Democracy as an aspect of Security Policy – Perspectives from Europe and Beyond

A Comparative Study Of Democracy
As A Foreign And Security Policy Factor

**DEMOCRACY
REPORTING
INTERNATIONAL**

Acknowledgements

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Executive summary

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, its serial committing of war crimes in Ukraine, and the worldwide economic and social disruptions that have followed the Russian war have brought the question of security of democracies into sharp focus. Many democratic governments (Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) are currently updating their existing security strategies to reflect the changed threat landscape. Germany and Ireland are in the process of drafting their first security strategies, expected to be published in January. Six further states have released new or updated security strategies in the last two years.

The question is what lessons have been learned from the Russian war against Ukraine since 2014 for understanding the global threat scenario for democracies and, in particular, do governments in democracies recognise the threats that result from the way that political systems are set-up? Will the expansion of the Russian war against Ukraine in 2022 lead to changes in security strategies? International security threats from authoritarian governments are rooted in that particular form of government. Authoritarian governments are not accountable to their people, they are not constrained by domestic checks and balances, they may engage in wide-spread corruption with impunity, and they can be prone to attempting to distract their populations from domestic legitimacy crises by stirring up conflicts abroad.

Authoritarian governments are also unpredictable. They can decide on policies in secrecy, with few people involved in decision-making and no free media scrutinizing policy. The Russian attack of 24 February is an extreme case – the Russian people had no idea that Putin would start a major war; most Russian soldiers did not even know they were going to war. Publics in other countries were better informed than in Russia, because the CIA issued specific, public warnings.

We have analysed the security strategies of 13 democracies to understand to what degree they reflect the security threat from authoritarian states.

These are our key take-aways:

> The security threat emerging from the characteristics inherent in authoritarian regimes is increasingly recognised, but still not articulated clearly in many security strategies.

> There is a gap in the thinking about international security and the nature of political regimes: Democracies understand defensive needs in terms of military protection, and they also support democracy in many countries, but they have no overarching security concept that employs all means of policy in favour of democratic governance in order to reduce the global security risks from authoritarian rule.

> Democracy is often portrayed more as a matter of values only, of idealism, taken care of through projects to be funded, rather than a hard foreign policy issue that affects the core interests of democracies.

> Security strategies tend to stress the threats that authoritarian states pose to their domestic politics (through disinformation campaigns, corruption of domestic actors; sabotage, etc.); they are less elaborated on the threat that such governments pose for international security. Even if Russia had not engaged in attacks against institutions in many democracies, its war against Ukraine would still pose a huge security risk to them (people forced to flee to democratic countries, trade disruptions, energy shortages, increased humanitarian needs, blatant violation of international rules, etc.).

> The strategies of Czechia, Slovakia and the United States are particularly vocal in naming autocracy as a key challenge. The strategies of Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden refer to challenges to the EU when EU member states become authoritarian The Danish strategy is particularly vocal on this point, and mentions Hungary.

> The Foreign Ministries of the 13 democracies have departments or units dealing specifically with democracy and human rights.

> Czechia, Slovakia and the United States list autocracies explicitly among security threats in their national strategies.

Democracy as an aspect of security policy – Comparative table on national security strategies and related documents

Country/ Indicator	Authoritarianism is recognised as domestic security threat	Authoritarianism is recognised as international security threat	Country integrates the interest in partnerships with democratic countries across its foreign policy toolbox (security, diplomacy, development cooperation)	Democracy is portrayed as a hard foreign policy issue that affects core interests of democracies	Democratic backsliding of partner democracies is described as a threat	Score
Belgium	X	✓	X	X	X	1
Canada	✓	✓	✓	X	X	3
Czechia	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	4
Denmark	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Finland	X	✓	✓	✓	X	3
France	X	X	X	X	X	0
Ireland	X	X	X	X	X	0
Netherlands	X	X	X	X	✓	1
Norway	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Slovakia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Sweden	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
United Kingdom	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	4
United States Of America	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	4

> Eight of the 13 countries (62 per cent) recognise authoritarianism as a domestic security threat in their security strategies or related documents.

> Ten countries (77 per cent) recognise authoritarianism as international security threat.

> Nine countries (69 per cent) integrate the interest in partnerships with democratic countries across their foreign policy toolboxes.

> In eight countries' strategies (62 per cent), democracy is portrayed as a hard foreign policy issue that affects their core interests.

> Five of the countries covered by the study (38 per cent) describe democratic backsliding in partner democracies as a threat.

Introduction

The trend of global autocratisation since 2012[1] is a challenge for security, especially because some autocratic regimes interfere with democratic processes elsewhere. But the threat goes beyond that: While political science has long shown that democracies almost never go to war with each other, autocratic regimes are more likely to wage war or increase regional or global tensions in other ways. The Russian war against Ukraine has brought these risks into broad daylight and raises the question of how democracies are dealing with this threat in the formulation of their foreign policies and, in particular, in their security strategies.

This study looks at 13 democratic states and their approaches to democracy/autocracy abroad and how they articulate the security dimensions of internal governance. The study looks primarily at security strategies, but also at other policy documents related to democracy abroad. These national strategies establish "a national understanding of the threats and risks of the security environment, and the values and principles that will guide the state in providing state and human security".[2] Authoritarian regimes or autocracies are referred to according to the 2021 analysis of the Economist's Intelligence Unit Democracy Index[3]; among them, this study focuses on those identified in national strategies as a source of risks for democracy and the rule of law. Moreover, the study also assesses to what degree these democracies anchor the concern for democracy in their institutional architectures.

1   Andrea Cassani & Luca Tomini, "Reversing Regimes and concepts: From Democratization to Autocratization", *European Political Science*, Vol. 19, No. 3, May 2018, pp. 272-287.
2   "National Security Policies. Formulating National Security Policies for Good Security Sector Governance", Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, 17 November 2015.
3   "Democracy Index 2021: The China Challenge", The Economist Intelligence Unit, 10 February 2022.

