EU Democracy Promotion and the Arab Spring

International Cooperation and Authoritarianism

VERA VAN HÜLLEN

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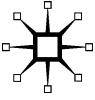American and European Strategies

EU Democracy Promotion and the Arab Spring

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Acknowledgements

When the 'Arab Spring' shook the Middle East and North Africa in early 2011, I hoped and feared that my research on international cooperation and authoritarianism in Euro-Mediterranean relations would be out-dated before I could get the chance to publish my results. Unfortunately, they are still just as relevant in today's world. In fact, the Arab uprisings forced me to rethink the role of international actors and scholars in ongoing struggles for freedom and dignity around the world more carefully. Analysing the European Union's democracy promotion efforts before and after the Arab Spring, this book now seeks to contribute to our better understanding of the domestic and international politics of regime 'survival' and change. As always, nobody is to blame for this book but me – but many people have contributed to its coming into existence and this is the time to thank every one of them.

First of all, it is my greatest pleasure to thank Tanja A. Börzel for being an expert advisor, supportive mentor, and wonderful friend over the past ten years or so. I also thank Federica Bicchi, Sabine von Oppeln, Thomas Risse, and Carina Sprungk for their much appreciated thoughts and recommendations on my way to writing this book. Furthermore, I am grateful to all those colleagues who provided valuable feedback or a platform to present my work. I am particularly indebted to Esther Barbé, Timm Beichelt, James Caporaso, Eugénia da Conceição-Heldt, Oriol Costa, Thomas Diez, Anke Draude, Adrienne Héritier, Sabine Hoegen, Liesbet Hooghe, Jolyon Howorth, Annette Jünemann, Steve Krasner, Michèle Knodt, Sandra Lavenex, Amichai Magen, Michael E. Smith, Jürgen Neyer, Michelle Pace, Frank Schimmelfennig, Philippe C. Schmitter, Ursula Schröder, Ulrich Sedelmeier, Esther Seha, and all the participants of various research colloquia at the Center for European Integration, the Collaborative Research Center (SFB) 700 'Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood', and the Kolleg-Forschergruppe (KFG) 'Transformative Power of Europe' at Freie Universität Berlin, at the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law at Stanford University, and, most recently, at the Center for the Study of Democracy (ZDEMO) at Leuphana Universität Lüneburg. I also thank all the members of the German Research Network 'External Democracy Promotion' (EDP) and in particular Tina Freyburg, Sonja Grimm, Julia Leininger, Solveig Richter, and Jonas Wolff for many pleasant and

Abbreviations

BTI	Bertelsmann Transformation Index
CBSS	Country-Based Support Scheme
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
ECU	European Currency Unit
EEC	European Economic Community
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EMAA	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EU	European Union
FIS	Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front)
FLN	Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HCTB	High Casualty Terrorist Bombings
HDI	Human Development Index
ICRG	International Country Risk Guide
IfS	Instrument for Stability
LTDH	Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (Tunisian Human Rights League)
MDP	MEDA Democracy Programme
MEDA	mesures d'accompagnement (accompanying measures)
NDP	National Democratic Party
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Aid for Restructuring of the Economies
PITF	Political Instability Task Force
RCD	Rassemblement Constitutionel Démocratique (Constitutional Democratic Rally)
SPRING	Support for Partnership, Reforms and Inclusive Growth

UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicator
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society

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Introduction

Regime dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa have attracted much attention from scholars and practitioners alike over the past two decades, in particular since the events of 2011. The wave of popular protest that has swept across the region during the 'Arab Spring' has created new hope for democratic change, promising finally to overcome the 'persistence' of authoritarianism (Albrecht and Schlumberger 2004; Bellin 2012; Brynen et al. 2012; Hinnebusch 2006). At the same time, it has highlighted the shortcomings of international democracy promotion efforts vis-à-vis authoritarian regimes in the past. Observers agree that international democracy promotion has contributed little to the emergence or outcome of protest movements throughout the region (Perthes 2011; Schumacher 2011). The European Union (EU) was among those external actors to admit its failure in promoting democracy and human rights in Euro-Mediterranean relations in early 2011 (Dennison 2013; Teti 2012; Teti et al. 2013). Following a partnership-based approach, it had sought the active cooperation of incumbent regimes in implementing political dialogue, democracy assistance, and political conditionality since the early 1990s. Yet it is not at all evident why the ruling elites should voluntarily engage in activities geared towards regime change or transformation. Indeed, a closer look at the patterns of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on democracy and human rights prior to the Arab Spring suggests that a number of authoritarian regimes were able to align the EU's offer for cooperation with their strategies for regime survival. These same regimes turned out to be particularly resilient to the 2011 wave of change. Despite the overthrow of a few long-time dictators, authoritarianism is likely to persist in the Middle East and North Africa for the foreseeable future.

