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## HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS, SOVEREIGNTY COSTS, AND DEMOCRATIZATION

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## **Human Rights Institutions, Sovereignty Costs, and Democratization**

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## **Human Rights Institutions, Sovereignty Costs, and Democratization**

### Abstract

Why do countries join international human rights institutions, when membership often yields few material gains and constrains state sovereignty? We argue that entering a human rights institution can yield substantial benefits for democratizing states. Emerging democracies can use the “sovereignty costs” associated with membership to lock in liberal policies and signal their intent to consolidate democracy. We also argue, however, that the magnitude of these costs varies across different human rights institutions, which include both treaties and international organizations. Consistent with this argument, we find that democratizing states tend to join those human rights institutions that impose greater constraints on state sovereignty.

The number of international human rights institutions and the number of countries participating in these institutions has risen dramatically in recent decades. This development has sparked a heated debate over why states choose to enter institutions designed to establish and monitor compliance with human rights standards. Various studies refer to the costs that states bear when they surrender discretion over national policies in order to adhere to the standards set by an international institution as “sovereignty costs” (e.g., Moravscik 2000: 227). Considerable interest has been expressed in why a government would voluntarily elect to pay the sovereignty costs of participating in a human rights institution – especially the constraints that the institution imposes on how a government treats citizens – when it seemingly obtains no material gains from membership.

The costs of participation in a human rights institution vary as a function of institutional design. Institutions characterized by obligation, precision, and delegation – features which are promoted by rule specificity, issue linkage, membership restrictions, or formal reporting, monitoring, and enforcement procedures – place substantial constraints on members’ sovereignty (Abbott and Snidal 2000). Not all human rights institutions, however, are characterized by high sovereignty costs. Human rights institutions are heterogeneous. They include United Nations (UN)-sponsored human rights treaties as well as international organizations (IOs) designed to govern how countries treat individuals within their borders. A growing body of research has focused on government ratification of a small number of specific human rights treaties (Cole 2005; Goodliffe and Hawkins 2006; Hathaway 2007; Neumayer 2007; Vreeland 2008; Simmons 2009). Much less attention has been paid to a larger and growing set of IOs that include the promotion, advancement, or enforcement of human rights among their aims, or to the variation in the costs to states of participation across these institutions.

We contend that democratizing states have a particular incentive to enter human rights institutions that extract more substantial membership costs. Joining such institutions signals that

their commitment to liberal policies and the consolidation of democracy is not “cheap talk.” Emerging democracies can use these costs of participation to help lock in liberal policies. Moreover, democratizing governments often respond to inducements from other more established democracies to join such institutions. For all three reasons, these states are particularly likely to accede to human rights institutions that extract substantial costs of participation. In addition to democratizing countries, stable democracies may also enter these institutions in response to domestic political pressures and in support of broader foreign policy goals, but they have fewer incentives to do so compared to emerging democracies. Of all regimes, autocracies (and autocratizing countries) have the weakest incentives to join high cost human rights institutions.

Using a new data set on human rights institutions and an original measure of sovereignty costs, we generate some of the first cross-national evidence on why and when states seek membership in these institutions and how membership varies with institutional design. The results provide strong support for our argument. Among the types of governments we analyze, states engaged in a democratic transition are most likely to join human rights institutions that levy greater sovereignty costs on participants. Stable democracies and autocracies are both less likely than democratizing countries to enter into high cost human rights institutions, although all three types of countries readily enter into low cost human rights institutions. Our results suggest that democratizing countries seek membership in human rights institutions for a different reason than other countries.

### Regime Type and Human Rights Institutions

In this paper, we argue that states experiencing a democratic transition have particular reason to pay the sovereignty costs generated by membership in human rights institutions, and that they are therefore drawn to those institutions that impose especially high costs. Democratizing

states are more likely than other states to incur higher sovereignty costs to signal they are not engaging in cheap talk about human rights as well as to lock in domestic political reforms.

For the government of a democratizing country that sincerely wants to consolidate democratic institutions, joining an international institution that insists its members safeguard the human rights of their citizens has various benefits. Respect for these rights is a keystone of democracy. Entering a human rights institution that extracts high costs enhances the credibility of the government's commitment to democratic reform and sends a credible signal to both domestic and foreign audiences that it is serious about such reform. By contrast, mature democracies and dictatorships have less reason to join such high cost institutions because membership infringes on their sovereignty and requires them to commit resources, with few corresponding benefits.

As Moravcsik (2000) argues, governments seek binding commitments to human rights institutions, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, when the benefits of reducing uncertainty over future human rights policy are greater than the sovereignty costs of membership. Emerging democracies gain most from an external mechanism to guide domestic policy because they have the strongest interest in demonstrating that they intend to act democratically in the future – including an avowal to protect human rights. They have an incentive to accept the sovereignty costs associated with membership in a human rights institution because membership locks in domestic reforms and reduces the likelihood that these reforms will be rolled back at some later date. Moravcsik (2000) also contends that this process of hand-tying precipitates a very different reaction from established democracies and dictatorships, which tend to oppose binding commitments. Because established democracies have already demonstrated a respect for human rights, they are generally reluctant to bear the sovereignty costs stemming from participation in human rights institutions. Pressure exerted by domestic interest groups sometimes prompts democracies to join these institutions, but they are less likely to do so than democratizing countries



(see also Simmons 2009). And while autocratic governments could potentially generate benefits from participation in these institutions, unless they can be assured they will bear few membership costs, they also tend to eschew membership.

Although we draw on Moravcsik's argument, his logic applies to a subset of institutions that requires members to surrender discretion over national policies – that is, to institutions designed to extract high sovereignty costs. However, not all human rights institutions impose high sovereignty costs on members. These costs vary across institutions as a function of their design. If there is a large degree of uncertainty concerning enforcement, delegation to an international agent will not tie the hands of government officials and thereby limit their ability to mistreat citizens. As such, we expect that democratizing states will be attracted to human rights institutions, but – contrary to Moravcsik – we do not expect that these states will display a similar tendency to enter low cost institutions more often than other types of states.

We also depart from Moravcsik in our view that credible commitments are only one among several motivations for new democracies to join human rights institutions. For democratic consolidation to succeed, the public must believe that democratic reforms are genuine (Mainwaring 1992). One way a new government can credibly signal its intention to carry through on reform is by joining international institutions (Pevehouse 2005). In an emerging democracy where citizens fear human rights abuses, the government can reassure a nervous public by entering institutions that regulate and monitor the treatment of citizens. Moreover, membership in these institutions can provide information to international audiences about a new democracy's objectives, signaling other states, multinational firms, and transnational social movements that it is committed to protecting human rights (Hawkins 1997; Vreeland 2008).

However, the clarity of a signal to support human rights is weakened if states join institutions that impose few costs. Because such institutions lack strong enforcement mechanisms,

contain imprecise or low levels of obligation, participation sends a less credible signal about a government's intentions to treat citizens humanely than membership in a higher cost institution. This is not to say that lower cost human rights institutions have no inherent value. Joining one can be costly if a government does not intend to abide by the agreement and participation raises expectations that the government will respect human rights. This is especially true in the case of new democracies, for which being granted membership in an international institution is often a form of international recognition (Klebes 1999; Pevehouse 2005). Moreover, the public in these countries is likely to be aware of membership since participation in more liberal international institutions is a clear break from past authoritarian practice (Pridham 1994). As Pridham (1995: 191) notes in the case of Southern Europe, for example, "Undoubtedly, the citizens of [Southern Europe] felt gratification over being treated as equals by international partners ... We may say that external policy practice has confirmed the credibility of the democratic decision-making structures." By reneging on international commitments, regardless of whether they are punished by other treaty members, some leaders risk a domestic political backlash.