BELGIUM

Main Policy Documents

► National Security Strategy | 2021

► General political note in international solidarity | 2021

The role of democracy

Belgium's integrated security National Security Strategy (NSS) was approved in December 2021 by the National Security Council.[4] The NSS refers to democracy, human rights and the rule of law as crucial elements for the country's security. It includes a broad assessment of potential internal and external factors that may constitute risks and threats, as well as a list of six vital interests, among them safeguarding the democratic state and its values. While stating that "authoritarian regimes openly attack the principles of our democracies", the strategy does not specifically refer to autocracies as a source of major concern for national security. It does, however, refer to democracy and rule of law as pivotal elements of Belgian foreign policy. In line with this approach, the federal government´s "general political note"[5] on international solidarity regarding the year 2022 placed democracy and human rights at the centre of international cooperation activities in bi-lateral relations, as well as in multilateral formats.

Institutional responsibilities

Within the federal government, the NSS (composed of the Prime Minister and relevant Ministers)[6] determines the main guidelines, coordinates all issues linked to intelligence and security policy, and sets the priorities of the intelligence and security services. In the Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, the Directorate for Human Rights (M3) of the Directorate General for Multilateral Affairs and Globalisation (DGM)[7] ensures the inclusion of the democracy and human rights dimensions in Belgian foreign policy. In the same Directorate General, the tasks linked to international security, including management, advocacy, development and coordination for hybrid threats, are the responsibility of the Directorate for Security Policy (M1). In addition, a high-level diplomat in the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD)[8] follows international cooperation issues linked to democracy, including those related to international security. As concerns the parliament,[9] the Security and Foreign Affairs Committees of the lower chamber consider all issues linked to the international cooperation and security strategy.[10]

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4   Kingdom of Belgium, Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, "A Strategy to Make Belgium More Resilient", 4 February 2022.

5   Chambre des représentants de belgique, "NOTE DE POLITIQUE GÉNÉRALE. Solidarité internationale", 29 October 2021.

6   Website of the Directorate-General for Secretariats and Coordination of Belgium.

7   Website of the Directorate General for Multilateral Affairs and Globalisation (DGM) of Belgium, Services and Structure.

8   Website of the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) of Belgium, Services and Structure.

9   Website of the Belgian Parliament.

10   Website of the Belgian Parliament, Permanent Committees.

CANADA

Main Policy Documents

► Feminist International Assistance Policy | 2017

► National Security Policy "Securing an Open Society"| 2004

The role of democracy

Support for democracy and democratic institutions is central to Canada's strategic foreign policy. The commitment to democracy and human rights is a core strategic priority in Global Affairs Canada's Departmental Plan 2022.[11] Global Affairs Canada unites the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, and International Development. The Plan sets out an integrated approach, combining diplomacy, support programmes and advocacy to advance democracy across its international assistance and foreign policy activities. This is also reflected in Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (2017),[12] particularly in its action area on inclusive governance.

Canada's National Security Policy "Securing an Open Society"[13] is outdated (from 2004). It articulated core national security interests based on the values of democracy, human rights, respect for the rule of law, and pluralism. While the strategy has not been updated, new concerns have been articulated, for example, reports by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) explored the issue of the "interference in national democratic processes as a security threat".[14]

Several civil society organisations (CSOs), universities and think tanks have raised concerns regarding the preparedness of Canada and its capacity to respond to the challenges that characterise the current scenario. One of the main publications drafted for feeding the debate, "A National Security Strategy for the 2020s",[15] features as co-author Vincent Rigby, the former national security adviser to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. This and other documents[16] analyse the challenges to democracy, the rule of law, multilateralism and human rights deriving from authoritarian governments. Their publication triggered a debate with national authorities,[17] and the context might prove fertile for developments at the policymaking level.

11   Global Affairs Canada, Departmental Plan.
12   Global Affairs Canada, "Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy".
13   Government of Canada, "Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy", April 2004.
14   Canada's Security Intelligence Service, "Foreign Interference. Threats to Canada's Democratic Process", July 2021.
15   "A National Security Strategy for the 2020s", Task Force on National Security, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa, May 2022.
16   Aaron Shull & Wesley Wark, "Reimagining a Canadian National Security Strategy", Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2021.
17   "Canada's National Security: A Discussion with The Honourable Marco Mendicino", Centre for International Governance Innovation, 27 June 2022.

Institutional responsibilities

Differently from other countries analysed here, Canada's national security architecture does not include a Cabinet-level body, as the Prime Minister relies on a National Security and Intelligence Advisor. Within the Government, the Minister of Foreign Affairs' mandate includes the promotion of peace and security, combating authoritarianism and countering foreign interference.[18] The Minister of Foreign Affairs shares the leadership on Global Affairs Canada (GAC) with the Ministers of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business, and of Economic Development and International Development. GAC is in charge of international relations, including advancing democracy across all fields of foreign policy.[19] Within GAC, this task falls within the competence of the Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion, under the leadership of the Associate Deputy Minister for International Security.[20] A Canadian centre to promote peace, human rights, democracy and inclusive governance worldwide is currently being set up[21] by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Development.[22] Within the Parliament, the Senate's Committee on National Security, Defence and Veterans Affairs has the mandate to examine legislation and study issues related to national security, defence and veterans affairs.[23] The Committee is currently working on a report concerning national defence and security, with its release expected by June 2023.[24]

18   Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mandate Letter, 16 December 2021.
19   Global Affairs Canada, Ministry Organization.
20   Website of the Government of Canada, Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion.
21   "Minister of International Development and Minister Responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada Appearance before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (FAAE) on Mandate Letter", Government of Canada, 3 March 2022.
22   "Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Session Minutes", Canada House of Commons, 3 March 2022.
23   Senate of Canada, Introduction to the Standing Senate Committee on National Security, Defence and Veterans Affairs.
24   "The Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, Order of Reference", Senate of Canada, 10 February 2022.