Fuelled by the suspicion that the EU's democracy promotion efforts were not only ineffective but even counterproductive, this book critically reviews the practice and effects of international democracy promotion efforts vis-à-vis authoritarian regimes in order to tackle this challenge better in the future. How, and under which conditions, do authoritarian regimes cooperate on democracy promotion efforts by international actors? And what does the Arab Spring tell us about the nature and prospects of these efforts? Based on a comprehensive analysis of cooperation on democracy and human rights in Euro-Mediterranean relations since the early 1990s, this book finds that the same set of factors facilitated both the cooperation of authoritarian regimes and their persistence during the Arab Spring. Crucially shaped by levels of political liberalization and statehood, cooperation on democracy and human rights thus became part of the more 'successful' survival strategies of authoritarian regimes.

EU democracy promotion and the Arab Spring

The EU introduced the objective to promote human rights, democracy, and the rule of law into its Mediterranean policy in the early 1990s. The EU and its Mediterranean partners have since repeated their joint commitment to these norms and values in several declarations in the framework of the Barcelona Process and the Union for the Mediterranean (Euro-Mediterranean Conference 1995, 2008). In the context of the 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (1995) and the 2003/2004 European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the EU created a set of instruments for democracy promotion vis-à-vis its Southern neighbours. It basically comprises political dialogue, democracy assistance, and political conditionality. Relying on persuasion, capacity building, and rewards instead of coercion or sanctions, the EU has always pursued a predominantly 'positive' approach in line with its global policy for promoting democracy and human rights. It intensified its efforts in the early 2000s, not least in response to the attacks of 11 September 2001. Nevertheless, many practitioners and observers remained critical of the EU's record of promoting democratic change in the Middle East and North Africa (Youngs 2009). When the Arab uprisings in early 2011 finally challenged the persistence of authoritarianism in the region, the EU itself admitted 'that EU support to political reforms in neighbouring countries has met with limited results' (European Commission and High Representative 2011f: 1). In fact, beyond the hope for a long-term socialization effect, the effectiveness of

EU democracy promotion in the Mediterranean had always been placed under several caveats.

Drawing on the experience of the EU's Eastern enlargement, the prospects for effective political conditionality in the Mediterranean were indeed bleak. Most of the EU's Southern neighbours are autocracies rather than transition countries or new democracies. In addition, they lack an EU membership perspective, which is seen as the crucial incentive in accounting for the EU's success in stabilizing the democratic transitions of Central and Eastern European countries. The much higher costs of domestic change for the target regimes is neither balanced by a sufficiently big reward nor outweighed by a credible threat of sanctions. Therefore, most scholars argue that conditionality in Euro-Mediterranean relations was bound to fail (Magen 2006; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz 2008). In fact, the EU has never applied sanctions based on the 'essential element' clause integrated into the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements (EMAA) since the mid-1990s (Youngs 2009). With the ENP, it has stepped up its 'reinforcement by reward' approach (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004, 2005), but incentives are small compared with the 'golden carrot' of EU membership (Magen 2006).

In comparison, the EU's other instruments for promoting democracy and human rights in Euro-Mediterranean relations have received less attention. Given the limited relevance of political conditionality, the EU's reliance on political dialogue and democracy assistance are emblematic of its 'cooperative' or 'partnership-based' approach, which aims at the active engagement of the target regime in promoting human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The EU and its Mediterranean partners conduct political dialogue at the intergovernmental level in their Association Councils and specific human rights subcommittees under the EMAA. Since the early 1990s, the EU has furthermore financed democracy assistance projects with state and non-state actors under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and various regional programmes for development cooperation. Over the years, the EU has established a highly standardized framework for cooperation on democracy and human rights with its Mediterranean partners. Even the implementation of the ENP's positive conditionality is subject to processes of bilateral negotiations.

