



# CRIMINAL STATES, MILITARIZED CRIMINALS, AND PROFITEERS

RUSSIA, AFRICA, AND THE EVOLVING ECOSYSTEM  
OF TRANSNATIONAL KLEPTOCRACY

// J.R. MAILEY, THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

In late June 2023, Russia's own state-owned media outlet, TASS, confirmed an open secret: the Russian state budget covers all expenses associated with the Wagner Group's mercenary and influence activities abroad. After years of denying a connection, Vladimir Putin made the admission during a speech in which he thanked his troops for putting down the mutiny led by the Wagner Group's founder, Yevgeny Prigozhin, that surprised—and confused—much of the world earlier that month.<sup>1</sup>

At least until recently, Prigozhin represented a part of an evolving ecosystem of transnational kleptocracy: he was a prominent member of Putin's inner circle, and the Wagner Group had been a major component of Russian operations in Ukraine as well as foreign military cooperation, mining ventures, information manipulation, and other influence activities elsewhere around the globe. At a time when Moscow is increasingly isolated diplomatically and economically, **Wagner's kleptocratic support network has developed a robust portfolio of opaque commercial interests throughout Africa and cozy relationships with some of the region's most notable autocracies.** These governments have outsourced some military and training operations to mercenary troops under its command, relying on the company as a source of weapons and leveraging its technical capabilities to disrupt and distort the flow of information.<sup>2</sup>

With a resume that mixes attributes of a crime boss, oligarch, cowboy, and mercenary, the story of Prigozhin's meteoric ascent defies archetypes despite recent tensions with Russia's uniformed military. Prigozhin spent most of the 1980s in prison for fraud, armed robbery, and a string of burglaries.<sup>3</sup> After his release in 1990 following a pardon, he worked his way up the hospitality food chain, eventually opening a series of upscale restaurants, including one frequented by Vladimir Putin.<sup>4</sup> Prigozhin's background has earned him the nickname "Putin's Chef."

By June 2023, Wagner troops had been deployed to half a dozen countries across Africa and the Middle East, leaving a trail of investments and accusations of corruption and predation in their wake. According to the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Prigozhin's relationship with Putin yielded lucrative contracts from the Kremlin and the ability to engage in illicit activities with impunity. In return, Prigozhin served as a staunch supporter of some of Putin's highest profile gambits, including through his partial control of the Russian Internet Research Agency, an internet troll farm that gained infamy for disseminating disinformation and propaganda ahead of the 2016 U.S. presidential elections—a charge Putin's Chef has willingly confirmed.<sup>5</sup>

While the fate of the Wagner Group and its leader remains unclear following its failed mutiny against the Russian state, it is difficult to imagine that the Kremlin would entirely abandon Wagner-style influence activities in Africa. Africa's natural resources are too lucrative and, on much of the continent, too easy to exploit, and mercenary activities—like those conducted by the Wagner Group—offer a means of extending the Kremlin's global influence. Civil society and others in the democracy community will need to reckon with the impact of Wagner's activities there, as well as with the vulnerability of some African countries to this form of malign security and kleptocratic influence.

## A Tale of Modern Kleptocracy

"Kleptocracy" literally means "rule by thieves," and the rise of Prigozhin illustrates how modern kleptocracy operates. Strongmen may attract some supporters who revere their authority and the order it brings, but few rulers would relish being labelled a thief. They therefore seek to hide the sources of their illicit wealth and use international institutions to launder ill-gotten gains in rule of law societies abroad.

Transnational kleptocracy is not a club of totalitarian rulers or an underground fraternity of supervillains. Anne Applebaum rejects the caricature of a strongman and his henchmen using violence to thwart resistance from brave dissidents. "In the 21st century, that cartoon bears little resemblance to reality," she said. "Autocracies are not run by one bad guy but by sophisticated networks composed of kleptocratic financial structures, security services (meaning police, military, paramilitary groups, and surveillance), and professional propagandists."<sup>6</sup>

This dynamic ecosystem consists of senior government officials, state security forces, armed groups, and organized criminal syndicates. It also depends upon a host of enablers in the private sector—bankers, lawyers, Fortune 500 firms, accountants, lobbyists, publicists, and an endless stream of middlemen and fixers who help conceal the flow of money or goods—based in Western capitals and financial centers across the globe. This dynamism allows kleptocratic networks to shift, adapt, and form alliances with each other, making kleptocracy difficult to address if the main tools are targeted prosecutions or sanctions on individuals.

