



COLEGIO REAL  
ROYAL SCHOOL

XVII FORO UN HEADQUARTERS  
PENSANDO EN COLOMBIA



DISEC



SALÓN  
MARÍA VALERIA GUERRA



"UN PENSAMIENTO HECHO POR JÓVENES PARA COLOMBIA"



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## 1. LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENTS

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Felix David Parales Figuera

Fellow delegates, sponsors, and other participants, my name is Felix David Parales Figuera, a current senior at Royal School and your president of the UN Headquarters Committee for the 17th edition of the Foro PEC.

Ever since I took the step from Primary to Middle School and learned through our retired sponsor, Maria Valeria Guerra, of a small something called Model United Nations I could've never imagined how far it would've taken me and it is with great honor that myself and my co-president, Valerie Manzur will be taking the torch of leading the new United Nations Headquarters commission in FOROPEC XVII. This commission, which was merely more than something regarded as a ludicrous idea 2 years ago finally came into fruition last year. It sincerely left many new challenges to overcome in the following years. Yet the objective is clear, to finally take this, a dream of many of the people who guided me through learning about one of my greatest passions, to its fullest potential.

In this committee, we hope to expand your view of the world with topics that are more often than not ignored. Topics that, as members of the future generations that will tackle these issues, we have to be informed about and capable of dealing with through the appropriate measures, to not repeat the mistakes of the past. As your president, I trust that you will reach the peak of what a delegate embodies through diplomacy and an organism as important as the United Nations.

**Felix David Parales Figuera**

**President** | [fparales4@royalschool.edu.co](mailto:fparales4@royalschool.edu.co)





**COLEGIO REAL  
ROYAL SCHOOL**



Valerie Manzur Martinez

Distinguished delegates, My name is Valerie Manzur Martinez, I'm an 11th-grade student at Colegio Real Royal School, I extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to each of you on behalf of the UN Headquarters Committee. It is with great enthusiasm that we anticipate your active participation and valuable contributions to our upcoming initiatives.

As we gather to address pressing global issues and foster cooperation, your presence truly enriches the diversity of perspectives within our committee. Your unique insights and experiences are invaluable assets that will play a crucial role in shaping our discussions and decisions. We believe in the power of collaboration and open dialogue, and it is our collective dedication that propels us toward meaningful solutions.

Together, we have the opportunity to make a lasting impact on the world's challenges, and I am excited to embark on this journey with each of you. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or ideas you may have. Let us seize this moment to work hand in hand for a better future.

**Valerie Manzur Martinez**

**President** | [valmanzur@royalschool.edu.co](mailto:valmanzur@royalschool.edu.co)



## **2. COMMITTEE GUIDE**

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### **Topic A: Addressing the Political Crisis in Niger and Its Implications Across West Africa.**

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#### **2.1.1 About "DISEC"**

Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC), is one of six main committees of the United Nations General Assembly. It deals with a diverse set of political issues, including disarmament, international conflict, the s and addressing challenges to Global Security However, the issues of conflicts and the Middle East take up most of its time. It focuses on military issues such as nuclear non-proliferation, terrorism, and violations of international law.

#### **2.1.2 Introduction:**

The history of Niger is a multifaceted narrative interwoven with a diverse range of historical, political, and economic dynamics that have significantly impacted its trajectory. The nation's evolution has been shaped by colonial legacies, decolonization struggles, military interventions, democratic transitions, as well as social and economic challenges.

The clear underdevelopment of the Sahel region is imperative to understanding the precedents and possible consequences of the 2023 military coup in Niger. Consequences which include as the worst case scenario an armed conflict that could raise a myriad of challenges for any progression whatsoever in West Africa

#### **2.1.2 Historical Background**

Niger, situated in West Africa, found itself ensnared in the colonial ambitions of European powers during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Under the sway of France, Niger was



integrated into the larger domain of French West Africa. (Mauritania, Senegal, French Sudan, French Guinea, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Dahomey and Niger) This colonial legacy left an indelible imprint on the country's political structures and socio-economic fabric.

