

Workshop on regime change – instructions

There are 3 scenarios of a possible regime change, for each of these there are 2 groups representing the regime and opposition respectively (i.e. you will be divided into 6 groups). Your task is to prepare a negotiation strategy that you consider meaningful to reach the goals stipulated in the assignment (you can add your own as well). To allow for reasonable debate, please prepare a handout summarizing your position and plans – it can be itemized, up to 2 pages, to be uploaded in the Homework Vaults Folder in the IS by Sunday noon before the session (scheduled for March 7). **IMPORTANT:** do NOT disclose everything in the handout, you must have some surprising tools at hand 😊 (as in reality)! And of course, read the handouts (especially the one submitted by the other side of your case) before the session.

Scenario 1 – Hard Heads

Country X represents an example of a post-totalitarian regime – after many decades of totalitarian rule, albeit softened by dramatic social diversity in the country and consequent resistance of several important groups to the regime which, thus, had to accept some “grey zones” in the society, the ruling elites come to understand that they are not any longer able to exercise total control and that their resources (economic, human) are near to exhaustion. They are willing to discuss a compromise but still believe that they are strong enough not to relinquish their power in full. The opposition is relatively strong in some parts of the country but conspicuously absent in the others. Its main base is provided by the church and countryside which are hostile to the regime ideology, but many ordinary citizens are disillusioned and do not really care.

The regime elites are open to discuss holding an election that would be partly free so as to allow them to keep control even if this would be shared with the opposition. The opposition strongly prefers a totally free election but is aware that its support may not be widespread enough to exercise sufficient pressure upon the government to succumb to their claims. On both sides, there is a high degree of uncertainty but also unwillingness to make substantial concessions. Try to model negotiation that can satisfy both sides and facilitate regime change.

Scenario 2 – Violent Losers

Country Y is for decades governed by a military junta which habitually suppresses any element of opposition as quickly as possible. However, in recent years the junta realized that international isolation, imposed upon the regime, was severely affecting its economic interests and consequently decided to seek ways out of the isolation. Currently, they are willing to negotiate with the opposition provided that they allow the junta to retain its wealth, and guarantee their impunity. Conversely, if this plan fails they would not be shy to employ violent means to once again suppress the opposition even if they prefer not to. The opposition is aware of how big opportunity there is for them to launch a transition process but simultaneously they understand that they are very much fragmented along ethnic and religious lines, and that the junta can easily misuse these divisions.

The junta has already approached the opposition suggesting that they could join forces in a government of “national unity” and work together towards what they call “free election”. The opposition would be in principle willing to go this way but strongly suspects that this is a trap. On the other hand, they know that they enjoy huge public support as people are already disenchanted by the

junta and desperately want better life. Try to develop negotiation that would prevent bloodshed and allow for a reasonable change.

Scenario 3 – Capo di Tutti Capi on the Brink of Retirement

Country Z is a personal dictatorship of a charismatic, relatively popular leader who, however, is getting old and understands that there is no suitable replacement. His regime has only produced a bunch of party cadres who are not popular with the public, and some of them are even likely to introduce ideologically-based oppressive regime. However, while the leader does not really care about ideology or any other normative framework, he is very much concerned about his personal legacy. Consequently, he is afraid that the regime that would replace him, could affect his image of the “father of the nation”, and considers an option to additionally become “father of democracy”. The opposition in the country is relatively limited and is truly popular only in some segments of the society, namely in the mountainous regions from which the leader’s predecessor originated. Nevertheless, they prove to be hard-working and efficient in pursuing their agenda.

The dictator is willing to talk to the opposition so as to search for the ways how to cement his legacy, and if democratization is the most promising way he could agree to initiate it. However, he is a difficult person to deal with and can easily get offended. Moreover, he cannot reliably guarantee that the top members of his party would not stage a coup provided they would know he is talking to the opposition and accepts a regime change. The opposition sees his attitude as an unexpected chance to install a democratic regime but many of its members are strongly suspicious towards the dictator assuming that he only wants to discredit them. Try to identify the proper negotiation strategy to allow for a regime change.

Scenario 1 Regime: Banerjee, Castrillón Levoyer, El Aoudati

Scenario 1 Opposition: Corovic, Dolák, Estabrook, Gedik

Scenario 2 Regime: Landaverde, Gergelčíková, Chenenaoui

Scenario 2 Opposition: Iworima, Dostál, Shcherbakova, Mammadov

Scenario 3 Regime: Roa, Scekcic, Maiettová

Scenario 3 Opposition: Skjæveland, Smith, Strand, Yao