CZECHIA

Main Policy Documents

► Security strategy of the Czech Republic | 2015

► Human rights and transition promotion policy concept| 2015

The role of democracy

The Security Strategy of the Czech Republic 2015[25] sets out a list of national security priorities, ranked as vital, strategic or "other", according to their relevance for the country. The safeguarding of the "democratic rule of law, including the guaranteeing and protection of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the population" is categorised as a vital interest. The document refers to non-democratic regimes when specifying that, for Czechia, "the main sources of threat include hard-line attitudes set against the fundamental values of our society, threatening the concept of the democratic rule of law and denying fundamental human rights and freedoms. The carriers of these attitudes are states as well as non-state actors, various groups and their sympathisers." In its foreign policy, Czechia promotes its values and interests through sharing its experience of democratic transition, as detailed in the policy concept note on "Human rights and transition promotion policy"[26] (2015). The document is a reference in the field of the country's international cooperation and development policy.[27]

Institutional responsibilities

The National Security Council[28] is the entity responsible for institutional coordination across different departments for the planning, drafting and implementation of measures concerning foreign and national security policy. The activities of the Council's committees are coordinated by the Security Policy Department[29] of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by the Ministry for Defence, mainly through its Defence Policy and Strategy Division.[30] The Department of Human Rights and Transition Promotion Policy[31] of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of coordinating Czech foreign policy in the fields of human rights and international support for democracy. Also, the Parliament monitors the government through its Committee for Defence, of the Chamber of Deputies,[32] and its Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security, of the Senate.[33]

25 "Security Strategy of the Czech Republic 2015", Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of Czechia,
26 "Human Rights and Transition Promotion Policy Concept of the Czech Republic", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechia, September 2015.
27 Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechia, Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid.
28 Website of the Government of Czechia, National Security Council.
29 Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechia, Department of Security Policy, Organisational Structure.
30 Website of the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of Czechia, Defence Policy and Strategy Division.
31 Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechia, Department of Human Rights and Transformation Policy, Organisational Structure.
32 Website of the Chamber of Deputies, Parliament of Czechia, Committee on Defence.
33 Website of the Senate of the Parliament of Czechia, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security.

DENKMARK

The role of democracy

Denmark's Foreign and Security Policy Strategy,[34] released in January 2022, considers democracy, justice and human rights as pivotal elements. The document devotes significant attention to democracy support worldwide, as "countries such as China and Russia and other authoritarian regimes attempt to hollow out the values our institutions are built on". Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 led to significant changes, one of which saw Denmark ended its opt out rule from the EU's cooperation on security and defence,[35] on the basis of a national referendum.[36] The Danish Minister of Defence wrote in the Danish Foreign Policy Review 2022 that "we are faced with rising authoritarian and anti-democratic great powers deliberately challenging the international rules-based order."[37]

The Act for International Cooperation (2017)[38] already sets out as main objectives the support of human rights and democracy, while the strategy for international cooperation, "The World We Share",[39] (2021) specifically focuses on support for democracy. This priority is addressed from various angles, including support for civil society and marginalised groups and the strengthening of national institutions and democratic processes, in a world where "rights and democracy are under increasing threat from authoritarian forces". In terms of programmes, the country's commitment[40] to democracy, human rights and good governance is mainly channelled through support to CSOs,[41] as well as via the initiative "Tech for Democracy",[42] aiming to develop, promote, use and regulate technology to the benefit of democracy and human rights.

It should be noted that, in September 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published "Danish Security and Defence towards 2035",[43] a new report that expands the country's vision with regards to international threats, focussing on those deriving from instability risks for European security. The report addresses risks emerging from within democratic countries, an area that most strategies do not address. On the United States, it notes that "[a] new administration led by a re-elected Trump or a president with a

34   "Foreign and Security Policy Strategy", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, January 2022.
35   Website of the Danish Ministry of Defence, Denmark and the EU.
36   "Denmark: Statement by the High Representative on the Outcome of the Referendum on the Opt-out in Defence Matters", European External Action Service, 1 June 2022.
37   Danish Institute for International Studies, Danish Foreign Policy Review 2022 has been published, 20 June 2022.
38   Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation, Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: Denmark 2021.
39   "The World We Share. Denmark's Strategy for Development Cooperation", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark,2021.
40   "The Government's Priorities For Danish Development Cooperation", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2022.
41   Through initiatives such as the "New Democracy Fund".
42   Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Tech for Democracy.
43   "Danish Security and Defence towards 2035", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, The Security Policy Analysis Group September 2022.

similar political programme would challenge the transatlantic relationship", noting that that the United States would support populist forces that undermine the rule of law and democracy in European countries." The report also notes security threats from within the EU, which others do not: "The strengthened unity in the EU and the dynamic development of the EU's strategic autonomy and role as a security policy actor are threatened by populist forces that are challenging fundamental EU principles regarding the rule of law and democracy, and which want to roll back the EU. As long as they only have power in countries like Hungary, the problem is manageable but, should they win power in one of the major countries, there is a serious risk of the cohesion and dynamism of the Union being undermined."

With regard to cybersecurity, the report highlights that "Denmark is working together with other countries to expand the options for countermeasures over a wider spectrum, especially in areas where hostile external interference and manipulation threaten EU values, democracy, and prosperity", and raises concerns about the negative effects of populism on "the EU's strategic autonomy and role as a security policy actor".