The culmination of World War II stirred a wave of anti-colonial sentiment across Africa, leading to movements for independence. On August 3, 1960, Niger gained independence from France. Hamani Diori, a prominent nationalist leader, ascended as the country's inaugural president. However, the newly emancipated nation was confronted with a myriad of challenges, including nascent infrastructure, an underdeveloped economy, and a diverse populace.

The early years of Niger's independence were marked by political instability. President Diori's administration faced criticism for its perceived inability to tackle the nation's challenges effectively. In 1974, Lieutenant Colonel Seyni Kountché orchestrated a military coup that ousted Diori, heralding a series of military interventions that would significantly influence Niger's political course. Kountché's regime, though promising stability and effective governance, exercised a tight grip on power, suppressing dissent and consolidating authority. However, the administration's ability to deliver on its promises remained limited. Kountché's rule endured until his demise in 1987. His successor, Colonel Ali Saibou, sustained the military's dominance over governance.

A crucial aspect of Niger's history is its role as a source of uranium, a valuable mineral used for nuclear energy production. European nations have historically been involved in the extraction and trade of uranium from Niger. This extractivist relationship has both economic and political dimensions, with concerns raised about the environmental and socio-economic impacts of uranium mining on local communities.

The early 1990s ushered in a wave of democratic reforms across Africa, including Niger. Under international pressure and domestic demands, Niger adopted a new constitution in 1992 and established a multi-party political system. Mahamane Ousmane emerged as the victor in the presidential elections of 1993, becoming Niger's first democratically elected president.

The death of Muammar Gaddafi, the former leader of Libya, had significant implications both domestically and internationally. Domestically, his death marked the end of his four-decade-long authoritarian rule, leading to a power vacuum and a period of instability in the country. This created an environment conducive to the rise of armed militias, tribal conflicts, and the proliferation of weapons, which further exacerbated the chaotic situation in Libya. Internationally, Gaddafi's death had ripple effects across the region, as it inspired other uprisings during the Arab Spring. It also resulted in the spread of extremist groups and the smuggling of weapons and migrants, contributing to regional insecurity and the refugee

crisis. This spread led to neighboring countries in the Sahel suffering from the diaspora of extremist groups who were allegedly funded by foreign nations to overthrow Gaddafi and thus, having their extremist ideals supported, to be affected immensely on their national integrity and making Niger a host of significant armed conflict.



However, democratic governance in Niger faced significant hurdles. Frequent leadership changes, coalition governments, and allegations of corruption plagued the political landscape. These challenges were exacerbated by socio-economic issues, including widespread poverty and environmental pressures. Political instability often impeded effective governance, and military interventions continued to pose a threat to democratic transitions.

One of the pressing challenges during Niger's recent history has been security. The nation's geographical proximity to volatile regions, such as the Sahel and the Lake Chad Basin, exposed it to threats from extremist groups and armed militias. The government, in collaboration with international partners, initiated efforts to address these security concerns, yet the situation remained complex and often difficult to fully control.

Despite its rich reserves of mineral resources, Niger grappled with significant socio-economic challenges, including high levels of poverty, unemployment, and limited access to basic services. The extractivist relationship with European nations, particularly concerning uranium, raised questions about the equitable distribution of wealth and the environmental consequences of resource exploitation. This relationship is not limited to Niger, Mali also suffers from constant extractivist which has sparked in multiple African nations in the Sahel strip to grow hatred towards NATO and a sense of security in Russia, which actively supported the multiple social movements in Africa that reject Western influence. Importantly, the dimensions of resource drainage or neocolonialism in the region can be seen in global statistics. A third of all lightbulbs in France are made with Uranium extracted from Niger, while 90% of the Nigerien populace has no electricity whatsoever. Mali has 810 gold mines from multiple American, French, and English multinationals, but no gold reserves of it's own

Across recent years this wave of nationalism and rejection to the mercantilist practices of many powerful nations led to a rise in military and social movements who spear-headed multiple coup d'etat across countries of former French West Africa.