A clearer signal is sent, however, if the international institution has a greater prospect of being enforced. Although any international commitment has the potential to create groups within society that will monitor the government's behavior and press it to adhere to the agreement, those commitments instantiated with organizations that extract clear costs are more likely to be preferred by emerging democracies. As Hathaway (2002: 2005) argues, the "expressive" (i.e., signaling) benefits of joining an international institution become attenuated when the "instrumental" (i.e., legal enforcement) possibilities are low. While states gain some utility from signing low cost human rights treaties, Hathaway shows that the difficulties associated with enforcing the treaties' terms create a pooling equilibrium in which the act of signing such a treaty conveys no information about the intent of the signatories.

Making commitments that have a greater likelihood of being enforced – such as commitments stemming from membership in institutions that create precise obligations and mechanisms to enforce them – sends a clearer and stronger signal. Whereas scholars often treat establishing credible commitments and signaling as distinct processes, they are intimately related in the human rights realm. Less credible commitments have low signaling value. If a country wants to create higher sovereignty costs in order to increase the quality of the signal about its future intentions, then it is more likely to do so by joining high cost human rights institutions, where the possibility of enforcement is greater, rather than by joining low cost institutions.

The decision to enter a human rights institution – whether an IO or a treaty – is not driven by prospective members alone. There can also be a supply side to this process, especially for IOs. Established democracies often provide inducements for emerging democracies to join such institutions. These inducements include financial assistance or the promise of future membership in more exclusive international organizations, such as the European Union (EU) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Hawkins 2004; Kelley 2004; Hafner-Burton 2005). The EU, for example, all but requires countries to enter various human rights treaties and organizations before being granted membership.

Our expectations regarding emerging democracies are clear. Although we cannot directly observe hand-tying, signaling processes, or inducements, we can observe some implications of each of these factors. The causal logic underlying each one implies that states experiencing a democratic transition have particular reason to join human rights institutions with considerable sovereignty costs stemming from participation. When they do join, we expect them to select the institutions that extract more substantial costs for participation. Such states, in contrast, have less reason to participate in institutions with the lowest participation costs.

Our expectations about the behavior of established democracies are less straightforward. Because there is little uncertainty about whether stable democracies will respect human rights, there is less need for them to signal future policy intentions. Domestic remedies also preclude the need for external solutions to problems that arise. Thus, there is less reason for established democracies to join human rights institutions of any kind. As sovereignty costs increase, established democracies are even more unlikely to join these institutions (von Stein 2005).

As a system of governance, however, democracy is not only consistent with respect for human rights, but it also provides opportunities for non-governmental actors to pressure the government (Hathaway 2003). In light of the premium placed on human rights in established democracies, interest groups may well press governments to join human rights institutions. Moreover, various established democracies have made promoting political liberalization and democracy abroad a foreign policy priority (Smith 1994; Carothers 2004). Certainly, the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations have made this goal a pillar of US foreign policy. Indeed, if some human rights institutions provide inducements for transitional states to become members, democratic participants often furnish these incentives.

We have clear reasons to expect that autocracies prefer to avoid participation in high sovereignty cost institutions. These states use human rights violations as a means to govern and redistribute resources. Thus, they have no direct incentive to protect human rights by delegating authority to an international institution that could credibly punish them for violations. Some dictators may join these institutions, feigning interest in human rights, if other linked benefits are large enough to offset the cost of membership. Yet, if the cost of membership in these institutions is high, we expect that autocratic leaders will, on balance, decide against membership. However, lower sovereignty costs institutions might attract non-democratic states.

As a result, we expect transitional democracies to display a pronounced tendency to join human rights institutions that extract high costs on them. Consolidated democracies may also enter these institutions, but they have fewer incentives to do so. Autocracies should also enter less frequently, preferring lower cost institutions that facilitate cheap talk.

### Variations in Sovereignty Costs

For our purposes, human rights institutions are comprised of treaties concluded under the auspices of the UN as well as both universal and regional international organizations that seek to protect human rights. Although various observers agree that membership in human rights institutions imposes costs on states, some institutions are better than others at generating sovereignty costs (Koh 1996-1997; Simmons 2009). We now turn to a discussion of the factors that affect the magnitude of these costs. We argue that human rights institutions marked by extensive precision, obligation, and delegation impose high sovereignty costs on participants (Abbott and Snidal 2003; Abbott et al. 2003). Other institutions generate fewer sovereignty costs because they have weaker enforcement mechanisms, a lack of institutional capacity, or the absence of formal reporting on human rights conditions in member-states. As such, some institutional commitments to human rights, even if spelled out in a charter or agreement, may be akin to cheap talk.

#### *Precision*

Institutions extract greater costs when they are more precise. This cost arises from the fact that precise rules are less subject to interpretation or political maneuvering. Highly determinant rules clearly proscribe certain behaviors, while more general guidelines leave open the possibility of behavior that is inconsistent with the spirit of the commitment (Abbott et al. 2000: 415). Yet because vague guidelines can be creatively interpreted, it may not be clear whether enforcement is

called for.

In the case of human rights, these institutions are more precise when they make specific reference to human rights norms or protecting human rights is their sole mission (Haas 1980). For example, the Inter-America Commission on Human Rights within the Organization of American States makes specific references to the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights. Similarly, the Council of Europe draws on the European Convention on Human Rights for its legal authority. These institutions are highly precise. Conversely, other institutions make only vague references to the improvement of human rights with no direct references to actual human rights law. The League of Arab States and the International Organization for Migration, for example, both pledge to uphold human rights, but offer little specific detail on which rights and what law or treaties are relevant. Such institutions are imprecise.

### *Obligation*

Institutions also extract greater sovereignty costs when they create more obligations for members. Obligations are voluntary legal commitments that indicate the “intent to be legally bound.” Extensive obligation involves unconditional pledges to be bound, whereas little obligation stems from mere recommendations or an intent to remain unbound by an agreement (Abbott et al. 2000: 410). Thus, the more clear and binding is the commitment, the more a state is obligated to act in a particular manner. Sovereignty costs are higher when these commitments are more binding and explicit, since the state is pledging via a legal instrument.

In terms of obligation, human rights institutions extract sovereignty costs in a variety of ways. First, while every organization or treaty in our sample addresses human rights, there is variation in how formally they do so. Institutions extract costs when they explicitly create a formal apparatus to focus on human rights because such an apparatus improves the odds that commitments

to uphold human rights standards will be consistently and explicitly discussed by member-states. The Latin American Parliament, for example, is marked by a relatively high level of obligation. It maintains a Commission on Human Rights, Justice, and Prison Policies to “protect and defend the fundamental rights of individuals and their development.” Alternatively, the Andean Parliament is characterized by a lower level of obligation. It pledges to “ensure respect for human rights,” but there is no formal part of the institution that deals with human rights issues.

Second, institutions create stronger obligations when they establish strict human rights or democracy requirements for membership (Hafner-Burton 2005; Schimmelfennig 2005). As a condition of membership, some organizations require that countries meet an existing standard of democratic governance or respect for human rights. Most famous in this regard is the EU, whose *acquis communautaire* reviews applicants to ensure their suitability for membership along many dimensions, including democracy and human rights (Kelley 2004). In the same vein, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) stipulates that all members should “enshrine the principles of equal opportunities and full participation of the citizens.”<sup>1</sup> Most organizations and all of the treaties in our sample, however, do not have explicit membership criteria and therefore create relatively few explicit obligations for participating countries.

### *Delegation*

Institutions characterized by widespread delegation also extract extensive sovereignty costs. Generally, delegation involves vesting third parties (in our case, human rights institutions or non-governmental organizations [NGOs]) with the authority to carry out tasks that could otherwise be performed by states. Among these tasks are dispute settlement, enforcement, and monitoring the

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, these principles or conditions may or may not be enforced. We leave this question for subsequent investigation and choose at this time to determine sovereignty costs by variations in regime design. In this way, we are consistent with other research on legalism that defines legalization as “key characteristics of rules and procedures, not in terms of effect” (Abbott et al. 2000: 402).

behavior of members (Abbott 2000: 416). Delegation increases sovereignty costs through a number of channels, including the creation of monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to which members grant authority in the human rights arena.

