrative—reducing the potential for backlash. Based upon the findings from message testing, the messaging was refined to increase the prevalence of the highest-performing message components.

“Freedom and democracy live in all of us” tested strongly for agreement, relevance, and willingness to share, and increased intention to take civic actions across all three test countries. It also connects most directly to narrative scan learnings in the other countries and to the global scan. Due to its broad resonance across the population—including democratic supporters and even those with authoritarian preferences—and its demonstrated low risk for potential backlash, it is the recommended narrative.

The specific message components that had the highest levels of support in testing included “We deserve both security and freedom” and “Freedom is both a right and responsibility.”

The narrative can be customized to address distinct issues (e.g., anti-corruption, free elections, minority rights, freedom of expression, etc.) in different countries, regions, and communities. When customizing or developing new messaging, consider applying the five evidence-based guidelines for more effective messaging.

FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY LIVE IN ALL OF US	
Core Message (summary)	All people deserve to be both free and secure . True security is only possible when we all can live and speak freely , honor our traditions , and provide for our families . Freedom is both our right and a responsibility we share to participate and to respect the freedom of others. Freedom and democracy live in all of us . We expect and deserve an honest and open government that answers to the people and treats everyone fairly . When we stand together for freedom and democracy, we build strong communities and a safer world .

Problem	Denying the rights and freedom of anyone puts at risk the rights and freedom of everyone . Too often, we are told that security is only possible if we sacrifice some of our freedom or that democracy undermines traditional family values . Both are untrue and are used to deny our rights and protect those in power, paving the way for corruption and disinformation . This limits our ability to solve our collective challenges and promote shared prosperity while also limiting people's access to education, health care, and jobs that make it possible to support themselves and their families .
Solution	To be a truly democratic society, we must demand a government that is honest and open , treats people fairly , and provides opportunities for all people . That is only possible if we do our part to actively participate , defend freedom for ourselves and others , and hold our government accountable to the people .
Benefits	When people are free to live and speak their minds without fear and are treated fairly , they can provide for themselves and their families , and fully participate and contribute to their communities . This combination of freedom , fairness , and fearlessness is also why democracies can best find innovative solutions to our shared challenges and build strong communities and a safer world .
Call to Action*	Freedom and democracy live in all of us . To best ensure strong communities and a safer world , we need to stand together for honest and open government , treat all people fairly , and protect our freedom .

Core Values Color Key	Freedom	Fairness	Safety/ Security	Honesty	Representation
	Prosperity	Strength/ Fearlessness	Responsibility	Family/ Belonging	Tradition

***NOTE:** The color coding used here corresponds to the revised color coding used in the 10 recommended values, and not the original color coding for the 15 most frequent values identified in the existing narrative landscape. The call to action statement shown here is a general statement appropriate to an overarching narrative message framework. It can be customized for audiences and key issues in ways that identify specific actions they can take (e.g., speaking out, contacting their elected representatives, or voting).

ISSUE-SPECIFIC GLOBAL MESSAGE FRAMES

In developing the global narrative, three illustrative examples, showing how the narrative and message framework may be applied to core issue areas with global relevance and salience were developed including: anti-corruption, human rights, and freedom of expression. These examples can be further customized and can help implementers apply the narrative to numerous other issues relevant to bolstering democratic principles and countering pro-authoritarian narratives, messaging, and disinformation.

ANTI-CORRUPTION	
Core Message	Fighting corruption cannot be done in secret . Yet, too often we are being denied our right to the information we need to hold our leaders accountable to the people . This paves the way for abuse of power and makes it harder for us to challenge disinformation . That hurts all of us by diverting resources to the rich and powerful instead of funding the education, health care, and infrastructure we all rely on. We must demand an open and honest government that is committed to actively fighting corruption so we can create a just, secure, and prosperous nation for all of us .
Problem	Too often we're told that we have to sacrifice our rights and freedoms to be secure . But it's not true. Without free access to information , we have no way to hold our leaders accountable or to make informed decisions . Limiting this access paves the way for corruption and abuse of power and makes it harder for us to challenge disinformation . Laws are applied unfairly and public resources are diverted to the rich and powerful instead of funding education, health care, and infrastructure . Corruption also undermines our democratic institutions, denies us justice we can trust , restrains our economic development , and weakens our faith in our government and each other .
Solution	Fighting corruption cannot be done in secret . To effectively fight corruption , we need a government that answers to the people and is committed to protecting our democratic ideas and institutions. Our leaders must respect and abide by the basic democratic principle that no one is above the law . We must demand honest and open government that enables us to see how decisions are made and public resources are used. We must support and protect a free and active press that asks important and hard questions . And each of us must be able to speak out against corruption without fear .
Benefits	When we fight corruption , we ensure public resources are used to increase access to jobs, education, health care, and safe infrastructure for all of us . As a result, people will live more freely and be better able to provide for themselves and their families . Fighting against the abuse of power will also increase fairness , promote shared prosperity , and deepen our trust in our society, our government, and each other .
Call to	Freedom and democracy live in all of us . Together —we must actively

Action	participate and demand that our government honestly and openly fight corruption to create a better future for all of us.
Draft Social Post	<p>Fighting corruption cannot be done in secret. We deserve free access to information to be able to make informed decisions and to hold our leaders accountable to the people. It's the only way to make sure public resources are being used to fund jobs, education, health care, and infrastructure for all of us.</p> <p>#FreedomAndDemocracyLiveInUs #FreedomMatters</p>

HUMAN RIGHTS	
Core Message	Denying the rights and freedom of anyone puts at risk the rights and freedom of everyone. Yet, today we are told that to be secure we have to sacrifice our most basic human rights, including the freedom to speak out, the right to work and education, freedom from inhumane treatment, a justice system we can trust, and more. We must demand that our leaders protect the human rights and freedoms that represent the backbone of life and liberty to which every person is entitled. When we stand together for freedom and democracy, we build strong communities and a safer world.
Problem	<p>Denying the rights and freedom of anyone puts at risk the rights and freedom of everyone. Too often we are told that security is only possible if we sacrifice our freedom. But that's just an excuse used to deny our rights. Today, people are subjected to unlawful detention and inhumane treatment, denied equal protection under the law, and discriminated against based on their race, religion, or gender. Too many people experience abusive working conditions or forced labor. Our right to express ourselves freely and speak out is under attack, and those who stand up are at risk of violence or worse. As long as these injustices can happen to anyone, no one is truly safe or free.</p> <p><i>NOTE: The examples of human rights violations referenced above can be replaced with others based on the country and the context.</i></p>
Solution	To be a truly democratic society, we need justice we can trust. Our leaders must do more to protect the basic freedoms and human rights that represent the backbone of life and liberty to which every person is entitled. Our government must commit to protecting strong democratic institutions, a legal system where innocent people do not suffer from injustice or abuse and where everyone can speak freely and live without fear. That is only possible if we do our part to demand that our government defend freedom and protect human rights for everyone, not only the rich and powerful.
Benefits	When people can live without fear, they can freely speak their mind, stand up for themselves and others, and better provide for themselves and their

	families . This makes it possible for them to more fully participate and contribute . This combination of freedom , fairness , and fearlessness is why democracies can best build strong communities and a safer world . By creating a society that is fair and treats everyone with respect , our country will be more secure and free .
Call to Action	Freedom and democracy live in all of us . We must stand together to defend everyone's freedom and rights . Only when we ensure fair treatment and speak out against injustice can we all live without fear . Together, we can build a country where everyone can enjoy freedom , security , and justice for themselves and their families .
Draft Social Post	We all deserve to live without fear . Our leaders must do more to protect the human rights and freedoms that represent the backbone of life and liberty to which every person is entitled. When we stand together for freedom and democracy, we build strong communities and a safer world . #FreedomAndDemocracyLiveInUs #JusticeWeCanTrust #FreedomMatters

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION	
Core Message	All people deserve to be both free and secure . Yet, we are told that we must sacrifice our freedom —including the right to express ourselves and speak out —to be more secure . That's a false choice. Without this freedom , we can never be truly secure . Together, we must demand that our government protect everyone's right to express themselves and question those in power without fear . When we stand together for freedom and democracy, we build strong communities and a safer world .
Problem	Too often, we are told that we must sacrifice our freedom to be more secure . That's a false choice used by those in power to deny our most basic freedoms including the right to speak out , to challenge misinformation , and to question—or even criticize—our leaders . Today, journalists, people who express different opinions , and organizations that exist to protect our freedoms , face harassment and violence. This weakens our country by preventing honest discussions about how to address our challenges and makes it impossible to hold our leaders accountable . This makes us both less free and less safe .
Solution	To be a truly democratic society, our leaders must do more to protect everyone's right to express themselves without fear , support a free and active press , and welcome diverse voices and criticism that help to make us stronger . Freedom is both a right and a responsibility . We must do our part by expressing ourselves , respecting the opinion of others, actively participating in our democracy, and defending freedom for ourselves and

	others.
Benefits	When people are free to speak their minds without fear —and have access to a free and active press —they are better able to fully participate in our democracy and contribute to their communities . Our right to speak out is central to the freedom , fairness , and fearlessness that makes democracies best equipped to find solutions to the challenges we face . In this way, freedom of expression is key to building strong and prosperous communities and a safer world .
Call to Action	Freedom and democracy live in all of us . We must demand that our leaders defend our freedom to speak out . And we must stand up for a free press and the rights of others to express diverse ideas and perspectives .
Draft Social Post	Without freedom to speak out and question our leaders , we can't have honest discussions about how to address our challenges and we can't hold our leaders accountable . This makes us both less free and less safe . #FreedomAndDemocracyLiveInUs #FreePress4FreePeople #FreeSpeech4FreePeople #SpeakOutForFreedom #StandUpAndSpeakOut #FreedomMatters

PRELIMINARY U.S. NARRATIVE

The U.S. narrative was constructed based on formative research (including a review of existing quantitative and qualitative data gathered globally and domestically) and was tested with focus groups in the U.S. (with moderate Republicans, independents, and moderate Democrats) in October of 2024 and again in January of 2025. Quantitative testing is being conducted in the summer of 2025 and the U.S. narrative will be updated/refined based on testing results. The testing findings will be shared with the updated narrative.

FREEDOM MATTERS	
Narrative Frame	In America, our freedoms matter. This country was built on the right to have our voices heard , to make our own decisions , to be treated fairly by the justice system, and to vote in free and fair elections. These freedoms are at the heart of democracy and our security . But, they require checks and balances on power and government that is open , honest , and responsive to the people . Our country hasn't fully lived up to these freedoms . But, a strong democracy isn't afraid to admit that and do the hard work of being better tomorrow than it is today .
Challenge	These days, it can feel like Americans can't find common ground on anything. Healthy debate and working toward compromise are a good thing in a strong democracy . But, there are some who are working every day to weaken American democracy and further divide us to serve their own interests. Defending freedom and fairness —and finding solutions to the challenges we face—doesn't have to mean fighting each other . Instead, we need to find a way to work together .
Solution	Protecting our freedoms has always been up to all of us , not just our elected representatives . But, democracy is about more than voting . It's about securing freedom and fairness for all Americans , ensuring all voices are heard , and demanding a government that is honest , open , and responsive to the people . Fearless and free people working together can find solutions that make our lives better and our democracy stronger .
Benefits	A democracy where freedoms are protected , fairness is something everyone can expect, and government is open and accountable to the people is better able to advance freedom , safety , opportunity , and justice for every one of us and our families .
Call to Action	None of this will happen on its own. It will take all of us working together to protect our freedoms and improve our democracy so it works better for everyone . It won't be easy. But we've done hard things before and we can do them again .

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NARRATIVE INTERVENTIONS

The research findings, data on salient and dominant narratives and high-frequency values, and recommended narrative and message frames provide actionable tools and guidance for immediate application. Below are a set of recommendations to apply these tools and findings in order to advance upstream narratives to defend and advance democracy.

1. **Recommendation: In all pro-democracy communications, apply the five guidelines for more effective messaging. Apply and refine new narratives using five evidence-based guidelines for more effective messaging:** When creating talking points, speeches, and presentations; preparing for interviews; posting on social media; and writing pro-democracy communications generally, using the following guidelines will help create more effective messaging:
 - a. **VALUES-BASED:** Center or highlight the recommended core values in all communications.
 - b. **ASSET-FRAMED:** Focus on opportunity and benefits (assets) instead of challenges and shortfalls (deficits).
 - c. **RELATIONAL, NOT TRANSACTIONAL:** Use language that focuses on what matters to people.
 - d. **ACCESSIBLE:** Use everyday, easy-to-understand language.
 - e. **CULTURALLY RELEVANT:** Use a cultural context lens when applying the narrative and messaging and in crafting stories.
2. **Recommendation: Build a pro-democracy narrative infrastructure to advance and build currency for new narratives:** Build the narrative infrastructure and deploy locally to support civil society organizations, activists, and cross-sector pro-democracy actors to advance a pro-democracy narrative rooted in freedom.
 - a. **Conduct proactive technical assistance (TA), narrative application, and rapid response:** Provide direct, real-time message customization and application to civil society, activists, and campaigns to advance the new narrative. Activities include:
 - i. **Narrative and message application:** Proactively apply the new narrative and customize messaging for specific campaigns, issue work, and audience engagement and community mobilization
 - ii. **Apply real-time analysis of the information ecosystem** (media, social media, and public discourse) and support strategic responses and activation in order to adjust to emerging challenges and opportunities
 1. Key audience analysis (Who are the most important stakeholder audiences to reach? What values resonate with them and what