**2.1.3 Current Context:**

Niger has suffered from four military coups ever since its independence, the last one occurred in 2010. Mohammed Bazoum was the first presidential candidate to assume power democratically in the same manner as his predecessor, Issoufou, from the same political party. Mohammed Bazoum’s campaign was characterized for the importance he gave to resolving demographic issues that affected Niger, such as limiting family size and increasing education. Mohammed Bazoum held a position close to Emmanuel Macron, French President and NATO affiliated nations, promoting trade with the aforementioned, this, sparked discord with the Nigerien population which since Operation Barkhane and multiple other Western involvements in the Sahel region gained distrust on the West because of the instability that ensued after their presence.

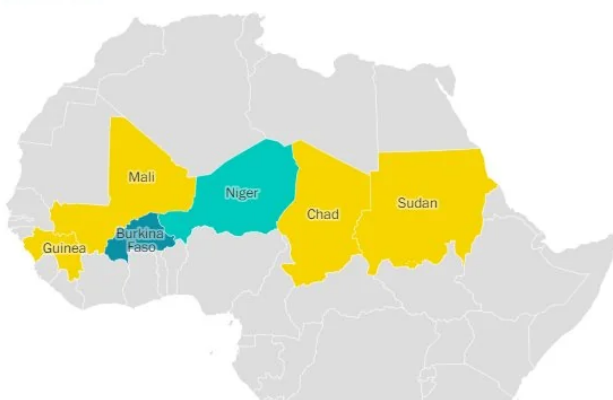
The distrust in the region had, among multiple other factors risen in the wake of recent coups in nearby countries, such as Guinea, Mali, Sudan, and most prominently Burkina Faso

-whose leader has made strong remarks against neocolonialism and mercantilism in the region, creating an even stronger sense of nationalism- leading to that portion of the Sahel being referred to as the ‘Coup Belt’.