First, shifting responsibility for monitoring compliance with human rights obligations to an institution is one aspect of delegation. Some institutions have a formal committee, subcommittee, working group, or equivalent body inside the organization that is formally charged with human rights reporting. For example, the Agencie de la Francophonie (ACCT) issues a human rights report on all members every two years. The Commissioner of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) also issues regular reports regarding the respect for human rights and civil liberties. Yet many other institutions that attempt to further human rights do not issue reports on members' treatment of people as standard practice.

In addition, some institutions promote frequent interaction over and discussion of human rights issues. Institutions that hold regular meetings or have the ability to call ad hoc meetings on human rights issues create higher sovereignty costs because they delegate control of this monitoring process to the international institution. For example, the Central European Initiative is able to call ad hoc meetings at the suggestion of its working groups. The League of Arab States can convene emergency meetings at the request of its members.

Second, some human rights agreements specifically delegate enforcement of human rights to the international institution and its member states, rather than leaving enforcement in the exclusive purview of states. In particular, the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) maintains that respect for human rights is an "essential element" of cooperation and reserves the right to suspend the membership of those countries violating their commitment to human rights. Council of Europe members have also delegated significant enforcement power to that organization in the realm of human rights since the European Court of Human Rights has the ability to overturn



domestic laws that it finds objectionable.

In the case of the core UN human rights treaties, delegating enforcement often occurs through optional protocols, which give international bodies the right to hear complaints from individual citizens of signatory countries. For example, the UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention Against Torture both contain optional language, which if adopted by member states, delegates some enforcement and monitoring power to institutions tied to those two agreements. In the extreme, this removes state control from the monitoring aspects of the agreement. Clearly these institutional features create more obligations for members than institutions that have no formal reporting or monitoring procedure.

Finally, delegation is more extensive when NGOs are formally consulted as the institutions deal with human rights-related business (Sikkink 1993; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse and Sikkink 1999). This increases the likelihood that states violating human rights standards will be publicly taken to task by non-governmental third parties over whom members have no control. Of course, human rights institutions vary widely as to how much access NGOs are given. For example, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination's body serves as a broker between national human rights delegations and NGOs. In the realm of international institutions, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights grants observer status to NGOs and reserves the right to consult with NGOs at any point. Many other institutions, however, have little to no role for NGOs.

Thus, there is considerable variation in the design of human rights institutions. In the next section, we discuss our sample of human rights institutions as well as our operationalization of our key theoretical concept of sovereignty costs.

### The Data

## *Human Rights Institutions*

There is no existing data set that we can draw on to test our argument. The most extensive data set on international organizations was compiled by the Correlates of War (COW) Project (Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke 2004), but it does not suit our purposes particularly well. Many human rights IOs are emanations, which are organizations created by other organizations. The COW data, however, excludes all emanations, limiting its usefulness in creating a measure of commitment to human rights-related IOs.<sup>2</sup>

To fill this gap, we identified and coded state membership in organizations that announced an intention to promote, advance, or enforce human rights during the period from 1945 to 2000. We identified these organizations by searching the 2000 *Yearbook* of the Union of International Associations (UIA) and examining every IO's stated "Goals and Aims." If the goals included a human rights program of any type, the organization was added to the sample. We then removed two types of organizations. First, we excluded organizations that were largely non-governmental rather than inter-governmental. The UIA included some organizations that consist almost entirely of individual citizens or experts who do not speak for or represent a government. Second, we excluded IOs that have rotating memberships. Some emanations from the UN, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, maintain a limited number of seats that rotate among states. While certain states may decide not to serve, it is more likely that membership in these cases is determined by other factors, such as the institutional rules of the parent body. We are interested only in human rights organizations that states actively decide to join.

Our sample of IOs is heterogeneous with respect to size, region, and scope of the organization's overall mission. For example, the sample includes the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which is the world's largest regional security organization, with 56

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participating states. Its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is active in election observation, democratic development, human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination, and rule of law. Also included is the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which aims to integrate human rights and development. The SADC works to ensure economic well-being, improve standards of living and quality of life, promote freedom and social justice, and foster peace and security for members. The League of Arab States (LAS) attempts to strengthen political, cultural, economic, and social programs among its 22 members. It now also monitors implementation of the updated Arab Charter on Human Rights. At first blush, our sample of IOs may seem overly broad. However, even organizations that do not have human rights as a central focus can impose significant sovereignty costs. We return to this issue later when we attempt to measure variations in human rights policies (monitoring, enforcement, etc.) among the institutions in our sample.

An important coding issue is related to international courts: some organizations create treaties and courts to enforce the treaties.<sup>3</sup> For example, the OAS created the American Convention on Human Rights and two organizations to enforce the treaty. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights investigates violations of individuals' human rights, monitors members' behavior, educates publics and governments on human rights matters, recommends policies to protect human rights, and submits cases of violations for consideration in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. However, the Court applies and interprets the treaty only in countries that accept its

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<sup>3</sup> In addition, there might appear to be some overlap between human rights IOs and treaties. Each UN treaty creates an organization to help monitor members. The UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, for example, established the Human Rights Committee. In principle, this could be problematic for our analysis, since the treaties create organizations that could, in theory, better generate credible commitments and clearly signal intentions. In practice, however, these attendant organizations do not meet the formal definition of an IO and are not part of our IO dataset. First, these organizations often include both state-sponsored representatives and private citizens. Second, some of the organizations do not convene in regular intervals or meet only after long recesses. Finally, only some treaty members recognize the competence of the monitoring body to consider complaints about treaty violations. Not all members of the treaty recognize the IO's jurisdiction.

jurisdiction. Thus, for the purposes of our data, only states accepting jurisdiction are considered members.<sup>4</sup>

We added to our data on IOs existing data on membership in all UN human rights conventions, covenants, and protocols created between 1945 and 2006. Our sample of treaties covers a diverse range of issues. For example, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide requires states parties to enact the necessary legislation to provide effective penalties for people that commit genocide. Other treaties commit members to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination, prohibit torture, or protect the freedom of association and the right to organize.

Figure 1 shows a time series of the human rights institutions that comprise our sample as well as the yearly number of democratic transitions, both of which we describe later. There is clear evidence of a rise in the number of such institutions from 1945 to 2000. The number of democracies in the world has steadily risen during this period as well, triggered by the beginning of the “third wave” of democratization in the early 1970s and the collapse of the Soviet bloc (Huntington 1991).

### *Sovereignty Costs*

There is no agreed upon way of measuring the sovereignty costs that a human rights institution imposes on member-states and no empirical study that we are aware of has actually developed such a measure. In an initial effort to develop a measure of institutional sovereignty costs, we code each institution in our sample based on the following ten factors, which tap the extent to which the institution is characterized by precision, delegation, and obligation.

1. Is human rights the only issue (1) or is the institution multi-issue (0)? [Precision]

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<sup>4</sup> This is akin to the International Court of Justice, where only states accepting universal jurisdiction are coded as members.

Institutions were marked as having human rights as the only issue in instances when all of the multiple issues center on human rights (e.g., the institution's mission is democracy, human rights, and rule of law.)