However, the implementation of these 'soft' instruments fundamentally depends on the domestic partner's cooperation. It is not evident why authoritarian regimes should respond positively to external democracy promotion efforts, in particular given the unique combination

of authoritarianism and comparably 'strong' statehood in the Middle East and North Africa, which differs from most other world regions (Schlumberger 2008). Authoritarian regimes are the real hard cases for international democracy promotion efforts (Adesnik and McFaul 2006; Carothers 2000; Dalpino 2000; Ottaway 2003; Schlumberger 2006). This is particularly true for the EU in its neighbourhood policy, as it is surrounded by regimes that got 'stuck' in transition or never even made that transition in the first place (Emerson and Youngs 2009). Previous experiences with 'successful' democracy promotion pale when considering the domestic context of international efforts. Unlike in Central and Eastern Europe, where most targets were countries already in transition and where external actors could support domestic regime dynamics (Kelley 2004; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004, 2005; Vachudova 2005), the EU's Southern, but also Eastern, neighbours have hardly been receptive to the EU's 'transformative' power.

Yet, empirical evidence shows that political dialogue and democracy assistance are being implemented in Euro-Mediterranean relations, and increasingly so. Except for negative conditionality, all the EU's instruments have been implemented at some point with Mediterranean partners. Even at first glance, however, there is significant variation across countries in the timing, extent, and quality of cooperation. For example, Morocco has comprehensively embraced the EU's democracy promotion agenda since 2000, pioneering in the implementation of democracy assistance projects with the judiciary and giving political reform a central role in the various fora for political dialogue. By contrast, up to the present, Syria fends off most of the EU's initiatives to establish cooperation on any of these issues. So, why is the EU more or less successful in implementing its cooperative approach with individual partners? And why do the Mediterranean partners engage more or less actively in the EU's democracy promotion efforts?

This empirical puzzle has been largely neglected in the extensive literature on EU democracy promotion in the Mediterranean. More generally, scholars of international democracy promotion have not paid much attention to the implementation of partnership-based instruments and to the specific challenge of cooperation on promoting democracy with authoritarian regimes. Thus the literature neither provides a comprehensive empirical picture nor offers a consistent theoretical explanation for the differential implementation of political dialogue and democracy assistance in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

The EU's – and other international actors' – efforts had no noticeable impact on regime dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa during the 1990s and 2000s. They certainly did not trigger any (democratic) transitions or promote a sustained political liberalization of incumbent regimes. Nor did they contribute to the emergence of mass protests in early 2011 that raised the hope for an 'Arab Spring' to bring freedom and democracy to the Arab world. Following the Tunisian example, people took to the streets throughout the region in order to voice socio-economic and political grievances and demand more or less radical changes to redress these deficits, holding their governments account-able for 'bad' governance. Protests were obviously 'contagious' and the course of events certainly challenged the general outlook on the 'persistence' of authoritarianism and (regime) stability in the region. It quickly became clear, however, that these protests would not cause a new wave of democratization in the short run. The overthrow of long-time presidents Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak did not trigger a 'domino effect' and the majority of rulers remained in power. In fact, the dynamics of protests varied significantly across coun-tries, not only in their timing, but also in their intensity and outcomes. Incumbent regimes were more or less successful in weathering the Arab Spring.

There is a growing body of literature that, from a comparative perspec-tive, focuses on a range of domestic factors in order to account for these differences (Bellin 2012; Brynen et al. 2012; Gerges 2014; Haseeb 2013; Larémont 2014; Lesch and Haas 2012; Sika 2013; Volpi 2012). While the Arab uprisings were clearly and primarily shaped by domestic actors and factors, the concurrence of active cooperation on democracy and human rights on the one hand, and the resilience to protests on the other, is nevertheless striking. The Moroccan and Jordanian regimes, for example, had been pioneers in implementing the EU's democracy promotion agenda in Euro-Mediterranean relations. In early 2011, both regimes faced only moderate levels of mobilization and managed to contain protests through a mix of violent repression and political and economic concessions. By contrast, cooperation had been particularly difficult with Tunisia during the 1990s and 2000s, which comes as a sur-prise given its otherwise well-advanced relations with the EU. The EU therefore had hardly any chance to directly affect the onset of the Arab Spring through the implementation of political dialogue or democracy assistance. The situation suggests, on the contrary, that the EU's efforts may have had a stabilizing effect on authoritarian rule – a criticism

regularly advanced, but hard to prove (Börzel and van Hüllen 2014; Durac and Cavatorta 2009).