**Political instability has gripped this belt of Africa in recent years**

Years coups occurred

■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023



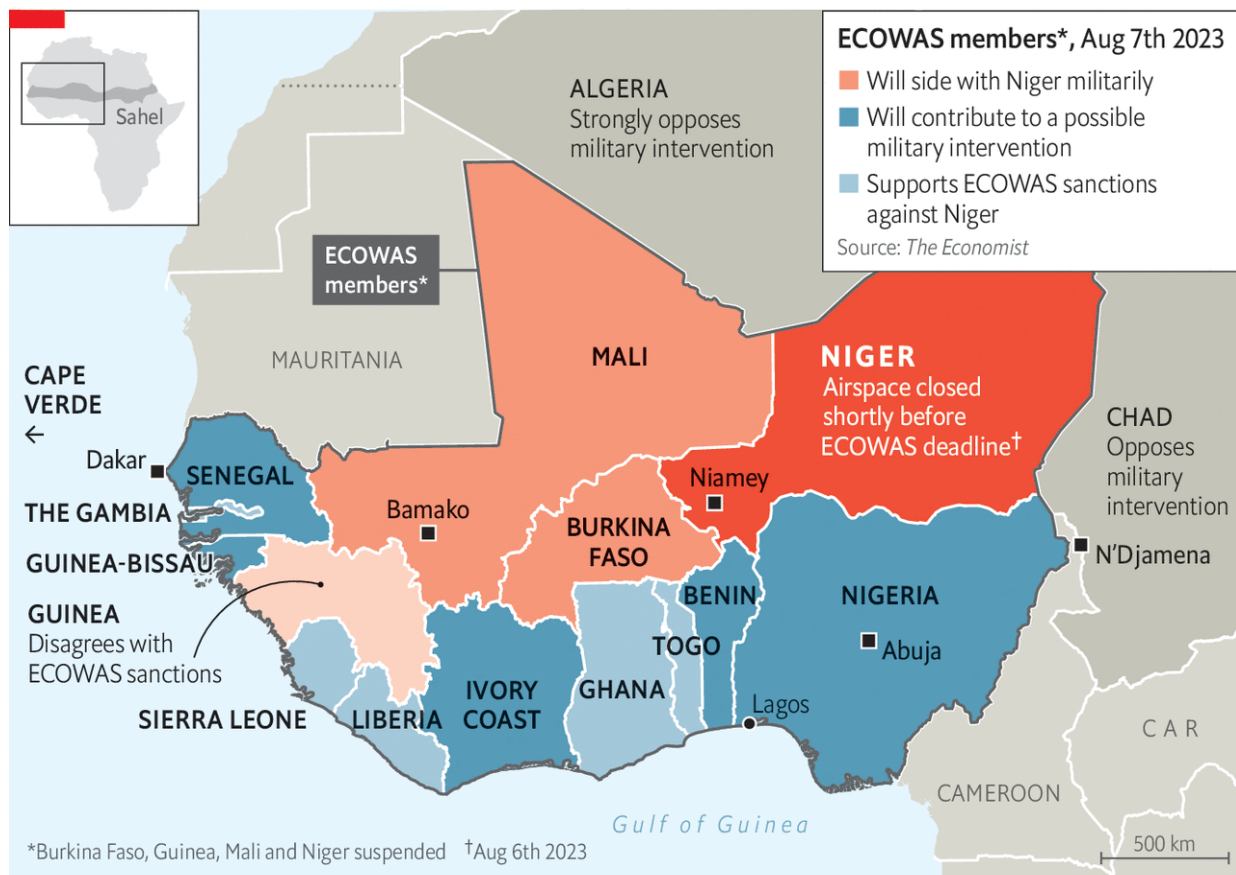
ECOWAS (Economic Community of Western African States), an organization of which Niger is a member, had condemned coups and suspended Guinea, Mali, and Burkina Faso because of their successful coups in recent years.

Bola Tinubi, President of Nigeria, warned that they will not allow another coup in the region as it’s a grave infraction towards democracy and social stability in any of the nations involved.



Following the expulsion of France’s anti-jihadist operation from Mali and Burkina Faso, with Bazoum as one of the few remaining pro-Western leaders, Niger became a key ally for France and the United States of America which invested millions of dollars in aid, drones, and military bases.

At the same time, anti-French sentiment grew and the thought of permitting entry of Russia and the Wagner Group mercenary company began to grow. The Wagner group had been expanding it’s influence following the latest coups in Mali and Burkina Faso.



The Economist

On 26 July 2023, a coup d’etat occurred in the Republic of the Niger, by the hands of commander Abdourahmane Tchiani, ex-UN Peacekeeper and leader of the National Council for the Safety of the Homeland. Tchiani arrested President Bazoum and warned the international community of his and his military junta 's “strong determination” to defend the homeland.

ECOWAS issued the Nigerien military an ultimatum to restore power to Bazoum but was ignored and now the West African region is spiraling towards a likely armed conflict.

The recent political crisis in Niger has escalated tensions in the West African region, raising concerns about the potential for armed conflict. Following the coup on July 26, 2023, in which President Mohamed Bazoum was overthrown, ECOWAS issued an ultimatum to the Nigerien military to restore power to Bazoum. However, this ultimatum was ignored, exacerbating the situation.

The failure to comply with ECOWAS' demands has created a dangerous precedent, and the threat of an all-out armed conflict is imminent in the region. The nations with successful coups aligned themselves with Tchiani's military government, making way to clear factions forming between ECOWAS and Niger's Junta with their allies. ECOWAS military chiefs met on the 18th of August of this year to decide for a military intervention in the country if a diplomatic solution fails.