The notion that kleptocrats around the world would work together may seem to evoke images of a society controlled by criminal masterminds aboard SPECTRE's yacht, conniving together to outmaneuver James Bond on their quest for unimaginable wealth and global domination. Yet together, these cross-border networks and the institutions they commandeer form the transnational kleptocratic system.

In Africa, a new vehicle for kleptocratic collaboration has emerged in recent years with the Wagner Group. It has been the preferred one-stop-shop for kleptocrats in need of mercenaries, weapons, cyber capabilities, or markets for their precious minerals. For the Kremlin, Wagner has provided the opportunity to export kleptocracy while simultaneously safeguarding its interests worldwide.

For the Kremlin, Wagner has provided the opportunity to export kleptocracy while simultaneously safeguarding its interests worldwide.

### Propping up Kleptocratic Networks in Africa

Prigozhin and Wagner's ascendance reflect broader trends in Russia and its relationship with Africa. In Sudan, for example, the Wagner Group has been active for several years, helping to prop up former President Omar al-Bashir. In exchange for the support, Sudanese authorities permitted Meroe Gold, a mining company owned by the Russian company M Invest, to be established—the company was later sanctioned by both the U.S. and EU for being a cover for the Wagner Group.<sup>7</sup> The EU further added that they suspected the Wagner Group of using the gold-mining resources derived in Sudan to help fund the Kremlin's war in Ukraine.<sup>8</sup>

In the Central African Republic, President Faustin-Archange Touadéra granted Russian access to its vast diamond and gold mines in exchange for arms, mercenaries, and a protection force. Approximately two thousand Wagner Group mercenaries were deployed, supposedly to provide stability, but instead have been accused of protecting the mines and keeping Touadéra in power.<sup>9</sup>

In other countries—including Libya, Mali, and Mozambique—Wagner's presence has been limited to the political and military realms. Other countries, like Cameroon and Kenya, have emerged as possible logistics hubs for Wagner's operations in neighboring countries. The Wagner Group's activities on the

African continent are complex and shadowy, **but much of the evidence suggests that the military support offered to African kleptocrats has little to do with providing security and stability for the African people and more to do with extracting resources, advancing geopolitical goals, and providing support to regional authoritarian actors.**

A clear pattern has emerged in Wagner's Africa gambit. Prigozhin's profiteering security forces do not simply target countries where the rule of law is weak; they take direct action to undermine institutions and strengthen their autocratic partners' hands. As the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime states, "the group has been accused of using whatever means necessary, including criminal activity, to achieve its aims: from indiscriminate use of violence against civilians in its military engagements, to disinformation campaigns and election-rigging to industrial scale smuggling of natural resources, like gold and diamonds."<sup>10</sup>

For Putin, Prigozhin and the Wagner group essentially provide a full-service, militarized, criminalized, technically capable, and loyal ruse for operations abroad. However, while there is a cottage industry of Wagner watchers that has undoubtedly contributed timely and insightful analysis of a dynamic and dangerous predator, when it comes to fighting transnational kleptocracy, the real challenge is the vulnerability of its prey.

Until these vulnerabilities are addressed through stronger oversight and accountability mechanisms, more robust civil societies and independent media, and consolidated democratic institutions, the hunt for kleptocratic partners will continue in vain. **It is not enough to attempt to address the Wagner's Group actions in Africa alone; the African kleptocrats that welcome them must also be targeted with sanctions and other measures designed to increase accountability.**

## **Building an Effective Response to the Kleptocratic Support Network**

Even if Wagner ceases to exist, African kleptocrats have found this model of "security cooperation" to be a useful exchange for keeping their regimes in power. Other partners will certainly emerge, be they from Russia or other countries that can package security and economic benefits to prop up these regimes. Building an effective response to the Wagner Group and Russian oligarchs' assets and dirty money—or any future iteration of this threat—has decades of lessons from which governments and civil society can draw.