The Arab Spring pointed once more to the EU's failure in promoting democratic change in the region, but the EU's previous efforts should not simply be dismissed. Rather, the Arab Spring highlighted the relevance of better understanding the dynamics of the EU's cooperation on democracy and human rights with Mediterranean partners before 2011. After all, the persistence of authoritarianism beyond the Arab Spring implies that international actors, including the EU, continue to face the challenge of dealing with authoritarian regimes in the future. Therefore, it is all the more important to systematically analyse the chances and limits of a cooperative approach to democracy promotion in authoritarian regimes as a third way between open confrontation and inaction. How do cooperation and regime dynamics relate to each other; and what does this imply about the conditions for – and effects of – international cooperation on democracy and human rights?

International cooperation and authoritarianism

This book argues that both the cooperation of authoritarian regimes in external democracy promotion efforts and their resilience to political mass protest are a function of authoritarian survival strategies. The underlying conditions of political liberalization and statehood in target countries crucially shaped the extent and quality of cooperation on democracy and human rights in Euro-Mediterranean relations during the 1990s and 2000s and the dynamics and outcomes of the Arab uprisings in 2011. The same conditions that facilitated the engagement of authoritarian regimes in implementing the EU's agenda also increased their chances to remain in power during the Arab Spring.

Research on the durability of authoritarianism has shown that, in addition to sheer repression, authoritarian regimes rely on different sources of legitimacy in order to strengthen their authority and secure their 'survival' (Dawisha and Zartman 1988; Kailitz 2013; Schlumberger 2007a). From this perspective, external attempts at democracy promotion, as well as political protests, are challenges to regime survival. The extent of this threat, and a regime's repertoire for handling the situation, depend on structural conditions and its overall politics of survival. They include, in particular, to what degree it relies on – limited, controlled – political inclusion, reflected in the level of political liberalization, and limitations to statehood that capture the overall level of contestation and the state capacities available to deal with them.

They affect cooperation and resilience of authoritarian regimes in different ways, but with the result that more active cooperation and greater resilience seem to go hand in hand.

Framing cooperation on democracy and human rights as a process and outcome of strategic interaction, the engagement of authoritarian regimes is the result of a cost–benefit calculation with regard to regime survival. While political liberalization determines the (mis)fit between external demands and the domestic political agenda, making cooperation more or less costly, challenges to statehood create a need for external support that can come as a benefit of cooperation. At the same time, political liberalization and statehood affect the potential for mobilization and the regime's response to protests, thus contributing to the dynamics and outcomes of the Arab uprisings. Under certain conditions, authoritarian regimes can thus integrate cooperation on democracy and human rights into their survival strategies: these strategies proved to be more 'successful' during the Arab Spring.

Studies of EU enlargement, external Europeanization, and international democracy promotion have already established the argument that some degree of political liberalization is crucial for the success of international efforts at democracy promotion (Jünemann and Knodt 2007a; Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2009; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004). However, these findings usually refer to the distinction between democratic as opposed to authoritarian regimes, or compare nationalist as opposed to reformist governments within already democratic, competitive political systems. Thus, their theoretical arguments are not directly applicable to the role of different degrees of political liberalization within authoritarian regimes, which are, after all, the hard cases of international democracy promotion and which are likely to dominate in the Middle East and North Africa even after the Arab Spring.

Adopting a rationalist perspective on the implementation of external democracy promotion efforts as strategic interaction, an increasing degree of political liberalization in the target country makes its active cooperation more likely. Higher levels of pluralism and political participation lower the costs of cooperation for the incumbent regime, because external efforts resonate better with the domestic political context. If an authoritarian regime tolerates political debates in the media, allows an active civil society, or pursues its own agenda of political reforms, it can more easily accommodate external demands by engaging in political dialogue with external actors or implementing democracy assistance projects without risking a loss of power through increased contestation. By contrast, in a closed autocracy with extremely low levels of political

liberalization, the costs of cooperation are prohibitive as cooperation may have disruptive effects on domestic politics. Cooperation might empower oppositional actors. This might be through capacity building under democracy assistance, or opening a window of opportunity for contestation linked to political dialogue, thus shifting the domestic balance of power and undermining the regime's legitimacy. Focusing on the domestic costs of cooperation, high levels of political liberalization are a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for cooperation.