- messages will move them to action?)
 - 2. Identifying influencers and trusted messengers to help amplify specific messaging (influencers can be prominent figures on social media, journalists, congressional representatives, city and state officials, trusted community members, etc.)
 - iii. **Crisis communication support**
 - 1. Message and talking point development (create specific customized messages and talking points for grantee cohorts based on the overarching democracy narrative)
 - 2. Leverage real-time media moments (posting and promoting POV pieces across social media channels; securing interviews on podcasts and other media; drafting short articles, posts, or op-eds)
 - 3. Media training/spokesperson training
 - a. Prepare spokespeople for media interviews
 - iv. **Social media review, support, and content development** (social, web, publications) ready-to-use and customizable
 - 1. Create or review media materials
 - 2. Develop short videos
 - 3. Draft and/or edit thought leadership pieces
 - 4. Create proactive social media campaigns
- b. **Build Narrative Hub – centralized open access of resources:** The narrative hub creates a central repository of narrative and messaging data, evidence, and tools that can be accessed openly by grantees, cohorts, and partners. The hub will also create a pipeline between national level organizations and local communities that are working simultaneously to build currency for a new narrative across movements and issue areas. Activities to launch the Narrative Hub include:
 - i. **Create a centralized open access virtual hub of actionable resources** to leverage evidence, data, analysis, research, and messaging application tools. We envision an actionable and dynamic online message guide and resource center where partners can access communication tools created through TA (including creative content, response messaging, op-eds, shareable digital content, media talking points, etc.). It will also include customization tips and links to other resources and research updates
 - ii. **Organize proactive engagement and ongoing coordination with dissemination networks** across social issues (including public health, environmental justice, economic equity, democracy, and freedom of expression) to leverage message application through existing pipelines with national organizations and their local affiliates and chapters in states, cities, and communities across the country
 - iii. **Conduct ongoing scanning of pro-democracy and pro-authoritarian narratives** and messaging (media, social media, political discourse scans) and adjust messaging and talking points accordingly as new

- information, ideas, and engagements shift the national conversation
- iv. **Provide regular analysis of influencer discourse** to shape responses
- c. **Ongoing narrative and message framing refinement:** Conduct ongoing monitoring of the impact and efficacy of narrative applications and campaigns, response messaging, and other application of narrative and messaging, in order to refine framing to emerging opportunities, challenges, and changes in the information ecosystem. Activities include:
- i. **Provide direct support to cohorts, grantees, and partners** to refine and adjust messaging
 - ii. **Continue ongoing/high-impact narrative research** (building on existing research, conducting gaps analysis and augmenting U.S.-based research with new research that addresses the specific changes occurring in 2025–2026)
 - iii. **Conduct polling to test narrative and issue/region specific messaging** (national population polling with over samples to ensure relevance with cities and communities. Conduct follow-on polling every two years to track perceptions, relevance, and changes in activation)
 - iv. **Review, analyze, and apply relevant research and testing** being conducted by others (tracking and aggregating efforts to inform ongoing refinements and application framing of the narrative)
- d. **Launch proactive initiatives to build currency for new narratives:** Support a key influencer engagement strategy to activate new narratives. Imbue tested narratives into messaging and activities designed to activate a wide range of priority stakeholders and allies, with the goal of building currency for a salient, pro-democratic narrative(s) that works to bolster the value of democratic principles and institutions and to inoculate against authoritarian narratives.
- i. **Influencer engagement strategy:** Design an influencer engagement strategy for key global and in-country influencers and champions to advance tested narratives. Include consideration of creative expression and pop culture initiatives. This recommendation is based on three factors: first, younger people are a key stakeholder group, and in many of the case study countries there are indicators that a more effective means of engagement is through pop culture. Second, there is a challenging political context in many case study countries where humor, music, and creative media content may offer opportunities for messaging not available in direct political discourse or news media. Finally, in many case study countries there is a vibrant arts, music, entertainment, and pop culture industry, and indicators of some existing use of this medium in pro-democratic or related issues.
 - ii. **Develop earned media strategy** to familiarize select media with tested narratives and to encourage their application. Reinforce this

familiarization with consistent application of narratives and supporting messaging in media materials, op-ed placement, and prep/talking points for interviews.

- iii. **Develop strategy for embedding tested democracy narratives** into popular culture (television, movies, streaming content, music, art, etc.).

- 3. **Recommendation: In countries that were not part of this research, conduct stakeholder analysis and testing to better prioritize stakeholder segments most open to pro-democracy narratives and stakeholders most concerned with authoritarian actions:** While many salient and dominant narratives overlap or resonate broadly based on core values, there is no one-size-fits-all narrative that is effective with all stakeholders, especially at a global level. Application of the narratives and message frames in specific country contexts should be crafted to appeal to those stakeholders who might be most receptive to a specific narrative. Moving champions and early adopters can influence other stakeholders and create a more fertile narrative environment for pro-democracy narratives to take root. Thus it is critical to conduct formative stakeholder research and mapping in order to identify potential openings and opportunities to advance narratives with specific stakeholder groups that are both more receptive and have the potential to influence others.

CONCLUSION

There is no way to prevent authoritarians from weaponizing or appropriating narratives, but democracy champions can deploy narratives that are authentic and trigger closely held values more effectively to shift the upstream information ecosystem, impact social norms, change mindsets, and create a more fertile enabling environment for liberal democracy.

Changing narratives is a long-term effort that requires commitment, sustained action, and shared effort among multiple stakeholders and allies. This research and actionable tools is a significant step in a complex process of narrative identification, development, testing, and application with the objective of increasing understanding and support for liberal democracy while inoculating against and more effectively countering narratives that promote or legitimize authoritarianism.

As this study illustrates, in the existing information ecosystem, pro-authoritarian narratives are generally more salient and dominant than pro-democracy narratives. They are ultimately effective in part because they trigger values that resonate with people in ways that clearly frame the benefits of the policies they advance. Pro-authoritarian narratives have an advantage in that their measure of success is relatively low—sow confusion, doubt, and indifference about the merits of democracy, democratic values, and democratic institutions.

While pro-authoritarian narratives increasingly dominate the information and narrative ecosystem, pro-democracy narratives can be more effective, and can build broad-based support. The new global and U.S. narratives and message frames, combined with the five guidelines for more effective messaging and recommendations for pro-democracy narrative infrastructure contained here, provide actionable insights and guidance for shifting the battle for hearts, minds, and social norms. These tools will help pro-democracy actors and all social impact fields reframe current narratives and craft new narratives using language that evokes motivating values, meets people where they are, and motivates civic actions.

APPENDIX I: EL SALVADOR RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE

The recommended pro-democracy narrative and supporting message framework below were developed in El Salvador by applying research findings, data, and the five evidence-based guidelines. The narrative and message framework evoke priority core values (see color key below), are primarily asset-framed, prioritize relatable (non-technical) language, and are informed by cultural, historical, and political context. The Narrative Development and Testing Phase created four narratives that were tested with focus groups and surveys.

The recommended narrative tested the strongest among stakeholders, standing out with the highest levels of agreement, relevance, and willingness to share across all audience segments. Even authoritarian-leaning respondents showed high agreement with the narrative—reducing the potential for backlash. Based upon the findings from the message testing, the messaging was refined to increase the prevalence of the highest-performing message components.

Words and phrases that reflect the identified core values are shown in the corresponding colors in the narrative and message framework:

Core Values Color Key	Freedom	Fairness	Safety/Security	Honesty	Representation
	Prosperity	Strength/ Fearlessness	Responsibility	Family	Tradition

Note: The color coding reflects the color coding of the 10 recommended values and not the existing narrative landscape.

FREEDOM TO BUILD THE COUNTRY WE DESERVE <i>Libertad para construir el país que merecemos</i>		
Core Message (summary)	Una guerra contra la corrupción no puede hacerse en secreto. Nuestro derecho a la información es fundamental no sólo para combatir eficazmente la corrupción , sino también para ser verdaderamente libres . Debemos exigir un gobierno honesto y abierto , comprometido en luchar activamente contra la corrupción para proteger nuestro país y garantizar un acceso justo a las oportunidades que todos nosotros , y nuestras familias , merecemos.	Salvadorans need and deserve to be both secure and free . Freedom is more than being able to walk without fear , it is when healthcare, education , and fair treatment under the law are not an illusion, but a possibility. Being truly free is being able to make informed decisions for our families and communities , and to express our views without being accused of attacking El Salvador. The leaders of our country must promote democracy, protect our freedoms , and ensure open and honest government . It is up to us to express ourselves and demand the country we deserve , because nothing changes if we remain silent.

Problem	<p>En la actualidad nos piden que sacrifiquemos algunas de nuestras libertades, incluido el derecho a la información, para saber cómo se está llevando a cabo la guerra contra la corrupción. Nos dicen que los resultados deberían ser evidentes y por eso no hace falta que nos compartan información. Pero eso no es cierto. Frecuentemente nos ocultan información y esto crea oportunidades para abusar del poder, escondiendo cómo se manejan los recursos públicos. Esto nos niega el acceso a servicios básicos y a una justicia en la que podemos confiar, a la vez que amenaza nuestra libertad, limita nuestro desarrollo económico y debilita a nuestro país.</p>	<p>Today, we are told that to be secure, we have to sacrifice some of our freedom. But, that's not true, and it's used as an excuse to violate our rights, justify unfair treatment and silence the voices of those who question. It also paves the way for corruption that tips the scales in favor of the few instead of looking out for the rest of us. This weakens our country and takes opportunities away from our families and our communities.</p>
Solution	<p>Una guerra contra la corrupción no puede hacerse en secreto. Los líderes de nuestro país están obligados a compartir la información que debería ser pública y a hacer cumplir las leyes que protegen el libre acceso a dicha información. Podemos hacer la diferencia si exigimos un sistema de justicia fuerte e independiente, además de honestidad y transparencia de todos los funcionarios electos y si votamos por candidatos que respeten nuestras libertades.</p>	<p>The leaders of our country must do more to promote democracy, protect the liberties of everyone, and ensure a more honest and open government that works for all of us. And we must all do our part to recognize that freedoms are rights we must defend while also respecting the freedom of others.</p>
Benefits	<p>Al proteger nuestras libertades y promover la transparencia y el derecho al acceso a la información, podremos prevenir la corrupción de forma más efectiva y así proteger el acceso justo a las oportunidades que todos nosotros—y nuestras familias—merecemos. Sin corrupción, nuestro sistema de salud tendrá suficientes camas para atender a los enfermos y los niños podrán asistir a escuelas dignas y</p>	<p>By protecting our freedoms we will be able to speak our minds, live without fear, and provide for the well-being of our families and communities. A more honest and open government can provide better access to essential services like healthcare and education. We will be truly safe and be treated fairly under the law.</p> <p><i>Note: Different and additional benefits examples can be used in this</i></p>

	<p>cercanas.</p> <p><i>Nota: Se pueden usar otros ejemplos diferentes o ejemplos adicionales para complementar este mensaje, de tal forma que sean más relevantes según la región, los stakeholders u otros factores.</i></p>	<p><i>messaging to be relevant by region, stakeholders, or other factors.</i></p>
Call to Action*	<p>Unámonos para exigirle a nuestros líderes honestidad, rendición de cuentas y libre acceso a la información pública. Es crucial que nos hagamos escuchar, escogiendo funcionarios que estén comprometidos con mantenerse honestos y abiertos. Al comprometernos con la transparencia, podremos luchar contra la corrupción y construir el país que merecemos, porque nada cambia si permanecemos en silencio.</p>	<p>Let us unite to demand freedom and security for ourselves and our families—and honesty and justice—from our leaders. Let us express ourselves freely, listen to others, and promote dialogue and understanding. Together, we can build the country we deserve, because nothing changes if we remain silent.</p>

***NOTE:** The call to action statement shown here is a general statement appropriate to an overarching narrative message framework. It can be tailored for audiences and key issues in ways that identify specific actions they can take (e.g., speaking out, contacting their elected representatives, voting, or other actions).

RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE AND MESSAGING IN ACTION

The recommended narrative includes three illustrative examples, showing how the narrative and message framework can be customized for any salient and relevant issue area in El Salvador. These examples can help implementers apply the narrative to numerous other issues relevant to bolstering democratic principles and countering pro-authoritarian narratives, messaging, and mis/dis/malinformation.

CORRUPTION		
Core Message	<p>Una guerra contra la corrupción no puede hacerse en secreto. Nuestro derecho a la información es fundamental no sólo para combatir eficazmente la corrupción, sino también para ser verdaderamente libres. Debemos exigir un gobierno</p>	<p>A war against corruption cannot be fought in secret. Our right to information is crucial not just to effectively combat corruption, but also to be truly free. We must demand an open and honest government that is committed to actively fighting</p>

	<p>honesto y abierto, comprometido en luchar activamente contra la corrupción para proteger nuestro país y garantizar un acceso justo a las oportunidades que todos nosotros, y nuestras familias, merecemos.</p>	<p>corruption so we can protect our country and ensure fair access to the opportunities all of us—and our families—deserve.</p>
Problem	<p>En la actualidad nos piden que sacrifiquemos algunas de nuestras libertades, incluido el derecho a la información, para saber cómo se está llevando a cabo la guerra contra la corrupción. Nos dicen que los resultados deberían ser evidentes y por eso no hace falta que nos compartan información. Pero eso no es cierto. Frecuentemente nos ocultan información y esto crea oportunidades para abusar del poder, escondiendo cómo se manejan los recursos públicos. Esto nos niega el acceso a servicios básicos y a una justicia en la que podemos confiar, a la vez que amenaza nuestra libertad, limita nuestro desarrollo económico y debilita a nuestro país.</p>	<p>Today, we are told we need to sacrifice some of our freedoms, including the right to information about how the war against corruption is being waged. We are told that the results should be plain to see, so there is no need to share information. But, that's not true. Too often, information is kept from us, creating opportunities for abuse of power that make it possible to hide how public resources are managed. This denies our access to basic services and justice we can trust, threatens our freedom, restrains our economic development, and weakens our country.</p>
Solution	<p>Una guerra contra la corrupción no puede hacerse en secreto. Los líderes de nuestro país están obligados a compartir la información que debería ser pública y a hacer cumplir las leyes que protegen el libre acceso a dicha información. Podemos hacer la diferencia si exigimos un sistema de justicia fuerte e independiente, además de honestidad y transparencia de todos los funcionarios electos y si votamos por candidatos que respeten nuestras libertades.</p>	<p>A war against corruption cannot be fought in secret. The leaders of our country must share information that should be public and enforce the law that protects our freedom of access to information. We can make a difference by demanding a strong and independent justice system and honesty and openness from all elected officials, and by voting for candidates who respect our freedoms.</p>
Benefits	<p>Al proteger nuestras libertades y promover la transparencia y el derecho al acceso a la información, podremos prevenir la corrupción de forma más efectiva y así proteger el acceso justo a las oportunidades</p>	<p>By protecting our freedoms and advocating for transparency and the right of access to information, we can more effectively prevent corruption to protect fair access to the opportunities all of us—and our</p>