2. Any formal institution in the institution that focuses on human rights (1) or not (0)? [Precision]  
Does a specific committee, subcommittee, working group, or equivalent focus on human rights? Also coded 1 if entirety of the institution focuses on human rights.
3. Are human rights rules specific references to law (1) or general (0)? [Precision]  
Coded as 0 if the institution refers only human rights in very general terms. Coded as 1 if a specific reference to a convention or treaty is found.
4. Does the institution engage in formal reporting (1) or not (0)? [Delegation]  
Institutions that had human rights specific reporting or an annual report (general report) that included extensive coverage of human rights issues are coded as a 1.
5. How many meetings does the institution hold on human rights per year? [Delegation]  
Any non-zero number coded as 1.
6. Does the institution have the ability to call ad hoc meetings (1) or not (0)? [Delegation]  
Meetings must have the ability to be concerned with human rights or human rights-related issues.
7. Are NGOs formally consulted (1) or not (0)? [Delegation]  
Coded as 1 if there are cooperative efforts or observer status with NGOs.
8. Is there a built in enforcement mechanism (1) or not (0)? [Obligation]  
Coded as 1 if a member state can be removed from the institution if it violates human rights. Also coded as 1 if a court or similar body can rule in relation to human rights violations.
9. Does formal membership include human rights requirement (1) or not (0)? [Obligation]  
Coded as 0 if documents mention "promotion of human rights" as important to the institution, but states could still be included if they had not met this criteria ahead of time.
10. Does formal membership include democracy requirement (1) or not (0)? [Obligation]  
Coded as 0 if documents mention "promotion of democracy" as important to the institution, but states could still be included if they had not met this criteria ahead of time.

The first three items are included to tap the concept of precision: how clear are commitments to uphold human rights and are those commitments grounded in specific international laws? Items 4-7 are included to capture the concept of delegation: how much power (that would normally reside at the state level) to monitor or information gather is given to the international institution (or related actors such as NGOs)? The final three items help measure obligation by addressing the expectations of enforcement prior to and after accession. Clearly, ours is not an exhaustive list of the institutional design characteristics that affect sovereignty costs. Equally, those design features that tend to raise sovereignty costs may not always increase the actual costs borne by members. Nonetheless, there is ample reason to expect the ten characteristics on which we focus to play a

crucial role in shaping sovereignty costs and focusing on them will allow us to take a useful first cut at the important task of measuring these costs.

The complete list of 57 IOs and 38 treaties in our sample, together with the sovereignty cost score for each institution, is shown in the Appendix.<sup>5</sup> For each state, we code sovereignty costs in the year that it accedes to a human rights institution. In all other years, sovereignty costs are assigned a value of 0. In any year when a given state joins more than one institution, we calculate the sum of the sovereignty cost scores of the institutions it entered.<sup>6</sup> For each institution, a higher score reflects greater precision, delegation, and obligation – and therefore higher sovereignty costs.<sup>7</sup> We expect a positive relationship between democratization and our measure of weighted institutional memberships since emerging democracies should seek membership in higher sovereignty cost institutions. Note that within our sample of treaties, we code all optional protocols as though they are independent institutions since the decision to adopt a protocol is independent of the decision to join the treaty from which it stems (i.e., states may or may not sign the protocols, regardless of whether they have signed the core treaty). Moreover, these protocols often have higher sovereignty costs associated with them than the treaties themselves. For example, the CEDAW and CCPR optional protocols expand the competence of a special treaty body that monitors member compliance. These expanded powers involve receiving and considering complaints from individuals or groups within its jurisdiction. The CAT optional protocol establishes a system of regular visits by independent international and national bodies to investigate allegations of torture in member-states. If new democracies hope to create sovereignty costs

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<sup>5</sup> A treaty must have entered into force by 2000 to be included in our sample.

<sup>6</sup> It is possible then, that a state joining several very low cost IOs could receive the same score as a state joining one high cost IO. This is not common in our data, however. Moreover, the correlation between the number of IOs joined and the sovereignty cost score is very high ( $r = 0.93$ ).

<sup>7</sup> We also estimate the models using the mean and the maximum (rather than the sum) of the sovereignty cost score when a country joined more than one institution in a given year. Our results are nearly identical to those presented below.

through the UN treaty system, for example, we would expect them to sign these high cost protocols. Thus, we treat treaties and related protocols as independent accession decisions.

### A Statistical Model of Human Rights Institutions

To test our hypothesis about the influence of democratization on human rights institutions, we estimate the following two-stage model:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Joining HR Institution} = & \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 \text{Democratization} + \gamma_2 \text{Autocratization} + \\
 & \gamma_3 \text{Stable Democracy} + \gamma_4 \text{Stable Anocracy} + \gamma_5 \# \text{Human Rights Institutions} + \\
 & \gamma_6 \# \text{IOs} + \gamma_7 \text{Dispute} + \gamma_8 \text{Year} + \gamma_9 \text{Hegemony} + \gamma_{10} \text{Former Communist} + \\
 & \sum_{i=11}^{16} \gamma_i \text{Region} + \varepsilon_1 \qquad [1]
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Sovereignty Costs} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Democratization} + \beta_2 \text{Autocratization} + \\
 & \beta_3 \text{Stable Democracy} + \beta_4 \text{Stable Anocracy} + \beta_5 \# \text{Human Rights Institutions} + \\
 & \beta_6 \text{Dispute} + \beta_7 \text{Year} + \beta_8 \text{Hegemony} + \beta_9 \text{Independence} + \\
 & \beta_{10} \text{Former Communist} + \sum_{i=11}^{16} \beta_i \text{Region} + \varepsilon_2 \qquad [2]
 \end{aligned}$$

In this study, the unit of analysis is the country-year. We simultaneously address each state's decision about whether to enter human rights institutions (equation 1) and the sovereignty costs associated with those institutions (equation 2). This is essential because past research has shown that democratizing states are more likely to join international institutions writ large (Mansfield and Pevehouse 2008). Thus, we want to separate the decision to join an institution in a general sense and the decision to join an institution of a particular type.

Therefore, the dependent variable in the first stage (*Joining HR Institution*) is the log of the odds that country  $i$  joins a human rights institution in year  $t$ . We observe a 1 when a state joins a human rights institution in a given year. Otherwise, this variable is coded as zero.<sup>8</sup>

The second stage dependent variable (*Sovereignty Costs*) is the level of sovereignty costs accrued when joining a human rights institution in year  $t$ . As previously discussed, we calculate sovereignty costs in the year of accession of state  $i$ . If state  $i$  joins multiple human rights institutions in a given year, the sovereignty cost scores are summed across each institution. If a state does not join a human rights institution, their sovereignty cost score for that year is coded as a zero.<sup>9</sup>

To measure each state's regime type, we use a 21-point index drawn from an updated version of the Polity IV data set. The index ranges from 10 for the most democratic states to -10 for the most autocratic ones (Jagers and Gurr 1995; Gleditsch 2004; Marshall 2004). Previous studies have defined states as democratic if they score greater than 6 on this index in a given year,  $t$ . They have defined states with a score of less than -6 as autocratic. States with scores ranging from -6 to 6 are considered anocratic. Initially, we use these thresholds to create five indicator variables measuring regime change or stability over each five-year period.

Thus, in both equations, *Democratization* equals 1 if, between year  $t-5$  and year  $t$ , a state makes a fundamental change in a democratic direction: from an autocracy to either an anocracy or a democracy, or from an anocracy to a democracy (Mansfield and Snyder 2005). *Autocratization*

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<sup>8</sup> This includes IOs in which state  $i$  is an associate member. We exclude IOs where the state is an observer. Associate members generally take part in most IO functions yet may not be fully approved for full membership, while observers usually lack voting power and only consult on IO operations.