By comparison, the impact of statehood on cooperation is more complex. On the one hand, statehood as state capacity positively affects the target regime's ability to cooperate in the first place. In order to conduct meetings or manage projects, the regime has to possess sufficient well-trained staff and other resources. If administrative capacities are too low, the regime is simply not able to engage in international cooperation. On the other hand, limitations to statehood in terms of instability capture challenges to the regime's authority that can make cooperation beneficial because the regime needs to secure external support to guarantee its survival. Violent contestation of the regime's monopoly on the use of force, for example in the form of international or civil wars, poses a direct threat to the regime. More indirectly, the regime's legitimacy might be tied to a certain outcome in domestic or international conflicts and depend on external actors in order to prevail. The regime can also be contested on other grounds; for example, a lack of socio-economic development can foster popular dissatisfaction with the regime's performance and thus undermine its output legitimacy. This need for external support creates an incentive for cooperation, whereas a (too) high level of statehood limits the potential benefits a regime can gain from such cooperation. This effect is reinforced if the target regime is highly dependent on the EU as a partner for international trade and aid.

The specific combination of political liberalization and statehood, shaping the costs and benefits of cooperation respectively, is more or less conducive to the joint implementation of international democracy promotion efforts. The implications for democratization and regime change are ambiguous. While cooperation, at best, seems to have only a limited democratizing impact in authoritarian regimes, the same factors that facilitate cooperation also affect their vulnerability to mass protest and political change between reforms and revolutions. Their different survival strategies shape both the conditions for protest and the coping mechanisms available to the regime. In particular the levels of political liberalization and statehood affect the initial mobilization as well

as the regime's response, making further escalation and radicalization of protests more or less likely. Higher levels of political liberalization limit the potential for mobilization and enable the incumbent regime to be more responsive to public grievances, helping to deescalate the situation. While severe limitations to statehood may deter the rise of protests, higher levels of statehood and seeming stability do not necessarily protect incumbent regimes against upheavals. When political and socio-economic grievances erupted in 2011, liberalized autocracies were hit less hard than closed autocracies, where greater pressure had built due to the lack of legal channels for – limited and controlled – participation and contestation. In addition, the former were better prepared to accommodate demands for reforms while remaining in control of the political agenda. The latter were not flexible enough to adapt when their strategy of unrelenting repression started to fail, and they were swept away in a wave of popular protest. It remains to be seen, however, if either path ultimately leads to genuine and sustainable democratization – and what the role of international democracy promotion and cooperation can be. Taken together, the combination of political liberalization and statehood did not only affect the willingness of the EU's Southern neighbours to cooperate on democracy and human rights during the 1990s and 2000s. It also shaped the dynamics and outcomes of protests during the Arab Spring.

Plan of the book

Chapter 2 develops in more detail the conceptual framework and theoretical argument advanced in order to account for cooperation on democracy and human rights in Euro-Mediterranean relations in light of the Arab Spring. Starting from the observation that the implementation of the EU's democracy promotion efforts hinges on the active participation of the targeted regimes, it elaborates a causal model of strategic interaction that draws on different approaches to international cooperation. The extent and quality of cooperation is conceived as the outcome of this process of strategic interaction, in which the actors' preferences, their choice of action and ultimately the outcome of cooperation are the result of rationalist cost–benefit calculations. Based on the assumption of fixed underlying interests in organizational survival, autonomy, and growth, the chapter discusses the formation of preferences of the EU and its Southern neighbours. In dealing with authoritarian regimes, the EU faces a democracy–stability dilemma limiting its choice of strategy whereas the costs and benefits of cooperation for Mediterranean

partners depend on their respective survival strategies. It identifies a set of factors that shape these cost–benefit calculations and specifies their expected impact on cooperation. The institutional framework for cooperation provided by the EU's democracy promotion policy, and a 'lock-in' effect of previous cooperation, first of all define the overall strategic setting and create mutual expectations on cooperation. Within this context, the country-specific configuration of political liberalization, statehood, and interdependence should be crucial for the willingness and capacity of authoritarian regimes to engage more or less actively in the implementation of political dialogue, democracy assistance, and political conditionality. In particular, cooperation on democracy and human rights should become an attractive option for authoritarian regimes when higher levels of political liberalization increase the fit between the external democracy promotion agenda and domestic politics; and some limitations to statehood create an interest in cooperation for securing external support. In a next step, the argument on survival strategies and the role of country-specific factors is extended to the prospects of authoritarian regimes to ensure regime survival even in times of increased political contestation. Following up on the impression that cooperation has had a stabilizing rather than democratizing impact on authoritarian rule, it argues that the specific combination of levels of political liberalization and statehood has also affected the dynamics and outcomes of the Arab uprisings in individual countries. The same conditions that facilitated cooperation also limited the potential for mass mobilization and enabled incumbent regimes to contain protests and remain in power, at least for the moment. Finally, the chapter discusses the potential impact of the Arab uprisings on the conditions for, and the prospects of, cooperation on democracy and human rights in Euro-Mediterranean relations beyond the Arab Spring.