	<p>que todos nosotros—y nuestras familias—merecemos. Sin corrupción, nuestro sistema de salud tendrá suficientes camas para atender a los enfermos y los niños podrán asistir a escuelas dignas y cercanas.</p> <p><i>Nota: Se pueden usar ejemplos de beneficios diferentes y adicionales en este mensaje para que sean relevantes por región, partes interesadas u otros factores.</i></p>	<p>families—deserve. Without corruption, our healthcare system will have enough beds to attend to the sick and children will be able to attend good schools that are close to home.</p> <p><i>Note: Different and additional benefits examples can be used in this messaging to be relevant by region, stakeholders, or other factors.</i></p>
Call to Action	<p>Unámonos para exigirle a nuestros líderes honestidad, rendición de cuentas y libre acceso a la información pública. Es crucial que nos hagamos escuchar, escogiendo funcionarios que estén comprometidos con mantenerse honestos y abiertos. Al comprometernos con la transparencia, podremos luchar contra la corrupción y construir el país que merecemos, porque nada cambia si permanecemos en silencio.</p>	<p>Let us unite to demand honesty, accountability, and free access to public information from our leaders. It is crucial that we make ourselves heard by electing officials who are committed to being honest and open. By committing to open government, we can fight against corruption and build the country we deserve, because nothing changes if we remain silent.</p>
Draft Social Post	<p>La lucha contra la corrupción no puede hacerse en secreto. Tenemos derecho a saber cómo se están protegiendo los recursos públicos. La transparencia y el libre acceso a la información son clave para prevenir abusos de poder. ¡Exijamos honestidad y rendición de cuentas a nuestros líderes! ¡Así protegeremos las oportunidades para todos los salvadoreños y garantizaremos el trato justo e igualitario!</p> <p>#TransparenciaContraLaCorrupción #LibertadDeInformación #NoMasReservasDeInformación</p>	<p>The fight against corruption cannot be done in secret. We have the right to know how public assets are being protected. Transparency and free access to information are key to preventing abuses of power. Let's demand honesty and accountability from our leaders! This way, we will protect opportunities for all Salvadorans and ensure fair and equal treatment!</p> <p>#TransparencyAgainstCorruption #FreedomOfInformation #NoMoreInformationReserves</p>

FREEDOM OF SPEECH / FEAR OF SPEAKING OUT		
Core Message	<p>La libertad de expresión es vital para proteger y mejorar nuestro país y para crear oportunidades para todas nuestras familias. No debemos continuar acusando a quienes tienen opiniones diferentes de estar atacando a El Salvador. Hacer esto genera división entre nosotros lo que hace más difícil trabajar juntos para mejorar las condiciones de nuestro país. Es nuestra responsabilidad respetar las opiniones de los demás y exigir un gobierno que proteja el derecho de todos nosotros a expresarnos libremente, mientras promueve el diálogo y la comprensión.</p>	<p>Freedom of expression is vital to protecting and improving our country, and creating opportunities for all our families. We must not continue to accuse anyone with a different opinion of attacking El Salvador. Doing this divides us from each other, making it harder to work together to improve conditions in El Salvador. It is our responsibility to respect others' opinions and demand a government that protects the rights of all of us to speak freely and promotes dialogue and understanding.</p>
Problem	<p>En la actualidad se nos dice que no critiquemos, que nos quedemos callados incluso cuando algo no nos parece correcto. Nos dicen que no hay necesidad de cuestionar al gobierno porque estamos seguros y no tenemos nada que temer. Pero merecemos tanto la seguridad como la libertad. En lugar de eso, se nos niegan nuestras libertades básicas, incluido el derecho a expresarnos. Se crean nuevas leyes para controlar la opinión pública y silenciar las voces, mientras que periodistas y ciudadanos que piensan diferente son acusados de atacar a El Salvador. Esto solo beneficia a aquellos que desean que solo se escuche su versión de los hechos y evita que cuestionemos lo que hacen. Este miedo debilita a nuestro país y limita nuestra libertad de expresarnos abiertamente.</p>	<p>Today, we're told not to criticize and to stay quiet even when something feels wrong. We are told there's no need to question our government because we're safe and have nothing to fear. But, we deserve both safety and freedom. Instead, we are being denied our basic freedoms, including the right to speak out. New laws are put in place to control public opinion and silence voices, while journalists and citizens who think differently are accused of attacking El Salvador. This benefits those who want only their side of the story to be heard and stops us from questioning what they do. This fear weakens our country and limits our freedom to express ourselves openly.</p>
Solution	<p>Los líderes de nuestro país deben hacer más para escuchar la diversidad de voces y aceptar las críticas, protegiendo las leyes que garantizan</p>	<p>The leaders of our country must do more to embrace diverse voices and welcome criticism by protecting laws that guarantee everyone's right to</p>

	<p>el derecho de todos a expresarse libremente. También es vital proteger la libertad de prensa, para que se puedan hacer las preguntas importantes y reportar honestamente para que todos tengamos acceso a la información. La libertad de expresión es un derecho y una responsabilidad. Debemos hacer nuestra parte respetando la opinión de los demás y apoyando a líderes honestos que vean las críticas como algo esencial para encontrar las mejores soluciones para El Salvador.</p>	<p>express themselves freely. It is also essential to protect a free press so it can ask important questions and report honestly so we all have access to information. Freedom of expression is both a right and a responsibility. We must do our part by respecting the opinion of others and by supporting honest leaders who see criticism as essential to finding the best solutions for El Salvador.</p>
Benefits	<p>Al proteger nuestras libertades y promover la libertad de expresión, podemos crear un entorno donde las personas puedan expresar sus opiniones sin miedo. Al tener libertad para expresarnos, podremos participar activamente en la toma de decisiones que nos afectan a nosotros, a nuestras familias y a nuestras comunidades. Al escuchar y valorar voces y perspectivas diversas, vamos a poder descubrir nuevas formas de enfrentar los desafíos que nos afectan. Esto facilitará el camino hacia un futuro justo para todos, al trabajar juntos para mejorar las condiciones en nuestro país y crear oportunidades para todos.</p>	<p>By protecting our freedoms and promoting free speech, we can create an environment where people can express their opinions without fear. When we have the freedom to speak up, we can actively participate in making decisions that affect us, our families, and our communities. In welcoming diverse voices and perspectives, we find new ways of solving the challenges that face us. This paves the way for a fair and just future for all of us, as we work together to improve the conditions in our country and create opportunities for everyone.</p>
Call to Action	<p>Unámonos para exigir la protección de nuestras libertades y el derecho a expresarnos. Escuchemos todas las ideas y perspectivas, y exijamos lo mismo de nuestros líderes, para que podamos crear las mejores soluciones para los retos que enfrentan nuestras familias, nuestras comunidades y nuestro país. Nada cambiará si permanecemos en silencio.</p>	<p>Let us unite to demand protection of our freedom and our right to speak out. Let us listen to all ideas and perspectives—and demand that our leaders do the same—so we can create better solutions to the challenges faced by our families, our communities, and our country. Nothing will change if we remain silent.</p>
Draft	<p>Opinar no es atacar a El Salvador.</p>	<p>Speaking out is not attacking El</p>

Social Post	<p>Opinar es libertad. No tengamos miedo de cuestionar cuando algo no nos parece correcto. Escuchemos todos los puntos de vista y dejemos de acusar a quienes piensan diferente de estar atacando a El Salvador. Unámonos para exigir a nuestros líderes que protejan nuestras libertades y el derecho a expresarnos. ¡Nada cambiará si permanecemos en silencio!</p> <p>#OpinarNoEsAtacar #ExpresateSinMiedo #YoHabloPorElSalvador #OpinarEsLibertad</p>	<p>Salvador. Sharing an opinion is an act of freedom. Don't be afraid to ask questions when something doesn't seem right. Let's listen to all points of view and stop accusing those who think differently of attacking our country. And, let's unite to demand that our leaders protect our freedoms and the right to express ourselves. Nothing will change if we remain silent!</p> <p>#OpinionsAreNotAttacks #SpeakUpWithoutFear #ISpeakForElSalvador #OpinionsAreFreedom</p>
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VIOLATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Core Message	<p>Ninguna sociedad puede decir que es realmente segura si hace daño a los inocentes. La libertad y la seguridad van de la mano y merecemos ambas. Para proteger nuestra nación, los inocentes no pueden seguir sufriendo abusos e injusticias, que están destruyendo sus vidas y las de sus familias. Debemos tomar medidas y exigir una verdadera protección de nuestra libertades para que todos estemos seguros, se respeten nuestros derechos y recibamos un trato justo. De esta forma eliminaremos la falta de cuidado, las injusticias y los abusos que están perjudicando a personas inocentes.</p>	<p>No society can truly claim to be secure if it harms the innocent. Freedom and security go hand-in-hand, and we deserve both. To protect our nation, innocent individuals should not have to suffer abuse and injustice that can destroy their lives and the lives of their families. We need to take action and demand real protection of our freedom, so everyone is safe, has their rights respected, and is treated fairly. By doing so, we can eliminate the carelessness, injustice, and abuse that are harming innocent people.</p>
Problem	<p>Actualmente nos dicen que para proteger nuestra seguridad, debemos sacrificar nuestras libertades. Pero eso no es cierto, y no debería ser una excusa para arrebatarnos nuestros derechos. Muchas personas son arrestadas sin orden de captura, van</p>	<p>Today, we are told that to protect our security, we must sacrifice our freedoms. But that's not true, and it shouldn't be used as an excuse to take away our rights. People are arrested without a warrant, face trials without a lawyer, and endure prolonged</p>

	<p>a juicio sin abogado y pasan largo tiempo en condiciones inhumanas. Esto debilita nuestro país y causa mucho dolor a muchas familias. Si estas injusticias pueden ocurrirle a cualquiera, entonces nadie está verdaderamente seguro o libre.</p>	<p>detention and inhumane conditions. This weakens our country and causes pain to countless families. If these injustices can happen to anyone, then no one is truly safe or free.</p>
Solution	<p>Necesitamos poder confiar en la justicia. Los líderes de nuestro país deben hacer más para proteger los derechos y libertades de todos. Deben comprometerse con un sistema legal en el que los salvadoreños no sufran injusticias ni abusos. Nosotros debemos exigir líderes con la capacidad de hacer avanzar al país, sin sacrificar nuestra libertad, el trato justo o la seguridad.</p>	<p>We need justice we can trust. The leaders of our country must do more to protect the rights and freedoms of everyone. They must commit to a legal system where Salvadorans do not suffer from injustice or abuse. And we must demand leaders who can move the country forward without sacrificing our freedom, fair treatment, or safety.</p>
Benefits	<p>Al proteger nuestras libertades, garantizar un trato justo ante la ley y exigir honestidad en el manejo de los casos, vamos a poder detener las injusticias y los abusos. Todos estaremos protegidos de arrestos y detenciones injustas, y nuestras familias no tendrán que enfrentar incertidumbre y angustia. Juntos, podemos crear una sociedad que sea segura y justa sin caer en el falso dilema entre seguridad y libertad.</p>	<p>By protecting our freedoms, ensuring fair treatment under the law, and demanding openness in how cases are handled, we can stop injustice and abuse. Everyone will be protected from unjust arrest and detention and families won't have to face uncertainty and anguish. Together, we can create a society that is both safe and fair without having to make the false choice between security and freedom.</p>
Call to Action	<p>Exijamos a nuestros líderes que defiendan nuestras libertades y garanticen un trato justo bajo un sistema legal confiable. Alcemos la voz contra las injusticias y elijamos líderes comprometidos con la protección de nuestras libertades, para así prevenir sufrimientos innecesarios. A través de estas acciones, podemos construir un país en el que todos los salvadoreños puedan disfrutar de la libertad, la seguridad y la justicia para ellos y sus</p>	<p>Let us demand that our leaders defend our freedoms and ensure fair treatment with a legal system we can trust. Let us speak out against injustice and choose leaders dedicated to protecting our freedoms so we can prevent suffering. Through these actions, we can build a country where all Salvadorans can enjoy freedom, security, and justice for themselves and their families.</p>

	familias.	
Draft Social Post	<p>Nadie puede estar seguro, si la libertad de cualquiera persona puede ser negada en el nombre de la seguridad. Hoy en día, muchos salvadoreños son arrestados sin orden de captura, van a juicio sin abogado y están expuestos a condiciones inhumanas.</p> <p>Necesitamos un sistema legal que nos proteja a todos de las injusticias y abusos. Exijamos a nuestros líderes que se defiendan nuestras libertades y garanticen un trato justo a través de un sistema legal confiable. Todos merecemos libertad, seguridad y justicia.</p> <p>#SeguridadSinAbusos #SeguridadConLibertad #SeguridadSinSacrificio</p>	<p>No one can be safe if anyone's freedom can be denied in the name of security. Today, many Salvadorans are arrested without a warrant, tried without a lawyer, and exposed to inhumane conditions. We need a legal system that protects everyone from injustice and abuse. Let's demand that our leaders defend our liberties and guarantee fair treatment through a legal system we can trust. We all deserve freedom, security, and justice.</p> <p>#SecurityWithoutAbuse #SecurityWithFreedom #SecurityWithoutSacrifice</p>

APPENDIX II: INDONESIA RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE

The recommended pro-democracy narrative and supporting message framework below were developed in Indonesia by applying research findings, data, and the five evidence-based guidelines. The narrative and message framework evoke priority core values (see color key below), are primarily asset-framed, prioritize relatable (non-technical) language, and are informed by cultural, historical, and political context. The Narrative Development and Testing Phase created four narratives that were tested with focus groups and surveys.

The recommended narrative tested the strongest among stakeholders, standing out with the highest levels of agreement, relevance, and willingness to share across all audience segments. Even authoritarian-leaning respondents showed high agreement with the narrative—reducing the potential for backlash. Based upon the findings from the message testing, the messaging was refined to increase the prevalence of the highest-performing message components: freedom and responsibility, and we deserve both freedom and security.

Words and phrases that reflect the identified core values are shown in the corresponding colors in the narrative and message framework:

Core Values Color Key	Freedom	Fairness	Safety/Security	Honesty	Representation
	Prosperity	Strength/ Fearlessness	Responsibility	Family	Tradition

Note: The color coding reflects the color coding of the 10 recommended values and not the existing narrative landscape.

DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM LIVE IN ALL OF US <i>Demokrasi dan kebebasan hidup dalam diri kita semua</i>		
Core Message (summary)	<p>Berlandaskan Pancasila, demokrasi Indonesia menjunjung tinggi Bhinneka Tunggal Ika sebagai kekuatan kita dan menekankan kebebasan sebagai hak dan tanggung jawab bersama. Menghormati Pancasila berarti bukan hanya mengatakan bahwa keberagaman itu penting, namun juga mewujudkannya dengan tindakan. Caranya adalah dengan menuntut para pemimpin kita untuk memerintah dengan keterbukaan dan kejujuran, melindungi kebebasan kita, dan memperlakukan semua orang secara adil. Demokrasi dan kebebasan hidup</p>	<p>Rooted in Pancasila, Indonesia's democracy embraces Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (unity in our diversity) as our strength and emphasizes freedom as both our right and our shared responsibility. Respecting Pancasila means not only saying that diversity matters but turning it into action. We do this by demanding that our leaders govern with openness and honesty, protect our freedoms, and treat everyone fairly. Democracy and freedom live in all of us. Together, we can make Indonesia more inclusive, prosperous, and secure for all of us and our families.</p>

	dalam diri kita semua . Bersama, kita dapat membuat Indonesia menjadi lebih inklusif, sejahtera, dan aman bagi kita semua dan keluarga kita.	
Problem	Meskipun fondasi kita kuat , kita menghadapi tantangan dalam menjalankan prinsip ini. Ketimpangan dan diskriminasi membuat kita terpecah belah , dimana kita harus memilih salah satu di antara kebebasan atau keamanan . Padahal, kita semua pantas mendapatkan keduanya. Selain itu, kurangnya pemerintahan yang adil, jujur dan terbuka , merusak kepercayaan publik , menciptakan hambatan untuk kita dapat berpartisipasi dalam demokrasi yang sesungguhnya.	Despite our strong foundation , we face challenges in fully living and governing by these principles . Inequalities and discrimination pull us apart . And we're told that we have to choose either freedom or security . In truth, all of us deserve both. Lack of fair, honest, and open government undermines public trust , creating barriers for us to participate in true democracy .
Solution	Oleh karena itu, ini adalah tanggung jawab kita untuk dapat memperkuat komitmen kita terhadap prinsip-prinsip Pancasila . Dengan bebas menyuarakan pendapat dan menuntut transparansi dari pemimpin kita, kita menegaskan bahwa demokrasi sepatutnya menjamin kebebasan , tanpa harus mengorbankan keamanan kita.	It is our responsibility to strengthen our commitment to the principles of Pancasila . By freely speaking our minds and demanding transparency from our leaders, we affirm that democracy can ensure our freedom without having to sacrifice our security .
Benefits	Dengan menghormati hak dan kebebasan , kita memastikan komunitas yang aman dan kuat , sehingga kita dapat hidup tanpa rasa takut , dan menciptakan peluang serta kesejahteraan yang lebih besar untuk kita semua serta keluarga kita. Dengan cara ini, kita lebih menghormati dan mencerminkan semangat Pancasila yang sejati .	Respecting our rights and freedoms ensures safe and strong communities , allows us to live without fear , and creates greater opportunities and prosperity for all of us and our families . In this way, we better honor and reflect the true spirit of Pancasila .
Call to Action*	Demokrasi dan kebebasan hidup dalam diri kita semua . Bersama-sama— kita menuntut agar para pemimpin kita memerintah dengan kejujuran dan keterbukaan ,	Democracy and freedom live in all of us . Together, we demand that our leaders govern with honesty and openness, protect our freedoms , and treat everyone fairly . By respecting our

	<p>melindungi kebebasan kita, dan memperlakukan setiap orang dengan adil. Dengan menghormati kekuatan dan persatuan dalam keberagaman, dan menggunakan hak kita secara bertanggung jawab—kita dapat menjadikan Indonesia tempat yang lebih baik bagi kita semua dan keluarga kita.</p>	<p>strength and unity in diversity—and exercising our rights responsibly—we can make Indonesia a better place for all of us and our families.</p>
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***NOTE:** The call to action statement shown here is a general statement appropriate to an overarching narrative message framework. It can be tailored for audiences and key issues in ways that identify specific actions they can take (e.g., speaking out, contacting their elected representatives, voting, or other actions).

RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE AND MESSAGING IN ACTION

The recommended narrative includes three illustrative examples, showing how the narrative and message framework can be customized for any salient and relevant issue areas in Indonesia. These examples can help implementers apply the narrative to numerous other issues relevant to bolstering democratic principles and countering pro-authoritarian narratives, messaging, and mis/dis/malinformation.

CORRUPTION		
Core Message	<p>Berlandaskan Pancasila, demokrasi Indonesia menjunjung tinggi Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Korupsi dan penyalahgunaan kekuasaan tidak hanya melanggar semangat Pancasila, tetapi juga menggerogoti kemerdekaan, keamanan, dan kesejahteraan kita bersama. Dengan bekerja sama, kita dapat mewujudkan bangsa yang adil, jujur, dan sejahtera di mana setiap suara berarti dan setiap orang memiliki kesempatan untuk berpartisipasi dan berkontribusi.</p>	<p>Rooted in Pancasila, Indonesia's democracy embraces Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (unity in diversity). Corruption and abuse of power not only violate the spirit of Pancasila, they also erode our freedom, our security, and our shared prosperity. Working together, we can create a just, honest, and prosperous nation where every voice matters, and everyone has the opportunity to participate and contribute.</p>
Problem	<p>Korupsi dan ketidakjujuran mengkhianati semangat Pancasila dan merugikan kita semua. Korupsi mengalihkan sumber daya publik untuk</p>	<p>Corruption and dishonesty violate the spirit of Pancasila and hurt all of us. Corruption diverts public resources to benefit a few while unfairly lowering</p>

	<p>menguntungkan segelintir orang juga secara tidak adil memperburuk kualitas infrastruktur, pelayanan kesehatan, pendidikan, dan peluang ekonomi bagi kita semua. Dengan demikian, korupsi melemahkan kepercayaan, kemajuan ekonomi, keamanan, dan kebebasan kita.</p>	<p>the quality of everything from infrastructure and healthcare to education and economic opportunity for all of us. In this way, corruption weakens our trust, economic progress, security, and freedom.</p>
Solution	<p>Hanya dengan menuntut langkah-langkah anti-korupsi yang kuat dan menumbuhkan budaya integritas, kita dapat menjunjung tinggi semangat Pancasila. Pemerintah harus secara jujur dan terbuka memerangi korupsi dan penyalahgunaan kekuasaan dalam segala bentuknya. Bersama-sama, kita bisa membuka jalan bagi tas masyarakat yang lebih adil dan demokrasi yang lebih kuat.</p>	<p>By demanding strong anti-corruption measures and fostering a culture of integrity, we uphold the spirit of Pancasila. The government must honestly and openly fight against corruption and abuse of power in all their forms. Together, we can pave the way for a more fair society and a stronger democracy.</p>
Benefits	<p>Memerangi korupsi akan memperkuat demokrasi kita, melindungi kebebasan kita, membangun kepercayaan publik, dan memastikan bahwa kesejahteraan dan kesempatan dapat dinikmati oleh kita semua. Dengan demikian, kita dapat lebih menghayati semangat Pancasila yang sejati. Hal ini akan menciptakan manfaat nyata bagi setiap rakyat Indonesia, berupa layanan kesehatan yang berkualitas, sekolah yang lebih baik untuk anak-anak kita, jalan yang lebih baik, dan transportasi umum yang lebih andal untuk menghubungkan kita dan komunitas kita satu sama lain dengan lebih baik.</p> <p><i>Catatan: Contoh manfaat lainnya dapat digunakan dalam pesan ini agar relevan dengan wilayah, pemangku kepentingan, atau faktor lainnya.</i></p>	<p>Fighting corruption will strengthen our democracy, protect our freedom, build public trust, and ensure that prosperity and opportunities can be enjoyed by all of us. In this way, we can better live up to the true spirit of Pancasila. This will create real benefits for every Indonesian, including quality healthcare, better schools for our children, improved roads, and more reliable public transportation to better connect us and our communities.</p> <p><i>Note: Different and additional benefits examples can be used in this messaging to be relevant by region, stakeholders, or other factors.</i></p>
Call to Action	<p>Demokrasi dan kebebasan hidup</p>	<p>Democracy and freedom live in all of</p>

	<p>dalam diri kita semua. Bersama-sama, kita harus menuntut para pemimpin kita memerangi korupsi dan memperkuat institusi demokrasi untuk memastikan pemerintahan yang jujur dan terbuka untuk menciptakan Indonesia yang lebih baik bagi semua.</p>	<p>us. Together, we must demand that our leaders fight corruption and strengthen democratic institutions to ensure honest and open government to create a better Indonesia for everyone.</p>
Draft Social Post	<p>Korupsi merusak kebebasan, keamanan, dan kemakmuran kita serta mengkhianati semangat Pancasila. Mari kita serukan pada para pemimpin kita untuk memastikan pemerintahan yang jujur dan terbuka, dan berjuang untuk Indonesia yang lebih bebas, adil, dan sejahtera untuk kita semua.</p> <p>#LawanKorupsi #Pancasila #DemokrasiIndonesia #KebebasanDanDemokrasiHidupDalamDiriKita</p>	<p>Corruption erodes our freedom, our security, and our prosperity in ways that violate the spirit of Pancasila. Let's call on our leaders to ensure honest and open government, and strive for a more free, fair, and prosperous Indonesia for all of us.</p> <p>#FightCorruption #Pancasila #IndonesianDemocracy #FreedomandDemocracyLiveInUs</p>

FAIR DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES		
Core Message	<p>Berlandaskan Pancasila, Indonesia berkomitmen untuk mewujudkan demokrasi yang adil, jujur, dan terbuka di mana setiap suara didengar, pemerintah menjawab kebutuhan rakyat, dan institusi demokrasi yang kuat untuk mencegah penyalahgunaan kekuasaan. Demokrasi yang sejati tidak hanya melayani kepentingan segelintir orang melainkan mendorong kebebasan, keadilan, keamanan, dan kemakmuran bersama untuk semua orang.</p>	<p>Rooted in Pancasila, Indonesia is committed to a fair, honest, and open democracy where every voice is heard, government answers to the people, and our strong democratic institutions prevent the abuse of power. A true democracy doesn't serve the interests of the few. Instead, it promotes freedom, fairness, security, and shared prosperity for everyone.</p>
Problem	<p>Terlepas dari fondasi yang kuat pada Pancasila, kita menghadapi tantangan dalam menjalankan prinsip-prinsip ini secara penuh. Kita semua dirugikan</p>	<p>Despite our strong foundation in Pancasila, we face challenges in fully living and governing by these principles. We are all hurt by a lack of</p>

	<p>oleh kurangnya pemerintahan yang jujur dan terbuka, sistem yang tidak memperlakukan semua orang dengan adil, yang juga melemahkan institusi demokrasi kita, hak kita, dan kebebasan kita. Dari ketidakadilan kesempatan kerja dan kemiskinan, hingga kesenjangan dalam pelayanan esensial dan layanan kesehatan yang tidak merata, tantangan-tantangan ini menghalangi kita untuk mewujudkan Indonesia yang padu dan sejahtera bagi kita semua juga keluarga kita.</p>	<p>honest and open government, systems that don't treat everyone fairly, and weakening of our democratic institutions, our rights, and our freedoms. From unequal job opportunities and poverty to gaps in essential services and unequal health outcomes, these challenges prevent us from realizing a united and prosperous Indonesia for all of us and our families.</p>
Solution	<p>Kita perlu menuntut pemerintahan yang jujur dan terbuka, perlakuan yang adil terhadap semua warga negara, institusi demokrasi yang kuat, dimana suara kita didengarkan. Dengan berpartisipasi aktif dalam demokrasi dan tetap bersuara, kita mampu menjalani prinsip-prinsip Pancasila dengan lebih baik yang bermanfaat bagi kita semua.</p>	<p>We need to demand honest and open government, fairness in how people are treated, strong democratic institutions, and the opportunity for every voice to be heard in our society. By actively participating in our democracy and speaking out, we can better live up to the principles of Pancasila in ways that benefit all of us.</p>
Benefits	<p>Dengan mewujudkan demokrasi yang adil, bebas, dan inklusif, kita bisa membangun masyarakat yang lebih kuat di mana setiap orang diperlakukan dengan setara dan dapat mengakses layanan dan kesempatan yang dibutuhkan dan layak didapatkan. Ini adalah cerminan dari semangat Pancasila yang sebenarnya, dengan memastikan setiap keluarga dapat berkembang dan berkontribusi bagi Indonesia yang makmur untuk kita semua.</p>	<p>By achieving a fair, free, and inclusive democracy, we can build a stronger society where everyone is treated equally and can access the services and opportunities they need and deserve. This is a reflection of the true spirit of Pancasila by making sure that every family can thrive and contribute to a prosperous Indonesia for all of us.</p>
Call to Action	<p>Demokrasi dan kebebasan hidup dalam diri kita semua. Bersama-sama, kita bisa menuntut pemilihan yang bebas dan adil, institusi demokrasi yang kuat, dan pemerintah yang bertanggung jawab kepada rakyat serta tetap setia pada prinsip-prinsip Pancasila. Dengan mencari informasi,</p>	<p>Democracy and freedom live in all of us. Together we can demand free and fair elections, strong democratic institutions, and government that answers to the people and stays true to the principles of Pancasila. By staying informed, voting, and sharing what we think and believe, we can</p>

	<p>memberikan suara dalam pemilihan, dan membagikan apa yang kita pikirkan dan kita yakini, kita bisa membantu membentuk Indonesia yang lebih bebas, adil, dan makmur untuk kita, keluarga kita, dan generasi mendatang.</p>	<p>help shape a more free, just, and prosperous Indonesia for us, our families, and future generations.</p>
Draft Social Post	<p>Setiap suara penting dalam demokrasi yang bebas dan kuat. Bersama, kita dapat menuntut pemerintahan yang jujur dan terbuka yang melindungi hak-hak kita dan memperlakukan setiap orang secara adil.</p> <p>#DemokrasiAdil #Pancasila #Indonesia #KebebasanDanDemokrasiHidupDalamDiriKita</p>	<p>Every voice matters in a free and strong democracy. Together, we can demand honest and open government that protects our rights and treats everyone fairly.</p> <p>#FairDemocracy #Pancasila #Indonesia #FreedomandDemocracyLiveInUs</p>