Before the term "kleptocracy" had become mainstream, activists and policymakers pushed for reforms to curb illicit financial flows, reduce bank secrecy, and find ways to impose consequences on the perpetrators of corruption and financial crime worldwide. In some ways, progress toward

Prigozhin's profiteering security forces do not simply target countries where the rule of law is weak; they take direct action to undermine institutions and strengthen their autocratic partners' hands.

this goal has been remarkable. Many U.S. allies have begun to develop tools that mirror the U.S. Treasury’s toolkit, imposing sanctions, seizing assets, and prosecuting the perpetrators and enablers of corruption. Some key jurisdictions have even taken steps toward closing the loopholes—many of which were designed and maintained by Western governments—that make it easier for criminals and kleptocrats to operate under the radar and evade authorities.

The United States and several European governments have taken numerous steps to disrupt Wagner’s operations and target the wealth of other Russian state-linked entities and oligarchs. While the impact of the sanctions on Wagner and its affiliates is difficult to assess, there is a clear indication that a rift has emerged between Prigozhin and the military establishment in Moscow. In June 2023, the Kremlin moved to take more direct control over Wagner after Prigozhin had become increasingly outspoken in his criticism of Russia’s defense minister, culminating in a rebellion against the Kremlin and Ministry of Defense for a lack of adequate supplies for Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine. **Even if Prigozhin were put out of business, however, vanquishing Wagner would amount to treating symptoms of a much larger problem.**

Civil society and independent media in Russia and Africa face enormous odds and often lack the resources, specialized knowledge, and skills needed to track illicit financial flows and the complex vehicles they use. Russian civil society does focus on these issues—since the invasion of Ukraine, often from exile—yet they need opportunities to connect with African activists to tell the full story of Russian kleptocracy and the Wagner Group’s activities on the continent. African civil society, with a long history of fighting state-bound corruption, is increasingly setting its sights on transnational kleptocracy, but few have an understanding of Russia or read Cyrillic. **Until a concerted effort is made to bring activists together from both regions, it will be difficult to understand the full spectrum of this kleptocratic cooperation and respond accordingly.**


Furthermore, some autocratic regimes with geopolitical ambition—such as the United Arab Emirates and Turkey—are forming new outposts for dirty money and thus becoming more visible, repressive, and corrupt.<sup>11</sup> While these governments are often identified as allies of the West, they are also destinations for parking illicit wealth in real estate, purchasing luxury goods, docking oligarchs’ superyachts, incorporating anonymous shell companies, and processing precious minerals. Even governments that show little interest in power projection that have formed robust security partnerships with Western governments—like Chad, Uganda, and the Philippines—have become major conduits for illicit flows of money, trafficked persons, drugs, wildlife products, and more.<sup>12</sup> Democratic countries, in part due to competing geopolitical demands, have been slow to address the role these “third countries” play in facilitating kleptocracy around the world. Until they do so, transnational kleptocratic networks like those that bind Russia and parts of Africa will continue largely unabated.

Democratic countries, in part due to competing geopolitical demands, have been slow to address the role these “third countries” play in facilitating kleptocracy around the world.

Vanquishing kleptocracy will not be achieved by smothering individual kleptocrats but by depriving the entire system of the oxygen it needs to continue burning—and that means having the discipline to resist the short-term gratification of tactical victories that sabotage the larger mission. Expanding the tools and resources available to investigators and law enforcement agencies tracking dirty money is part of the solution, as is increasing support for civil society activists and independent media.

Ultimately, it will require making the dismantling of the global architecture of kleptocracy a policy priority—at home and abroad—for democracies around the world. Systemic change will require rolling back long-standing practices in democratic societies such as golden visas, anonymous shell companies, flags of convenience, shadow banks, and even jurisdictions that provide a safe haven to kleptocrats—and it will likely mean disrupting relationships with illiberal allies.

Vanquishing kleptocracy will not be achieved by smothering individual kleptocrats but by depriving the entire system of the oxygen it needs to continue burning.



