

Name

Professor

Title

Date

U.S promotion of Democracy in Africa: From the Obama Administration to the Trump
Government.

1. Background of the dissertation

From the time it emerged as a key global power, the United States of America has always made claims of leading the process of democratization. During the Cold War, the United States' foreign policy was to a larger extent focused on pro-democracy approaches. At this time, the U.S. claimed that the major difference between its ideologies those of the former Soviet Union, a rival superstate, was that the U.S. supported democracy while the former USSR endorsed authoritarianism. From this time, all the successive administrations in the U.S. have made claims of their commitment to the promotion of democracy. The position of the United States on world democracy was stressed even more during the second term of President George W. Bush. During his inaugural address for the second term, President Bush stressed America's commitment to the pursuit of democracy around the world. He promised to make freedom agenda one of the pillars of the country's foreign policy.

Despite the assurance of various administrations of their commitment to the promotion of democracy around the world, the United States has come under harsh criticism for aiding authoritarianism. This comes as a result of the U.S. close cooperation with countries and regimes that proved to be an invaluable asset in promoting the USAs interests, regardless of those states' views on democracy in their own countries. Moreover, the United States of America's invasion of Iraq in 2003 led to criticism of its claims of democracy promotion as well as questioning of its legitimacy in advancing its values outside its borders. Additionally,

the U.S. political field is dominated by two major political parties with differing ideologies. The differences in ideologies of the political parties are usually highlighted whenever a regime supported by one party succeeds one that was led by the other. Regimes led by parties with different ideologies are likely to take different approaches towards the promotion of democracy, particularly in Africa.

2. Research questions

The proposed research will examine the United States of America's involvement in democracy promotion in Eastern Africa focusing mostly on the Obama and Trump administrations. Specifically, the proposed research will seek to answer the following questions:

Was the Obama Administration committed to the United States' claims of democracy promotion with regard to the East African sub-region?

Is the Trump Administration committed to the United States' claims of democracy promotion with regard to the East African sub-region?

Is there any difference in approaches used by the two administrations to stimulate democracy in the sub-region?

3. The structure of the thesis

1. Introduction
2. Literature Review
3. Methodology
4. Results and Discussion
5. Conclusions

4. State of research

United States of America's foreign policy on promotion of democracy in African countries has been extensively studied under the Bush and Obama administrations. In 2007, Carothers

conducted a study to compare the US promotion of democracy during the Bush administration and the projected promotion of democracy in the subsequent administrations. Carothers argues that in the second term of his presidency, President Bush elevated U.S. promotion of democracy to a level that would remain unmatched by the subsequent administrations for long. He attributes this elevation to the terrorist attacks of 2001 that necessitated a change in policy to accommodate balking for political change in the various countries whose political systems throttled democracy.

In 2013, Kieh George conducted a related study to examine the Response of the United States government under the Bush administration to fraudulent elections in African countries allied with the U.S. He uses the example of Zimbabwe, Kenya, Egypt, Uganda and Nigeria; all of which have had fraudulent elections followed by blatant infringement of human rights. By analysing the response of the United States of America to these elections, he identifies the position of the US concerning fraudulent elections in the African countries. Kieh argues that while the US is advancing claims of being active at promoting democracy globally, it has been largely silent on fraudulent elections particularly when they are advanced by regimes known to be pro-America.

Emiliano Alessandri, Oz Hassan, Ted Reinerti (2015) also conducted a study aimed at examining the democracy promotion policy of the U.S in the North Africa and Middle East from the Bush government to the Obama administration. The authors argue that the public perception of democracy promotion by the United States was significantly tarnished in 2003 when the U.S. invaded Iraq. While a lot of research work has been dedicated to the study of U.S. promotion of democracy in Africa and the Middle East regions, only a few of such studies focus on Eastern Africa. There is also limited literature on the promotion of democracy in Africa by the Trump administration.

5. Scope and objectives of the study

To fill the identified gap in the literature, the proposed research will focus on studying US promotion of democracy in Eastern Africa during the Obama and Trump Administration. To achieve the main aim which is to add to the available literature, the proposed study will address the following specific objectives:

To determine whether the Obama Administration was consistent with the U.S claims of democracy promotion in regard to the East African as a sub-region.

To determine whether the Trump Administration is consistent with the United States' claims of democracy promotion with regard to the East African sub-region

To determine whether there is any difference in approaches used by the two administrations to stimulate democracy in the sub-region

The proposed study makes three hypotheses in the light the following three research questions.

H1: The Obama Administration was committed to the United States' claims of democracy promotion with regard to the East African sub-region.

H2: The Trump Administration is committed to the United States' claims of democracy promotion with regard to the East African sub-region.

H3: There is a significant difference in approaches used by the two administrations to promote democracy in the sub-region.

6. Relevance

The proposed study is a theory advancing research. It will organize the available literature by categorizing it by the administrations. It will also add to the available literature by providing information about two less researched areas: promotion of democracy in Eastern Africa and during the Trump administration.

7. Approach and methodologies

The proposed study will be conducted through the comparative case study design. It will entail a detailed examination of democracy promotion in Eastern Africa by the United States of America during the two administrations: the Obama and Trump administration.

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Works Cited

Alessandri, Emiliano, Oz Hassan, and Ted Reinerti. "US Democracy Promotion from Bush to Obama. EUSpring Working Paper No. 1, April 2015." (2015).

Carothers, Thomas. *US Democracy Promotion during and after Bush*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007.

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