MINORITY RIGHTS		
Core Message	<p>Berbekal semangat Pancasila, demokrasi Indonesia menjunjung tinggi Bhinneka Tunggal Ika karena setiap orang, terlepas dari latar belakangnya, memiliki hak yang sama, dilibatkan sepenuhnya, dan mendapatkan perlakuan yang adil di mata hukum. Sayangnya, kita tidak selalu bertindak sesuai dengan nilai tersebut. Adalah tanggung jawab kita bersama untuk menjamin kebebasan, keadilan, dan kesempatan untuk semua, serta berkontribusi bagi Indonesia yang makmur, aman, dan inklusif di mana setiap orang dapat berkembang.</p>	<p>In the spirit of Pancasila, we embrace Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (unity in diversity) because every person—regardless of their background—should have equal rights, be fully included, and be treated fairly under the law. Yet, we don't always live up to those principles. It is our shared responsibility to guarantee freedom, justice, and opportunity for all, contributing to a prosperous, secure Indonesia where everyone can thrive.</p>
Problem	<p>Komitmen kita terhadap nilai Pancasila melemah ketika kita gagal melindungi hak orang-orang serta kelompok yang berbeda, dikucilkan, atau terpinggirkan. Akses kesehatan, pendidikan, pekerjaan, dan banyak hal lain terhambat oleh ketidakadilan</p>	<p>Our commitment to the principles of Pancasila is undermined when we ignore the rights of people and communities that are different, left out, or left behind. Unfairness and discrimination limit access to health care, education, jobs, and more.</p>

	<p>dan diskriminasi. Pelanggaran yang terus-menerus terhadap hak-hak orang menyebabkan perasaan terasing dan tidak berdaya, kehilangan akses dasar dan kesempatan yang lebih luas, serta menjadi sasaran kebencian dan kekerasan. Ini bertentangan dengan semua yang kita perjuangkan sebagai negara demokrasi. Minimnya keadilan dan kesetaraan yang terus mempengaruhi kita semua dengan dengan melemahkan persatuan, merusak kepercayaan publik kita, mengancam keamanan kita, dan menghambat kemajuan dan kemakmuran kita sebagai bangsa yang bebas dan demokratis.</p>	<p>When people's rights are consistently disregarded, they feel alienated and powerless, lose access to services and opportunities, and can even become targets of hate crimes and violence. This is a direct contradiction to our democratic ideals. The persistent lack of fairness and equality affects all of us by weakening our unity and our public trust, threatening our security, and hindering our progress and prosperity as a free and democratic nation.</p>
Solution	<p>Merupakan tanggung jawab kita bersama untuk membela kebebasan, akses layanan dan kesempatan yang lebih luas, serta keadilan bagi setiap individu dan komunitas, terlepas dari latar belakangnya. Kita harus berkomitmen penuh pada prinsip-prinsip Pancasila dan menciptakan masyarakat inklusif di mana setiap suara didengar dan dihargai. Pemerintah harus tanggap terhadap kebutuhan seluruh rakyat Indonesia tanpa mengesampingkan siapa pun. Demokrasi yang kuat mampu dan sudah seharusnya melindungi kebebasan dan keamanan setiap orang tanpa pengecualian atau kompromi.</p>	<p>It is our shared responsibility to stand up for freedom, access to services and opportunities, and justice for every individual and community, regardless of their background. We must fully commit to the principles of Pancasila and create an inclusive society where every voice is heard and valued. The government must be responsive to the needs of all Indonesians without leaving anyone out. A strong democracy can and must protect everyone's freedom and security without any exceptions or compromises.</p>
Benefits	<p>Melindungi hak semua orang dan kelompok, terutama mereka yang terpinggirkan, berperan dalam membangun masyarakat yang bebas, adil, dan inklusif di mana setiap orang dapat berpartisipasi, berkontribusi, dan berkembang. Dengan menghormati keragaman kita dan menguatkan hubungan satu sama lain, kita meningkatkan stabilitas</p>	<p>Protecting the rights of all people and communities—especially those that are different, left out, or left behind—helps build a free and fair society where everyone can participate, contribute, and thrive. In respecting our diversity and strengthening our connections to each other, we increase the stability of our society and create more</p>

	<p>masyarakat dan menciptakan lebih banyak peluang bagi kita semua. Hal inilah yang benar-benar mencerminkan esensi Pancasila—Indonesia yang makmur yang memberi manfaat bagi semua orang.</p>	<p>opportunities for us all. This truly reflects the essence of Pancasila—a prosperous Indonesia that benefits everyone.</p>
Call to Action	<p>Demokrasi dan kebebasan hidup di dalam diri kita semua. Sebagai satu bangsa, mari kita membela hak-hak semua orang, terutama orang-orang yang mengalami ketidakadilan dan diskriminasi. Hanya dengan mendorong Indonesia yang inklusif, kita dapat benar-benar mencerminkan semangat Bhineka Tunggal Ika dan memungkinkan seluruh keluarga untuk berbagi kemakmuran, keamanan, dan kebebasan yang ditawarkan oleh bangsa kita yang hebat.</p>	<p>Democracy and freedom live in all of us. As one nation, let us stand up for the rights of all people, especially those who experience unfairness and discrimination. Only by fostering an inclusive Indonesia can we truly reflect the spirit of unity in diversity and enable all families to share in the prosperity, security, and freedom that our great nation has to offer.</p>
Draft Social Post	<p>Kita semua berhak atas kebebasan dan keadilan, terlepas dari latar belakang kita. Mari kita bersatu untuk hak SEMUA orang dan komunitas.</p> <p>#HakUntukSemua #Pancasila #IndonesiaInklusif #KebebasanDanDemokrasiHidupDalamDiriKita</p>	<p>We all deserve freedom and justice, regardless of our background. Let's stand together for the rights of ALL people and communities.</p> <p>#RightsForAll #Pancasila #InclusiveIndonesia #FreedomandDemocracyLiveInUs</p>

APPENDIX III: SERBIA RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE

The recommended pro-democracy narrative and supporting message framework below were developed in Serbia by applying research findings, data, and the five evidence-based guidelines. The narrative and message framework evoke priority core values (see color key below), are primarily asset-framed, prioritize relatable (non-technical) language, and are informed by cultural, historical, and political context. The Narrative Development and Testing Phase created four narratives that were tested with focus groups and surveys.

The recommended narrative tested the strongest among stakeholders, standing out with the highest levels of agreement, relevance, and willingness to share across all audience segments. Even authoritarian-leaning respondents showed high agreement with the narrative—reducing the potential for backlash. Based upon the findings from the message testing, the messaging was refined to increase the prevalence of the highest-performing message components.

Words and phrases that reflect the identified core values are shown in the corresponding colors in the narrative and message framework:

Core Values Color Key	Freedom	Fairness	Safety/Security	Honesty	Representation
	Prosperity	Strength/ Fearlessness	Responsibility	Family	Tradition

Note: The color coding reflects the color coding of the 10 recommended values and not the existing narrative landscape.

CARING ABOUT OTHERS IS CARING ABOUT US <i>Briga o drugima je briga o nama</i>		
Core Message (summary)	<p>U našoj tradiciji, porodica je svetinja i imamo obavezu da brinemo jedni o drugima. Kao u porodici, u demokratiji je neophodno da svi zajednički rade na poštovanju i zaštiti prava svakog od članova.</p> <p>Ne bi trebalo da moramo da žrtvujemo svoje slobode u zamenu za ličnu bezbednost ili bezbednost naše zemlje. Prava bezbednost postoji samo kada svi možemo slobodno da živimo, mislimo, govorimo—i damo svoj doprinos dobrobiti zemlje.</p> <p>Sloboda je i pravo i odgovornost; svi imamo pravo da budemo slobodni, i odgovornost da poštujemo slobodu</p>	<p>In our tradition, family is sacred, and we have a duty to care for each other. Like in a family, democracy demands that everyone work together to respect and protect all of our freedoms and rights.</p> <p>But too often we are told we must sacrifice our freedom in exchange for security. True security exists only when we all can live, think, and speak freely, and fully participate in contributing to the well-being of the country.</p> <p>Freedom is both a right and a responsibility; we all have a right to be free and a responsibility to respect</p>

	<p>drugih. Kada svako od nas bude brinuo o Srbiji kao što brinemo o svojoj porodici, nećemo morati da strahujemo za budućnost demokratije u našoj zemlji.</p>	<p>the freedom of others. When each one of us cares for Serbia like we care for our own families, we will not have to worry about the future of democracy in our country.</p>
Problem	<p>Previše često slušamo kako bezbednost Srbije zahteva da žrtvujemo svoja lična prava i slobode, kao i da demokratija podriva tradicionalne porodične vrednosti. Ali to je samo paravan za one koji bi hteli da nam uskrate prava i slobode koje svi mi zaslužujemo.</p>	<p>Too often we're told that Serbia's security demands that we sacrifice our personal rights and freedoms, or that democracy undermines traditional family values. But that is just a smokescreen used by those who would deny the rights and freedoms every one of us deserves.</p>
Solution	<p>Istinski demokratska Srbija štitila bi i brinula o pravima i slobodama svih, baš kao što naša tradicija nalaže da brinemo o svim članovima naših porodica. Demokratsko društvo funkcioniše na pošten i otvoren način, sa punom svešću o tome da niko ne može da bude bezbedan ako nije slobodan.</p>	<p>A truly democratic Serbia protects and cares about the rights and freedoms of everyone, just as our tradition dictates that we care for all the members of our families. A democratic society operates honestly and openly and recognizes that no one can be secure if they are not free.</p>
Benefits	<p>Svi zaslužujemo demokratsku Srbiju izgrađenu na slobodi i pravdi, koja može da obezbedi bezbednost za sve nas, naše porodice i našu zemlju. Poštena vlada koja odgovara na potrebe građana—i pravična je prema svima—može da pomogne da se izgradi bogato društvo, u kojem svako može da stvori bolji život i da pun doprinos zajednici i čitavom društvu.</p>	<p>A democratic Serbia built on the freedom and justice we all deserve can provide security for ourselves, for our families, and for our country. An honest government that is responsive to the needs of the people—and treats everyone with fairness—can help build a more prosperous society in which each person can create a better life and contribute fully to their community and our country.</p>
Call to Action*	<p>Hajde da brinem o slobodi i pravu drugih da žive, rade, misle i govore slobodno, kao što brinemo o članovima naše porodice. Hajde da govorimo, slušamo druge i tražimo transparentnost i odgovornost od onih koji nam služe. Zajedno možemo da doprinesemo bezbednosti i slobodi Srbije i svakog od nas.</p>	<p>Let us care for the freedom and rights of others to live, work, think, and speak freely, like we care for the members of our own families. Let us speak out, listen to others, and demand transparency and accountability from those who serve us. Together, we can contribute to security and freedom for Serbia and for each of us.</p>

***NOTE:** The call to action statement shown here is a general statement appropriate to an overarching narrative message framework. It can be tailored for audiences and key issues in ways that identify specific actions they can take (e.g., speaking out, contacting their elected representatives, voting, or other action).

RECOMMENDED NARRATIVE AND MESSAGING IN ACTION

The recommended narrative includes three illustrative examples, showing how the narrative and message framework can be customized for any salient and relevant issue in Serbia. These examples can help implementers apply the narrative to numerous other issues relevant to bolstering democratic principles and countering pro-authoritarian narratives, messaging, and mis/dis/malinformation.

CORRUPTION		
Core Message	<p>Zaslužujemo da imamo i slobodu i bezbednost.</p> <p>Neki nam govore da moramo da žrtvujemo slobodu da bismo bili bezbedni. To je samo izgovor koji koriste kako bi nam uskratili pravo da pravo da znamo kako se donose važne odluke i koriste javni resursi. A to stvara pogodno tlo za korupciju, zbog koje nismo ni bezbedni ni slobodni. Svi zajedno moramo da se borimo protiv korupcije. Moramo se zalagati za osnovne demokratske principe: za poštenju i transparentnu vlast, zajedničku odgovornost i pravičnost za sve.</p>	<p>We deserve both freedom and security. Some people say we have to sacrifice freedom to be secure. That's only an excuse they use to deny our right to know how important decisions are made and how public resources are used. And that creates fertile ground for corruption, which makes us neither safe nor free. We must fight together against corruption. We must stand up for the core democratic principles of honest and open government, shared responsibility, and fairness for all.</p>
Problem	<p>Previše često nam govore da moramo da žrtvujemo naša prava i slobode da bismo bili bezbedni. Ali to je samo izgovor da bi nam se uskratilo pravo da znamo kako se donose važne odluke i koriste javni resursi. To podriva naše demokratske institucije i utire put korupciji i zloupotrebi moći. U Srbiji ne važe isti zakoni za sve. Javni resursi se preusmeravaju ka onima koji su bogati i moćni umesto da se ulažu u obrazovanje, zdravstvo i infrastrukturu. To su važne stvari na</p>	<p>Too often we're told that we have to sacrifice our rights and freedoms to be secure. But that's just an excuse to limit our right to know how decisions are made and public resources are used. And it undermines our democratic institutions and paves the way for corruption and abuse of power. In Serbia, laws are applied unfairly. Public resources are diverted to the rich and powerful instead of funding education, healthcare, and infrastructure. These</p>