## ENDNOTES

---

### Criminal States, Militarized Criminals, and Profiteers: Russia, Africa, and the Evolving Ecosystem of Transnational Kleptocracy

- 1 "Putin: PMC Wagner was fully funded by state budget," *Novaya Gazeta Europe*, 27 June 2023, <https://novayagazeta.eu/articles/2023/06/27/putin-pmc-wagner-was-fully-funded-by-state-budget-en-news>.
- 2 Simon Marks and Mohammed Alamine, "Russian Forces Help Secure Central Africa Gold Zone in New Pact," Bloomberg, 1 February 2023, [www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-02-01/russian-forces-help-secure-central-africa-gold-zone-in-new-pact#xj4y7vzkg](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-02-01/russian-forces-help-secure-central-africa-gold-zone-in-new-pact#xj4y7vzkg).
- 3 "Prigozhin's criminal past, straight from the source: A complete translation of one of the court documents from the case that sent 'Putin's chef' to prison, four decades ago," Meduza, 29 June 2021, <https://meduza.io/en/feature/2021/06/29/prigozhin-s-criminal-past-straight-from-the-source>.
- 4 Greg Myre, "'Putin's Chef' Has His Fingers In Many Pies, Critics Say," *NPR*, 30 January 2019, [www.npr.org/2019/01/30/685622639/putins-chef-has-his-fingers-in-many-pies-critics-say](http://www.npr.org/2019/01/30/685622639/putins-chef-has-his-fingers-in-many-pies-critics-say).
- 5 "Treasury Targets Assets of Russian Financier who Attempted to Influence 2018 U.S. Elections," U.S. Department of the Treasury, 30 September 2019, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm787>.
- 6 For more information, please see Anne Applebaum's remarks at the nineteenth annual Seymour Martin Lipsett Lecture: Anne Applebaum, "Autocracy Inc.," 1 December 2022, [www.ned.org/events/nineteenth-lipsett-lecture-anne-applebaum-autocracy-inc/](http://www.ned.org/events/nineteenth-lipsett-lecture-anne-applebaum-autocracy-inc/).
- 7 "Treasury Targets Financier's Illicit Sanctions Evasion Activity," U.S. Department of the Treasury, 15 July 2020, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1058>.
- 8 "Wagner Group: Council adds 11 individuals and 7 entities to EU sanctions lists," Council of the European Union, 25 February 2023, [www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/02/25/wagner-group-council-adds-11-individuals-and-7-entities-to-eu-sanctions-lists/](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/02/25/wagner-group-council-adds-11-individuals-and-7-entities-to-eu-sanctions-lists/).
- 9 Joseph Siegle, "How Russia is pursuing state capture in Africa," London School of Economics (*Africa at LSE* Blog), 21 March 2022, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2022/03/21/how-russia-is-pursuing-state-capture-in-africa-ukraine-wagner-group/>.
- 10 Julia Stanyard, Thierry Vircoulon, and Julian Rademeyer, *The Grey Zone: Russia's military, mercenary, and criminal engagement in Africa*, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 16 February 2023, <https://globalinitiative.net/analysis/russia-in-africa/>.
- 11 Matthew Paige and Jodi Vittori, *Kleptocratic Adaptation: Anticipating the Next Stage in the Battle Against Transnational Kleptocracy*, National Endowment for Democracy, 17 January 2023, [www.ned.org/kleptocratic-adaptation-anticipating-the-next-stage-in-the-battle-against-transnational-kleptocracy/](http://www.ned.org/kleptocratic-adaptation-anticipating-the-next-stage-in-the-battle-against-transnational-kleptocracy/).
- 12 Please see, for example, the 2021 Organized Crime Index by the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, available at: <https://ocindex.net/>.

### How China Fuels African Kleptocratic Networks: The Case of Congo-Brazzaville

- 1 Central Africa is generally understood to comprise eleven countries: Angola, Burundi, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and São Tomé and Príncipe. All but São Tomé and Príncipe are classified as "Not Free" according to Freedom House. For more information, please see: "Central Africa and the EU," European External Action Service, 13 July 2022, [www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/central-africa-and-eu\\_en](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/central-africa-and-eu_en); and "Countries and Territories," Freedom House, 2023, <https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores>.
- 2 Claire Klobucista, "Africa's 'Leaders for Life,'" Council on Foreign Relations, 30 June 2021, [www.cfr.org/backgrounder/africas-leaders-life](http://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/africas-leaders-life).
- 3 "Assets Abound: Tracking the Assets of Congo-Brazzaville Kleptocrats," Opening Central Africa, 22 September 2021, <https://openingcentralafrica.com/en/2021/09/22/assets-abound-tracking-the-assets-of-congo-brazzaville-kleptocrats>; and "Welcome to the #Kleptolands: Republic of the Congo," Opening Central Africa, YouTube, 7 March 2022, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=RENV5jYl7lw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RENV5jYl7lw).