<sup>9</sup> It is possible that a state could join an institution with a sovereignty cost score of zero, thus conflating not joining a human rights institution with joining a low cost institution. Although this is rare in the data ( $n=153$ ), we re-estimate the models below including an indicator variable for these cases. The variable itself never achieves statistical significance and has no substantive effect on the other estimates. In addition, we re-estimate equation 2 including only cases where a state joins a human rights institution, including an additional variable controlling for the probability of joining a human rights institution (the predicted probability from a probit estimation of equation 1). The estimates of that model provide an identical substantive answer to the estimates found below.



equals 1 if a state makes a transition in an autocratic direction: from a democracy to either an anocracy or an autocracy, or from an anocracy to an autocracy. *Stable Democracy* equals 1 if a state remains democratic between years  $t-5$  and  $t$ . *Stable Anocracy* equals 1 if a state remains anocratic during this interval, and *Stable Autocracy* equals 1 if a state remains autocratic during the interval. We exclude *Stable Autocracy*, which is arbitrarily designated the reference category. Consequently, the coefficients of the first four variables reflect the impact of each type of regime relative to being a stable autocracy. We expect the coefficient of *Democratization* to be positive in equation 2, since our argument is that states experiencing a democratic transition are especially likely to enter human rights institutions that impose higher sovereignty costs on members. We also expect this coefficient to be larger than the coefficients of *Autocratization*, *Stable Democracy*, and *Stable Anocracy*.

Membership in any particular human rights institution is no doubt related to the existing set of institutions to which a state is a member. To this end, we control for existing institutional memberships. To control for possible “ceiling” or “floor” effects in human rights institution membership. As a state participates in a growing number of human rights institutions, the marginal benefit of joining another one may decline. Further, the number of human rights institutions that a state does not belong to declines as it joins more organizations, thereby reducing the number of institutions that it could enter. As such, *#Human Rights Institutions* may be inversely related to the change in institutional memberships and sovereignty costs. Alternatively, this relationship may be direct. States that participate in a large number of human rights institutions may be “joiners,” predisposed to enter as many international institutions as possible, even if those institutions work in the same substantive issue area (Mansfield and Pevehouse 2008). Conversely, states that belong to few human rights institutions may have an aversion to joining more.

It is also possible that “ceiling” effects or the propensity to be a “joiner” matters across various types of international institutions. To this end, we also introduce *#IOs* in the first stage

model, a count of the total number of all international organizations that state  $i$  is a member of in year  $t$ .<sup>10</sup> The information used to generate this count is taken from the COW Intergovernmental Organizations data (Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke 2004).

It is also crucial that we control for other factors that may prompt states to enter human rights institutions or influence their decisions on which institutions to join. First, *Dispute* is the number of Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) involving state  $i$  that are ongoing in year  $t$ , based on the MID 3.0 data (Ghosn and Palmer 2003). Participants in a human rights institution may be reluctant to grant membership to a state involved in interstate disputes, since its belligerence could adversely affect the institution. Moreover, if there is a perceived tradeoff between national security and respect for individual liberties during times of conflict, it is unlikely that states would give priority to gaining membership in an institution that demands respect for human rights. This is especially likely to be true if the institution in question is quite intrusive (and thus, generates higher sovereignty costs). Finally, if democratization is related to disputes (Mansfield and Snyder 2002), then it is important to control for MIDs as a source of omitted variable bias.

Second, we also include a trend (*Year*) in both model stages to ensure that any observed relationship between state regime type and human rights institutions does not stem from the spread of both democracy and international institutions over time (Huntington 1991; Jagers and Gurr 1995; Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke 2004). In addition, given that the number of high sovereignty cost institutions has increased over time, this variable will also guard against spurious findings with regard to sovereignty costs. Third, *Hegemony* measures the relative size of the largest state in the international system and is included in both stages. It is operationalized as the share of global military capabilities controlled by the largest state in the system (in this analysis, the US) in year  $t$ , using the COW Material Capabilities data (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972; Singer 1987).

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<sup>10</sup> We add this variable only to the first stage of the model since there is no reason to think that general membership in IOs should influence both the decision to join institutions and the type of those institutions.

Past research has linked hegemony to the formation of international organizations (Keohane 1984). Furthermore, the hegemon during the period covered here – the US – often emphasized the need for countries to strengthen human rights and supported the establishment of various human rights bodies.

Fourth, *Independence* is the number of years state  $i$  has been an independent nation-state as of year  $t$ , based on the date of independence furnished by the COW Project (Gleditsch and Ward 1999). There is also evidence that the time that has elapsed since independence is associated with transitions to democracy, suggesting that the variable should be included in our model to avoid conflating the influence of political independence and democratization (Pevehouse 2005). It is included in the second stage of the model because it is more likely that the sensitivity captured by this measure will influence decisions regarding the level of sovereignty costs more than the propensity to join human rights institutions generally.

Fifth, many former communist states expressed a desire to join Western organizations after the Cold War, including those focused on human rights. This tendency is not at odds with our argument, but we need to ensure that these cases are not driving any observed correlation between democratization and membership in human rights institutions or between democratization and the desire to choose high sovereignty cost institutions. To this end, we introduce *Former Communist*, which equals 1 for states that were communist at some point during the post-World War II era, beginning in the year after the communist government fell. In addition, because many human rights IOs are regional, patterns of membership may be similar within geographic regions (Shanks, Jacobson, and Kaplan 1996). We therefore add regional indicator variables to the model.<sup>11</sup> In the first stage of the model, we also add a counter of the years since joining any human rights institution

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<sup>11</sup> We use the COW Project's definition of geographic regions with the exception of Oceania, which we combine with Asia. Because of the small number of observations in that region, this decision is necessary to achieve model convergence in several cases. See Singer and Small (1994).

to help account for temporal dependence in accession decisions (see Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998). Finally, each model contains a stochastic error term.

Descriptive statistics for the variables analyzed in this paper are presented in Table 1. To estimate both stages of the model, we use a zero-inflated negative binomial specification. This zero-inflated count model allows for the simultaneous estimation of the decision whether to enter a human rights institution (stage 1 or equation 1) and the level of sovereignty costs accepted (stage 2 or equation 2). Tests of statistical significance are based on standard errors that are clustered by country.<sup>12</sup>

## Results

Table 2 presents the initial estimates of our models. The coefficient estimates in column 1 refer to accession (the first stage model), while the coefficient estimates in column 2 refer to sovereignty costs (the second stage model). Because we are using a zero-inflated estimation procedure, the coefficient estimates in column 1 represent the probability of non-accession (i.e., an observed value of zero), rather than the typical discrete outcome model that estimates the probability of a positive outcome. Thus, negative coefficients represent an increased probability of acceding to a human rights institution. As such, it is not surprising that the coefficient estimate of *Democratization* in the table's first column is negative and statistically significant. Yet, this estimated coefficient is smaller than that of *Stable Democracy* and is not statistically distinguishable from any of the other regime type coefficients. This indicates that there is no pronounced difference between regime types in their propensity to join human rights institutions.

There are, however, very stark differences in the extent to which various regime types are drawn to institutions marked by extensive sovereignty costs. In column 2, the estimated coefficient

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<sup>12</sup> A Vuong test confirms the appropriateness of the zero-inflated negative binomial specification versus a typical negative binomial specification.

of *Democratization* is positive, statistically significant, and three times the size of any other regime type coefficient. Moreover, these differences are highly statistically significant in the case of *Autocratization*, *Stable Anocracy*, and *Stable Democracy* ( $\chi^2 = 11.40, p < 0.01$ ;  $\chi^2 = 6.50, p < 0.01$ ;  $\chi^2 = 14.29, p < 0.01$ , respectively). Not only do states that have recently undergone a democratic transition display a greater tendency to enter higher sovereignty cost human rights institutions than any other type of country, these effects are substantively large as well. Based on our estimates, for example, a state transitioning to democracy selects institutions that impose roughly double the sovereignty costs as that selected by other countries.<sup>13</sup>

It is noteworthy that there are few differences among the remaining regime types. The estimated coefficients of *Stable Democracy* and *Stable Anocracy* are not statistically different from each other, although *Stable Autocracy* is distinguishable from the reference category.

*Autocratization* is negative and not statistically distinguishable from the reference category. It is also significantly different from *Stable Anocracy* ( $\chi^2 = 3.02, p < 0.10$ ), but not from *Stable Democracy*. Thus, our initial analysis suggests that democratizing states are more likely to join human rights institutions with higher sovereignty costs than other states and that few differences exist among these other states.