The crisis in Niger has also sparked anti-French sentiment, with protesters blaming France for its perceived support of the ousted president. The potential entry of Russia and the Wagner Group into the crisis adds another layer of complexity. The alignment of the anti-French group with Russian ideals is clearly notorious among the leaders of the nations with post-coup military governments.

The threat of armed conflict is imminent in Niger and cannot be dealt with the indifference that plagues the world related to issues of the global south.

*The crisis in Niger highlights the importance of addressing the root causes of instability in the Sahel region. Poverty, unemployment, climate change, and the lack of basic services have contributed to a sense of frustration and disillusionment among the population, making them susceptible to radicalization and violence.*

#### 2.1.4 Key Terms:

1. **Colonialism:** The historical practice of European powers exerting control over other regions, often for economic exploitation.
2. **Independence:** The state of being free from the control or influence of another country, often achieved through anti-colonial movements.

3. **Uranium:** A valuable mineral used for nuclear energy production, extracted from Niger and historically involving European nations.
4. **Democracy:** A system of government in which the people have the power to make decisions through elected representatives.
5. **Extremist Groups:** Organizations with radical ideologies and often employing violent means to achieve their goals.
6. **Sahel:** A region in Africa south of the Sahara Desert, characterized by instability, security concerns, and socio-economic challenges.
7. **Neocolonialism:** The continuation of economic, cultural, or political control by powerful nations over less powerful ones, often through indirect means.

***Sub Topics:***

- Fragility of Francophone African countries' relation to colonization .
- ECOWAS's response and role in the Niger crisis.
- Threats to democratic stability.
- Migration trends and transnational implications.
- Addressing socioeconomic factors contributing to instability.
- Role of foreign countries in military coups across the Global South-

**2.1.5 Guide Questions:**

1. What is your delegation's position regarding the Niger crisis?
2. Is your delegation directly involved in the conflict, if so, how? If not, explain similar situations that have happened in your delegation's country.
3. Does your delegation believe that diplomatic solutions are possible so far into the crisis?
4. Would your delegation support a military intervention in Niger or the coup-successful nations mentioned in the guide?

**2.1.6 Sources:**

- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jul/31/niger-coup-leaders-accuse-france-plotting-military-intervention>



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## Topic B: Global Threat: Rise of Authoritarianism and Its Threat to Global Democracy

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### 2.1.1. Introduction

Global freedom faces a dire threat. Around the world, the enemies of liberal democracy, a form of self-government in which human rights are recognized and every individual is entitled to equal

treatment under law are accelerating their attacks. Authoritarian regimes have become more effective at circumventing the norms and institutions meant to support basic liberties, and at providing aid to others who wish to do the same. The present threat to democracy is the product of 16 consecutive years of decline in global freedom. A total of 60 countries suffered declines over the past year, while only 25 improved. As of today, some 38 percent of the global population live in Free countries, the highest proportion since 1997. Only about 20 percent now live in Free countries.

During this period of democratic decline, checks on abuse of power and human rights violations have eroded. In the decades after World War II, the United Nations and other international institutions promoted the notion of fundamental rights, and democracies offered support, however, in their domestic and foreign policies as they strove to create an open international system built on shared resistance to totalitarianism. Governments that relied on external economic or military support had to stage at least superficially credible elections and respect some institutional checks on their power, among other concessions, to maintain their good standing.

### 2.1.2. Historical context:

Autocrats have created a more favorable international environment for themselves over the past decade and a half, empowered by their own political and economic might as well as waning pressure from democracies. The alternative order is not based on a unifying ideology or personal affinity among leaders. It is not designed to serve the best interests of populations or to enable people to improve their own lives. Instead, it is grounded in autocrats' shared interest in minimizing checks on their abuses and maintaining their grip on power. A world governed by this order would in reality be one of disorder, replete with armed conflict, lawless violence, corruption, and economic volatility.