- 4 “Andréa Ngombet: How to get away with state capture,” The Stanford Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law (CDDRL), YouTube, 8 December 2022, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVFtpekEtfI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVFtpekEtfI).
- 5 David Servenay, “Trafic d’armes: Le dispositif de Jacques Monsieur,” Radio France Internationale (RFI), 6 December 2004, [www1.rfi.fr/actu/fr/articles/060/article\\_32272.asp](http://www1.rfi.fr/actu/fr/articles/060/article_32272.asp); and Spyros Demetriou, Robert Muggah, and Ian Biddle, *Small Arms Availability, Trade and Impacts in the Republic of Congo*, the Small Arms Survey, study commissioned by the International organisation for Migration and the United Nations Development Programme, April 2002, [www.files.ethz.ch/isn/87826/2002-04-No2\\_Small%20Arms%20Availability%20Republic%20Congo.pdf](http://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/87826/2002-04-No2_Small%20Arms%20Availability%20Republic%20Congo.pdf).
- 6 Agathe Duparc, Marc Guéniat, and Olivier Longchamp, *Gunvor in Congo: Oil, Cash, and Misappropriation—the Adventures of a Swiss Trader in Brazzaville*, Public Eye, September 2017, [www.publiceye.ch/fr/publications/detail/gunvor-au-congo-rapport](http://www.publiceye.ch/fr/publications/detail/gunvor-au-congo-rapport).
- 7 *Toxic Trade: Forest Crime in Gabon and the Republic of Congo and Contamination of the US Market*, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), 25 March 2019, <https://us.eia.org/report/20190325-toxic-trade>.
- 8 “Press Release: Toxic Trade: Forest Crime in Gabon and the Republic of Congo and Contamination of the US Market,” EIA, 25 March 2019, <https://us.eia.org/press-releases/20190325-toxic-trade-pr/>.
- 9 “The Bank at the Heart of the Scandal,” *Africa Confidential*, 62:24, 2 December 2021, [www.africa-confidential.com/article/id/13684/The\\_bank\\_at\\_the\\_heart\\_of\\_the\\_scandal](http://www.africa-confidential.com/article/id/13684/The_bank_at_the_heart_of_the_scandal).
- 10 *The Backchannel: State Capture and Bribery in Congo’s Deal of the Century*, the Sentry, November 2021, <https://thesentry.org/reports/backchannel/>.
- 11 Forthcoming paper by Brett Carter on “How the New Cold War Will Shape Africa’s Future.”
- 12 Barry Eichengreen, “Sanctions, SWIFT, and China’s Cross-Border Interbank Payments System” part of *the Marshall Papers*, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 20 May 2022, [www.csis.org/analysis/sanctions-swift-and-chinas-cross-border-interbank-payments-system](http://www.csis.org/analysis/sanctions-swift-and-chinas-cross-border-interbank-payments-system).
- 13 Oliver Bullough, “The Rise of Kleptocracy: The Dark Side of Globalization,” *Journal of Democracy* 29, no. 1 (January 2018): 25–38.
- 14 Tutu Alicante, *To Catch a Kleptocrat: Lessons Learned from the Biens Mal Acquis Trials in France*, National Endowment for Democracy, June 2019, [www.ned.org/to-catch-a-kleptocrat-lessons-learned-biens-mal-acquis-trials-tutu-alicante/](http://www.ned.org/to-catch-a-kleptocrat-lessons-learned-biens-mal-acquis-trials-tutu-alicante/).
- 15 The author, Andrea Ngombet Malewa, is the founder of the Sassoufit Collective.
- 16 Blanche Simona, “Exploitation de l’Or à Kellé Dans la Cuvette-Ouest,” Rainforest Journalism Fund, 16 September 2022, <https://rainforestjournalismfund.org/fr/projects/exploitation-de-lor-kelle-dans-la-cuvette-ouest>.
- 17 Damon Wilson (@DamonMacWilson), “Welcome to Washington @President\_KR! Yoon Suk Yeol is pushing South Korea to be a global pivotal state including by contributing \$100 million to support democracy around the world. Thank you for your leadership,” Twitter, 27 April 2023, <https://twitter.com/DamonMacWilson/status/1651741490840842241>.



## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

---

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Andrea Ngombet Malewa** is a civil society leader, a former Reagan-Fascell fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy, and a Stanford Draper Hill fellow. He is also a member of the International Coalition for Democratic Renewal and founder of the #Sassoufit Collective, an organization that advocates for democracy and rule of law in the Republic of the Congo. He holds a Bachelor degree in History from Sorbonne Paris IV university. Follow him on Twitter [@andrea\\_ngombet](#).

**J.R. Mailey** is a senior expert at the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), where he works on corruption, organized crime, and illicit financial flows. Prior to joining GI-TOC, he was Director of Investigations for the Sentry, overseeing investigations into financial crimes and corruption linked to violence and atrocities. Prior to joining the Sentry and the Enough Project, J.R. was a research associate at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, where he specialized in natural resources, corruption, and security in Africa. While at the Africa Center, he authored the ACSS Special Report, "The Anatomy of the Resource Curse: Predatory Investment in Africa's Extractive Industries." He also previously worked as a researcher for the U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission, where he was co-author of "The 88 Queensway Group: A Case Study in Chinese Investors' Operations in Angola and Beyond." Follow him on Twitter [@MaileyJR](#).

### ABOUT THE EDITOR

**Melissa Aten** is a senior program officer at the International Forum for Democratic Studies, a center for research and analysis at the National Endowment for Democracy, where she specializes in transnational kleptocracy and its impact on democracy and governance around the world. She is the co-author of the January 2018 *Journal of Democracy* article, "The Rise of Kleptocracy: A Challenge for Democracy," and as editor of several kleptocracy-related publications. In her spare time, she is a passionate advocate for animal adoption, holding multiple volunteer positions at a Washington, DC-based animal rescue. She holds an MA in International Relations from the George Washington University and a BA in English Literature from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas. Follow her on Twitter [@melissaaten](#).

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

---

The authors are grateful for the contributions of the International Forum’s staff and leadership, including Christopher Walker, John K. Glenn, Kevin Sheives, John Engelken, Ariane Gottlieb, and Lily Sabol, all of whom played important roles in the editing and publication of this paper. Particular acknowledgment goes to Melissa Aten, whose support and vision for this project were invaluable to its completion. Andrea Ngombet Malewa and J.R. Mailey also are grateful to Brett Carter and Joe Siegle, respectively, for lending their expertise and knowledge to further sharpen the analysis presented in this report, as well as Tyler Roylance for his careful copyedit. Finally, the Forum wishes to thank Factor3 Digital for their efforts and invaluable support in producing graphical elements and designing this report for publication.

## **PHOTO CREDITS**

---

Cover image: Photo by ESB Professional/Shutterstock

Page 3: Photo by da-kuk/Getty Images

Page 9: Photo by traffic\_analyzer/Getty Images



**The International Forum for Democratic Studies at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)** is a leading center for analysis and discussion of the theory and practice of democracy around the world. The Forum complements NED's core mission—assisting civil society groups abroad in their efforts to foster and strengthen democracy—by linking the academic community with activists from across the globe. Through its multifaceted activities, the Forum responds to challenges facing countries around the world by analyzing opportunities for democratic transition, reform, and consolidation. The Forum pursues its goals through several interrelated initiatives: publishing the *Journal of Democracy*, the world's leading publication on the theory and practice of democracy; hosting fellowship programs for international democracy activists, journalists, and scholars; coordinating a global network of think tanks; and undertaking a diverse range of analytical initiatives to explore critical themes relating to democratic development.



**The National Endowment for Democracy (NED)** is a private, nonprofit foundation dedicated to the growth and strengthening of democratic institutions around the world. Each year, NED makes more than 1,700 grants to support the projects of nongovernmental groups abroad who are working for democratic goals in more than 90 countries. Since its founding in 1983, the Endowment has remained on the leading edge of democratic struggles everywhere, while evolving into a multifaceted institution that is a hub of activity, resources, and intellectual exchange for activists, practitioners, and scholars of democracy the world over.

1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 378-9700  
[ned.org](http://ned.org)



@thinkdemocracy



ThinkDemocracy