Turning to the control variables, the coefficient estimates are quite mixed across the two stages of the model. For example, while a higher number of memberships in human rights institutions (*#Human Rights Institutions*) tends to predict accession to other human rights institutions (accession/first stage), it has only a marginal bearing on the size of sovereignty costs accepted by new members. States are increasingly likely to join additional human rights institutions as they gain membership in a growing number of IOs (*#IOs*). This is consistent with the findings of

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<sup>13</sup> For the baseline prediction, we set all continuous variables at their mean, and we set *Former Communist*, and all regional indicator variables to zero (with Africa as the reference category).

Mansfield and Pevehouse (2008), who find a similar pattern across various types of IOs.

Military disputes have little bearing on the choice to join these institutions, but do influence the sovereignty costs accepted by those states who do join, as the estimate of *Dispute* is negative and highly statistically in the second stage of the model. Further, as hegemony wanes, states are more likely to join human rights institutions, possibly to lock in human rights standards and monitoring in the event that the hegemon (the US for this analysis) continues to falter. Likewise, waning hegemony also increases the level of sovereignty costs states are willing to accept. Finally, *Former Communist* states are especially likely to join human rights institutions as well as accept higher sovereignty costs.

#### Robustness Checks

Our initial results indicate that democratizing states are drawn to human rights institutions that impose high sovereignty costs on members, but that these costs have little bearing on the human rights institutions that other regime types enter. However, it is important to ensure that our findings are not an artifact of how we measured regime type. To this end, we replace *Stable Democracy* and *Stable Anocracy* with *Regime Type*, which is state *i*'s score at time *t* on the 21-point index of regime type that we described earlier. This approach will allow us to determine whether democratization influences the decision to join human rights institutions, after accounting for each state's institutional make-up in the year the decision is made. Note that when analyzing the effects of democratization and autocratization in these models, the reference category is the combination of all stable regime types.

The results, which are omitted to conserve space, indicate that the coefficient estimate of *Democratization* is positive and statistically significant. Controlling for a state's regime type in year *t*, emerging democracies are more likely to enter human rights organizations than autocratizing

countries ( $\chi^2 = 8.01, p < 0.01$ ). Democratization also continues to have a strong substantive impact on how the level of sovereignty costs accepted: the predicted level of these costs in institutions joined is twice as large for states that have undergone a democratic transition than for other states.<sup>14</sup>

Next, we remove some human rights IO emanations from our sample of institutions. Membership in certain emanations is automatic when a state joins the parent organization. Including these emanations in our sample is entirely appropriate since governments understand that the decision to join the parent IO is also a decision to join the emanation and these emanations involve the promotion or protection of human rights. Nonetheless, to make sure this coding procedure does not influence our results, we re-estimate our model after excluding membership in these automatic emanations.

As shown in the third column of Table 2, the estimated coefficient of *Democratization* is positive and statistically significant.<sup>15</sup> In addition, this estimate is statistically different than that of every other regime type analyzed here. The coefficient estimate of *Democratization* is smaller than in our previous analysis, but this is not unexpected. These automatic emanations can be viewed as another measure of sovereignty costs. States joining the OSCE, for example, recognize that they are also becoming members of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Both of these institutions may serve to lock in the democratization process. Having different institutions embedded within an organization can serve to increase the likelihood that it will enforce conditionality, investigate backsliding, or otherwise increase sovereignty costs associated with membership.

Another issue we address is the possibility that our findings about institutions are driven by the EU, which has a long-standing commitment to human rights and several emanations that

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<sup>14</sup> Again, this assumes an African state that is not a former communist country. All other variables are set to their mean.

<sup>15</sup> For this and remaining models, we show only the second stage (sovereignty cost) estimates. The first stage estimates are very similar across each additional set of estimates.

promote norms of justice. After removing all EU (or previously EC) members from the sample, the coefficient estimate of *Democratization* in the sovereignty cost stage of the model is smaller than in our initial estimates. However, it remains positive, statistically significant, and statistically different from the coefficient estimate for every other regime type indicator. Thus, our results (which are omitted to conserve space) are not an artifact of the EU.

We also need to ensure that our findings are not undermined by omitted variable bias. One possible source of such bias is that a state's desire to protect human rights (or join institutions generally) could be linked to its transition toward democracy by some variable that causes both phenomena. Past research has linked economic wealth to both IO membership rates (Shanks, Jacobson, and Kaplan 1996) and transitions to democracy (Burkhart and Lewis-Beck 1994). Consequently, we include *Development*, which is country *i*'s per capita GDP in year *t*, in both stages of our model and then re-estimate the model.<sup>16</sup>

The results (also omitted to conserve space) indicate that including *Development* has little bearing on our previous results. The estimated coefficient of *Development* is positive and statistically significant in the first stage of the model, indicating that wealthier states are less likely to join human rights institutions (although the substantive effect is small). *Development* is positive in the second stage of the model, but does not achieve statistical significance. But the coefficient estimate of *Democratization* in the second stage remains positive and statistically significant (at the 0.01 level) and it is statistically different than the coefficient estimates of *Autocratization* ( $\chi^2 = 10.38, p < 0.01$ ), *Stable Democracy* ( $\chi^2 = 11.86, p < 0.01$ ), and *Stable Anocracy* ( $\chi^2 = 4.57, p < 0.05$ ).

Another possible source of omitted variable bias, highlighted by Hathaway (2007), is that a state's existing record of human rights protection might affect its entrance into human rights

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<sup>16</sup> Data on per capita GDP are taken from Heston, Summers, and Aten (2002).



institutions. For instance, states with relatively poor human rights records may not wish to join a human rights institution, especially one that has the potential to generate high sovereignty costs. Moreover, if democratic or democratizing countries are more likely to respect human rights, this could have a confounding effect in our model. A state's record of respect for human rights could account for the observed relationships between democratization and democracy, on the one hand, and changes in human rights institution membership, on the other.

To address this possibility, we introduce a yearly measure of each state's respect for human rights into our initial models. This five-point index is constructed using annual data published by Amnesty International and measures the extent of murder, torture, forced disappearance, and political imprisonment in a given country.<sup>17</sup> As shown in the fourth column of Table 2, this new variable is not statistically significant in either the first or the second stage of our model. These results indicate that a state's rate of repression does not influence changes in its portfolio of human rights institutions. As such, human rights practices do not seem to influence membership patterns in human rights institutions, contrary to what some studies suggest (Hathaway 2003). More importantly, none of the regime type coefficient estimates vary in any meaningful way from the original estimates. The coefficient estimate of *Democratization* is positive and statistically different from the reference category, *Stable Democracy*, *Stable Anocracy*, and *Autocratization*.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, we separate our sample into treaties and IOs. Our argument is that a critical factor in a country's decision to join a human rights institution is whether the institution is designed to impose sovereignty costs. These costs vary across both treaties and IOs. However, membership rules for treaties and IOs differ, with many treaties offering open enrollment while many IOs are

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<sup>17</sup> Coding details are available from Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005). Human rights data are available on a limited sample of states, reducing the sample size of our analyses. Substituting a similar measure constructed from State Department human rights reports yields nearly identical results. On the State Department measure, see Poe and Tate (1994).

<sup>18</sup> We also examined the interaction between *Democratization* and the measure of state repression and found no evidence that this interaction helps to explain either the decision to join human rights institutions or the level of sovereignty costs accepted by new member states.

selective in which countries they admit. To see if there are observable differences between joining treaties and IOs, we re-estimate our core empirical model twice: once including membership and sovereignty cost decisions for IOs only, and once for these same decisions involving international human rights treaties. Table 3 presents the second stage estimates of these two different models.