	<p>koje se mi i naše porodice oslanjamo i koje zaslužujemo. Korupcija podriiva moгуćnosti za privredni rast i opštu dobrobit. I smanjuje našu veru i poverenje u vladu, ali i međusobno poverenje građana.</p>	<p>are the important things we and our families deserve and rely on. Corruption hurts opportunities for economic growth and shared prosperity. And it weakens our faith and trust in our government and each other.</p>
Solution	<p>Niko nije iznad zakona. Da bismo suzbili korupciju, potrebna nam je vlada koja poštuje taj demokratski princip i koja je odgovorna prema narodu. I potrebna nam je vlada koja štiti naše demokratske ideje i institucije, uključujući slobodne i aktivne medije. Moramo da zahtevamo poštenju i transparentnu vladu kako bismo znali kako se donose odluke i koriste javni resursi. I moramo podržati i zaštititi pravo svakoga od nas da bez straha digne glas protiv korupcije.</p>	<p>No one is above the law. To defeat corruption, we need a government that respects this principle of democracy and answers to the people. And we need a government that protects our democratic ideas and institutions, including a free and active press. We must demand honest and open government so we can see how decisions are made and public resources are used. And we must support and protect everyone's right to speak against corruption without fear.</p>
Benefits	<p>Što je manje korupcije, javni resursi se bolje koriste. To znači lakši pristup poslovima, boljem obrazovanju i zdravstvenoj zaštiti za svakoga od nas. Ljudi onda žive slobodnije i mogu bolje da brinu o sebi i svojim porodicama. Borba protiv korupcije će povećati i pravičnost i mogućnost da svi imaju koristi od napretka države. Borba protiv zloupotrebe moći će povećati i naše međusobno poverenje, poverenje u društvo, i u našu vladu.</p>	<p>The less corruption, the better public resources are used. That means more access to jobs, education, and healthcare for all of us. As a result, people will live more freely and have a better chance to provide for themselves and their families. Fighting against corruption will also increase fairness and opportunities to share in our country's prosperity. Fighting the abuse of power will also increase our trust in our society, our government, and each other.</p>
Call to Action	<p>Svi zajedno moramo da zahtevamo da naša vlada preduzme ozbiljne korake u borbi protiv korupcije. I moramo da zahtevamo pravičnost i jednaki uslovi za sve. Svako od nas može da da svoj doprinos tako što će da podigne glas protiv korupcije. Bilo kada. Bilo gde.</p>	<p>Together, we must demand that our government take real steps to fight corruption. And we must demand fairness and opportunity for everyone. Every one of us can make a difference by speaking out against corruption. Anytime. Anywhere.</p>
Draft Social	<p>Niko nije iznad zakona. Da bismo suzbili korupciju, potrebna nam je</p>	<p>No one is above the law. To defeat corruption, we need a government</p>

Post	<p>vlada koja odgovara narodu, a ne bogatima i moćnima. Manje korupcije znači lakši pristup poslovima, boljem obrazovanju i zdravstvenoj zaštiti za svakoga od nas. Naša vlada mora da preduzme ozbiljne korake u borbi protiv korupcije. Zajedno, moramo da zahtevamo pravičnost i jednaki uslovi za sve.</p> <p>#EndCorruptionNow #SlobodaiDemokratijaZiveuNama</p>	<p>that answers to the people instead of the rich and powerful. Less corruption means more access to jobs, education, and healthcare for all of us. Our government must take real steps to fight corruption. Together, we must demand fairness and opportunity for everyone.</p> <p>#EndCorruptionNow #FreedomAndDemocracyLiveInUs</p>
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ECONOMY		
Core Message	<p>Slobodna društva stvaraju najbolje uslove za snažnu i stabilnu privredu. Ona to čine zaštitom slobode izražavanja i ideja, snažnih demokratskih institucija i zakona koji su isti za sve. Ovo stvara stabilno poslovno okruženje koje privlači investicije i pokreće privredu. Time su preduzetnici inspirisani da pokreću poslove i poslovno okruženje podstiče inovacije. Sve ovo otvara nova radna mesta. U Srbiji našu privredu kontroliše šaćica ljudi sa privilegijama. Govore nam da misle na opšte dobro. Ali, zapravo oni slabe naše demokratske institucije, ograničavaju nam slobodu i umanjuju prilike koje nam se pružaju. Zajedno, možemo da zahtevamo poštenu i transparentnu vlast, Zahtevajmo vlast koja štiti naše slobode. Tako ćemo stvoriti slobodniju, pravičniju, prosperitetniju i bezbedniju Srbiju za sve nas.</p>	<p>Free societies create the best opportunity for a strong and stable economy. They do this by protecting freedom of expression and ideas, strong democratic institutions, and laws that treat everyone fairly. This generates a stable business environment that attracts investment and boosts trade. Entrepreneurs are inspired to start businesses and it's easier to drive innovation. All of this creates jobs. In Serbia, our economy is controlled by a privileged few. They say they have our best interests at heart. But they are weakening our democratic institutions, our freedom, and our opportunities. Together, we can demand honest and open government that protects our freedoms. That is how we create a more free, fair, prosperous, and secure Serbia for all of us.</p>
Problem	<p>U Srbiji našu privredu kontroliše šaćica ljudi sa privilegijama. Govore nam da misle na opšte dobro. Ali, oni samo brinu o sopstvenom bogatstvu i moći. Zapravo nam ograničavaju slobodu</p>	<p>In Serbia, our economy is controlled by a privileged few. They say they have our best interests at heart. But they care only about their power and wealth. They limit our freedom of speech and</p>

	<p>govora i medija kako ne bi saznali šta oni rade. To dovodi do korupcije i obezbeđuje neravnopravan pristup resursima i prilikama. Odvraćaju se investicije i otežava slobodna trgovina. Zbog toga naša privreda i naša zemlja u teškim vremenima postaju manje izdržljivi. Ovo nanosi štetu našem ekonomskom rastu i ugrožava se budućnost naših porodica i dece. Naša privreda i naše društvo postaju manje bezbedni, manje prosperitetni i manje slobodni.</p>	<p>media to make it harder for us to know what they are doing. This leads to corruption and creates unequal access to resources and opportunities.</p> <p>Investments and trade are deterred. Because of that, our economy and our country become less resilient during hard times. This hurts our economic growth and jeopardizes the future of our families and children. It also makes our economy—and our society—less secure, less prosperous, and less free.</p>
Solution	<p>Da bismo imali snažnu i stabilnu privredu, potrebna nam je vlada koja štiti slobodu izražavanja, podržava jake demokratske institucije, sprovodi zakone koji svakog tretiraju pravično i javno i iskreno se bori protiv korupcije.</p>	<p>To have a strong and stable economy, we need a government that protects freedom of expression, supports strong democratic institutions, enforces laws that treat everyone fairly, and fights corruption honestly and openly.</p>
Benefits	<p>Demokratsko društvo koje poštuje lična prava i slobode svojih građana je bolje opremljeno da izgradi snažnu privredu. To je iz razloga što privlači investicije, omogućava razvoj kompanija i promoviše zajednički prosperitet. Kao rezultat toga ljudi i društvene zajednice dobijaju bolji pristup zdravstvenoj zaštiti, obrazovanju i poslovima. To znači da ljudi neće morati da napuštaju svoju zemlju u potrazi za boljim životom. Tako možemo da izgradimo slobodniju, pravičniju, prosperitetniju i sigurniju Srbiju za sve nas i našu decu.</p>	<p>A democratic society that respects the rights and freedoms of its citizens is better equipped to build a strong economy. That's because it attracts investment, grows companies, and promotes shared prosperity. As a result, people and communities have increased access to health care, education, and jobs. That means people don't have to leave our country in search of a better life. That is how we can build a more free, fair, prosperous, and secure Serbia for all of us and our children.</p>
Call to Action	<p>Svi zajedno moramo da zahtevamo poštenu i transparentnu vladu koja štiti slobodu izražavanja i ideja, jake demokratske institucije i zakone koji svakog pojedinca tretiraju ravnopravno.</p>	<p>Together, we must demand honest and open government that protects freedom of expression and ideas, strong democratic institutions, and laws that treat everyone fairly.</p>

Draft Social Post	<p>Kakve veze imaju sloboda i ekonomija? Slobodna društva štite slobodu izražavanja i ideja, snažnih demokratskih institucija i zakona koji su isti za sve. Tako se stvara stabilno poslovno okruženje, i lakše privlače investicije i razvija trgovina. Ljudi pokreću inovacije i osnivaju nove firme čime se otvaraju nova radna mesta.</p> <p>Zajedno možemo da zahtevamo poštenju i transparentnu vlast, koja štiti naše slobode. Tako ćemo stvoriti slobodniju, pravičniju, prosperitetniju i bezbedniju Srbiju za sve nas.</p> <p>#SlobodnoDrustvoSnaznaEkonomija #SlobodaIDemokratijaZiveUNama</p>	<p>What does freedom have to do with the economy? Free societies protect freedom of expression and ideas, strong democratic institutions, and laws that are the same for everyone. That creates a stable business environment and attracts investment and trade. People innovate and start new businesses, which creates jobs. Together, we can demand honest and open government that protects our freedoms. That is how we create a more free, fair, prosperous, and secure Serbia for all of us.</p> <p>#FreeSocietyStrongEconomy #FreedomAndDemocracyLiveInUs</p>

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS		
Core Message	<p>Sloboda medija je od suštinskog značaja ne samo za naše ljudske slobode. Ona je istovremeno i temelj našeg zajedničkog prosperiteta i bezbednosti. Zahvaljujući slobodnim medijima imamo pristup informacijama koje su nam neophodne za donošenje odluka, sprečavanje korupcije i proveru poštenja i transparentnosti naših liderima. Svi zajedno moramo da štitimo slobodu medija kako bi mediji bili u boljoj poziciji da zaštite slobodu svih nas.</p>	<p>Freedom of the press is not just essential to our freedom as people. It is also the foundation of our shared prosperity and security. A free press makes sure we have access to the information we need to make decisions, prevent corruption, and keep our leaders honest. Together we must protect freedom of the press so the press is in a better position to protect freedom for all of us.</p>
Problem	<p>Previše često, pred nama je lažni izbor između bezbednosti i slobode. Kažu nam da kritičari i novinari koji postavljaju važna i teška pitanja napadaju Srbiju.</p> <p>Uskraćuje nam se pristup informacijama koje su nam potrebne, ili nam se podmeću dezinformacije</p>	<p>Too often, we are given a false choice between security and freedom. We are told that critics and journalists who ask important and hard questions are attacking Serbia. We are denied access to the information we need and subjected to disinformation designed to distract our attention.</p>

	<p>osmišljene da nam odvuku pažnju. Zbog toga nam je teže da se pošteno suočimo sa izazovima i da pozovemo naše lidere na odgovornost. Ograničavanje slobode medija slabi naše međusobno poverenje kao i poverenje u naše lidere. Zbog toga postajemo i manje slobodni i manje bezbedni.</p>	<p>Restricting freedom of the press makes it harder to face our challenges honestly and hold our leaders accountable. As a result, we lose trust in our leaders and each other, and we become less free and less safe.</p>
Solution	<p>Sloboda izražavanja i informacija—uključujući i slobodu medija—može i mora da bude temelj naše bezbednosti. Naši lideri moraju da poštuju i štite slobodu medija da bismo imali pristup informacijama neophodnim za donošenje dobrih odluka. Kao Srbi, dovoljno smo jaki da cenimo kritike, istinite informacije i ideje o tome kako da našu naciju učinimo boljom. To mogu da nam obezbede samo slobodni mediji.</p>	<p>Freedom of expression and information—including freedom of the press—can and must be the foundation of our security. Our leaders must respect and protect freedom of the press so we have access to the information we need to make informed decisions. As Serbs, we are strong enough to value the criticism, honest information, and ideas on how to make our nation better than only a free press can provide.</p>
Benefits	<p>Čuvanje slobode medija nastavlja dugu tradiciju Srbije da se stvari nazovu pravim imenom. Slobodni i nezavisni mediji mogu da nam pomognu da bolje razumemo i rešimo izazove pred nama. Zahvaljujući slobodnim medijima lakše je boriti se protiv korupcije, razdvojiti činjenice od dezinformacija i pozivati lidere na odgovornost prema narodu. Očuvanje slobodnih i nezavisnih medija gradi poverenje u naše vođe i međusobno poverenje građana. Tako gradimo snažniju Srbiju koja je prosperitetnija, slobodnija, pravičnija i bezbednija za sve nas i naše porodice.</p>	<p>Protecting freedom of the press honors Serbia's long tradition of speaking hard truths. A free and independent press can help us better understand and solve the challenges we face. A free press makes it easier to fight corruption and challenge disinformation, and to hold our leaders accountable to the people. Ensuring freedom of the press builds trust in our leaders and in each other. It also builds a stronger Serbia that is more fair, more prosperous, more free, and more secure for all of us and our families.</p>
Call to Action	<p>Svi zajedno moramo da zahtevamo da naše vođe poštuju i štite slobodu medija kako bi mediji mogli da zaštite našu slobodu.</p>	<p>We must stand together to demand that our leaders respect and protect freedom of the press so the press can protect our freedom.</p>
Draft Social Post	<p>Da li je sloboda moguća bez istine? Kada nam se uskraćuje pristup informacijama koje su nam potrebne,</p>	<p>Is freedom possible without the truth? When we are denied access to information and subjected to</p>

ili nam se podmeću **dezinformacije**, gubimo sposobnost da se kao društvo pošteno suočimo sa **izazovima**. **Slobodni i nezavisni mediji** pomažu nam da **donosimo odluke**, sprečavamo **korupciju** i **pozivamo lidere na odgovornost prema narodu**. Čuvanje **slobode medija nastavlja dugu tradiciju Srbije da se stvari nazovu pravim imenom**. Svi **zajedno moramo da zahtevamo da naše vođe poštuju i štite slobodu medija** kako bi mediji mogli da efikasno **zaštite** našu **slobodu**.

#SlobodniMedijiSnaznaSrbija
#SlobodaiDemokratijaZiveuNama

disinformation, we can't **face Serbia's challenges honestly**. A **free and independent press** helps us **make informed decisions**, prevent **corruption**, and **keep our leaders honest**. Protecting **freedom of the press honors Serbia's long tradition of speaking hard truths**. We must **stand together to demand that our leaders** respect and **protect freedom of the press** so the press can effectively **protect** our **freedom**.