Institutional responsibilities

The prime minister chairs the government's security committee.[44] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs[45] oversees all issues linked to foreign, development and security policy. International cooperation activities are managed by DANIDA,[46] which forms an integral part of the Ministry and falls under the authority of the State Secretary for Development. The security strategy is under the responsibility of the State Secretary for Foreign Policy, within the Security Policy Department. The parliament's Foreign Policy Committee[47] deals with a range of security and defence policy issues, and works closely with the Foreign Affairs[48] and Defence Committees.[49]

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44 Sune J. Andersen, Martin Ejnar Hansen & Philip H. J. Davies, "Oversight and Governance of the Danish Intelligence Community", *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 37, No. 2,4 January 2022.
45 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Organisation chart.
46 Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Danida.
47 Website of the Danish Parliament, The Foreign Policy Committee.
48 Website of the Danish Parliament, The Foreign Affairs Committee.
49 Website of the Danish Parliament, The Defence Committee.

FINLAND

Main Policy Documents

► Government Report on changes in the security environment| 2022

► Government Report on Human Rights Policy | 2022

► Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy| 2020

► Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Democracy Support Policy| 2014

The role of democracy

The Finnish government has not adopted a security strategy, but in 2020 published a Report on Foreign Security Policy of 2020.[50] The document notes that "[t]he key elements of the set of values Finland applies in its foreign and security policy include the promotion of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, peace, freedom, equitable treatment and equality in all its international activities." The Finnish report uses a wide definition of security and links interests with global developments; "By means of its foreign and security policy, Finland produces security, addresses global challenges and acts for a safer and fairer world, viewing security from a wide perspective. Finland participates in international cooperation with an aim to secure peace and human rights and to promote societal development, the ultimate goal being a more stable, predictable and safer world." The report also notes that "[t]he respect for and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law provides the value-based foundations for the actions Finland takes in its foreign and security policy. Finland promotes human rights as an EU Member, bilaterally and in multilateral fora."
The report further mentions specific threats from authoritarian regimes, but this aspect is not elaborated on.

In April 2022, however, the government published a new report on changes in the security environment that complements the 2020 Report.[51] It recognises the widening of a value-based polarisation between countries in the multilateral and regional cooperation fora, and refers to Russia's war against Ukraine as "an assault against democracy". Finland applied to join NATO in May 2022.

Finland's international development, conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction policy applies such principles by emphasizing actions in support of democratic societies.[52] With the purpose of promoting a coherent approach to these issues, the Ministry published a "Democracy Support Policy" (2014), framed around three working priorities: increasing the political participation of marginalised groups, supporting civil society organisations and strengthening democratic institutions.[53]

50   "Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy", Government of Finland, 2020.
51   "Report on Changes in the Security Environment", Government of Finland, 2022.
52   Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Peaceful and Democratic Societies.
53   "Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Democracy Support Policy", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2014.

The aforementioned values are also at the core of the Finnish government's Report on Human Rights Policy (February 2022), which provides long-term guidance concerning fundamental and human rights activities. The report underlines their central role as cross-cutting issues for Finland's foreign policy, as well as within national governance, especially in the context of a "new rise of authoritarianism" and a "pace of de-democratisation".[54]

Institutional responsibilities

The government's Cabinet Committee on Foreign and Security Policy provides for guidance on foreign, security and defence policy (The Security Committee assists the government and the ministries in all matters pertaining to comprehensive security).[55] The Political Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs hosts both the Unit for Security Policy, which has the responsibility for general security policy, and the Unit for Human Rights Policy, in charge of democracy-related issues.[56] Within the latter office, an *ad hoc* Ambassador promotes Finnish foreign policy on human rights and democracy and ensures horizontal coordination across the Ministry's offices for related matters.[57] The parliament in involved in the definition and approval of the government's security and defence reports.[58] Civil society is also systematically involved both in the design and implementation of the security strategy. According to the Finnish approach, this means to "defend and promote the values of democracy on every level of society, from daily life to politics and national defence".

54 "Report on Human Rights Policy", Government of Finland, 2022.
55 "OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects on Security on Finland", Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 14 April 2022.
56 Website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Political Department.
57 Website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Unit for Human Rights Policy.
58 "Report on the Government Report on Changes in the Security Environment and the Government Report on Finland's Accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization", Parliament of Finland, Foreign Affairs Committee, 17 May 2022.

FRANCE

Main Policy Documents

► Strategic Update | 2021

► Human Rights and Development: A Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation | 2019

► Strategic Defence and National Security Review | 2017

► White paper on Defence and National Security | 2013

The role of democracy

The Strategic Defence and National Security Review was approved by the National Security and Defence Council in 2017.[59] The document largely operates within a framework of military security. It does not identify autocracies as a direct risk for French democracy, though it mentions aggressive acts by the Chinese and Russian governments.

The Strategic Update of 2021, published by the Ministry of Armed Forces, mentions an attitude of strategic intimidation by Russia and China.[60] There may be a current trend in favour of revising this approach – and a consequent update of the national strategy[61] – in some cases evoking the threats posed by *"démocratures"*.[62] This is, for instance, the case of some publications of the Ministry of the Armed Forces.[63]

In terms of cooperation, the French government has increased funding over recent years.[64] The national strategy of 2019 indicates that France applies a human rights-based approach in its international cooperation policy.[65] In addition, the Strategy on Prevention, Resilience and Sustainable Peace for the period 2018-2022 mentions inclusive governance as a field of support to third countries.[66]

Institutional responsibilities

The national security strategy is implemented under the authority of the prime minister.[67] Within the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Mission for Democratic Governance of the Directorate for Sustainable Development (DDD) leads the development of democratic governance strategies, particularly with regards to reform of the state, the strengthening of national and regional institutions, and the promotion of human rights, the rule of law and public freedoms.[68] In the same ministry, the main player in the field of security is the Directorate of Cooperation on Security and Defence (DCSD).[69] The role of the Parliament is mainly limited to political and budgetary implications of the national security strategy, in addition to its legislative functions in the fields of defence and security.[70]