Column 1 of Table 3 presents the estimates for the sample of IOs. These results are very similar to our core findings: the estimated coefficient of *Democratization* is positive and significantly different from the reference category as well as each of the other regime type variables.<sup>19</sup> Substantively, *Democratization* continues to have a substantively large impact, increasing the sovereignty costs accepted by a state entering an IO by nearly 70 percent. Turning to the estimates of the treaty sample, found in column 2 of Table 3, the results are substantively consistent although somewhat statistically weaker than in our original estimates. The coefficient estimate of *Democratization* is statistically distinguishable from the reference category, *Stable Democracy*, and *Autocratization*. But, it is not statistically different from *Stable Anocracy*. While it could be tempting for some to interpret these results as evidence that organizations provide stronger incentives for newly democratized states to commit to human rights than do treaties, we are hesitant to do so. Given that some treaties create related IOs to deal with human rights issues, it is hard to draw a bright line between these type forms of organization. Thus, we present this result to show that IOs *and* treaties with higher sovereignty costs tend to attract newly democratic states, but this trend is more pronounced for IOs.

In sum, our results show that democratizing states accept higher sovereignty costs than other types of regimes. This holds while simultaneously controlling for the choice to enter a human rights institution in the first place. Stable anocracies tend to also accept higher sovereignty costs than stable democracies or autocratizing countries, but these differences are rarely statistically

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<sup>19</sup> We note that the sample size is smaller in the treaty model because the first year of treaty accession is 1948 rather than 1945.

significant.

### Conclusions

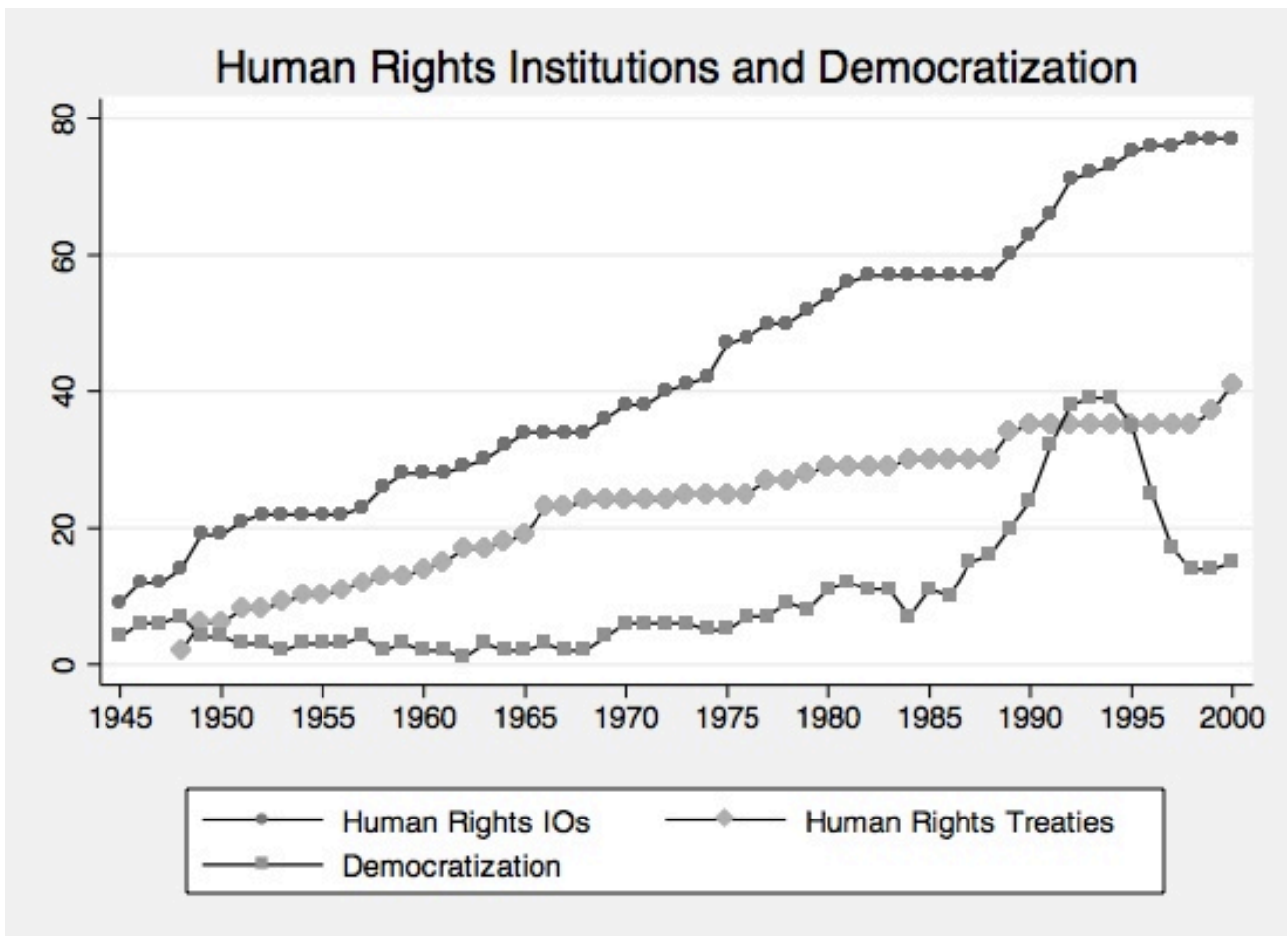
The rise of international human rights institutions has spawned a vigorous debate in the fields of international relations and international law. Many observers contend that these institutions create strong legal and normative structures that heavily shape state behavior, and thus that they tend to attract members that seek better (or already protect) human rights. Others hold that these institutions are often inconsequential and thus widely attract members that intend to violate human rights. This paper engages the debate by exploring what types of states join what types of institutions. By developing a new data set of human rights organizations to compliment existing data on human rights treaties, and mapping variation in the sovereignty costs associated with participation, we tested several propositions concerning what provides the impetus for state membership in human rights institutions.

The logics of credible commitments, signaling and inducements all lead us to expect that transitions to democracy will spur states to join human rights institutions with substantial costs to participation. In this paper, we generated what we believe to be the first index of sovereignty costs associated with membership to these human rights institutions. When using this direct measure of the sovereignty costs imposed by human rights institutions, we found significant support for our hypothesis: democratizing states are more likely to join higher sovereignty cost institutions, even when controlling for their underlying propensity to join any human rights institutions. This is in comparison to states in transition to authoritarianism, but also all manner of stable regime types.

We have obviously avoided the question of effects in this paper: do high cost human rights institutions improve respect for human rights in signatory states? We leave that question to future research, but we do note that our work is relevant to that debate. Because of the significant

possibility for selection (non-random treatment), efforts to estimate compliance must begin with a serious effort to explicate why states join human rights institutions in the first place. We believe that a crucial consideration for states in this accession decision is domestic regime type and change. Democratizing states' desire to join particular types of human rights institutions – those that will provide the costliest (and therefore clearest) signal of intent to comply with human rights rules and standards. Thus, we believe our findings are important not only for those wanting to know who joins human rights institutions, but for those asking to what end states join human rights institutions.

FIGURE 1. HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE WORLD, 1945-2000.