Such global instability and insecurity would have a significant cost to human lives. For much of the 21st century, however, democracy's opponents have labored persistently to dismantle this international order and the restraints it imposed on their ambitions. The leaders of China,



Russia, and other dictatorships have succeeded in shifting global incentives, jeopardizing the consensus that democracy is the only viable path to prosperity and security while encouraging more authoritarian approaches to governance.

Countries in every region of the world have been captured by authoritarian rulers in recent years. In 2021 alone, Nicaragua's incumbent president won a new term in a tightly orchestrated election after his security forces arrested opposition candidates and deregistered civil society organizations. Sudan's generals seized power once again, reversing democratic progress made after the 2019 ouster of former dictator Omar al-Bashir.

As the the United States abruptly withdrew its military from Afghanistan, the elected government in Kabul collapsed and gave way to the Taliban, returning the country to a system that is opposed to democracy, pluralism, and equality. Popular demand for democracy remains strong. From Sudan to Myanmar, people continue to risk their lives in the pursuit of freedom in their countries. Many others undertake dangerous journeys to live freely elsewhere. Democratic governments and societies must harness and support this common desire for fundamental rights and build a world in which it is ultimately fulfilled.

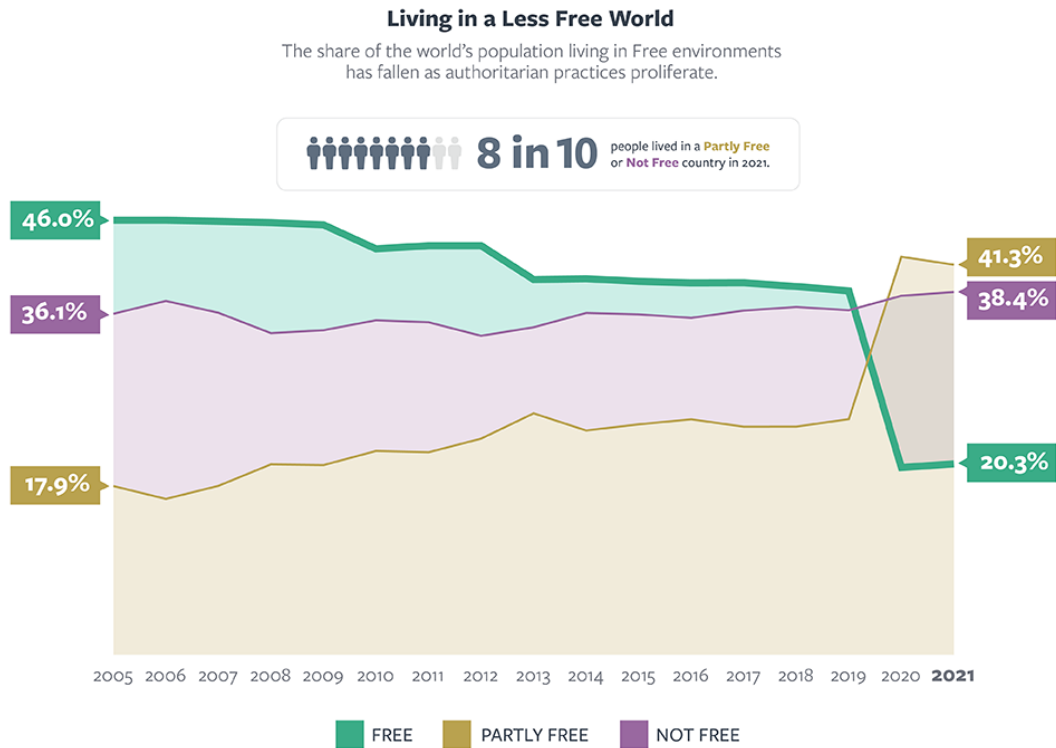
*Global freedom faces a dire threat. Around the world, the enemies of liberal democracy—a form of self-government in which human rights are recognized and every individual is entitled to equal treatment under the law—are accelerating their attacks.*

### **2.1.3 Current Context**

There has been renewed interest in exploring the nuances of authoritarianism. Earlier perceived as only a transitional paradigm, real-world developments have indicated the exact opposite: that authoritarianism is here to stay and is as dynamic and evolving as any other form of politics. But authoritarianism cannot be merely treated as a new political category. Stretching as far back as ancient Greece, authoritarianism (the rule of one) was among the three models that featured in Aristotelian categorisations as well with the other two being the rule of the few (oligarchic or feudal), and the many (liberal).