The empirical analysis starts with a regional overview of cooperation on democracy and human rights in Euro-Mediterranean relations in the period 1990–2010. Chapter 3 investigates the institutional framework for, and patterns of cooperation between, the EU and seven Arab neighbours in the Middle East and North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, and Tunisia. Within the region and the set of the EU's originally 12 Mediterranean partners (excluding, for example, Libya), the analysis thus covers all non-member countries (excluding Cyprus and Malta) that match the criteria of authoritarianism (excluding Turkey and Israel) and statehood (excluding the Palestinian Authority). Tracing the evolution of the EU's democracy promotion policy vis-à-vis its Southern neighbours, it identifies instruments and

strategic guidelines for the mostly consensual and joint implementation of measures. Starting in the early 1990s, the EU developed ever more elaborate and ambitious provisions for political dialogue, democracy assistance, and political conditionality that built on a strategy of active engagement of its authoritarian neighbours. Following a 'one size fits all' approach, they formed a highly standardized and increasingly institutionalized framework for cooperation on democracy and human rights. A comparison of the implementation of political dialogue, democracy assistance, and political conditionality in the seven countries over time yields two main findings on the outcomes of cooperation. On the one hand, there is a clear, regional trend towards 'more' (and 'better') cooperation over time that confirms theoretical expectations on the role of the institutional framework and a 'lock-in' effect of previous cooperation. As the degree of institutionalization of the framework for cooperation increases, the implementation of measures becomes more pervasive, spreading to all countries at some point and improving in its intensity and quality. Furthermore, the trend also supports the idea that once partners have agreed on cooperation, they are less likely to fall behind this new standard. This suggests that the context indeed matters for shaping the outcome of cooperation by creating mutual expectations. On the other hand, the regional overview highlights at the same time significant variation in the timing, extent, and quality of cooperation across countries.

Chapter 4 therefore studies in greater detail the process and outcomes of cooperation on democracy and human rights with individual countries. It looks more closely at the dynamics of interaction between the EU and its Mediterranean partners during the 1990s and 2000s and draws a more nuanced picture of the implementation of political dialogue, democracy assistance, and political conditionality. As the EU sticks to its cooperative approach under almost any circumstances, variation in the timing, extent, and quality of cooperation hinges on the differential engagement of the targeted regime. While the EU seems to be caught in a democracy–stability dilemma, its Southern neighbours are more or less reluctant to participate actively in implementing the EU's agenda for cooperation. Systematically assessing the extent and quality of cooperation from a comparative perspective across countries and over time reveals that they were consistently so, which allows to 'rank' their performance: Morocco and Jordan often pioneered the implementation of new instruments and cooperated most comprehensively; in comparison, cooperation with Algeria, Egypt, and Lebanon was more limited and Algeria and Egypt in particular cooperated only

selectively; despite a formal commitment, the implementation of measures proved extremely difficult with Tunisia; and finally, cooperation on democracy and human rights was virtually non-existent with Syria.

Following the argument on cooperation and regime survival, Chapter 5 therefore turns to country-specific factors and investigates their influence on the differential engagement of Mediterranean partners during the 1990s and 2000s. In a first step, the chapter analyses the role of political liberalization, statehood, and socio-economic interdependence on the basis of macro-level indices. In a comparison across countries and over time, none of the factors can, on its own, account for variation in the extent and quality of cooperation with individual countries. Considering their interplay, however, their specific configuration directly relates to patterns of cooperation. Morocco and Jordan show that cooperation indeed works best at high levels of political liberalization combined with a medium degree of statehood. At medium levels of political liberalization, limitations to statehood can account for diverging strategies and outcomes of cooperation in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, and Tunisia. Finally, cooperation is impossible at extremely low levels of political liberalization in Syria. Asymmetries in socio-economic interdependence only play a secondary role, supporting more comprehensive cooperation in the case of Morocco and the overtly selective engagement in the case of Algeria. Empirical findings thus support the theoretical expectation that political liberalization and statehood affect the actors' preferences more fundamentally than strategic considerations in the face of asymmetric interdependence. Even authoritarian regimes are not, *per se*, reluctant to participate in the joint implementation of measures, and asymmetries in socio-economic interdependence play only a minor role in shaping the quality of cooperation on democracy and human rights.