59   "Revue Stratégique De Défense Et De Sécurité Nationale 2017", Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, 2017.
60   "Strategic Update 2021", Ministry of the Armed Forces of France, 2021
61   Michel Duclos, "Guerre en Ukraine : nouvelle politique étrangère pour la France", Institut Montaigne, June 2022.
62   "Repenser la défense face aux crises du 21e siècle", Institut Montaign, February 2021.
63   George David, "Le mythe de l'autonomie stratégique : une perspective de l'extérieur sur la capacité des puissances d'agir seules", Revue Defense Nationale, 27 September 2022.
64   Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD Stat 2021.
65   "Human Rights and development. A Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation", Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, 2019.
66   "Rapport De Stratégie Prévention, Résilience Et Paix Durable (2018-2022). Approche globale de réponse à la fragilization des États et des sociétés", Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, 2018.
67   Defence Code of the Republic of France, Article L1131-1.
68   "Décision du 20 septembre 2022 portant délégation de signature (direction générale de la mondialisation, de la culture' de l'enseignement et du développement international)", Official Legal Journal of the Republic of France, 22 September 2022.
69   Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, Organisational Chart.
70   Website of the National Assembly of France, Commission de la défense nationale et des forces armées.

IRELAND

Main Policy Documents

► A Better World: Ireland's Policy for International Development | 2019

The role of democracy

Ireland's military neutrality seems to be being challenged by the increasing deterioration of the European security environment.[71] According to a recent report of the Commission on the Defence Forces (2022),[72] Ireland is unable to "conduct a meaningful defence"[73] of the national territory. In order to fill the country's security gaps, the government is working on the development of a National Security Strategy,[74] under the responsibility of a newly created National Security Analysis Centre[75] in the Department of the Taoiseach (Prime Minister). The policy documents previously released in the field of national security are the White Paper on Defence Update of 2019[76] and the White Paper on Defence 2015,[77] which do not elaborate on the challenge of autocracies to security. When it comes to the policy framework for international cooperation, "A Better World: Ireland's Policy for International Development" includes as objectives the development of effective and accountable institutions, underpinned by strong governance and adherence to the rule of law.[78]

Institutional responsibilities

The National Security Committee is chaired by the Secretary General to the Government.[79] The National Security Analysis Centre in the Taoiseach's Department[80] provides a secretariat to the National Security Committee and co-ordinated strategic advice to the government on threats to Ireland's national security.[81] The management of Irish support for governance within the Department of Foreign Affairs is the responsibility of the Policy Unit of the Development Co-operation and Africa Division.[82] The Political Division is in charge of international security policy. Finally, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence is the parliament's reference body for all issues in this field.[83]

71   Website of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Ireland's policy of neutrality.
72   Website of the Government of Ireland, Commission on the Defence Forces.
73   "Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces", Government of Ireland, February 2022.
74   As mentioned by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ireland in a written answer to a Member of the Parliament, in May 2022, as well as in more recent exchanges.
75   Department of Defence of Ireland, Ministerial Brief, June 2020.
76   "White Paper on Defence Update 2019", Government of Ireland, 2019.
77   "White Paper on Defence 2015", Website of the Government of Ireland, 26 August 2015.
78   "A Better World. Ireland's Policy for International Development", Government of Ireland,
79   "White Paper on Defence 2015, *op. cit.*, note 77.
80   Government of Ireland, Department of the Taoiseach Organisation Chart, 25 July 2022.
81   Department of Defence of Ireland, Ministerial Brief, June 2020.
82   Website of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Who does what, Division: Development Cooperation and Africa Division.
83   Website of the House of Oireachtas, Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.

THE NETHERLANDS

Main Policy Documents

► Working Worldwide for the Security of the Netherlands: An Integrated International Security Strategy 2018-2022 (currently under revision) | 2018

The role of democracy

The reference document for national security of the Netherlands, the Integrated International Security Strategy 2018-2022 (*Rijksbrede Veiligheids strategie* - RbVs),[84] is currently being revised. The updated strategy is expected to be completed by the end of 2022.[85] It describes an international scenario characterised by a clash of values between democratic and autocratic systems. The fact that "existing political parties and governments in some Eastern European countries are increasingly advocating more autocratic, illiberal versions of democracy" is "relevant for Dutch and European strategic thinking". At present the Government-wide National Security Risk Analysis 2022[86] was submitted by the government to the parliament on 23 September 2022 and will serve as an input for the updated Security Strategy.[87] It warns against the serious threat of hybrid attacks, mainly coming from Russia, and explains that "this foreign influence is undesirable for national security, because it can gradually undermine the Dutch democratic constitutional state".

When it comes to other fields of foreign affairs, in a newly published policy document concerning its trade and cooperation policies,[88] the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs underlines its interest in promoting the Netherlands and Europe as the "democratic alternative" to China and Russia. Such an interest materialises as initiatives for the strengthening of CSOs and the development of civic space, as well as support for democratisation in fragile contexts.

Institutional responsibilities

The reference body for matters of national and international security is the Ministerial Security Committee, chaired by the prime minister. The National Security Strategy falls under the responsibility of the Minister of Justice and Security.[89] At the same time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs[90] coordinates the strategy's implementation,[91] particularly through the Security and Defence Policy Division (DVB/VD) of the Security Policy Department (DVB), within the

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84 Not available online.
85 The indicative timetable appears in "A Stronger Netherlands, a Safer Europe. Investing in a Robust NATO and EU Defence. 2022 Defence White Paper," the Ministry of Defence of the Netherlands, July 2022.
86 "Rijksbrede Risicoanalyse Nationale Veiligheid 2022", Website of the Government of the Netherlands, 31 July 2022
87 Website of the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security, Ministry of Justice and Security of the Netherlands, National Security Strategy.
88 "Policy Document for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation: Do What We Do Best", Website of the Government of the Netherlands, 10 October 2022.
89 Ernst Hirsch Ballin, Huub Dijstelbloem & Peter de Goede, "The Netherlands and the Extended Concept of Security: The Rise of Security Strategies", *Security in an Interconnected World*, 8 April 2020, pp. 65-85.
90 Website of the Government of the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Organisational Structure.
91 As detailed in the Integrated International Security Strategy 2018-2022, "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will play a coordinating role, taking account of evolving global trends and threats and associated changes to strategic goals."