#FreePressStrongSerbia
#FreedomAndDemocracyLiveInUs

APPENDIX IV: METHODOLOGIES

LITERATURE REVIEW SOURCES

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INDICES

Indices	Years Reviewed
AfroBarometer	2021
AmericasBarometer	2021
AmericasBarometer: Latin American Public Opinion Project	2023
Analysis of Trends in Democratic Attitudes: Ecuador Report: NORC at the University of Chicago	2023
AsiaBarometer	2021
Click Report	2024
Corruption Barometer: Fundación Ciudadanía y Desarrollo, Transparency International	2023
Economist Democracy Index	2022
Freedom House	2011, 2016, 2021
Freedom House: Freedom in the World	2023, 2024
Freedom House: Freedom in the World	2023
Freedom House: Internet Freedom Score	2023
Freedom House: Internet Freedom Score	2023
Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	
Fund for Peace: Fragile States Index	2023
International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) Democracy Index	2023
Latinobarometer: Fundación Latinobarómetro	2021, 2023
National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic's Index of Public Confidence in the Activities of State Executive Authorities and Local Self- Government Bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic	2021–2023
National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic's National Multidimensional Poverty Index of the Kyrgyz Republic	2021–2023
Perception Survey: Quito Cómo Vamos	2022
Reporters Without Borders: Press Freedom Index	2023, 2024
The Economist Democracy Index	2017 and 2021
The Economist Democracy Index	2022
The Global State of Democracy Indices	2021–2023

Indices	Years Reviewed
Transparency International Corruption Perception Index	2011, 2016, 2021
Transparency International Corruption Perception Index	2017, 2023
V-Dem Liberal Democracy Index	2017, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2024
World Justice Project: Human Rights and Rule of Law Index	2023
World Values Survey, World Values Survey Association	2017–2022
Youth Development Institute’s Youth Well-being and Development Index	2017, 2022

MEDIA SOURCES

The following are the digital and print media sources reviewed for this methodology:

1. **ABS-CBN’s TV Patrol** is a Philippine television news broadcasting show broadcast by ABS-CBN, Kapamilya Channel, A2Z, ABS-CBN News Channel, TeleRadyo Serbisyo and ALLTV. It is the longest-running Filipino-language news broadcasting show. The ABS-CBN News Channel has faced the democratic backsliding after it was ordered to be shut down under the administration of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr. and former President Rodrigo Duterte.
2. **Al Jazeera** is an international radio, television, and news company which covers global news, though focused primarily on Arabic-speaking countries. It is owned by media conglomerate Al Jazeera Media Network, which is based in and owned by the state of Qatar.
3. **Al-Tanasuh Channel** is a local channel reflecting the views of Mufti Sadiq Al-Ghariani and specifically funded and directed by the Libyan Fatwa House. The channel focuses on Islamic preaching and awareness, alongside its concentration on Libyan political affairs. It expresses support for the February Revolution and opposition to authoritarian rule. It enjoys strong popularity among moderate Islamic groups.
4. **Americas Quarterly** is an American magazine dedicated to politics, business, and culture in the Americas founded in 2007.
5. **Associated Press News** is an American not-for-profit news agency headquartered in New York City. Founded in 1846, it operates as a cooperative, unincorporated association, and produces news reports that are distributed to its members, major U.S. daily newspapers, and radio and television broadcasters.
6. **BBC News** is the division of the British Broadcasting Corporation responsible for news and current affairs in the United Kingdom and globally. It maintains over 50 field offices and reaches over 300 million people around the world through various platforms.
7. **Breitbart** is a right-wing U.S. news and opinion website.
8. **Brill** is a publishing house with an international focus. The company’s head office is in the Netherlands, with offices in Germany, Austria, the U.S., and Asia.

9. **CNN** is a subscription-based American news outlet founded in 1980. Currently, CNN is the second most-watched news channel in the United States.
10. **Dallas News** is a daily newspaper serving the Dallas-Fort Worth area of Texas, with an average print circulation in 2022 of 65,369. It is the most prominent newspaper in Dallas.
11. **Diario Las Américas** is the first Spanish-language newspaper founded in South Florida and the second oldest in the United States dedicated to Spanish-speaking readers.
12. **DZBB Super Radyo** is a radio station owned and operated by GMA Network. It serves as the flagship station of the Super Radyo network and one of the assets of GMA Radio and GMA Integrated News.
13. **DZMM TeleRadyo** is a Philippine pay television channel owned by Media Serbisyo Production Corporation, a joint venture between Prime Media Holdings (through subsidiary Philippine Collective Media Corporation) and ABS-CBN Corporation, with ABS-CBN News as its main content provider, and is available on cable providers throughout the Philippines. TeleRadyo Serbisyo is also simulcasted via The Filipino Channel (TFC) and it can be heard and viewed online via its YouTube channel and iWantTFC. TeleRadyo was also included as a digital subchannel on digital terrestrial television seen via the ABS-CBN TVplus digital TV receivers and other digital TV boxes, until its discontinuation on November 1, 2022.
14. **Ecuador Times** is an Ecuadorian digital newspaper that publishes events in Spanish and English.
15. **El Comercio** was a printed Ecuadorian newspaper founded on January 1, 1906. Its publication ceased in 2023.
16. **El Norte** is an Ecuadorian local digital media outlet focusing on events occurring in the Imbabura province and also covers national events.
17. **El País** is a Spanish newspaper founded in 1976. Written in Spanish, it also publishes content in Catalan, English, and Portuguese, covering news from Spain and around the world.
18. **El Universal** is a Mexican newspaper founded in 1916 in Mexico City. It is one of the highest-circulation newspapers in Mexico. It is considered Mexico's leading newspaper, and is the oldest one still in national circulation.
19. **El Universo** is an Ecuadorian morning newspaper founded in 1921 and published in the city of Guayaquil. This newspaper is currently one of the largest in the country.
20. **Expreso** is a newspaper from Guayaquil founded on July 25, 1973. It is among Ecuadorian media outlets known for its analytical capacity.
21. **February Channel** is a local Libyan channel established during the Tripoli war in 2019. Its purpose is to support the February Revolution movement. The channel discusses various Libyan affairs with a focus on supporting democracy. It is inclined towards the Government of National Unity since the channel's founder, Minister of State for Communications Walid Al-Lafi, established it before assuming his ministerial position. The channel has more followers from western Libya, especially on social media platforms.
22. **Forbes** is a media company that publishes a magazine and news website covering topics like global media, technology, and business.

23. **France 24** is a French-origin international subscription-based government television channel created on November 30, 2005.
24. **Fundamedios** is an Ecuadorian non-governmental organization established in 2007, aiming to support media outlets and journalists by monitoring threats and attacks against freedom of expression, as well as documenting violations against the press.
25. **Gaceta UNAM** is a biweekly publication covering cultural, scientific, academic, sports, and institutional activities and events from all UNAM departments and organizations, as well as international news.
26. **GMA Network News** is the Philippines' leading broadcasting company, which produces the most innovative, most trusted, and top-rating TV programs. Also known as the Kapuso Network, GMA brings superior entertainment and responsible, unbiased, and timely delivery of comprehensive and accurate News and Information to Filipinos anywhere in the world—through its TV, radio, online platforms and wide array of other media-related ventures: program syndication, film production, music publishing and distribution, set design, audio-visual production, and new media.
27. **Infobae** is an online newspaper focused on current events and the economy of Argentina established in 2002.
28. **Jamahiriya TV** is a local channel loyal to the Gaddafi regime, primarily reporting on Libyan affairs with a focus on supporting the Gaddafi regime. The channel attempts to shape and guide public opinion towards increasing the popularity of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi.
29. **Kaktus Media** is an independent Kyrgyz news agency, established in 2017, that focuses on political, economic, and social news, often with critical views on government policies.
30. **La Hora Ecuador** is a newspaper with several regional editions in Ecuador, founded on August 23, 1982. It was printed until March 19, 2020 and transformed to a digital newspaper.
31. **La Línea de Fuego** was founded in October 2010 as a digital magazine for analysis, essays, opinions, and journalistic articles that narrate current and historical events from an interdisciplinary perspective.
32. **La Nación** is a traditional liberal-conservative newspaper based in Buenos Aires.
33. **La Prensa de Riobamba** is a local digital newspaper from the Andean region of Ecuador; it covers the events from Chimborazo province.
34. **Libya Al Ahrar TV** is a local channel based in Istanbul, previously in Doha, funded by Qatar. The channel tries to emulate the professionalism of Al Jazeera. It covers Libyan affairs with a relatively neutral approach, leaning more towards supporting democratic values and freedom of expression. It is one of the most-watched Libyan channels on television and social media platforms.
35. **Libya Al-Hadath TV** is a local channel loyal to Haftar's military establishment and the House of Representatives in eastern Libya. It has a wide popularity and a strong audience base in the eastern and southern regions of Libya. Its rhetoric consistently justifies military and authoritarian rule in Libya, showcasing their achievements on a wide scale. It also has a strong presence on social media.
36. **New York Post** is a daily media publication that covers topics from global news to celebrity gossip.

37. **Notimundo** is a traditional media outlet from the Sierra region of Ecuador; it covers news through its website and radio station.
38. **Open Democracy** is an independent international media platform that produces journalism which challenges power, inspires change, and builds leadership among groups underrepresented in the media.
39. **Página 12** is an Argentine newspaper published in Buenos Aires since 1987.
40. **Político** is a digital media company that focuses on political and policy news, analysis, and opinion, primarily for a professional audience. It provides coverage of U.S. and international politics, with a strong emphasis on the intersection of politics and policy.
41. **Primicias** is Ecuador's first digital newspaper, covering both national and international news.
42. **Proceso** is a Mexican digital media outlet that covers both national and international news.
43. **Radio La Calle** is an Ecuadorian alternative digital media outlet.
44. **Russia Today (RT)** is a Russian state-controlled international news print and television network funded by the Russian government. It offers global coverage in multiple languages and is known for its prominent role in disseminating pro-Russian propaganda and misinformation.
45. **Sin Embargo** is a Mexican digital media outlet that, according to its mission, upholds rigor and social responsibility, free from political, economic, or governmental commitments.
46. **Sputnik** is a Russian state-owned news agency and radio broadcast service based in Moscow. It focuses on global politics and economics and is widely perceived to be a Russian propaganda outlet.
47. **Swissinfo** is a Swiss news and multimedia information portal. It belongs to SRG SSR.
48. **Teleamazonas** is an Ecuadorian television network that was launched in February 1974. It is a major television network in the country.
49. **The Economist** is a British weekly newspaper focused on current affairs, international business, politics, technology, and culture. It is estimated to have an audience of over 35 million.
50. **The Global Times** is a Chinese and English language daily news publication based in Beijing, China, and is known for its close ties to the Chinese Communist Party. Its editorial stance tends to cover events from a Chinese nationalist perspective.
51. **The Guardian** is a British daily newspaper considered a “newspaper of record” in the United Kingdom. It was founded in 1821 with the intent to be a news source safeguarding journalistic freedoms.
52. **The New York Times** is a daily newspaper based in New York City with a subscriber base of nearly 7 million, and is generally considered the “newspaper of record” in the United States.
53. **The Philippine Daily Inquirer** is a daily newspaper founded on the 9th of December 1985. A newspaper that is fearless in the face of repression, unflinching in its commitment to the truth for the Filipino people. The Philippine Daily Inquirer is undeniably the country’s most credible and influential newspaper, with more than one

million nationwide readers daily. Not only is it the most read among all sectors and ages, it is also the country's most trusted source of hard-hitting news and countless exposés.

54. **The Philippine Star** (self-styled The Philippine STAR) is an English-language newspaper in the Philippines and the flagship brand of the Philstar Media Group. First published on July 28, 1986, by veteran journalists Betty Go-Belmonte, Max Soliven and Art Borjal, it is one of several Philippine newspapers founded after the 1986 People Power Revolution.
55. **The Russian News Agency (TASS)** is a major Russian state-owned news agency and one of the largest news agencies worldwide, with 70 offices in the Russian Federation and 68 bureaus around the world.
56. **The Wall Street Journal** is a business and financial news publication from the U.S.
57. **The Washington Times** is a conservative daily newspaper based in Washington, D.C.
58. **U.S. News** is an American magazine published in Washington, D.C.
59. **Washington Post** is a daily newspaper in the United States headquartered in Washington, D.C., with one of the largest national audiences of any U.S. news publication.
60. **Xinhua News Agency** is the official state news agency of the People's Republic of China. It is an institution subject to the Chinese State Council and is the highest ranking state media organization in China.

SOCIAL MEDIA LISTENING

Metropolitan Group and research partners used Meltwater, a social listening tool that is able to research and monitor over 300 billion social conversations from around the world. We set up detailed search parameters to capture content themes, to help validate salient and dominant narratives identified through other methodologies.

X (then Twitter) was the main social media platform analyzed, as it is the social platform used the most amongst the global political key leaders. For example, in 2021 there were over 477,000 posts by members of the U.S. Congress on Twitter. In comparison, there were 295,000 Facebook posts published by members of Congress in 2021.¹⁵⁷ In addition, Twitter and Facebook measure reach differently. On Facebook, the reach value is sourced from the number of likes on the individual Facebook page. On Twitter, the reach value is sourced from the author of the post's number of followers. Twitter also provides data for engagement—such as sharing, commenting, or liking. Facebook has also set policies for all third-party providers such as Meltwater, limiting accessibility to public page content. This meant that when pulling Facebook data we were required to add specific pages to monitor, rather than being able to do a broader search for keywords across all accounts.

MG developed a set of keyword search terms (listed below) to scan social media on three core issue areas—the 2021 Summit for Democracy, COVID-19 lockdowns, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The searches were conducted using boolean search logic to help filter content for

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.statista.com/topics/3723/social-media-and-politics-in-the-united-states/>

the most relevant results and sorted by reach and engagement. Given the large amount of data, we restricted our analysis to the first 100 social posts that were relevant to our research. The boolean search logic included:

Pro-Authoritarian (English)

((vaccine* OR "vaccine passport*" OR masks OR face masks) AND sentiment:negative) OR ((blame and (US or "United States" OR USA OR U.S. OR U.S.A.)) AND sentiment:positive) OR

("democratic resilience" AND sentiment:negative) OR

("state sovereignty" AND sentiment:negative) OR

((separatists OR justified) AND sentiment:positive) OR

((Ukraine AND Turkey AND (Kurds or Kurdish)) AND sentiment:negative)

"Government Control" OR (mask near/3 "child abuse") OR "government mandate" OR tyranny OR freedom OR nazi or Hitler or ("heroic sacrifice" AND china) OR (wuhan AND martyrs) OR (Turkey AND success) OR (Turkey AND West AND jealous) OR "personal choice" OR "masks are child abuse" OR "public order" OR truth

OR denazification or de-nazify OR irredentist OR irredentism OR separatists

OR ((Ukraine AND India AND Pakistan) AND sentiment:negative) OR (Russia AND ("right to protect" OR security)) OR expansionism OR "national unification" OR "NATO aggression" OR protect

OR "American hegemony" OR Imperialism OR "whole-process people* democracy" OR "Law-based governance" OR "national unification" OR "national harmony" OR "misunderstood democracy" OR "chinese economic miracle" OR ("democratic governments" near/3 (broken OR divided)) OR (democracy near/3 (ineffective or outdated)) OR "democracy with Chinese characteristics" OR "george floyd" OR "western interference" OR "western hegemony" OR "The West" OR hypocritical OR "The Five Poisons" OR "China Dream" OR (democracy near/5 interference)

Pro-Democracy (English)

((vaccine* OR "vaccine passport*" OR masks OR facemasks) AND sentiment:positive) OR (freedom AND sentiment:negative) OR

("state sovereignty" AND sentiment:positive) OR

(separatists AND sentiment:negative) OR

((blame near/4 (US OR USA OR U.S. OR U.S.A. OR "United States")) AND sentiment:negative) OR

(justified AND sentiment:negative) OR

("democratic resilience" AND sentiment:positive)

"public safety" OR "public health crisis" OR ((respect or listen) near/3 science)

OR "territorial integrity" OR "war crimes" OR "war criminal" OR "geneva conventions" OR (Crimea near/3 annexation) OR "far-right" OR "far right" OR "White supremacist" OR (RIM AND Russia) OR "Russian Imperial Movement" OR wrong OR illegal OR unlawful OR protect

OR "trust crisis" OR "substantive democracy" OR "by the people, for the people" OR "democratic dictatorship" OR "territorial integrity" OR "voting rights" OR "voting access" OR authoritarianism OR authoritarian OR "rule of law" OR "free speech" OR "freedom of expression" OR "freedom of the press" OR corruption or ("abuse of power" AND sentiment:negative) OR "Social justice" OR strongman OR nationalism OR fascism OR transparency OR accountability OR ("work in progress" near/3 democracy) OR "surveillance state" OR "police state"

In addition, we did a broad search for any posts that included Democracy in Decline, Democracy Delivers, Summit for Democracy, or S4D. We analyzed the results to determine the number of mentions for each, top locations of people posting about the topics, and sentiment. We then analyzed the posts with the highest reach and engagement to identify emerging key narratives.