In a second step, the chapter probes the plausibility of the argument about survival strategies, (mis)fit, and the need for external support for each case. It proceeds on the basis of studies in comparative politics and area studies that provide deeper insights into regime dynamics and state characteristics of countries in the Middle East and North Africa. With an increasing degree of political liberalization, incumbent regimes cultivated a greater dynamic of political reforms. This dynamic aligned well with the EU's expectations and facilitated cooperation in support of national reform initiatives. This effect is most obvious in the comparison between Morocco and Jordan, on the one hand, and Syria, on the other. In Algeria and Lebanon, problems of severely limited statehood impeded cooperation in times of acute crisis. This changed, however,

when the acute conflict subsided and a minimum of stability and state capacity enabled the incumbent regimes to engage with the EU. The Tunisian reluctance to engage in cooperation supports the argument that challenges to the regime's authority, reflected in (more) limited statehood, actually created an interest in cooperation on democracy and human rights in order to secure much needed external support. Asymmetries in interdependence in favour of the EU provide further incentives for cooperation as it becomes even more important for the incumbent regime to secure specifically the EU's support, for example in the case of Morocco. However, dependence on the EU does not compensate for a lack of willingness based on the levels of political liberalization and statehood. Still, the stronger position of Algeria, and to some extent also Egypt vis-à-vis the EU, can account for their particularly selective engagement. In other words, the disposition for cooperation of Mediterranean partners was tightly linked to their different survival strategies and underlying conditions of political liberalization and statehood.

Chapter 6 finally extends the analysis of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on democracy and human rights in light of authoritarian survival strategies to and beyond the Arab Spring. The dynamics and outcomes of protests in the EU's seven Arab neighbouring states varied significantly. Those regimes that had actively cooperated with the EU were more resilient to the winds of change. In the first stage, the chapter relates these dynamics to the dominant survival strategies of incumbent regimes and traces the effect of levels of political liberalization and statehood on the mobilization and escalation of protests in individual countries. The analysis shows that the very factors that facilitated cooperation on democracy and human rights made incumbent rulers more or less adept in dealing with political contestation during the Arab Spring. Those regimes that had already engaged in domestic political reforms were able to deflect popular protest by making further political concessions. Seeking to secure their political survival, it remains to be seen how far these reforms further liberalize or even democratize these countries. While cooperation did not necessarily stabilize authoritarian rule directly, it became an integral part of their survival strategies. In the second stage, the chapter traces the Arab Spring's impact on cooperation regarding democracy and human rights between the EU and its Mediterranean partners since 2011. While the EU prominently announced the revision of the ENP, it barely modified its cooperative approach. It reinforced its focus on positive incentives and updated its provisions for democracy assistance, but it did not

fundamentally change the institutional framework for cooperation on democracy and human rights. At the same time, the Arab uprisings did not bring a democratic breakthrough and levels of political liberalization have hardly improved since. By contrast, the course of events has undermined statehood and stability in a number of countries. Overall, patterns of cooperation on democracy and human rights since 2011 show a high degree of continuity. While the trend towards more active implementation of political dialogue, democracy assistance, and political conditionality continues, the logic of cooperation with authoritarian regimes has not changed – with the notable exception of Tunisia. These findings fundamentally challenge the value of international cooperation with authoritarian regimes on democracy and human rights: either cooperation fails, precluding any impact of international democracy promotion efforts; or, in the worst case, cooperation risks being counterproductive, stabilizing the incumbent authoritarian regime.

These reflections are taken up in the concluding Chapter 7, which starts by reviewing the theoretical arguments and empirical findings presented. The analysis of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on democracy and human rights in light of the Arab Spring also yields more general insights into the EU's international 'actorness' and international democracy promotion, on the one hand, and authoritarianism and regime dynamics, on the other hand. Pointing to the international dimension of authoritarian regime survival and the domestic dimension of international democracy promotion, it highlights the dilemma of cooperation with authoritarian regimes and holds important lessons for the prospect of international democracy promotion efforts in the Middle East and North Africa.