**TABLE 1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

<b>Variable</b>	<b><i>N</i></b>	<b><i>Mean</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>	<b><i>Max</i></b>	<b><i>Min</i></b>
Sovereignty Costs	6157	2.24	4.57	0	65
Sovereignty Costs-IOs	6157	1.07	3.45	0	55
#Human Rights Instit.	6157	19.66	12.45	0	61
#Treaties	5760	11.57	7.26	0	31
#Human Rights IOs	6157	8.84	5.87	0	31
Democratization	6157	0.09	0.29	0	1
Autocratization	6157	0.06	0.24	0	1
Stable Democracy	6157	0.30	0.46	0	1
Stable Anocracy	6157	0.20	0.40	0	1
Dispute	6157	0.64	1.28	0	27
Hegemony	6157	0.19	0.05	0.14	0.38
Year	6157	1977.64	14.55	1945	2000
Independence	6157	53.14	47.55	0	184
Former Communist	6157	0.03	0.17	0	1
Sovereignty Costs-Tr	5760	1.25	2.89	0	29
#IOs	6157	46.29	20.75	0	130

**TABLE 2. ESTIMATES OF THE DETERMINANTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IO MEMBERSHIP CHANGES**

Variable	CORE MODEL		ROBUSTNESS CHECKS	
	<i>IO Accession</i>	<i>Sovereignty Cost</i>	<i>No Emanations</i>	<i>HR Ratings</i>
Democratization	-0.123* (0.079)	0.290*** (0.082)	0.218*** (0.082)	0.249*** (0.093)
Autocratization	-0.043 (0.084)	-0.057 (0.089)	-0.082 (0.085)	-0.113 (0.132)
Stable Democracy	-0.081* (0.051)	0.042 (0.051)	-0.009 (0.047)	-0.126* (0.083)
Stable Anocracy	-0.048 (0.058)	0.101** (0.052)	0.098** (0.049)	0.136** (0.070)
#HR Institutions	-0.029*** (0.003)	0.004* (0.003)	0.004 (0.003)	0.004* (0.003)
#IOs	-0.002** (0.001)	--	--	--
Dispute	0.012 (0.012)	-0.050*** (0.013)	-0.025** (0.012)	-0.024* (0.021)
Year	0.027*** (0.003)	0.0004 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.041*** (0.006)
Hegemony	1.671** (0.870)	-0.179 (0.670)	-0.494 (0.589)	-16.832*** (3.000)
Independence	--	0.0003 (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0003)	0.0005 (0.0005)
Former Communist	-0.625*** (0.150)	0.388*** (0.095)	0.227*** (0.092)	0.445*** (0.096)
Human Rights Rating	--	--	--	-0.017 (0.028)
Constant	-52.901*** (6.763)	0.891 (5.857)	5.333 (5.144)	86.069*** (12.114)
ln( $\alpha$ )		-0.592*** (0.069)	-0.986*** (0.069)	-0.853*** (0.099)
<i>Observations</i>		6157	6157	3135
<i>Number of countries</i>		173	173	164
<b><math>\chi^2</math> Tests</b>				
Democratization vs. Autocratization	0.57	11.40***	8.60***	7.64***
Democratization vs. Stable Democracy	0.31	14.29***	11.30***	20.89***
Democratization vs. Stable Anocracy	0.80	6.50**	2.27*	1.78*

NOTE: Zero-inflated negative binomial estimation (with panel-corrected standard errors in brackets). Only second stage estimates are shown in columns 3 and 4. Estimates of regional fixed-effects are excluded to save space. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%; one-tailed tests are conducted for the  $\chi^2$  tests.

**TABLE 3. ESTIMATES OF THE DETERMINANTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY AND IO MEMBERSHIP**

<b>Variable</b>	<i>Second Stage Estimates</i>	
	<i>HR IOs</i>	<i>HR Treaties</i>
Democratization	0.283** (0.102)	0.128* (0.088)
Autocratization	0.042 (0.097)	-0.076 (0.105)
Stable Democracy	-0.022 (0.059)	-0.069 (0.057)
Stable Anocracy	0.036 (0.071)	0.012 (0.066)
#HR IOs   Treaties	0.025** (0.007)	0.016*** (0.005)
Dispute	-0.006 (0.022)	-0.046*** (0.016)
Year	-0.005* (0.004)	0.001 (0.004)
Hegemony	1.646* (0.733)	-3.777*** (1.298)
Independence	0.0006* (0.0004)	-0.0004 (0.0004)
Former Communist	0.216 (0.131)	0.155* (0.120)
Constant	11.960** (7.039)	0.469 (8.030)
ln( $\alpha$ )	-0.861 (0.102)	-0.893*** (0.082)
<i>Observations</i>	<i>6157</i>	<i>5760</i>
<i>Number of countries</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>165</i>
<b><math>\chi^2</math> Tests</b>		
Democratization vs. Autocratization	2.94**	2.47*
Democratization vs. Stable Democracy	9.24***	6.30***
Democratization vs. Stable Anocracy	6.09***	1.53

NOTE: Zero-inflated negative binomial count estimation (with panel-corrected standard errors in brackets). Only the second stage estimates are shown. Estimates of regional fixed-effects are excluded to save space. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%; one-tailed tests.



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Appendix. List of Human Rights IOs and Treaties.

IOs that announced an intention to promote, advance, or enforce human rights, with the corresponding sovereignty cost score in brackets

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) [7]  
African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) [5]  
Agence de La Francophonie (ACCT) [4]  
Andean Parliament [1]  
Arab Labour Organization (ALO) [0]  
CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights [6]  
Central American Integration System [1]  
Central European Initiative [1]  
Committee for the Development of Sport [0]  
Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe [8]  
Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) [4]  
Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries [0]  
Council of Europe (CE) [7]  
Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) [6]  
European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) [4]  
European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (ECSWPR) [0]  
European Commission [6]  
European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) [6]  
European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) [3]  
European Court of Human Rights [9]  
European Parliament (EP) [8]  
European Union (EU) [9]  
European Youth Foundation (EYF) [3]  
Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI) [7]  
Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) [7]  
Inter-American Indian Institute (IAII) [1]  
Intergovernmental TV and Radio Corporation (MIR) [1]  
International Bureau of Education (IBE) [4]  
International Court of Justice (ICJ) [5]  
International Labour Organization (ILO) [7]  
International Organization for Migration (IOM) [4]  
International Training Centre of the ILO [1]  
Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences [0]  
Latin American Parliament [4]  
League of Arab States (LAS) [2]  
Nordic Council of Ministers [2]  
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) [2]  
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) [5]  
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) [8]  
Organization of American States (OAS) [4]  
Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) [3]  
OSCE - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) [9]  
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe [7]

Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [6]  
Parliamentary Committee of the Central European Initiative [5]  
Phare Programme [5]  
Programme for Central and Eastern European Development (PROCEED) [1]  
Southern African Development Community (SADC) [6]  
Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men [7]  
Tacis Programme [1]  
United Nations [7]  
United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People [4]  
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) [5]  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [6]  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Executive Committee (UNHCREXC) [8]  
United Nations (SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON) Peacekeeping Operations [3]  
World Tourism Organization (WTO) [0]

Human Rights Treaties, with the corresponding sovereignty cost score in brackets

Convention on the Freedom of Association and the Right to Organize [2]  
Convention Against Torture (CAT) [5]  
Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees [3]  
Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons [1]  
Convention against Discrimination in Education [3]  
Convention on the Abolition of Forced Labor [1]  
Convention on the Elimination Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) [6]  
Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) [5]  
Convention on Genocide [3]  
Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples [1]  
Convention on Marriage [1]  
Convention on Mercenaries [3]  
Convention on Migrant Workers [5]  
Convention on Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations [1]  
Convention on Reduction of Statelessness [2]  
Convention on Right to Organize & Collective Bargaining [1]  
Convention on Rights of Child [5]  
Convention on Trafficking in Persons [2]  
Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) [4]  
Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) [5]  
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention [1]  
Employment Policy Convention [1]  
Equal Remuneration Convention [1]  
Geneva Convention, Protection of Civilians Time of War [2]  
Geneva Convention, Treatment of Prisoners of War [2]  
Minimum Age Convention [1]  
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights Child (Armed Conflict) [5]  
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights Child (Sale/Prostitution/Pornography) [5]  
Optional Protocol to CEDAW [6]  
Optional Protocol to the ICCPR [4]  
Protocol Amending the 1926 Slavery Convention [2]

Protocol I Additional to Geneva Conventions of 1949 [2]  
Protocol II Additional to Geneva Conventions of 1949 [2]  
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish Trafficking in Persons [2]  
Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees [4]  
Second Protocol to the ICCPR [4]  
Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery [2]  
Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention [2]