Authoritarianism can be understood as a principle of blind submission to authority. In government, authoritarianism denotes any political system that concentrates power in the hands of a leader or a small elite that is not responsible to the people. Authoritarian leaders tend to exercise power arbitrarily, with no regard for constitutional norms and morality. In countries with long-established democracies, internal forces have exploited the shortcomings of their systems, distorting national policies to promote hatred, violence, and unbridled power. Today's authoritarianism, often occurring within democracies of both developed and developing countries, develops authoritarian-populist features—a style of government that

fuses personal leadership with conservative nationalism. Faced with deep insecurities, people trust authoritarian regimes not only to give them a sense of nationalism but also to secure them against all the challenges they are encountering.



According to the Freedom House Report, 2021, 2020 saw a sharp decline of democracies. Less than a fifth of the world’s population now lives in fully free countries. This is part of a larger trend of democratic decline and rising authoritarianism that has been underway across the globe for the last 30 years. Hannah Arendt had shared anxieties with this form of polity, by stating, “Never has our future been more unpredictable, never have we depended so much on political forces that cannot be trusted to follow the rules of common sense and self-interest—forces that look like sheer insanity, if judged by the standards of other centuries.”

Democracy is also more than just an ideal. It is a practical engine of self-correction and improvement that empowers people to constantly, peacefully struggle toward that ideal. When one part of the system falters, the others can be used as tools to repair and strengthen it. This unique and inherent capacity for self-correction is what makes democracy so successful at delivering long-term stability and prosperity. Autocrats have created a more favorable international environment for themselves over the past decade and a half, empowered by their own political and economic might as well as waning pressure from democracies. The

alternative order is not based on a unifying ideology or personal affinity among leaders. It is not designed to serve the best interests of populations, or to enable people to improve their own lives. Instead it is grounded in autocrats' shared interest in minimizing checks on their abuses and maintaining their grip on power. A world governed by this order would in reality be one of disorder, replete with armed conflict, lawless violence, corruption, and economic volatility. Such global instability and insecurity would have a significant cost in human lives.

Through these investigations, we have tried to explain the contours of authoritarianism, its rise and the sociopolitical context that surrounds it, and it is through them that we can begin to search for alternatives to this political form, which has been present throughout history.

#### 2.1.4 Key Words

1. **Authoritarianism:** is characterized by highly concentrated and centralized government power maintained by political repression and the exclusion of potential or supposed challengers by armed force.
2. **Democracy:** a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.
3. **Self-government:** is the ability of a person or group to exercise all necessary functions of regulation without intervention from an external authority.
4. **Regime:** a particular government or a system or method of government: The old corrupt, totalitarian regime was overthrown.
5. **Totalitarianism:** is a form of government that attempts to assert total control over the lives of its citizens.

#### Sub-Topics

- Threats to Freedom and Democracy in *El Salvador*.
- Left Behind: *Afghanistan's* Fight against Extremist Authoritarianism.
- Relation between Lack of Development and Lack of Democracy
- Silent Censorship and Silenciation across the Globe





#### 2.1.4 Guide Questions

1. What is your delegation's position regarding the Rise of Authoritarianism?
2. Is your delegation directly involved in the conflict, if so, how? If not, explain similar situations that have happened in your delegation's country.
3. Does your delegation believe that diplomatic solutions are possible so far into the crisis?
4. Does your delegation have or support authoritarian governments?

#### 2.1.5 Sources

<https://www.epw.in/engage/article/global-rise-authoritarianism>

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