Directorate-General for Political Affairs (DGPZ). The Human Rights and Political and Legal Affairs Division (DMM/MP) of the Multilateral Organisations and Human Rights Department (DMM)[92] develops foreign human rights policy, including as concerns the protection of democracy abroad. In addition, in the field of post-conflict reconstruction, the Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid (DSH) is responsible for issues of democratic governance, and the Civil Society Division of the Social Development Department (DSO) is involved through supporting the development of diverse and pluralist societies. The government's policies and decisions regarding foreign policy and security are subject to parliamentary supervision.[93]

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92   Website of the Government of the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Organisational Structure, Multilateral Departments.
93   The information available on the websites of the House of Representatives and the Senate is very limited.

NORWAY

Main Policy Documents

▶ White Paper "Setting the Course for Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy" | 2017

▶ International Strategy for the Freedom of Expression | 2021

▶ Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation | 2014

The role of democracy

In its White Paper "Setting the Course for Norwegian Foreign and Security policy"[94] of 2017, the definition of the national security interest includes sovereignty, territorial integrity and the democratic system of government. The safeguarding of democratic institutions and citizens' rights and freedoms is a key objective of Norway's foreign and security policy.[95] The loss of democracies' influence worldwide is considered as a threat to Norway's "values and positions in international negotiations and may affect political developments. In the worst case, this could undermine democracy and stability in our own country".[96] The promotion of democracy in Norwegian foreign and development policy is further detailed in the White Paper "Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation".[97] The document focuses on the support of public participation and the rule of law and, in addition, the "International Strategy for Freedom of Expression" emphasizes the role of healthy democracies in safeguarding human rights.[98]

The recent changes in the security environment have led Norway to increase its security efforts[99]; as mentioned by the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, "democracy, freedom and international law must also be defended through action. Norway stands firmly together with its European partners and allies in responding to Russia's aggression."[100]

Institutional responsibilities

The government's Security Committee (RSU)[101] is the highest body for security issues in Norway. Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the main player is the Section for Human Rights, Democracy and Gender Equality[102] of the Department for Multilateral Affairs, tasked with the horizontal responsibility of the promotion human rights and democracy internationally. The Department

94   "Meld. St. 36 (2016–2017). Setting the Course for Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy", Website of the Government of Norway, 21 April 2017.
95   Peace and security feature as the most important global public goods in the context of Norway's development policy: "Meld. St. 24 (2016–2017) Report to the Storting (White Paper). The Sustainable Development Goals and Norway's Development Policy. English summary", Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
96   "Report to the Storting (White Paper), Setting the Course for Norwegian Foreign and Security Policy", *op. cit.*, note 94.
97   "Meld. St. 10 (2014–2015) Report to the Storting (White Paper). Opportunities for All: Human Rights in Norway's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation," the Government of Norway,
98   "International Strategy for Freedom of Expression", the Government of Norway, 29 June 2021.
99   "Security in a New Security Policy Landscape," the Government of Norway, 1 April 2022; "Nordic Countries to Further Strengthen Cooperation on Security and Defence, Press release", the Government of Norway, 15 August 2022; "La Norvège relève son niveau d'alerte militaire", Le Figaro, 31 October 2022.
100 "Foreign Policy Address to the Storting 2022, Speech/Statement", Government of Norway, 22 March 2022.
101 Website of the Government of Norway, The Security Committee (Norwegian).
102 Website of the Government of Norway, Department for Multilateral Affairs.

for Security Policy and the High North[103] follows global security issues and international cooperation activities in this field. The Parliamentary Standing Committee for Defence and Foreign Affairs[104] ensures political and democratic control in all fields of foreign policy, while the Intelligence Oversight Committee[105] considers security and defence issues.

103   Website of the Government of Norway, Department for Security Policy and the High North.
104   Website of the Storting, The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.
105   "Annual Report 2021", Website of the Norwegian Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Intelligence and Security Services, 30 March 2022.

SLOVAKIA

Main Policy Documents

► Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic | 2021

► Medium-term Strategy for Development Cooperation of the Slovak Republic for 2019 - 2023 | 2019

► Concept Paper on the Promotion of Human Rights and Democracy in the World | 2021

The role of democracy

The main policy tool of reference in this context is the Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic,[106] adopted by the parliament at the beginning 2021. The promotion and protection of democratic values, fundamental human rights and freedoms and the rule of law feature as the key international interests of Slovakia. In the identification of security challenges and priorities, the strategy adopts a double approach. On the one hand, the chapter concerning the security environment and threats mentions the "growing influence of authoritarian states promoting non-democratic regimes [...] who have the intent, capability and opportunity to seriously jeopardize the interests of states" while, on the other, the strategy also refers to Slovakia's interests in developing "good relations" with Russia.

As a complement to the abovementioned policy documents, Slovakia's Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA), in May 2021, released a Concept Paper that systematically integrates the promotion of human rights and democracy into its action and programmes.[107] This crosscutting approach also appears in the medium-term[108] and main recommendations of the recently published Strategic Foresight for the Foreign and European Policy of the Slovak Republic,[109] which refers to the decline of democracy as a driver of change in the policy scenario up to 2035.

Institutional responsibilities

The government is assisted by the Security Council, composed of the prime minister, the deputy prime minister and the ministers of defence, the interior, finance and foreign affairs of the Slovak Republic, for all matters concerning foreign security and defence.[110] At the administrative level, the responsibility in this field is ascribed to the MFEA,[111] in charge of coordinating the relevant activities of all national institutions. The Department of Human Rights, in the Directorate-General for International

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106 "Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic"' the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, 2021.
107 Concept Paper on the Promotion of Human Rights and Democracy in the World," the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic.
108 "Medium-Term Strategy For Development Cooperation Of The Slovak Republic For 2019 - 2023", the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic,
109 "Strategic Foresight for the Foreign and European Policy of the Slovak Republic", Website of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, 10 November 2022.
110 Other members can be appointed and dismissed by the chairman: "Art 8, Constitutional Act No. 227/2002 Coll. on State Security at the Time of War, State of War, State of Emergency, and State of Crisis", 11 April 2022.
111 Website of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, What we do.

Organisations and Human Rights, plays a central role in the field of the promotion of democratic values.[112] The Common Foreign and Security Policy Department and Transatlantic Relations and Security Policy Department of the Directorate-General for Political Affairs are both active in the field of national security. The parliament (National Council) oversees the government's activities through its Foreign Affairs and Defence and Security Committees.[113]

112   Website of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Organisation Chart.
113   Website of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Committees of the NR SR.

SWEDEN

Main Policy Documents

► Statement of Government Policy Announcing a Review of the National Strategy | 2022

► Report of the Swedish Government on the "Deterioration of the Security Environment – Implications for Sweden" | 2022

► Total Defence 2021-2025 | 2020

► Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Areas of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law 2018–2022 | 2018

► Statement of Government Policy | 2019

The role of democracy

Sweden´s national security document "Total Defence 2021-2025",[114] adopted in 2020, defines war and armed attacks as threats, but also names information warfare and threats against human rights and democracy.[115] In its 2020 report, the Swedish Security Service[116] dedicated a chapter to "extensive attacks on democracy", detailing that "several countries are involved in security-threatening activities targeting Sweden. The most substantial threat is posed by authoritarian regimes that can devote significant resources to achieve their set security policy goals".

Within the framework of its foreign affairs, Sweden contributes to the defence of democratic rule through its 2016 Policy Framework for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance, characterised by a strong focus on the support of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.[117] As a complement, the Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Areas of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law 2018–2022 refers to the need to strengthen democratic systems world-wide in order to counter "authoritarian social models and political ideas".[118] The support for secure, just and inclusive democratic societies ranks highly on the Swedish development policy agenda, as the country devotes a significant share of its aid budget to democracy-related activities.[119] It should also be noted that, in its 2019 Statement of Foreign Policy, Sweden launched a "Drive for Democracy", in an effort to provide a counter-narrative to those connected to the democratic backsliding that many countries are experiencing worldwide.[120]

Following Russia´s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, a government report (August 2022)[121] concerning the changes in the international security environment refers to Russia as a threat, underlying the conflict "between an authoritarian regime and the free, open and democratic world". In May 2022, Sweden applied to join NATO.

114 "Main Elements of the Government Bill Totalförsvaret 2021–2025/Total Defence 2021–2025", the Government of Sweden.
115 Mikael Wigell, Mariette Hägglund, Christian Fjäder, Emma Hakala, Johanna Ketola & Harri Mikkola, "FIIA Report: Nordic Resilience Strengthening Cooperation on Security of Supply and Crisis Preparedness", Finnish Institute of International Affairs, September 2022.
116 "The Swedish Security Service 2020", the Swedish Security Service.
117 "Government Communication 2016/17:60: Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance," the Government of Sweden, 14 December 2016.
118 "Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Areas of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law 2018–2022", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden.
119 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD Stat 2021.
120 "Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, Wednesday 13 February 2019", the Government of Sweden, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, 13 February 2019.
121 "Deterioration of the Security Environment – Implications for Sweden", the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden.

In the field of development policy, the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law is conceived as a key driver for development, and is supported horizontally through a rights-based approach.[122]

Within this new framework, the newly appointed government issued a programmatic statement (October 2022)[123] prioritising a revision of the national foreign and security policy according to the threats that Sweden and Europe are currently facing. In a scenario in which "Russia is challenging the free world with its authoritarian domestic policy and aggressive foreign policy", changes to the national strategy are to be expected.

Institutional responsibilities

A revision of the Swedish government's decision-making architecture concerning national foreign, security and defence policy has been announced in its recent programmatic statement.[124] The Ministry for Foreign Affairs' responsibility in the field of foreign policy includes security matters. [125] Within this framework, the Department for European Security Policy (UD ES) is in charge of security issues, while the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law (UD FMR) deals with democracy-related priorities of the foreign and development cooperation policies.[126] In addition, the Ambassador for Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law plays a key role in promoting the Swedish vision in this field, including the Drive for Democracy. Finally, the Swedish national parliament's (Riksdag)[127] function of control over the government's action also extends to security and foreign policy matters.

122 "Strategy for Sweden's Development Cooperation in the Areas of Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law 2018–2022", *op. cit.*, note 118.
123 "Statement of Government Policy", the Government of Sweden, 18 October 2022.
124 *Ibid*.
125 Website of the Government Offices of Sweden, Organisation of the Foreign Service, updated 13 January 2023.
126 The Government Offices of Sweden, Organisation of the Foreign Service.
127 Website of the Riksdag, The 15 Parliamentary Committees.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

Main Policy Documents

► Global Britain in a Competitive Age - The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy (currently under revision) | 2021

► National Security Strategy (NSS) | 2015

► Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) White Paper | 2015

The role of democracy

"Global Britain in a Competitive Age - The Integrated Review (IR) of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy"[128] was presented in March 2021, replacing the former National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review White Paper "A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom"[129] of 2015. The document reflects a horizontal approach, bringing together all aspects of foreign policy and national security in one strategy and setting out a list of priorities, defined as the "Strategic Framework to 2025". The IR's commitment to universal human rights, the rule of law and free speech, as essential values of the national security and international policy, is marked, "especially in the face of rising authoritarianism". When analysing the security environment, the IR focuses on the increased global competition, including between systems, manifesting as "the deliberate targeting of the vulnerabilities within democratic systems by authoritarian states and malign actors; and the testing of the boundary between war and peace, as states use a growing range of instruments to undermine and coerce others." In this sense, the IR clearly identifies a cleavage "between democratic and authoritarian values and systems of government" as one of the main characteristics of the global security context. Russia is indicated as the most acute threat to the United Kingdom's security, and China as a growing risk.

Furthermore, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), in its first annual report (released in 2021),[130] established the promotion of human rights and democracy as a strategic priority in the face of "the retreat of democracy and a rise in authoritarianism".[131] The FCDO maintains in its list of objectives the support for open societies and human rights,[132] without detailing specific strategic guidelines.

Following the further deterioration of the international security environment after Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine, the Parliament requested and obtained (13 October 2022) a revision of the IR, to assess changes in the strategic context and the IR's capacity as a tool to respond to major events and international crises.[133] The revision is expected by the end of 2022.[134]

128 "Policy paper. Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy", website of the Government of the United Kingdom, 2 July 2021.
129 "National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. A Secure and Prosperous United Kingdom", the Government of the United Kingdom, November 2015.
130 "Corporate Report. Human Rights and Democracy: 2020 Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office Report", the Government of the United Kingdom, 8 July 2021.
131 "Open Aid, Open Societies: A Vision for a Transparent World", the United Kingdom Department for International Development, February 2018.
132 "Transparency data. Open Societies and Human Rights Programme Summary", the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, 26 August 2022.
133 At the time of writing, the next Foreign Affairs Committee's (House of Commons) hearing in the framework of the update to the United Kingdom's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, was planned for 14 November 2022.
134 "Letter by Sir Tim Barrow, National Security Adviser of the UK to Dame Margaret Beckett, Chair, Joint Committee on the National Security on Revised Committee Structure And Integrated Review Refresh", 13 October 2022.

🏛️ Institutional responsibilities

Following the adoption of the IR, the government undertook a reorganisation of the national foreign and security architecture; it replaced the former National Security Council (NSC) with a Foreign Policy and Security Council.[135] The merging of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development into a new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the following adjustments[136] currently seem to be evolving towards additional staffing for the Ukraine response.[137] The United Kingdom's external action in the field of democratic governance is the responsibility of the Director for Open Societies and Human Rights,[138] reporting to the Director General for Geopolitics and Security.[139] The responsibility for the security strategy is shared with the Director General for Defence and Intelligence.[140] At the level of the Parliament, the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy scrutinises the government's decision-making on national security.[141] In addition, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons examines expenditure, administration and policy in the field of external relations. [142]

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135 "Information Exchange on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security: UK Code of Conduct Questionnaire Return 2021", the United Kingdom Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 18 November 2021.
136 Patrick Wintour, "Foreign Office under Liz Truss Has Failed to Regain Global Footing, Report Finds", *The Guardian*, 28 July 2022.
137 Sophia Gaston, "The Foreign Secretary's Evidence on the Work of the FCDO", British Foreign Policy Group, 29 June 2022.
138 Website of the Government of the United Kingdom, Biography Paul Williams.
139 Website of the Government of the United Kingdom, Biography Harriet Mathews.
140 Website of the Government of the United Kingdom, Biography Thomas Drew.
141 Website of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, National Security Strategy (Joint Committee).
142 Website of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, Foreign Affairs Committee.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Main Policy Documents

► National Security Strategy | 2022

The role of democracy

The newly adopted national security strategy of the United States[143] strongly emphasizes the countering of authoritarian rule and the support of democratic governance, in the context of a global contest between democracies and autocracies. It notes that "[a]ctions to bolster democracy and defend human rights are critical to the United States not only because doing so is consistent with our values, but also because respect for democracy and support for human rights promotes global peace, security, and prosperity. Global threats to accountable and transparent governance also threaten our own democratic system. We will continually update our range of tools to advance democracy and counter authoritarianism."[144] When detailing the nature of such challenges, the roles of the Russian and Chinese regimes are depicted differently, as the first is described as a threat, while the second is seen mostly as a strategic competitor.[145]

The Strategy notes its purpose to "advance democracy and counter authoritarianism", responding "to the ever-evolving ways in which authoritarians seek to subvert the global order".[146] As President Joseph Biden already laid out in his election campaign platform, the new Strategy indicates that support for democracy abroad must be combined with the revitalisation of United States democracy (see, in this context, the Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal).

The strategy also notes that the United States is open to work with any country, including rivals, to address shared challenges.

Institutional responsibilities

The President signs the United States' National Security Strategy, which expresses their vision and outlines the goals that seek to enhance the security of the country.[147] The National Security Council[148] (NSC) is the President's main framework for considering national security and foreign policy matters with senior advisors and cabinet officials. The Department of State is responsible for the management and implementation of security and foreign policy.[149] The NSC includes representatives from the Foreign Service, Civil Service, and United States Agency for International Development.

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143 "National Security Strategy", the White House, 12 October 2022.
144 *Ibid*.
145 See also: "2022 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America", United States Department of Defense, 27 October 2022.
146 "National Security Strategy" *op. cit*., note 143.
147 "Information Exchange on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. Questionnaire Return 2022", the United States Mission to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 12 August 2022.
148 Website of the White House, National Security Council.
149 Website of the State Department of the United States, Organisational Chart, May 2022.

Within the Department of State, the office of reference is the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor,[150] which falls under the authority of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. The Department of State also includes the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs,[151] its main link to the Department of Defence. This Bureau provides policy direction in the areas of international security, security assistance, military operations, defence strategy and plans, and defence trade. Finally, "the Constitution authorizes Congress to oversee but not establish U.S. foreign policy, except by law and approval of war and treaties. In that capacity, Congressional committees question Department officials about matters of foreign policy, internal operations and other subjects as it sees fit".[152]

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150 Website of the State Department of the United States, About Us – Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.
151 Website of the State Department of the United States, About Us – Bureau of Political-Military Affairs.
152 Website of the National Museum of American Diplomacy, How Does the Department of State interact with Congress?, 11 October 2022.

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