Neutral (English)

((vaccines AND "vaccine passports" OR freedom OR masks OR facemasks OR "state sovereignty" justified "abuse of power") AND sentiment:neutral)

OR ((Ukraine AND India AND Pakistan) AND sentiment:neutral)

OR ((Ukraine AND Turkey AND (Kurds OR Kurdish)) AND sentiment:neutral)

OR "Game of money politics" OR "political stability"

Additional Search Terms by Country

Ecuador

Inequality, poverty, indigenous rights, migration, crime, healthcare, education, environment, prison crisis, citizen security, Lasso, Correa, Moreno, Naboa, Unión por la Esperanza Ecuador, Pachakutik, Partido Social Cristiano, National Assembly, Consejo de Participación Ciudadana y Control Social, judicial reform, economic austerity, protests, citizen participation, corruption, transparency, political violence, democracia vs.

	populismo, patria nueva, corrupción de siempre, crisis institucional, gobierno legitimo, defensa de la democracia, derechos humanos, lucha social, crisis carcelaria, estado de excepción, violencia política, muerte cruzada, October 2021 protests, 2023 mutual death, 2023 early elections, media censorship cases, 2024 narco violence, violence curfews
Libya	Accountability, armed groups, civil society organizations, corruption, democracy, development, dictatorship, elections, February revolution, foreign intervention, Gaddafi, governance, government of national unity, Haftar, high state council, ISIS, judiciary, legitimacy, migrants, military rule, oil, revolution, rights, Saif-al-Islam Gaddafi, security, state institutions terrorism, transparency, voting
Philippines	1987 constitution, EDSA constitution, charter change, apathy, aquino, yellow, liberal party, Hacienda Luisita, Diliwan, China, PRC West Philippines Sea, South China Sea, corruption, democracy, election, development, dictatorship, discipline, war on drugs, crime, Adik, Duterte, DDS, Davao, dynasties, elites, EDSA people power, fatigue, nutribun, imperial, Manila, US, Marcos, taliano gold, golden era, Ilocos, Singapore
U.S.	"democratic" or "free" or "freedom" or "free people" or "free press" or "freedom of the press" or "independent media" or "free media" or "rule of law" or "human rights" or "fundamental rights" or "transparent" or "transparency" or "accountable" or "accountability" or "justice" or "judicial" or "open government" or "dictator" or "authoritarian*" or "coup" or "insurrection" or "January 6" or "J6" or "vote*" or "voting" or "misinformation" or "disinformation" or "representation" or "un-american" or "unamerican" or "un american" or "not american" or "real american" or "true american" or "patriot" or "real patriot" or "civil society" or "civic society" or "liberty" or "will of the people"

POLLS AND SURVEYS

Metropolitan Group reviewed a number of polls selected for their engagement with key issues around democracy, including abuse of power, human rights, elections, transparency and accountability, political tolerance, rule of law, sociopolitical inclusion, citizen participation, equality, corruption, tribalism, and justice, among other key issues.

Poll/Survey	Organization	Year
Africa Youth Survey	Ichikowitz Family Foundation	2020–2022
AfroBarometer Survey in Nigeria	AfroBarometer – NOI Poll	2007, 2020

Poll/Survey	Organization	Year
AmericasBarometer	Latin American Public Opinion Project	2017–2021, 2023
Analysis of Trends in Democratic Attitudes: Ecuador Report	NORC at the University of Chicago	2023
Asian Barometer Survey	Hu Fu Center for East Asia Democratic Studies	2022
Biafra Poll	Global Igbo Alliance – Bizopt Solutions	2018
Buharimeter	CDD West Africa – NOIPoll	2018
Click Report	Click Research	2024
Corruption Barometer	Fundación Ciudadanía y Desarrollo, Transparency International	2023
Democratic Values Poll	Ventures Africa	2018
El Comercio – Ipsos Opinion Survey	Ipsos	2021
European Social Survey	ESS-ERIC	2020
Gender Equality Poll	NOIPoll	2022
Human Rights Poll	NOIPoll	2022
INEC Continuous Voter Registration Poll	NOIPoll	2021
Judicial System Perception Poll	NOIPoll	2021
June 12th Declaration Poll	NOIPoll	2018
Kyrgyzstan National Survey	CISR	2022
Latinobarómetro	Fundación Latinobarómetro	2018–2020, 2023
Libyan Political and Social Omnibus Survey	Diwan Research	2024
National Public Opinion Poll on Post-Election Perceptions in Nigeria	International Republican Institute	2011
National Survey of Nigerian Public Opinion	Center for Insight in Survey Research	2016

Poll/Survey	Organization	Year
New Serbian Political Thought	Ipsos	2022
Nigeria Post-Election Survey	International Foundation for Electoral Systems	2015–2019
Nigeria Social Cohesion Survey	African Polling Institute	2021
Nigeria Unity Poll	Nairaland Forum	2015
Per Research Center Survey – Nigeria	Pew Research Center	2018
Perception Survey	Quito Cómo Vamos	2022
Presidential Survey	Center for Research and Public Opinion	2017
Public opinion poll	The Libyan Center for Studies and Policy Design	2024
Public Perceptions of Serbia's Foreign Policy	Belgrade Centre for Security Policy	2017
Pulse Asia's Ulat ng Bayan	Pulse Asia Research Inc.	2022
Special Public Opinion Poll on the Presidential Elections and Referendum in Kyrgyzstan	Central Asia Barometer	2020
SWS' Social Weather Report	Social Weather Station (SWS)	2022
Tribal Discrimination in Nigeria Poll	NOIPolls	2019
Wave 7 – Libya	World Value Survey	2022
Western Balkans Regional Survey	International Republican Institute	2022
World Values Survey	World Values Survey Association	2017–2022
WR Numero's Philippine Public Opinion Monitor	WR Numero Research, Inc.	Q4 2023; Q1 2024

POLITICAL DISCOURSE SOURCES

Based upon the data gathered in the literature scan, media scan, and initial social media scan, Metropolitan Group and partners conducted an analysis of speeches and statements from the list of prominent individuals below. For each, Metropolitan Group used a combination of keyword searches to identify and analyze relevant political discourse (speeches, media interviews and statements, campaign communication, etc.) for these key contemporary and historic political figures. (Each individual is identified using their title at the time of the research.)

The political figures selected for analysis included:

- Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, Prime Minister of Government of National Unity
- Abdulaziz kary Zakirov, Mufti of Kyrgyzstan
- Abed Bwanika, Ugandan politician
- Adian Napitupulu, PDIP politician, Indonesia
- Aguila Saleh, Speaker of the House of Representatives
- Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, Chairman of Democratic Party, Indonesia
- Airlangga Hartarto, Chairman of Golkar Party, Indonesia
- Aisha Yesufu, Nigerian gender rights activist and influencer
- Akylbek Japarov, Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic
- Aleksandar Vučić, Serbian President
- Alondra Santiago, Journalist at Ingobrnables Ecuador
- Amama Mbabazi, former Prime Minister of Uganda
- Ana Brnabić, Serbian Prime Minister
- Anatoly Antonov, Russian Ambassador to the United States
- Andersson Boscán, Journalist and Founder of “La Posta”
- Andrew Mwenda, Ugandan journalist
- Anies Baswedan, Governor of DKI Jakarta, Indonesia
- Antony Blinken, United States Secretary of State
- António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General
- Anwar Gragash, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
- Bishop Hassan Kukah, influential Nigerian cleric and critic
- Bobi Wine, former Member of the Parliament of Uganda
- Boško Obradović, leader of Serbian opposition
- Carlos Rabascall, former vice-presidential candidate, commercial engineer, and journalist, Ecuador
- Cecilia Chacón, former congresswoman of the political party Fuerza Popular, Perú
- Claudia Ortiz, Deputy of the Vamos Party, El Salvador
- Dahlan Iskan, former Minister of State Enterprise Companies, Indonesia
- Daniel Noboa, President of Ecuador
- Dobrica Veselinović, leader of Serbian opposition
- Dr. Sam Amadi, Nigerian legal practitioner
- Dragan Đilas, leader of Serbian opposition
- Edil Baisalov, politician and civil servant in Kyrgyz presidential administration
- Erulan Kokulov, Deputy of Parliament in the Kyrgyz Republic
- Fahri Hamzah, former Vice Spokesperson of the Parliament, Indonesia
- Femi Falana, Nigerian legal practitioner and activist

- Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos, Jr., 17th President of the Philippines
- Fernando Villavicencio, Politician, Journalist, Co-founder at La Fuente, and former presidential candidate
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt, former United States President
- Ganjar Pranowo, Governor of Central Java, Indonesia
- George Forsyth, former presidential candidate, Perú
- George W. Bush, former President of the United States
- Guillermo Lasso, former President of Ecuador
- Henry Tumukunde, Ugandan politician
- Ivica Dačić, Speaker of Serbian Parliament
- Jan Topić, former presidential candidate, economist, and businessman
- Javier Altamirano, former mayor of the district of San Juan de Miraflores, Perú
- Joe Biden, President of the United States
- John F. Kennedy, former President of the United States
- Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia
- José Siméon Cañas Central American University (UCA), various editorials, El Salvador
- Joseph Kabuleta, Ugandan journalist
- Julio Rosas, former congressman of the political party Alianza para el Progreso and Peruvian pastor
- Kamala Harris, Vice President of the United States
- Kamchybek Tashiev, Kyrgyz politician and part of state national security
- Keiko Fujimori, presidential candidate and leader of the political party Fuerza Popular, Perú
- Khaled Mishri, former Head of the High Council of State
- Khalifa Haftar, Military commander and leader of the Libyan National Army
- Kizza Besigye Kifeefe, Ugandan politician
- Leónidas Iza, President at Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE)
- Linda Thomas-Greenfield, United States Ambassador to the United Nations
- Luhut Binsar Panjaitan, Coordinating Minister of Investment and Maritime Affairs, Indonesia
- Luisa González, lawyer and former presidential candidate
- M. Qodari, political scientist, Indonesia
- Ma. Leonor “Leni” Robredo, 14th Vice President of the Philippines and President of the Angat Pilipinas NGO
- Maia Sandu, President of Moldova
- María Sol Borja, Journalist and Political Analyst
- Marinika Tepić, leader of Serbian opposition
- Mario Vega, Pastor of Elim Church, El Salvador
- Martín Vizcarra, former President of the Republic of Perú
- Megawati Soekarnoputri, Chairman of PDIP, Indonesia
- Milena Mayorga, El Salvador Ambassador to the U.S.
- Mo Ibrahim, British businessman
- Moeldoko, Presidential Chief of Staff, Indonesia

- Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates
- Muhaimin Iskandar, Chairman of PKB, Indonesia
- Muhammadu Buhari, President of Nigeria
- Nadira Narmatova, Deputy of Parliament in the Kyrgyz Republic
- Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India
- Nayib Bukele, President of El Salvador
- Nurjigit Kadyrbekov, Deputy of Parliament in the Kyrgyz Republic
- Obiageli Ezekwesili, former Minister of Education and social activist, Nigeria
- Pabel Muñoz, Mayor of Quito, Sociologist, and Politician
- Pauline Tallen, Nigeria's Minister of Women's Affairs and Social Development
- Pedro Castillo Terrones, former President of Perú
- Pope Francis, former Head of the Catholic Church and Sovereign of Vatican City
- Porfirije, Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church
- Prabowo Subianto, Minister of Defense and Chairman of Gerindra Party, Indonesia
- Presidential Press Secretary of El Salvador
- Professor Mahfud MD, Coordinating Minister of Politics, Law, and Security, Indonesia
- Qin Gang, Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Rafael Correa, former President of Ecuador
- Rafael Rey, former defense minister, Perú
- Raila Amollo Odinga, former Prime Minister of Kenya
- Rashid bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates
- Recep Erdoğan, President of Turkey
- Ridwan Kamil, Governor of West Java, Indonesia
- Rodrigo R. Duterte, 16th President of the Philippines
- Sadiq Al-Ghariani, Grand Mufti of Libya and a seated professor in the College of Sharia at the University of Tripoli
- Sadyr Japarov, President of Kyrgyzstan
- Samantha Power, Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development
- Sara Zimmerman Duterte Carpio, 15th Vice President of the Philippines and Secretary of the Department of Education
- Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
- Solomon Sserwanja, Ugandan journalist
- Tamar Arimborgo, former congresswoman and representative of the evangelical churches, Perú
- Timothy Karyegera, Ugandan journalist
- Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, former President of Kenya
- Verónica Mendoza, former presidential candidate and ex-leader of the political movement Nuevo Perú
- Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary
- Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation
- William Samoei Ruto, President of Kenya
- Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China

- Yaku Pérez Guartambel, politician, lawyer, Indigenous leader, and former presidential candidate
- Yaqut Cholil Qoumas, Minister of Religious Affairs, Indonesia
- Ydyrys Isakov, Kyrgyz blogger with audience of about 1 million people
- Yemi Adamolekun, Nigerian social activist
- Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda
- Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, former Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations