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**Internet Use, Diversionary Conflict, and Autocracy**

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## Executive Summary

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As exhibited by Russian incursions into Ukraine, the wars (proxy or otherwise) which continue to ravage the Middle East, North Korea's nuclear proliferation leading Washington to consider a military solution, and tensions in the South China Sea continuing to rise, the phenomenon of interstate conflict remains as relevant as ever. As the world has become more connected, it is necessary to reconsider the mechanisms which contribute to the onset of such events. Though the advent of the internet has commonly been viewed as being synonymous with the spread democracy and (through increased interconnectivity) an overall increase in global peace, an investigation into its potentially adverse effects within the context of international relations represents a worthwhile endeavour. When viewed from the perspective of diversionary theory – which, in short, explains that (especially under autocracy) interstate conflict may be initiated when domestic shocks occur to gain regime legitimacy, distract civilian populations from hardship, and rally individuals through nationalist sentiment – these events occurrence within the internet age takes on new meaning. This research fuses the assumptions of various bodies of literature together to produce a framework through which autocratic governments' participation in diversionary conflict can be plausibly explained as resulting from the increased civil sensitivity to domestic which results from widespread access to the internet. In doing so, it addresses a sizeable gap in the existing literature. Through the introduction of an array of control variables which operationalize socio-economic and socio-political instability at the country-year level, multivariate regression is used not only to ascertain whether the impact of such events is exacerbated by internet saturation, but to establish that the aforementioned exacerbation has transposed into increased autocratic participation in diversionary conflicts between 2000 and 2015.

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## Preface / Acknowledgements

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# Chapter I: Introduction

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## 1.1 Introduction

Social media networks have proliferated in the internet age. Since 2008, the number Facebook users worldwide has increased from 100 million to 1,79 billion (Statista, 2016) and the number of internet users per 100 inhabitants has increased from 23,265 to 43.998 (World Bank, 2016). In the same period, the landscape of international relations has been characterized by events such as the Russian annexation of Crimea, the waging of a proxy war in Syria, and the militarization of islands in the South China Sea. The manner in which these trends coincide is largely incompatible with the assumptions of liberal international relations theory, which posits that increased communication between entities – whether through international institutions, trade relations, or word of mouth – reduces propensity for conflict within a dyad (Oneal & Russett, 1999: 423). Given the fact that widespread international access can (arguably) be equated with significant increases in inter-entity communications, it is worth exploring whether the relatively contemporary conflicts which have occurred between 2000 and 2015 have done so *despite* or (in part) *because of* this development. One need look no further than Russian disinformation campaigns to conclude that leapfrogging advances in information technology (a significant driver of the previously outlined trends) in the post-Cold War world have fundamentally altered the power dynamics which govern relations between state and civilian. This trend is synonymous with an erosion of the state's ability to limit its population's access to information, and has arguably altered authoritarian regimes' modus operandi vis-à-vis civilian repression. While such states may well continue to employ a coercive apparatus (such as security services), these agencies' operations are increasingly expanding into cyberspace. Where previously the censorship of dissent solely required action in the physical world (assassinating opposition leaders, brutal crackdowns on protestors, etc.), modern censorship requires the management of vast quantities of information. The ultimate output of this process of information management is not – as one might assume – a tendency to censor or punish any individual which criticizes the state's leader and / or policies. It appears, instead, to take the form of a reduction of the probability of collective action by 'clipping social ties whenever any collective movements are in evidence or expected' (King et al., 2013: 326). While this approach appears to pay dividends for the states which employ it, it carries with it one considerable drawback: information which is not censored can be processed by third parties. Today's autocracies therefore increasingly preside over systems which can be understood as being 'partly open yet somewhat repressive' (Vreeland, 2008: 403). Negative information relating to the incumbent regime is – due to the proliferation of personal network sizes – abundant, but the individual's ability (or willingness) to take to the street in protest is lacking due to state intervention. Timur Kuran's framework surrounding the phenomenon of preference falsification posits that – under authoritarianism – individuals may express public support for a regime which they

feel an aversion towards because their revolutionary thresholds (the point at which they deem dangers associated with publicly expressing discontent less than the potential payoff associated with doing so) are not yet activated (Kuran, 1991: 17). This study will establish whether autocracies – in a bid to increase domestic legitimacy and (by extension) reduce the chance that collective action will lead to revolution – respond to domestic shocks through the use of diversionary force more frequently as their populations’ access to internet increases.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

A large portion of global uncertainty in the world today stems from conflicts in which non-democracies are either directly or indirectly engaged. Such uncertainty may be alleviated by the introduction of explanations which consider the mechanisms through which modern autocratic regimes placate their civilian populations. Explanations surrounding authoritarian states’ conduct in the international arena (and, in particular, explanations surrounding these states’ appetite for initiating international conflict) revolve almost exclusively around research which deals with dynamics within the regime. Such theories are unified by several underlying assumptions. The first is that non-democratic governments do not feel accountable to their civilian populations. This thesis challenges this assumption because – if internet saturation results in dictators resorting to diversionary conflict more frequently – the theoretical framework presented within this thesis explains that the leader’s fear of being called to account constitutes the logical causality which binds them together. The second is that autocrats enjoy an increased degree of freedom in policymaking. While this theory retains significant explanatory power within contemporary conflicts, it is important to note that – while today’s autocracies share many characteristics with the authoritarian states which preceded them – they are by no means the same. Arguably, resorting to the diversionary use of force represents a gamble for survival which (in the context of autocracies) is synonymous with a *lack* of choice. This thesis explores this phenomenon by operationalising the trend which is believed to deprive autocrats of their ability to choose across countries in order to establish whether diversionary use of force constitutes an outlier or a trend. Finally, this thesis challenges – in positing that, rather than mitigating conflict, communication between individuals *causes* it – a well-established pillar of international relations theory, and thus contributes to policymaking by (potentially) introducing a healthy dose of realism to the aforementioned paradigm.

## 1.3 Research Aim and Research Question

This research aims to ascertain whether internet saturation exacerbated the impact of domestic shocks to such a degree that it incentivises autocratic regimes to resort to the diversionary use of force. Ultimately, the research should be able to conclude whether non-democratic regimes employ international conflict as a diversionary measure through which to mitigate the challenges posed by the

repressive governance of populations which (by autocratic standards) find themselves exposed to unprecedented volumes of unfiltered information.

The research question is as follows:

**Has the advent of the internet and social media led non-democratic regimes to increase their participation in diversionary conflict?**

#### 1.4 Theoretical and Social Relevance

The relevance of this research is twofold. First and foremost, as the mechanisms linking social media, the advent of the internet, social collective action, and bargaining failures on the international stage remain – likely because widespread access to social media is an entirely new phenomenon in-and-of itself – relatively underexplored in the academic context. This research's theoretical relevance thus derives from its aim to address (or simply encourage further research into) a sizeable gap in the existing literature. Secondly, as the potential human cost of policy failure in the area of international conflict is substantial, the social relevance of this research derives from its supplementation of quantitative findings with theory to provide a framework through which to guide future policymaking.

#### 1.5 Research Structure

With data pertaining to 167 countries' individual aggregate annual participation in international conflicts being extracted Lockheed Martin's ICEWS database, this research utilises a large-N design to test through multivariate analysis whether the predictive power of models which incorporate variables which have been previously linked to conflict in autocracies is improved by the addition of data pertaining to internet access. The bodies of literature from which the theoretical causality linking the independent variable to the dependent variable derives are outlined in the second chapter of this paper. These include autocratic incentives to participate in international conflict, an overview of hypotheses surrounding the phenomenon of diversionary conflict, previously conducted research into the democratizing power of the internet, and an introduction to the theoretical framework of preference falsification and trends which affect collective action under autocracy. These bodies of literature are transposed into testable hypotheses in the third chapter and subsequently operationalised in the fourth. Context in the form of the real-world significance of recorded correlations is provided through graphical representation of trends over time. Causality is established partially through the exploration of relevant theory and past research, and is further derived from the introduction of several control variables.

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## Chapter II: Literature Review

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### 2.1 International Conflict & Authoritarianism

Current literature surrounding authoritarian states' participation in international conflict draws explanations primarily from observable power-sharing dynamics within a regime. This body of literature carries significant explanatory power within the framework of this thesis not because it corroborates the notion that authoritarian regimes are receptive to electoral inputs, but because it establishes a trend in which state participation in international conflict can (from the perspective of an incumbent autocrat) be understood as a rational response and because it provides an insight into variables which should be incorporated into the multivariate regression design used to test its hypotheses. While the body of literature surrounding this area is rapidly expanding (partially due to the increasing availability of data through which to conduct case studies), it can be argued that Giacomo Chiozza & H.E. Goemans' *Leaders and International Conflict* (2011), Milan W. Svolik's *Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes* (2009) and Jessica L. Weeks' *Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict* (2012) form the backbone of the body of literature which exists today. As is extensively outlined under section 2.3 of this literature review (which reviews the body of literature surrounding anocracy), anocratic regimes share many characteristics with their authoritarian counterparts. As such, the following body of literature is presented to introduce logical arguments in support of the notion that war need not represent a zero-sum game for all actors involved.

International relations literature almost unanimously supports the notion that war is, as explained by James D. Fearon's *Rationalist Explanations for War* (1995), 'costly and risky' (Fearon, 1995: 380). That is to say, it supports the notion that the nature of conflict - which is characterized by the loss of human life, societal chaos, destruction, and (perhaps most importantly) *risk* – offers rational actors abundant incentives to address disagreements through negotiated settlements (Fearon, 1995: 380). Wars are therefore assumed to be the result of '*pareto efficient*' (Fearon, 1995: 383) negotiations in which neither side prefers negotiated settlements to the gamble of armed conflict. Such outcomes may be produced by **1.) anarchy** (neither side trusts the other to deliver on negotiated settlements because no enforcement mechanism exists at the global level to which ensures compliance), **2.) preventive war** (an anticipated shift in balance of power between negotiators can lead one to consider conflict an acceptable way of hedging loss or mitigating uncertainty), **3.) positive expected utility** (both states calculate the potential benefits of fighting outweigh the expected costs), **4.) miscalculation due to lack of information**, or **5.) miscalculation / disagreement regarding relative power** (Fearon, 1995). These explanations are unified in their assumption that war is the result of the failure of a rational bargaining process in which states (not individuals) constitute 'players'. The body of

literature surrounding authoritarianism and international conflict is unique in its recognition that conflicts which appear *ex pareto efficient* from a state perspective can be understood as being *pareto efficient* when viewed from the perspective of the individuals which initiate them.

To better understand *why* authoritarian leaders may calculate participation in conflict as being *pareto efficient* requires us to develop a deeper understanding of the risks which are inherent to their rule. Milan W. Svolik's *Power Sharing and Leadership Dynamics in Authoritarian Regimes* makes notable strides in this area. Svolik argues that the upper echelons of authoritarian regimes are characterized by the conflicting interests which exist between the regime's leader and its ruling coalition (Svolik, 2009: 478). Dictators are almost universally catalogued as presiding over paranoid personalities (see Joseph Stalin and Saddam Hussein). This personality trait, Svolik argues, is entirely rational: the centralized nature of power under authoritarianism means that the so-called 'ruling elite' which surrounds the dictator wields considerable influence over the state's coercive apparatus (army, secret police, etc.). Such influence provides the elite with the ability credibly threaten a coup d'état – a violent affair which, more often than not, results in the dictator's deposition and death (Svolik, 1995: 478). Simultaneously, it is important to note that 'by far the most frequent fate of unsuccessful coup plotters is death' (Svolik, 1995: 481). The dictator and his ruling elite thus find themselves locked in an existential struggle: while the dictator may circumvent a coup by 'establishing' himself,<sup>1</sup> overtly doing so is likely to trigger the ruling coalition into attempting a coup. Simultaneously, information asymmetry – a concept which, within the coup literature, denotes the fact that members of the ruling coalition have no method through which to 'calculate' how consolidated a dictator is – means that it is almost always in the ruling coalition's best interest to attempt a coup.

The tensions outlined in the previous paragraph lie at the core of all literature which contemplates authoritarian regimes' appetite for initiating international conflict. Giacomo Chiozza & H.E. Goemans' *Leaders and International Conflict* (2011) builds upon Svolik's argument by positing that authoritarian systems are characterized by the opposition's realization that – due to lack of democratic process through which to 'legitimately' remove the leader – even minor exogenous shocks should be leveraged to exert influence on the one hand, and by the absence of the institutional guarantees (typically present in democracies) which allow a dictator's to relinquish power peacefully on the other (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 15). These notions were expressed as early as 1982 by William H. Riker in *Liberalism against Populism: A Confrontation Between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice*. Drawing upon the works of Milan W. Svolik and William H. Riker, Giacomo Chiozza & H.E. Goemans propose a framework in which authoritarian heads of state utilize international conflict as a 'gamble for survival' (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 30). Considering the

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<sup>1</sup> Leaders may consolidate power by appointing members of their family or ethnic group to governing positions, reducing the size of the ruling elite as a whole, or fostering close ties between the regime and security forces. ([source](#))

established characteristics of authoritarian regimes, the logic supporting this framework is sound: faced with the certainty (or even the uncertainty) of a coup (and, by extension, death or exile) leaders may choose to initiate conflict. The worst possible outcomes of losing a war are death or exile. As these outcomes are identical to those associated with vacating power as the result of a coup, fighting a war – which, in the event of victory, yields considerable boons to the leader (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 30) – represents (from the leader's perspective) a rational gamble for survival. Considering the fact that successful coups under authoritarianism originate almost exclusively from the state's coercive apparatus, Chiozza and Goemans present a theoretical framework which explains autocratic propensity for interstate combat through the following pathways:

1. If the leader has reason to expect a coup, sending the military to fight is effective because it removes troops from the capital (thus reducing capacity to initiate a coup), tests the loyalty of officers,<sup>2</sup> and may result in the battlefield deaths of the coup plotters themselves without arousing suspicion by hiding a 'dead body in a field of bodies' (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 20).
2. In the event of staunch rebel opposition, international conflict may allow an embattled leader to pursue or eliminate opposition which has fled national borders (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 20).
3. Victory increases legitimacy on the domestic front and allows for institutional reform which is geared towards further centralising power in the leader (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 34).

It is important to note that these 'rewards' are solely payable at individual level. Traditional theories pertaining to the phenomenon of war within international relations have long since established that at the state level (destruction of the military, society, etc.) the cost-benefit matrix relating to conflict yields overwhelmingly negative outcomes.

Jessica L. Weeks' *Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict* (2012) represents the final strand of literature (in the area of authoritarianism and international conflict) which can be considered relevant for the research question posited by this thesis. This text acknowledges the empirical evidence supporting the framework put forward by Chiozza and Goemans (Weeks, 2012: 326), but argues that differentiating between different 'types' of authoritarian regimes according to the overarching characteristics which define them may improve the explanatory power of the hypothesis. Weeks defines 'types' of authoritarian regimes according to several characteristics; these include a.) a differentiation between civilian rule and military rule, b.) the degree of personal rule commanded by the leader, and c.) the strength of the 'audience'

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<sup>2</sup> Members of the military can – if they refuse to comply with state orders – be purged, tried for treason, or otherwise removed from the regime (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 20).

(government insiders) to which the leader is accountable (Weeks, 2012: 329). The following regime types are outlined:

1. **Peaceful Machines** (autocracies): characterized by civilian leaders which are held accountable to an economically-motivated ruling elite *and* (though to a lesser degree) a civilian population. In these regimes, the cost of war is no lower for elites than for civilians, and a leader can reasonably expect to be held accountable in the event of failure. Weeks finds that such regimes are less likely to initiate international conflict than their democratic counterparts (Weeks, 2012: 333).
2. **Military Juntas**: characterized by military rule in which both the leader and the ruling elite have military backgrounds. Such a government subscribes to a worldview in which military force should have a central role in foreign affairs, and – because it is staffed by officers – is likely to view the net benefits associated with victory as higher and the costs of initiating armed conflict as relatively low. Perceived costs of fighting largely relate to the maintenance of military hierarchy. Weeks finds that such regimes tend to be more supportive of using military force than their democratic counterparts (Weeks, 2012: 334).
3. **Personalist Dictators**: characterized by highly centralized rule which typically results from violent manoeuvring within the party. These regimes are unconstrained, ambitious, and likely prone to visions of empire. Because dictators such as these have extraordinary resources at their disposal, the costs of an eventual defeat can often be mitigated. Weeks finds that these regimes are more likely to initiate conflict than are military juntas (Weeks, 2012: 335).
4. **Strongmen**: these regimes differ from personalist dictatorships in the nature of their rule; whereas the latter is headed by a civilian leader, a strongman regime is headed by an individual with a military background. Weeks finds that personalism and militarism are somewhat additive properties, and that these regimes are more likely than personalist dictators to initiate conflict, but notes that several aspects of these two attributes are redundant. As a result, strongmen – though more assertive than personalist dictators – represent only an incrementally more risk-averse tier of authoritarian rule (Weeks, 2012: 336).

Absent in all the previously outlined literature is a framework which links forces such as nationalism to authoritarian rule and international conflict. Mention of regime accountability to civilian populations is limited to Jessica L. Weeks' 'peaceful machine' model, which focuses almost entirely on the restraints (rather than payoffs) associated with the aforementioned relationship. Also absent is a distinction between authoritarianism and anocracy and an exploration of the impact of modern technology (particularly in the area of communications and information) upon the allure of international conflict for leaders.

## 2.2 Diversionary Conflict

The lines of thinking which support the theories outlined under the body of literature which surrounds diversionary conflict align closely with those that are presented in the previous section. This fact notwithstanding, this body of literature retains its significance in the context of this thesis because – where the literature surrounding authoritarianism focused almost exclusively on arguments which related to selectorate theory – it lends credibility to the notion that government concerns relating to electorate theory compel democratic states to view international conflict through an opportunistic lens. As this thesis aims to explore the role which international conflict plays in boosting state legitimacy under autocracy, the body of literature surrounding diversionary conflict is of particular significance. The presentation of this literature is intended not only to provide the theoretical context necessary to conceive of the role which international conflict plays in building state legitimacy, but also to lend logistical credibility to the ICEWS CAMEO codes which (under the Analysis section of this paper) are used to operationalize the research question and to provide insight into the dyadic anatomy of diversionary conflicts.

The body of literature surrounding the phenomenon of diversionary conflict is sizeable. While previous literature agrees that the incentives to initiate diversionary conflict stem almost universally from ‘domestic economic and political turmoil’ (Mitchell & Thyne, 2010: 461; Nicholls, Huth & Appel, 2010), it presents competing hypotheses through which to explain the phenomenon. These hypotheses – commonly referred to **rally around the flag** and **gambling for resurrection** – differ mainly in their explanation of target choice. The literature which comprises these theories is outlined below:

### **Rally Around the Flag**

The rally around the flag hypothesis derives from literature put forward by Lewis Coser in *The Functions of Social Conflict* (1956) which posits that group cohesion can be achieved by ‘attracting’ enemies (Coser, 1956: 104) in order to foster in-group cohesion. In *Diversionary Conflict: Demonizing Enemies or Demonstrating Competence* (2015), Kyle Haynes argues that diversionary conflict which aims to foster civilian support for the government through a rally around the flag effect must target an enemy which presents a ‘salient threat to the entire in-group’ (Haynes, 2015: 5). In other words, encouraging patriotism and fostering government support throughout a domestic population through rally around the flag requires a target against which the use of force is not (domestically) considered controversial. The literature surrounding this notion is relatively saturated, with publications such as Sung Chul Jung’s *Foreign Targets and Diversionary Conflict* (2014), Paul F. Diehl & Gary Goertz’s *War and Peace in International Rivalry* (2001) Sara McLaughlin Mitchell

& Brandon C. Prins's *Rivalry and Diversionary Use of Force* (2004) and James P. Klein, Gary Goertz & Paul F. Diehl's *The New Rivalry Dataset: Procedures and Patterns* (2006) all providing empirical evidence to support the notion that rally around the flag effects are most likely to occur in conflicts which are waged between states which share an enduring historic rivalry. A particularly recent example (presented by Mitchell & Prins) correlates George W. Bush's exceptionally high (80%+) approval ratings to the initiation of the Iraq War shortly after the September 11 World Trade Center attacks, thus operationalizing the notion that (even under democracy) leaders are likely to enjoy electoral support in wartime if they choose their targets wisely. The literature outlines several potential sources of interstate rivalry. These include:

1. **Geographic Proximity:** in *Dangerous Dyads* (1992), Stuart A. Bremer establishes that geographic proximity is a strong predictor of interstate rivalry because states which share a border or which are situated near to one-another are more likely to be embroiled in territorial disputes or in disputes which involve treatment of 'foreign ethnic kin groups' (Haynes, 2015: 6). Historically, such states are also in a more credible position to threaten and initiate armed conflict against one another because the practical considerations (distance, technology, etc.) associated with doing so are relatively low. Bluntly stated, the 'loss of strength' gradient associated with increasing geographical distance between members of a dyad makes the states in dyads in which said distance is smaller more susceptible to conflict with one-another (Vasquez, 1995: 279). Bremer's research was later reinforced by John A. Vasquez's *Why do Neighbors Fight? Proximity, Interaction, or Territoriality* (1995), which confirms the statistically relevant relationship between geographic proximity and the onset of interstate conflict.
2. **Incompatible Geopolitical Preferences:** in *The Logic of Political Survival* (2003) Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson & James D. Morrow outlines that states which have incompatible geopolitical preferences (i.e.: the Soviet Union and the United States of America) are more likely to initiate conflict against one-another than states which do not simply because they are more likely to disagree on 'vital' issues.

The rally around the flag hypothesis thus predicts that diversionary conflict is likely to occur between states or parties which share mutual grievances and (or) geographic proximity (proxy for historic rivalry) because such conflict is the least likely to cause domestic polarization along policy lines. Though the empirical evidence to support rally around the flag is relatively mixed (a phenomenon which likely stems from the *conditionalities* of diversionary conflict as a whole), ample evidence has been presented in support of its causal mechanisms.

### **Gambling for Resurrection**

The gambling for resurrection hypothesis shares many characteristics with the ‘gambling for survival’ hypothesis from the previous section (put forward by Chiozza and Goemans). There is, however, a distinct difference between the meaning of the words ‘resurrection’ and ‘survival’. In the cadre of the aforementioned hypotheses, this difference is embodied by the stakes associated with losing office or losing a war. Whereas survival clearly indicates either of these losses are likely to result in the leader’s death (Chiozza and Goemans, 2011), ‘resurrection’ strikes an altogether more optimistic tone. As this hypothesis considers the rationality of conflict initiation through the lens of electorate theory, it is assumed that the leader will face loss of power (not death) in the event of a failed conflict (Haynes, 2015: 7). Because the gambling for resurrection hypothesis posits that leaders will not initiate a diversionary conflict unless they find themselves facing high chances of removal, it follows that initiation of conflict can (under some circumstances) pay dividends on the individual level.

Where the gambling for resurrection hypothesis diverges strongly from the gambling for survival (and, to a lesser extent, rally around the flag) hypothesis is in its explanation of target choice. Whereas gambling for survival posits that virtually *any* conflict may sufficiently undermine the military’s ability to execute a coup, gambling for resurrection associates specific parameters with target choice. This difference stems from the fact that gambling for resurrection aims to demonstrate leader competence to a sceptical population (Tarar, 2006: 169). It is through this causal pathway that this hypothesis clearly differentiates itself from the gambling for survival hypothesis, which is more concerned with the short-term benefits of *unifying* a polarized population than it is with the long-term mandate of securing the leader’s government. In *Diversionary Incentives to the Bargaining Approach to War* (2006), Ahmer Tarar presents a formalized principle-agent model to operationalize target choice under the gambling for resurrection hypothesis. Tarar argues that – if international action is to bolster an electorate’s opinion of a leader – it must seek to achieve victory against a party whose defeat *cannot* be attributed to economic or military imbalance (Tarar, 2006: 176). It follows, then, that leaders which want to gamble for resurrection have little to gain (unless elements of rally around the flag are at play) from the defeat of an adversary whose capabilities cannot compete with those of the initiating state. Simultaneously, Tarar argues that is counterproductive to provoke adversaries against which victory is extremely unlikely, as such a scenario yields no tangible gains from the initiator’s perspective. Several other caveats, such as the principle that provoking a state which provides security (a relationship which aligns closely with the status quo which exists between European NATO member states and the United States) for the initiating party is counterproductive (Haynes, 2015: 7).

Tarar’s model is critiqued by Kyle Haynes in *Diversionary Conflict: Demonizing Enemies or Demonstrating Competence* (2015) because it does not account (or allow) for ‘diversionary spectacles’ (provocations which do not lead to war). Haynes argues that gambling through such

spectacles widens the explanatory power of the hypothesis because it allows for scenarios in which embattled leaders provoke powerful adversaries (by means of a dispute) knowing full-well that the situation can be de-escalated before force is used (Haynes, 2015: 7). Through this mechanism, leaders may be able to extract minor concessions from powerful states, especially if the dispute revolves around an issue which the target state does not consider as particularly salient (Haynes, 2015: 7). As even limited victory is likely to bolster leader legitimacy, such a model aligns closely with the logic presented by the gambling for resurrection hypothesis. When diversionary spectacles are included under the gambling for resurrection hypothesis, the empirical data to support it is statistically significant. It indicates that a positive relationship exists between target power and effect of unrest on dispute initiation (Haynes, 2015: 17).

As these hypotheses identify entirely different circumstances which surround state behaviour in international conflict (specifically regarding choice of target), competition for validity within the presented literature is minimal. Both hypotheses should be accounted for when studying diversionary conflict. The literature also agrees that domestic instability – often brought about by economic or political factors and volatility – cause diversionary conflict. This notwithstanding, the literature's explanatory power is reduced by its failure to account for (or attempt to correct for) the phenomenon of proxy wars. Conflict initiated against nonstate actors is also omitted from the data. This oversight is puzzling, as (even in the geopolitical context of the Cold War) the inclusion of such data could potentially offer tantalizing insight into the mechanisms surrounding this increasingly relevant form of conflict.

## 2.3 Non-Democracy & the Internet

As the phenomenon of international conflict as it refers to autocracy has been explored in a preceding section of this chapter, it is – at this point – prudent to explore this phenomenon as it relates to autocratic regimes. The body of literature surrounding state conduct under autocracy is sizeable. Several studies (including Edward N. Muller & Erich Weede's *Cross-National Variation in Political Violence: A Rational Action Approach* and James DeNardo's *Power in Numbers*) corroborate the notion that semi-or-non-democratic systems are more prone to political violence on the domestic front than their democratic or totalitarian counterparts (Vreeland, 2008: 401). James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin find that the odds of civil war breaking out under anocracy – a semidemocratic form of governance – is about 68% higher than in a full autocracy (Fearon & Laitin, 2003: 85). This trend is almost universally attributed to the fact that semidemocratic systems offers dissident groups limited (though not non-existent) opportunities to organize, while providing a low probability of policy change (success) as a result of collective action (Vreeland, 2008: 401). This dynamic is problematic because it leads dissidents to conclude that violence is the only effective recourse through which to participate in policymaking (Vreeland, 2008: 402). This phenomenon stands in stark contrast with trends within democracies (under which both expression and collective action are possible) and dictatorships (where neither expression nor collective action is possible). In the semidemocratic regimes which Fearon and Laitin study, expression is possible: action is not. It is a recipe for frustration, and it is one which is entirely consistent with autocratic state conduct in the internet age. In *How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression*, Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts explore the real-world workings of such a system. They find that China's ruling Communist Party does not censor content. Scathing reviews of Xi Jinping and the regime are not found to be *more* likely than other posts to be removed from social media platforms in China. Rather, it censors attempts to initiate collective action; its energies are directed towards 'clipping social ties whenever any collective movements are in evidence or expected (King et al., 2013: 326). In addition to voicing almost unanimous support for the hypothesis that an anocratic regime's confusing mix of freedom and repression increases the likelihood that factions opposing the regime will resort to violence, literature which studies these states is remarkably consistent in its method of identifying them. James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin's (2003) method – which defines any state which scores between -5 and 5 (on a scale from -10 to 10) on the Polity IV index as an anocracy, or (more generally) any state below 5 as nondemocratic – represents something of a standard among scholars seeking to operationalise regime type.

While the body of literature which specifically sets out to examine trends relating to internet usage in nondemocracies are limited, the body of literature which explores correlations between prevalence of internet use and the strength of democracy (outlined below) is sizeable.

## **The Internet & Democracy**

The internet is generally understood as being something of a double-edged sword with regards to state democracy. Trends in literature have tended towards a more sceptical view of the democratizing power of the internet as time has gone on. As such, publications such as Christopher Kedzie's *Communication and Democracy: Coincident Revolutions and the Emergent Dictators* (1997) strike a markedly more optimistic tone vis-à-vis the aforementioned relationship than Michael L. Best & Keegan W. Wade's *The Internet and Democracy: Global Catalyst or Democratic Dud?* (2009). Research is split along the line of democratic causality (internet as **democracy-causing** vs. internet as **democracy-stifling**), with both sides offering concrete empirical evidence to back up convincing explanations that explain observed phenomena.

Studies which support the notion that the internet can generally be understood as being **democracy-causing** subscribes to the notion that globalization (the onset of which has been accelerated by the internet) forces states to choose between economic growth and the preservation of social control. The 'dictator's dilemma' hypothesis was first presented by Christopher Kedzie in 1997. Kedzie argues that the internet provides citizens with the tools to expose government abuse of power, thus bolstering systemic accountability and democracy. His empirical research on the subject (which includes data from 144 countries) finds statistically significant evidence to support the notion that internet use is a stronger predictor of democracy than other more traditional predictors such as the World Values Survey (Kedzie, 1997). In *Information Technologies and Turbulence in World Politics* (2002), James N. Rosenau and David Johnson hint at several social changes brought on by the internet which can be considered as strengthening democracy. These include trends at the individual level in which people have access to more information and larger social networks, and thus have a better idea as to *where* they stand on various issues, but also include trends at the international level and trends which combine these two realms. With regards to trends at the international level, these revolve around the observation that the internet has given rise to a wide range of NGO's which these have their own agency and have undermined the nation state's monopoly on dissemination of information and political initiative. Trends which combine international and national occurrences are attributed to the notion that a more multicentered world contributes to more information, which leads to individuals making more informed choices – thus putting more strain on nation states to cater to democratic principles. In *Globalization, Information, and Change* (2002) Frank Webster argues that the internet has facilitated the rise of 'information capitalism,' in which 'elites' cannot exist as uneducated, intellectually docile individuals. This trend (which is correlated to the growth of the internet) implies that the internet may indirectly accelerate transitions to democracy because the prevalence of educated, cosmopolitan individuals in the upper echelons of an economy means that subscription to

democratic values is likely to be adopted by the state (Webster, 2002: 97). This sentiment is echoed by Cherie Steele & Arthur A. Stein's *Communications Revolutions and International Relations* (2002), which argues that the internet amplifies all trends in international relations, including domestic and international subscription to civil rights & political liberties (Steele & Stein, 2002: 42). This section of the literature is thus characterized by its belief that civilian access to the internet mandates the state (whether directly or indirectly) to adopt democratizing elements. The underlying assumptions supporting this logic (which also form the basis of the competing literature's criticism) are that states are passive entities and that individuals make 'better' choice when they have access to more information. Both these assumptions are questionable: China's conduct clearly indicates that nondemocratic states are aware of the challenges posed by the information age (King et al., 2013: 326). In addition, several authors have commented on the fact that the internet is more geared towards frivolous show business & distraction from reality than towards rational debate ('as I write, the president of the United States is a former Hollywood movie actor') (Postman, 1986: 32). This argument could (depending on perspective) hardly be *more* relevant today. The sentiments put forth by Postman were empirically tested by Bruce Bimber's *Information and Political Engagement in America: The Search for Effects of Media Technology at the Individual Level* (2001), which finds that frequent internet use does not stimulate politically inactive Americans into engaging *more* with political issues (Bimber, 2001: 64). Dietram A. Scheufele & Matthew C. Nisbet found in 2002 (*Being a Citizen Online: New Opportunities and Dead Ends*) that Americans which frequently used the internet were 'less likely to feel efficacious about their potential role in the democratic process and also knew less about facts relevant to current events' (Scheufele & Nisbet, 2002: 69) than those which did not or those which relied mainly on traditional forms of mass media, thus suggesting that extensive internet use might have a depressing effect upon user engagement with politics.

It can thus be concluded that – with regards to whether internet use leads to democratisation – the verdict is still out. Empirical research exists to support both (stifling vs. causing) notions. As a recurring theme throughout the body of literature is the importance of individual agency (in this regard, Steel & Stein's research is particularly telling), communications technologies such as Facebook and Twitter are best understood as passive frameworks which must be collectively utilised according to individual agency.

## 2.4 Preference Falsification & Social Media

Absent from the previous section was a review of the literature surrounding the phenomenon of collective action. This link is vital to this thesis' research question, as large-scale collective action is essentially *the* phenomenon which diversionary conflict is aimed at undermining. Building upon the literature outlined in the previous section, the following literature review contributes to this thesis' research question by reviewing literature which addresses the problem of collective action under authoritarianism and by outlining the findings of research which has explored the impact of social media (read: modern communications technology and the internet) on civilian populations' ability to do so.

Timur Kuran's *Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989* utilizes the Soviet Union's collapse as a case study to illustrate the causal mechanism which prevents collective action under authoritarianism. The preference falsification hypothesis is presented as a framework through which phenomena of 'revolutionary bandwagons,' 'flash revolutions,' and 'cascade revolutions' (such as the collapse of the Soviet Union) can be rationally explained. Under authoritarianism, any public expression of dissent is likely to lead to violent reprisal from the regime. Depending on the type of regime, such a reprisal may constitute prison, death. Kuran leverages rational choice theory to explain that this characteristic makes collective action under authoritarianism particularly difficult: 'an individual opposed to the incumbent regime is unlikely to participate in efforts to remove it, since the personal risk of joining a revolutionary movement could outweigh the personal benefit that would accrue were the movement a success' (Kuran, 1991: 14). In extreme cases, individuals may even be punished for not actively modifying their behaviour to support the regime (see Stalinist Soviet Union, Ba'athist Iraq, modern day North Korea, etc.). Kuran argues that this dynamic facilitates the creation of societies in which repressive states – despite the fact that they tend to provide their civilian populations with ample reason to organize an opposition movement – enjoy almost unanimous *public* support (Kuran, 1991: 26). Individuals tattle on one another, display the regime's colours in windows, and even cast their votes in the incumbent's favour to secure the 'certificate of normalcy' (Kuran, 1991: 28) that is needed to safeguard personal wellbeing. Individuals thus falsify their external preferences publicly, not knowing that – in doing so – they are simultaneously victims and supporters of the system which they privately detest (Kuran, 1991: 29).

Mass uprisings require a multitude of individuals to make the choice to participate in a campaign for change. The cost of participating in a revolution is reduced as more people participate in it because larger revolutions (i.e.: 90% of the population in open revolt) are far more likely to succeed and because the chances that the state will punish the individual reduces as the size of the opposition increases due to simple logistics. Kuran's framework has been applied to several real-world case

studies since its conception, with Bengal peasant uprisings in the 19th century India being explained by Suman Kumar Bhaumik in *Peasant Uprisings in Bengal: A Case for Preference Falsification* (2002) as deriving from the fact that rule under the Mughal empire (and later the British East India Trading Company) had presented in a particularly oppressive fashion, thus encouraging a climate of mass preference falsification and – when governance became less oppressive under the preceding regimes – greatly reduced revolutionary thresholds in peasant populations. In more contemporary world academics, the concept has been successfully linked to turmoil in the Middle East by Bertold Schweitzer in *Modelling Mechanisms of Democratic Transition in the Arab Uprisings* (2015) and to the ethnic polarisation that tore apart Yugoslavia in the 1980's by Murat Somer in *Cascades of Ethnic Polarisation: Lessons from Yugoslavia* (2001).

The empirical relationship between successful initiation of collective action and social media has been extensively researched. A study published by Michael D. Makowsky & Jared Rubin (*An Agent-Based Model of Centralized Institutions, Social Network Technology, and Revolution*) in 2013 engages with Kuran's hypothesis directly by utilising a computerised model of social networks to test the 'impact' of shocks. This study finds not only that individuals which preside over large radii within a social lattice are considerably more likely to react negatively to shocks under authoritarianism, but that there is a definite correlation between internet users per 100 and the onset of cascade revolutions. This lends credibility to the notion that internet use lowers revolutionary thresholds at the individual level (Makowsky & Rubin, 2013: 9). Makowsky & Rubin's study is unique because it establishes causality between level of state centralization, likelihood that collective action will be initiated, size of social network, and prevalence of internet use. This notwithstanding, the conclusion that the size of an individuals' social network correlates negatively with the costs associated with collective action has been corroborated by several studies, including Gerald Marwell, Pamela E. Oliver & Ralph Prahls's *Social Networks and Collective Action: A Theory of the Critical Mass. III* (1988), Robert Huckfeldt's *The Serial Communication of Political Expertise* (2001), and Scott D. McClurg's *The Electoral Relevance of Political Talk: Examining Disagreement and Expertise Effects in Social Networks on Political Participation* (2006). Building upon this premise, several publications (including Zeynep Tufekci & Christopher Wilson's *Social Media and the Decision to Participate in Political Protest: Observations From Tahrir Square*, Alexandra Segerberg & W. Lance Bennett's *Social Media and the Organization of Collective Action: Using Twitter to Explore the Ecologies of Two Climate Change Protests*, and Jonathan A. Obar, Paul Zube & Clifford Lampe's *Advocacy 2.0: An Analysis of How Advocacy Groups in the United States Perceive and Use Social Media as Tools for Facilitating Civic Engagement and Collective Action*) use case studies to correlate reduced costs of collective action to internet-based social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, thus corroborating Makowsky & Rubin's findings.

## 2.5 Literature Gap

The advent of the internet has arguably blurred the line between authoritarianism and anocracy. Though it can be readily assumed that conventional wisdom is correct in positing that any state which scores below 6 on the Polity IV index faces a democratic deficit (and can therefore not be classified as democratic), its operationalisation of the concept of anocracy (must score between 5 and -5) is at odds with the literature outlined in chapter 2.3. As outlined by King et al, modern authoritarian regimes (which, in many cases, retain a modus operandi which revolves around physical repression in the event of organised dissent) have needed to differentiate themselves greatly from the quasi-totalitarian states which preceded them with regards to their approach to censorship. Whereas authoritarianism *before* the internet is characterised (as outlined by Kuran) by state-sponsored initiatives which incentivise civilians to express their support for the regime publicly (see school records & perks of Ba'ath party membership in Saddam Hussein's Iraq) (Blaydes, 2013: 14), modern-day authoritarianism has increasingly had to acclimatise to a status quo in which societal mass unrest simmers publicly without culminating in collective action and revolution. This is because states such as China (which has maintained a score -7 on the Polity IV aggregate index since 1991 and can thus be considered highly authoritarian) focus upon employing mechanisms which discourage collective action rather than employing mechanisms which censor dissent (King et al., 2013: 326). While these states are still likely to crackdown violently on movements which are considered legitimately threatening (see Yanukovych's crackdown on Maidan square protestors in Ukraine), the aforementioned trend marks a remarkable shift in the domestic modus operandi of authoritarian regimes. Cascade revolutions are no longer avoided through the stringent control of political narrative within society; they are avoided by employing active measures which discourage individuals from taking to the streets.

Interestingly, this trend is relatively new. Saddam's Iraq, for example, employed 'traditional' authoritarian methods of repression until the regime collapsed in 2003 (Blaydes, 2013: 14). As the country presided over large oil reserves (and thus had the means to invest in infrastructure), it is likely that – had it not collapsed under the onslaught of the United States military – the regime would have eventually needed to adapt its modus operandi to more closely resemble the Chinese model outlined by King et al. When viewed through the lens of Kuran's preference falsification hypothesis, such an approach has clear drawbacks: collective action may not initiate, but because dissent can be openly expressed online and because 'shocks' can spread through society at much faster rates, the advent of the internet (and, more specifically, social media) creates a social atmosphere in which individuals' revolutionary thresholds are eroded as a by-product of frustration with an unchanging status quo. The notable difference between this dynamic and the dynamic observed under 'traditional' authoritarianism is that central authorities under 'modern' authoritarianism are – mainly because they

preside over the tools to gage (and, if necessary, *set*) the tone of sentiment expressed over social media – likely to be keenly aware that a cascade revolution is only a shock away.

While each of the individual bodies of literature outlined in the previous sections can be criticised for one reason or another, their main shortcoming – from the perspective of this thesis – manifests in each body of literature's aversion to integrating its findings with a larger (macro level) socio-political context. This is particularly true of the bodies of literature surrounding diversionary conflict and autocratic conduct, which – thanks largely to their failure to explore 21<sup>st</sup> century trends – are rendered increasingly obsolete as the aforementioned trends develop. Because – when combined in a coherent fashion – these bodies of literature have the potential to yield explanatory power which is greater than the (current) sum of their parts, the previously outlined isolationism within the literature is detrimental to the field of research at large. This thesis addresses this issue by drawing upon the theoretical frameworks outlined in the reviewed literature to provide a robust conceptual base which – as mandated by the research question – integrates them into a framework through which the onset of 21<sup>st</sup> century diversionary conflict can be explained. This allows the thesis to address a research question which is specifically geared towards exploring whether autocrats' international conduct has been modified by the advent of the internet and large-scale access to social media domestically, and thus allows to it fill a sizeable gap in the literature which surrounds the phenomenon of diversionary conflict.

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## Chapter III: Theoretical Framework

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As this thesis will utilise a large-N research design to operationalise its research question, this section's main purposes will be to present a framework through which the theories outlined in the previous chapter can be unified and produce testable predictions (hypotheses) through which the posited research question can be addressed. In order to solidify the causal logic which links the various theories outlined in the literature review, this chapter will be divided into sections. Each section will culminate in a hypothesis designed to test a specific theoretical correlation within the literature.

### 3.1 The Internet & International Conflict

As outlined in the literature review, evidence supporting the notion that governments (whether authoritarian or democratic) engage in diversionary conduct on the international stage to mitigate the impact of domestic shortcomings is extensive (Coser, 1956; Diehl & Goertz, 2001; Tarar, 2006; Mitchell & Thyne, 2010; Nicholls, Huth & Appel, 2010; Chiozza & Goemans, 2011; Haynes, 2015). Simultaneously, evidence which supports the proposition that access to internet (and particularly social media) reduces the costs associated with collective action (thus making political movements more likely) is robust (Maxwell, Oliver & Prahl, 1988; Kuran, 1991; Huckfeldt, 2001; McClurg, 2006; Segerberg & Bennett, 2011; Makowsky & Rubin, 2013). As the causal relationship between domestic unrest and state participation in diversionary conflict (as outlined by the 'gambling for resurrection' hypothesis) has been established as being statistically significant (Haynes, 2015: 17), it follows that increasing prevalence of internet use should correlate to an increase in international conflict.

As outlined by Kyle Haynes, international conflict need not – under a model which allows for **diversionary spectacles** – manifest itself solely in interactions which are characterised by the occurrence of armed disputes. Indeed, it is likely that – given power distribution in the world today – diversionary conflict may manifest in the form of diplomatic provocations and demands which are directed towards powers at the international (or even regional) level. Such 'soft' provocations (which do not escalate to the use of force) of extremely powerful states can (if successful) pay considerable boons on the domestic front because such states are more likely to grant concessions (Haynes, 2015: 7). Keeping this in mind, the following hypothesis is posited:

**H1: a positive correlation exists between global access to the internet and the number of active international conflicts.**

### 3.2 Non-Democracies and Conflict

There is little doubt that participation in conflict can pay dividends at the individual level (Chiozza & Goemans, 2011: 34). Whether through mechanisms which facilitate the purge of rival elites from the upper echelons of a regime or through diversionary conflict (whether by means of a ‘rally around the flag’ or through a ‘gambling for resurrection’ model), the potential utility of such policy has time and again been established. Though the incentives for engaging in such policy differ between democratic and non-democratic governments (death or exile vs a peaceful concession of power), the potential inputs which lead individuals to consider engaging in diversionary conflict (domestic economic or political unrest, scandal, etc.) are similar. This notwithstanding, there are several characteristics inherent to non-democratic regimes which increase their theoretical propensity for diversionary conflict. First and foremost, the costs associated with participating in international conflict (particularly under a rally around the flag model) are likely higher for democratic leaders than they are for autocrats. This is because, according to culpable leader theory (proposed by Sarah E. Croco in 2015) democracy’s system of checks and balances mandates parties (even parties which are aligned with the incumbent) to consider the future electoral implications associated with inserting the state into a conflict (Croco, 2015: 21). As democratic electorates have proven themselves increasingly apathetic towards the notion of engaging in international conflicts through intervention, policymakers in such system are incentivised through a ‘shadow of the future’ mechanism to regulate leader agency with regards to international conflict. Secondly, dissatisfaction within democratic populations is likely to be less profound, less widespread, and (perhaps most importantly), less *uniform* than in autocratic populations. This phenomenon can, once again, be understood as resulting from the presence of a multiparty system. If a democracy is working ‘as intended’, voter dissatisfaction with policy is likely to extend to the parties which can be considered as being culpable in its inception (Croco, 2015: 21). Under autocracy – where, even if a multiparty system is in place, a ‘ruling’ party or individual can be held accountable for policy – opinions vis-à-vis culpability are likely to be less diversified. Finally, due to the onset of democratic peace (shared institutions, values, monetary system) between democracies worldwide (Doyle, 2005: 463), policymakers under democracy are more likely to consider the implications that participation in international conflict will have on alliances and are more likely to have access to alternate mechanisms through which to appease electorates. This increases the relative cost of initiating conflict from the democratic perspective, and should transpose into a trend in which autocracies are more prone to initiating it.

As studies such as Makowsky & Rubin’s *An Agent-Based Model of Centralized Institutions, Social Network Technology, and Revolution* have corroborated the causal relationship between level of regime centralisation, access to social media, and likelihood that a cascade revolution will occur, it follows that non-democratic regimes have greater incentives (and reduced associated costs) to engage

in diversionary conflict than democracies do. If this is the case, a causal relationship should exist between non-democratic states' populations' access to internet than non-democratic states' participation in international conflict. This expectation leads to the following hypotheses:

**H2: a positive relationship exists between the prevalence of non-democratic states' populations' access to internet and non-democratic states' propensity to participate in international conflict.**

**H3: a positive relationship exists between the prevalence of non-democratic states' populations' access to internet and non-democratic states' propensity to participate in diversionary international conflict.**

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## Chapter IV: Research Design

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### 4.1 Research Design

Multivariate regression is used to operationalise the hypotheses posited in the previous chapter. To allow for the drawing of conclusions regarding trends as they have evolved over time, country and year dummies are included to correct for country-and-year fixed effects. For all hypotheses, data pertaining to trends in *non-diversionary* conflict, *diversionary* conflict, and Internet Users per 100, and several control variables (discussed later) is provided for annually for both regime types identified within this research's theoretical framework (democratic and authoritarian). As this research rests upon the assumption that the repressive nature of autocratic governance makes such governments particularly vulnerable to collective action brought on by increased internet saturation, the former category (in which such modes of repression are not typically common practice) is included as a control group.

This research aims to establish whether the rates at which autocratic regimes employ diversionary conflict measures correlates more strongly with growth in national internet saturation than it does in democratic countries. As such a relationship (if recorded) would stem mainly from social media's ability to facilitate collective action and to (by extension) heighten the societal impact of 'shocks', the focus period of this research is spans from 2000 to 2015. Facebook (by far the largest platform within social media) launched in 2004. MySpace (arguably Facebook's forerunner) launched in 2003. Many of today's popular platforms (Twitter, Snapchat, etc.) were founded later still (2006 and 2011 respectively). The previously outlined focus period makes a conscious effort to allow for the possibility that non-internationalised social media platforms had impacts upon government conduct before the inception of such services.

### 4.2 Sample

The Polity IV index (and, more specifically, the polity2 variable contained within it) is used to discern between democratic and non-democratic countries within this research, and thus form the baseline of this study's sampling technique. Polity IV provides the time-sensitive (calculated yearly) polity2 score on a country-to-country basis, with the score constituting the value generated by subtracting a country's AUTOC score from its DEMOC score. The scores provided by these variables are awarded according to the parameters presented in Appendix I.

Countries can score once per section (e.g. under **Competitive of Executive Restraint** for **DEMOC** a country can either hold an election and score +2 or be categorised as Transitional and score +2). Countries can score a maximum of 10 (eleven points: 0 to 10) on DEMOC variable and a maximum

of -10 (ten points: -1 to -10) AUTOC variable. As countries will never score maximum points in both variables (they are, by nature, mutually exclusive), final polity2 scores range between 10 and -10. In accordance with the *POLITY IV PROJECT: Dataset Users' Manual* and the practice of publications such as Fearon & Laitin's *Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War* (2003), this research considers any country whose score during the period 2000-2015 averages below 6 on the polity2 indicator as non-democratic. Polity2 scores are utilised as a filter for data contained in the ICEWS & Internet User per 100 databases. Countries which fail to receive a polity2 score between the years 2000 and 2015 are excluded from the research. See Appendix 3.2 for an extended overview of countries included in the nondemocratic democratic categories respectively.

Within the context of this research question, Polity IV is prioritised over other governance-related indices for several reasons. First and foremost, as the relationship between state centralisation and unrest has been previously established (Kuran, 1991; Makowsky & Rubin, 2013), Polity IV's method of defining autocracy (which focuses almost entirely on state conduct) offers a more succinct view of government centralisation than, for example, the DD (Democracy and Development) dataset (Alvarez et al., 1996; Munck & Verkuilen, 2002; Cheibub et al., 2010), which also considers civilian participation. Secondly, Polity IV's ordinal (DD, for example, is nominal) mode of measurement facilitates statistical time-series analysis, and thus provides wider possibilities with regards to future research. The use of Polity IV also strengthens the validity of the research, as the indicator has been utilised by various influential studies within the body of literature that this thesis aims to contribute to. Because of this, the use of this indicator thus provides a form of compatibility with past-and-future research within the field.

### 4.3 Dependent Variable

The dependent variables used in the operationalization of this thesis' research question are derived from data presented within the ICEWS (Integrated Crisis Early Warning System) database. The power of databases such as ICEWS derives from their capability to aggregate large (and diverse) amounts of data through automated coding procedures. Such an approach facilitates the conduction of large-N studies of political phenomena. As many aspects as the ICEWS dataset are marked as FOUO (for official use only) by the U.S. government, this research is limited to the data contained within the (give or take) 70-million rows of text-based data (spanning the years 1995-2015) which is publicly available via the Harvard Dataverse as of the time of writing. Still, the N value for this research – in which event occurrences on a **country-year** basis are the unit of measurement – is in excess of 1200 for both the democratic and nondemocratic categories. ICEWS utilises an automated coding technique (NLP) to generate event-based data through the cataloguing, categorising, and coding of information contained in the first 6 sentences of a news article. Stories are automatically collected from media

outlets which span ‘international, regional, national, and local sources’ (Ward et al., 2016: 4). This practice serves to mitigate several common critiques of article-based event data, including the fact that not all events receive international (or, indeed, any) news coverage (Schrodt & Van Brackle, 2013: 25) and the phenomena of media bias and selectivity within news agencies.

As outlined above, the ICEWS NLP coding mechanism yields a wide range of supplementary data for each entry it processes. This allows for operationalisation (through means of filtering, counting, etc.) by researchers. These include longitude, latitude, initiating party, source country, target country, type of event, etc. Of these, several are of particular interest in the cadre of this study. The indicators leveraged are as follows:

### **1. *Story ID* (Quantify / Count Distinct Dependent Variable)**

All quantitative data through which dependent variables are operationalized in this research are expressed through use of the **CNTD Story ID** (Count Distinct) function. I use several of ICEWS’ supplementary indicators to filter CNTD Story ID according to the parameters required to form dependent variables. These filters and variables are discussed below. As an investigation conducted by Berger et al has shown that – in the case of ICEWS – the slope of the curve produced by plotting the total number of stories published per event against time (though significantly higher than the number of events which factually occur) aligns closely with the slope of the curve produced by plotting number of factual events against time (Ward et al., 2016: 4), Count Distinct Story ID is considered as being a suitable measure through which to gage the frequency of events as they occur over time. The ‘Count Distinct’ function takes advantage of ICEWS’ ability to identify stories which constitute reposts,<sup>3</sup> and of its ability to assign the aforementioned stories with the same Story ID to circumvent the problem of any data inflation which might result from duplication.

### **2. *CAMEO Codes / Event Text* (Variable Filter)**

This research design utilises ICEWS’ CAMEO Code classification of events to categorise events into various types of diversionary conflict and diversionary spectacles. CAMEO codes are numeric values assigned to ICEWS event data which denote the nature of the event to which they occur. Each CAMEO code receives a corresponding (descriptive) event text.<sup>4</sup> Within the ICEWS dataset, events are assigned both a CAMEO code *and* an Event Text. CAMEO codes are extremely relevant in the cadre of this research because they allow for the filtration of CNTD Story ID values by actions. This allows for a research in which several dependent variables – in this case, variables which refer to either diversionary conflicts or diversionary spectacles – can be correlated against the previously

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<sup>3</sup> Reposts are stories which are published by various news outlets or which are republished at later point in time.

<sup>4</sup> For example, events which receive CAMEO code 010 are accompanied by the ‘make a statement’ event text.

outlined independent variable over time. A table which outlines the manner in which CAMEO codes have been used in this research can be found in Appendix II. The yielded dependent variables – all of which will be entered into a multivariate regression model *avec* and *sans* the internet variable separately – are ACCUSE, CONV (conventional conflict), REJECT, THREAT, and DEMAND. The impact of internet saturation on the SUM of these variables is also considered.

These variables are used to aggregate CNTD Story ID's with relevant CAMEO codes into useable filters according to the action undertaken. As such, they are essentially used to construct the dependent variables which are examined and referred to throughout research. ACCUSE, DEMAND, and REJECT are coded as 'spectacles' because they are viewed as 'soft' measures. All three represent bargaining chips which are typically highly publicised and which are likely to receive widespread coverage. As a general rule, the CAMEO codes selected to form these variables refer to instances in which issues which can be regarded as 'high politics' (human rights abuses, macro-scale military or economic cooperation) within international relations are referenced. To avoid over complication of results & conclusions, the CONV variable omits instances in which non-conventional violence is employed. Such violence is far less likely to be mobilised in a cross-border format by state actors than conventional force, and will thus reduce both the reliability and the validity of eventual results). In addition, (as previously outlined) the format of ICEWS – which, in this case, is unlikely to produce reliably consistent data pertaining to these engagements – remains a concern. Furthermore (as in the case of proxy wars through nonstate actors), the mechanisms through which such engagements – when mobilised internationally – can further diversionary agendas have not been addressed by previous literature. In the absence of extensive original research aimed towards solidifying the mechanisms surrounding this phenomenon, it is impractical (within the limited scope of this thesis) to formulate credible policy advise. The THREAT variable (though arguably able to fit into either the CONFLICT or SPECTACLE category of this research), is coded as CONFLICT because the use of threats typically presents the targeted party with ultimatums of one kind or another. Ultimatums are – when compared to the ACCUSE, REJECT, and DEMAND variables within this study – relatively less conducive to the granting of minor concessions, and are thus considered as far more likely to result in serious bargaining failures.

### **3. Source / Target Country**

ICEWS' NLP code identifies the source (or initiating) and target (receiving) country listed in every story it catalogues. This allows for the filtration of data according to these variables. As this research concerns itself with international (as opposed to domestic) conflicts and spectacles, I discount all data which refers to events in which the target country is the same as the initiating country (see Appendix 3.3). This variable also serves as a filter through which to divide data between democracies & non-democracies through polity2 rankings (see previous section), and through which to identify whether

(according to source and target combination) the events described in a story can be understood as diversionary. Events are coded as diversionary when the initiating country directs them towards either a neighbouring state, a regional or global hegemon, or a historic rival. For a detailed overview of how this variable was operationalised, refer to appendix 3.1.

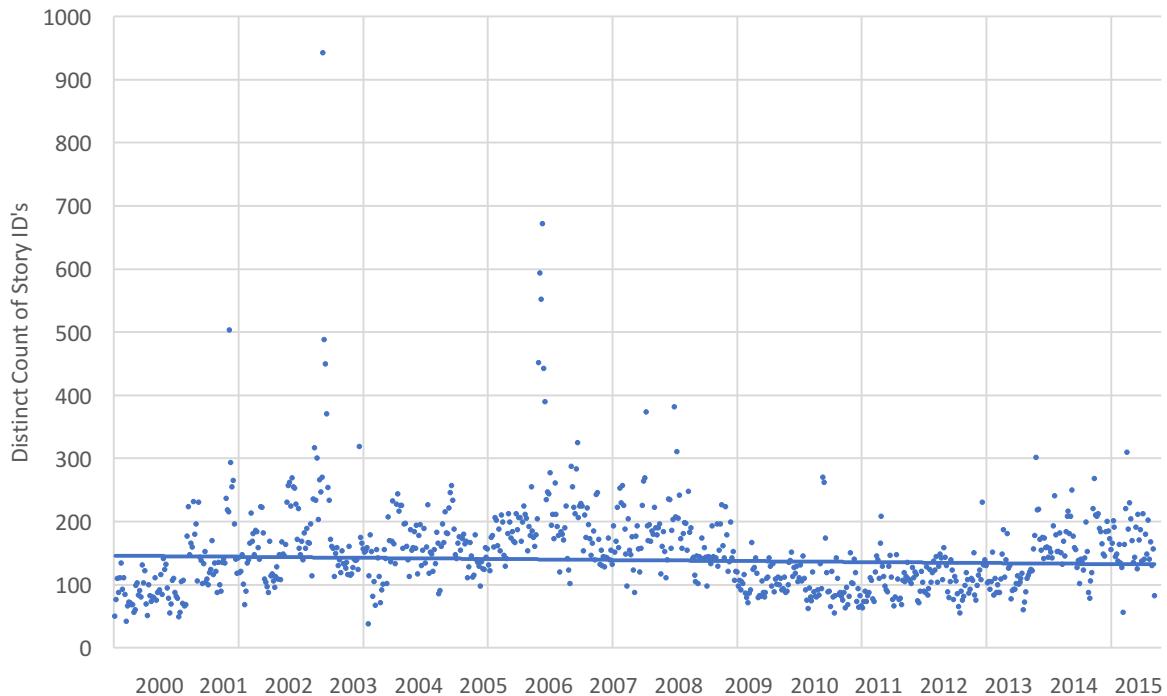
Because the layout of ICEWS' data does not allow for filtration by general event (i.e.: the Iraq War does not manifest as *one* event, but a collection of thousands of individual stories which cannot be correlated in any intuitive manner), it is impractical to determine (beyond identification of initiating and target country) whether actors are participating in conflicts which involve multiple actors. This means that it is impossible to test whether the Russian Federation and the United States are consistently participating in the same conflicts or whether Iran is sponsoring Shia groups in Syria (3<sup>rd</sup> parties and nonstate actors cannot be identified as targets: events are simply coded as being directed towards the state in whose territory the target resides or operates). As such, the parameters used to define diversionary conflict within the operationalisation of this research omit the phenomenon of proxy wars as diversionary. Considering the tendency of modern conflicts (see again the Middle East) to exhibit strongly diversionary characteristics, this omission is unfortunate. While this complication is likely to impact data within the 2010-2015 period more than data within the 2000-2005 period, it is not expected (due to the large sample size of the countries included in the study) to have a heavy impact upon validity of yielded results. This is partially because literature surrounding diversionary conflict makes little mention of diversion through proxy wars or to wars fought along ethno-religious (group) lines; ICEWS' limited capacity to filter such conflicts may therefore improve this research's compatibility with the body of literature it aims to contribute to.

#### **4. Date** (Time Filter)

ICEWS' NLP code attaches timestamps (in the form of day, month, year) to every story it catalogues. The sum of CNTD Story ID is calculated on a weekly basis. As the data examined in this research spans 16 years (each with between 51-53 weeks), the N of this research is 836. For the time segments 2000-2005 and 2010-2015, the N is 314.

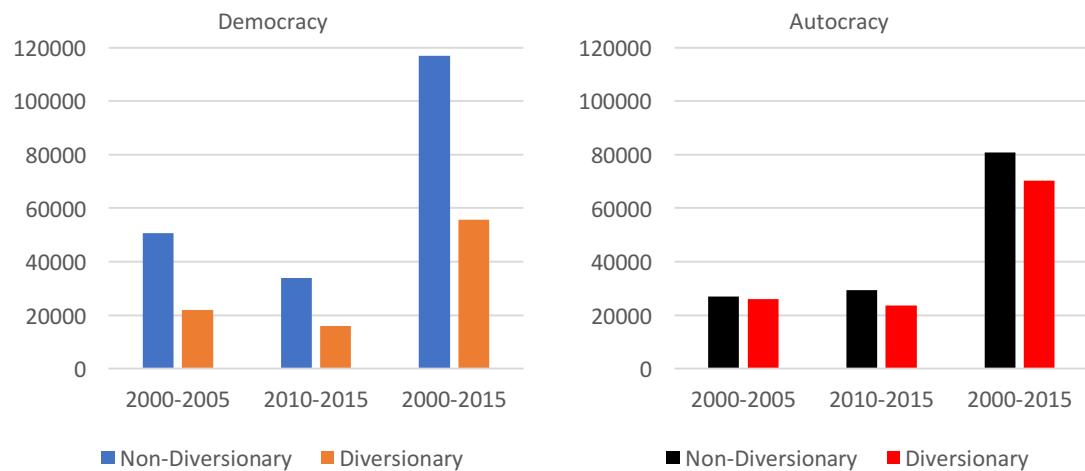
A preliminary view of ICEWS conflict variables – provided in Figure 1 – shows that aggregate levels of diversionary conflict (for all ICEWS variables) have, over the course of the last 16 years, slightly reduced.

Figure 1: ICEWS Diversionary Conflict All Variables 2000-2015



It pays to note, however, that these reductions have been far from uniform across conflict variables, regime types, and time periods. Figure 2 provides an overview of conflict type per government type and time period. The results here are striking. Logging 151,110 vs. 172,584 unique ICEWS Story ID's respectively, autocracies have generally participated in less conflicts than their democratic counterparts between 2000 and 2015. This result likely derives partially from the fact that, as measured through the Polity IV index, democratic governments simply outnumber their autocratic counterparts within this study, and partially from the fact that the United States – a democratic state with 'globocop' status – simply participates in a large number of conflicts. Moving on to diversionary conflicts, the discrepancies which emerge between these government types' participation in such conflicts (in relation to non-diversionary conflict) is remarkable. On both the micro-and-macro level vis-à-vis timespans, autocratic regimes' propensity for diversionary conflict consistently matches propensity for non-diversionary conflict – a trend does not recur on the democratic spectrum.

Figure 2: Diversionary Conflict Per Regime Type ICEWS All Variables

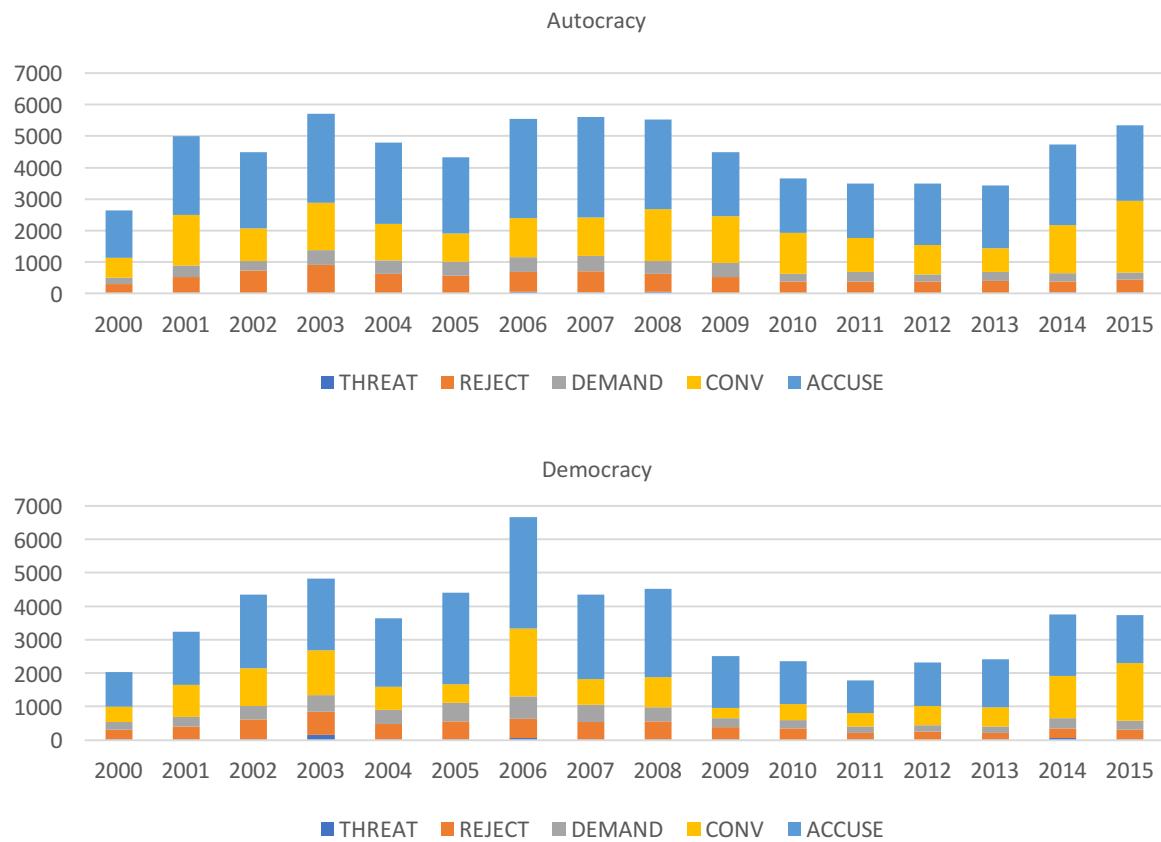


Diversionary conflicts have featured heavily in autocracies' conduct since the year 2000. Though it is surprising to observe that the 2010-2015 timeframe – in which, as previously outlined, autocracies have generally experienced an explosive growth in internet saturation – does not identify these governments as participating in a significantly higher number of diversionary conflicts than the 2000-2005, the findings do not point towards a non-relationship between internet saturation and diversionary conflict. As displayed in Figure 2, autocracies generally presided over relatively low levels of internet saturation during this time period. It is therefore likely that variables such as elite competition within regimes can explain why the trends between these periods manifest in the way they do. It is also possible that due to limitations in data filtration within ICEWS and due to antiquated definitions surrounding the phenomenon of diversionary conflict, data surrounding autocratic states' participation in diversionary conflict in the 2010-2015 time period is underrepresented. The Russian Federation's intervention in Syria – which bears many of the hallmarks of diversionary conflict due to the fact that it is routinely framed (both within Russia and without) as a campaign designed to outline the inadequacy of Western and American conduct on the international stage (McKew, 2017) – is, for example, not included. Turkey's participation in the aforementioned conflict is likewise omitted; despite the fact that Turkey scores below democratic thresholds on Polity IV in recent years, its average over the course of this research's focus period designates it as such. At the macro level, these examples likely have limited impact upon the data presented: rate of internet growth (even in the 2010-2015 period) has not (as seen in Figure 2) been uniform under autocracy.

Keeping the previously outlined caveats in mind, it pays to examine the makeup of the data presented in Figure 5 through the lens of the ICEWS variables introduced in the previous chapter. Doing so is important not only because it will provide the context necessary to discuss the results yielded through statistical analysis (a high correlation between two variables has limited explanatory power if

understanding of the trends these variables have exhibited over time is limited), but because – due to the holistic, macro-level nature of the data – it can be used to visualise and inform the policy recommendations provided in this paper’s closing remarks. Figure 3 presents a breakdown of diversionary conflicts as they have manifested since between 2000 and 2015 by ICEWS variable type. To streamline the process of drawing comparisons, the data is divided by regime type.

Figure 3: Diversionary Conflict ICEWS Variable Type by Regime Type 2000-2015



As is shown in Figure 3, autocracies’ modes of participating in diversionary conflict differs from the modes employed by their democratic counterparts. In both government types, the ACCUSE and CONV variables account for a disproportionately large majority of total events recorded by ICEWS. Democracies tended more strongly towards ACCUSE while autocracies were generally characterised by their relatively more aggressive employment of CONV for diversionary ends. In autocracies, the largest increases in the CONV variable (from 1307 to 2271 recorded stories) took place in the 2010-2015 time period. In this period, autocracies’ score in the ACCUSE category also saw incremental increases. Because this variable appears systematically to make up a large percentage of these governments’ diversionary portfolio (far more so than CONV), this phenomenon – while interesting – is not particularly telling. Despite this study’s focus period of 16 years, for autocracies it is the 2010-2015 time period which presides over these governments’ highest recorded ‘score’ in the CONV

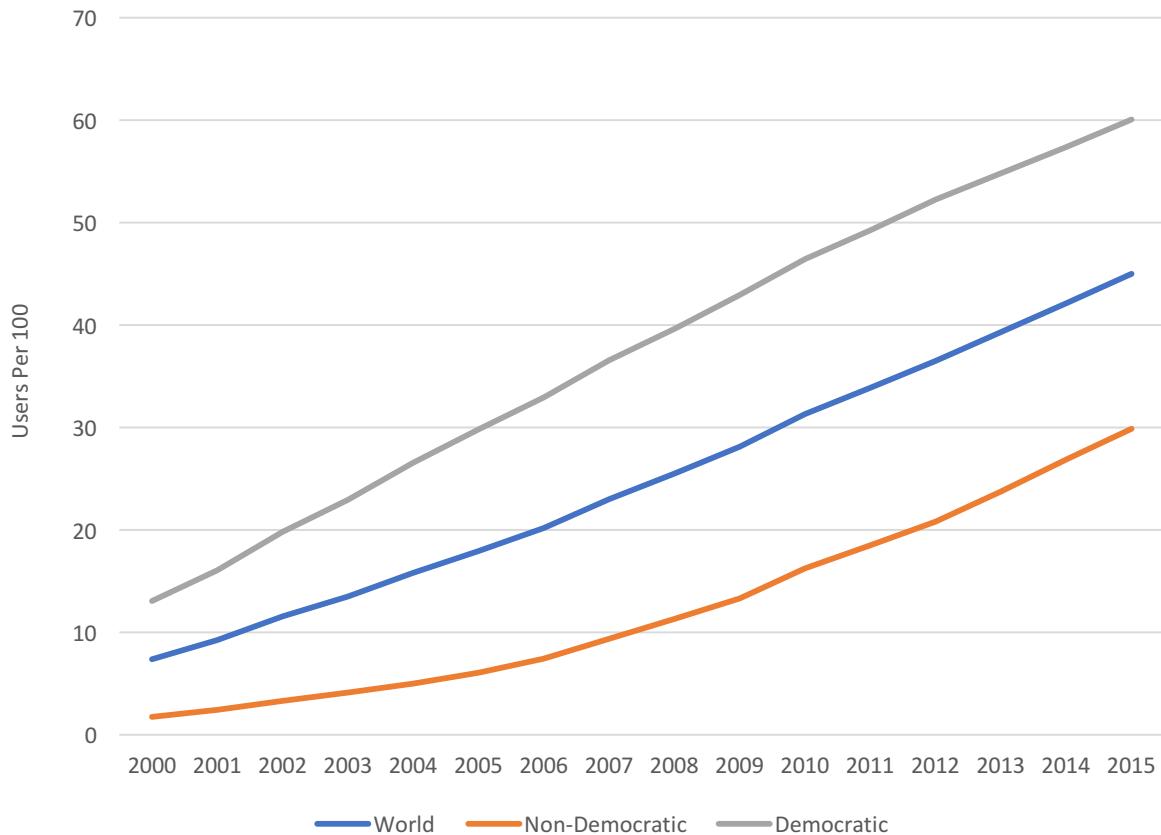
variable (2015); this is not the case for ACCUSE, which receives its highest score in 2007. Autocracies' employment of the CONV variable is – in the 2000-2005 period – relatively liberal by comparison. As autocratic governments (see Figure 2) experienced explosive growth in internet saturation in the 2010-2015 period, this phenomenon is ripe for discussion. Of the five conflict categories examined in this thesis, it would appear that increases in internet saturation incentivised autocracies to increase participation in that activity (the use of conventional force) which arguably has the most directly detrimental impact upon the lives of those it affects. This trend does not recur in democracies, which (during their own 'explosive internet growth period' of 2000-2005) engaged more aggressively in increasing diversion through the ACCUSE variable.

It is important to note that – despite the fact that both government types see increases in diversionary conflict during the period in which their internet saturation experiences explosive growth – diversionary conflict (for both government types) manifests extensively *outside* of these time periods as well. This can partially be explained by the fact that conflict is a double-edged sword. Increased assertiveness by democracies in the 2000-2005 period (inevitably partially aimed towards autocracies) and by autocracies in the 2010-2015 period (inevitably partially aimed towards democracies) invites the party on the receiving end of it to employ proportional retaliatory measures. Despite this systemic autocorrelation between autocratic & democratic states' respective conduct, diversionary conflict in autocracies (though it experiences sizeable increases in frequency during the 2010-2015 period) manifests more consistently throughout this research's focus period than it does in democracies – a phenomenon which likely derives from the fact that repressive regimes preside over societal environments which incentivise diversionary policymaking more generally.

#### 4.4 Independent Variable

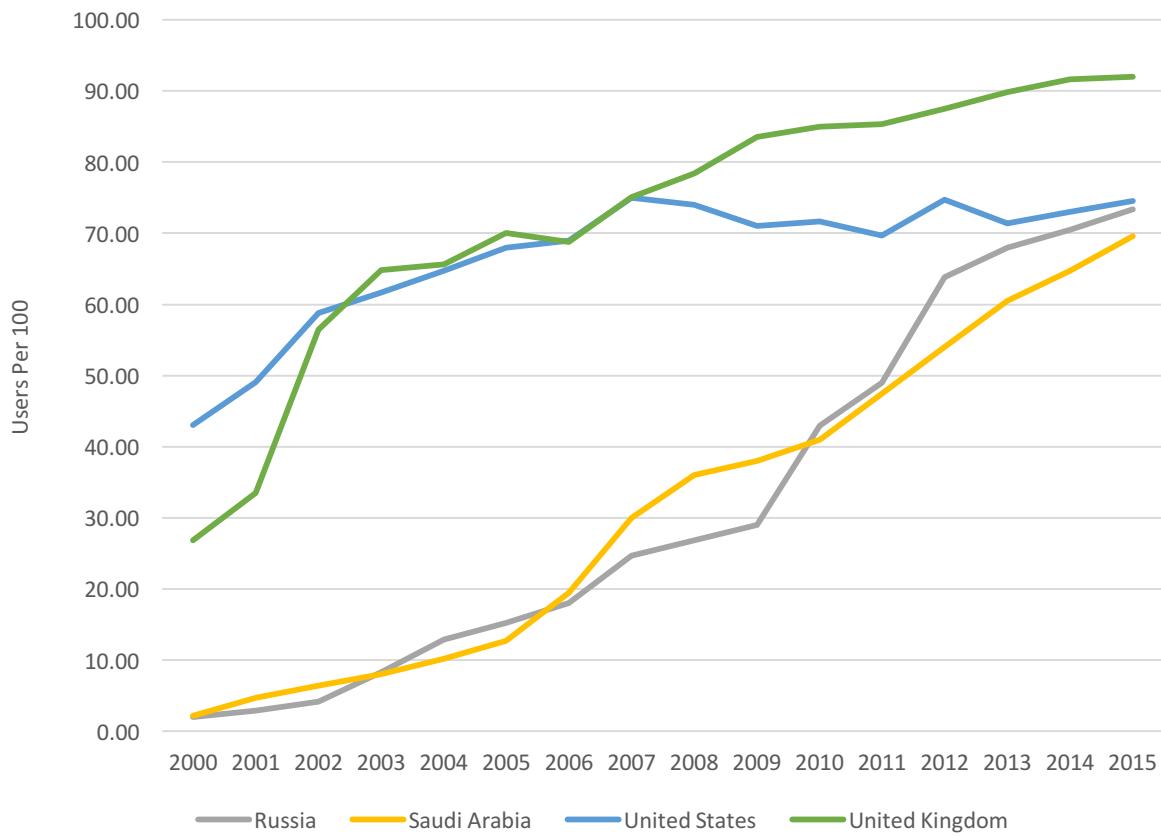
To draw conclusions vis-à-vis the internet's (and, by extension, social media's) impact on global trends surrounding international conflict, it is helpful to first establish the visible trends which have characterised these two variables over the course of this study's research period (2000-2015). Figure 4 provides an overview of internet growth as measured through Internet Users per 100 (World Bank, 2016).

Figure 4: Internet Users Per 100 by Government Type 2000-2015 (World Bank)



As the data displayed in Figure 4 represents an aggregated trend which spans 167 countries in total, it is unsurprising that the trend lines produced are relatively linear. Nonetheless, the slope of the trend line representing democracies indicates that the *rate of growth* at which the internet users per 100 variable has increased in these countries has, over the course of the last 16 years, slowed. Simultaneously, the slope of the trend line produced by non-democracies indicates that the opposite is true for these countries. Hypothesis 1 is thus confirmed. In the cadre of these findings, it is useful to conduct a brief small-N study to illustrate the differences in these trends, as this will provide context to the thesis' choice of independent variable. Figure 5 provides an overview of trends in internet user per 100 in four countries (Democratic: United States, United Kingdom; Non-Democratic: Russia, Saudi Arabia).

Figure 5: Internet Users Per 100 Russia, Saudi Arabia, United States, United Kingdom 2000-2015 (World Bank)



The data presented in Figure 5 offers a succinct view into the individual cases which shape the trends observed in Figure 1. Democratic societies have generally entered the social media age with significantly higher levels of internet saturation than their non-democratic counterparts. Much of the growth in this area in ‘established’ Western democracies (United States, European nations, etc.) occurred *before* 2005; non-democracies such as Russia and Saudi Arabia did not achieve comparable levels of saturation until 2009 or 2010, and experienced explosive growth between then and the present.

The implications of this phenomenon are considerable for this thesis’ research question: because collective action (as illustrated by Kuran) requires a critical participation mass to produce tangible real-world results, it is highly likely that a similar relationship exists between internet use and international conflict. If this is the case, it is likely that trend lines which are consistent with this phenomenon can be observed at the aggregate level.

This study’s independent variable – degree of internet saturation – is operationalised by the Internet Users per 100 Dataset provided by the World Bank. Internet users per 100 is a simple dataset which,

on an annual basis, is updated to provide a figure which estimates how many people per 100 (essentially a percentage of total population) have access to internet in any given country or region. The data is available for most of the world's countries. Data points are generated based on estimates provided by the International Communications Union, World Telecommunication/ICT Development Report, and the World Bank itself. As collective action over social media is *impossible* without access to internet, it is considered – in the absence of robust time-sensitive data regarding social media users across platforms – as a valid *proxy* social media access in societies. The author acknowledges the critique that access to internet does not automatically translate into access to (or use of) social media for collective action, and therefore does not necessitate an exacerbation of domestic shocks. As the phenomenon of widespread use of social media is presented as a causal explanation to link the framework of collective action and prevalence of internet use, this indicator is nonetheless considered relevant in the cadre of this thesis' research question.

#### 4.5 Control Variables

As this research aims to establish that, under autocracy, a relationship exists between internet saturation within society (as measured through Internet Users per 100) and state participation in international conflict (as measured through previously defined ICEWS variable categories), it deals with dependent variables whose causality matrixes are incredibly complicated and difficult to quantify. This thesis utilises a research design in which the tested hypotheses are considered valid if a multivariate model which incorporates internet saturation is a better predictor of diversionary conflict initiation than is the model which does not incorporate it. Because of this, I include a several control variables which are intended to provide a robust model for through which to predict conflict initiation under autocracy. All included variables are based on the findings of previous literature, and are intended to provide country-year specific proxies for several of the types of 'shocks' which have been previously shown to contribute to conflict initiation. The control variables included are as follows:

##### 1. State Fragility Index

The State Fragility Index (SFI) is developed by Center for Strategic Peace, and incorporates a swathe of indicators which proxy for state cohesion, social cohesion, economic stability, and political stability. As a result, it represents a relatively catch-all mechanism for quantifying how susceptible a state is to internal and external shocks alike. Within the multivariate analysis conducted in this thesis, I fetch on a country-year basis (2000-2015) the 'overall' SFI scores for each country. This measure lends itself well to multivariate analysis because higher scores are indicative of higher instability. This measurement is included to control for the phenomenon that states which are *more* susceptible to shocks are also more likely – particularly if they preside over populations which have widespread access to information – to mitigate their fragility through conflict (Chiozza and Goemans, 2011: 20).

## **2. GDP Per Capita (World Bank)**

The GDP Per Capita index is developed by the World Bank, and is a measure of individual welfare. In general, it is expected that countries with higher per capita GDP rankings are less susceptible to shocks because economic welfare reduces civil unrest. This measurement is included because – in conjunction with high scores in the SFI – high scores in this indicator are indicative of economic inequality. As with the SFI, this measurement is included on a country-year basis for all countries included in the study.

## **3. Coup Data**

To correct for conflict which are initiated to circumvent coups, I include data from the Center for Systemic Peace's Coup d'état Events 1946-2015 Database. This dataset provides on a country-year basis a count of (amongst other variables) number of coups initiated, number of coups plotted, number of coups rumoured. The coup variable within this research is formed by aggregating all coup events (whether plotted, rumoured, attempted, or successful) in the Coup d'état Events 1946-2015 Database by country-year. Non-actual coups (i.e.: rumoured, plotted) are included because these are still indicative of unrest within the regime, and may thus incentivise a leader to initiate a conflict (Svolik, 1995: 481).

## **4. Population Size (World Bank)**

To correct for the possibility that any impact that internet saturation has on the onset of diversionary conflict cannot be simply attributed to increasing population sizes, I include data from the World Bank's population database on a country-year basis.

## **5. Unemployment Rate (World Bank)**

Unemployment rate has been previously shown to constitute a phenomenon which reduces the revolutionary threshold of individuals within a society (Makowsky and Rubin, 2013: 9). I include data from the World Bank's global unemployment dataset on a country-year basis to ensure that any increases in conflict onset between *avec* and *sans* internet models through multivariate regression are explained by increases in internet saturation as opposed to increases in population size.

## **6. Press Freedom**

To correct for an uptick in conflicts which derive from overt authoritarian practices such as suppression of the press, I include a variable which catalogues on a country-year basis Freedom House's Freedom of the Press 'total' ranking.

## 4.6 Computational Method

Several of the hypotheses posited in the previous chapter (namely hypothesis 2 and 3) call for testing through statistical analysis in SPSS. Analysis is conducted through a multivariate linear regression analysis. This test allows for the inclusion of several independent variables, and is geared towards utilising these variables to produce a ‘model’ which is used to *predict* variations in the dependent variable. To test the previously outlined hypotheses, this research conducts a multivariate regression first on non-diversionary ICEWS conflict data (NDIV), and then on data which is coded as constituting diversionary conflict. This test is conducted twice for all dependent variable categories (ACCUSE, THREAT, REJECT, DEMAND, CONV, SUM): once using a model which does *not* include Internet Users per 100, and once using a model which *does* include internet users per 100. These tests are further conducted on data pertaining to democratic and non-democratic data separately. As outlined in the controls section, I correct for country-and-year fixed effects by incorporating dummy variables for both into the independent variables section of the multivariate analysis. The introduction of dummy variables drastically reduces the occurrence of Type I errors by accounting for average results on a per-dummy basis. This ensures that trends in Chinese independent variable are used only to predict trends in the Chinese dependent variable, and that the impact of time-sensitive outliers in the independent variable (i.e. the onset of a war causes a rise in coups worldwide) is accounted for and subsequently normalised. This research structure allows for the identification of trends over time by regime and conflict type. All 167 countries which receive a polity2 score between 2000 and 2015 are included.

In order ensure the reliability of results obtained through multivariate regression analysis, input data must conform to the parameters of several assumptions. These are:

1. **The relationship between the dependent and independent variables must be linear** (Hinton et al., 2004: 297). Condition 1 can be tested for by plotting each of the dependent variables (CONV, REJECT, THREAT, ACCUSE, DEMAND) against the independent variable (Internet User Per 100) in a scatter plot. A linear relationship is assumed when the resulting scatter plot does not organise data in a hyperbolic, parabolic (or, more generally, clearly *non-linear*) fashion. Data points need not form a perfect line because outliers are expected. With the exception of the THREAT variable – which, due to consistently low rates of recorded occurrence in ICEWS, rarely exhibits signs of a linear relationship with internet saturation – the variables used to measure conflict within this research are generally recorded as exhibiting a linear relationship with Internet Users Per 100.
2. **The data is homoscedastic** (Hinton et al., 2004: 297). The assumption of homoscedasticity requires data points to be evenly distributed along a regression line. This characteristic can be

tested for by conducting a bivariate linear regression analysis between the independent variable (Internet Users per 100) and each of the dependent (ICEWS conflict) variables. SPSS provides the option to, as part of the aforementioned regression, plot the standardised regression residual against the dependent variable. If data is homoscedastic, points are expected to (once again) organise themselves in a linear fashion around a central line. Points need not align themselves tightly around this line, but outliers (i.e.: points which clearly do not conform to the same trend as is generally visible in the rest of the data) should not be visible. As the dependent variables utilised within this research have universally exhibited a clear linear relationship with Internet Users per 100's regression residual, it can be concluded that they have conformed to the assumption of homoscedasticity well.

3. **The data is drawn from normally distributed populations** (Hinton et al., 2004: 297). Although (because it essentially tests correlation between two or more lines of best fit) the assumptions posited in the previous two are more 'vital' to obtaining reliable results through multivariate analysis than is a normal distribution of data, I test for normality before testing the predictive power of the models. When data is normally distributed, data points whose value is close to the sample size's median value occur more frequently than those whose value lies towards either extreme. As such, normal distribution can be assumed when bars produced in a histogram conform to the general shape of a bell curve. A non-normal distribution – typically characterised by the presence of (or *complete lack*) of outliers – can indicate a problem with the reliability of the data. In this research, normal distribution is tested for by constructing a histogram (which plots variable values against corresponding frequency of occurrence) in SPSS. If a resulting histogram exhibits non-normal distribution, the offending variable is transformed through a logarithm with a base 10 (log) and another histogram is constructed to re-test the resulting values for normality.  $\text{Ln}(10)$  shrinks the difference between values while maintaining difference ratios, and thus allows data which contains many outliers to exhibit relatively normal distribution. As (in the event of event based data pertaining to conflict), the explanatory power of the independent variable may be overvalued if outliers are removed (in ICEWS, outliers are *expected* to occur when wars initiate),  $\text{Ln}(10)$  tends to present itself as an adequate solution to the problem of ensuring normality. Whether before or after transformation through the  $\text{Ln}(10)$  function, the variables used within this research display (with the exception of THREAT) distributions which – despite often exhibiting *slightly* left-or-right skewing distribution – conform well to the assumption of normality. This finding is in keeping with expectations; large-N data typically exhibits normal distribution.
4. **The data must be interval or ratio** (Hinton et al., 2004: 297). All data used within this research is interval data; this means that the interval between data is numerically interpretable (the distance between 3 and 40 is bigger than the distance between 4 and 5 just as weeks in which a variable

returns a count of 5 in ICEWS are calmer than weeks where the same variable returns a count of 50). Condition 4 is thus fulfilled.

The end goal of this research is to provide macro-level observations which can be used to guide policymaking. As such, trends are analysed as they have manifested over extensive periods of time. The conduction of a multivariate regression yields a value which explains how well a multiple independent variable model can predict changes in a dependent variable. This test should serve to maximise generalisability vis-à-vis future trends in these phenomena, and thus facilitates the end goal. The use of this particular test is further justified because the data utilised to operationalise variables within this research generally conform well to the previously outlined conditions.

### **Hypothesis 1**

Hypothesis 1 is intended to establish that – at the aggregate (international) level – there is a positive correlation between internet saturation and active conflicts. This hypothesis is confirmed partially through means of a bivariate (Pearson) analysis test, and partially through a multivariate regression analysis which is conducted using a model which does not incorporate internet saturation (model 1) and a model which *does* incorporate internet saturation (model 2). These models incorporate data from all countries in the study, and include all described control and dummy variables. Here, the unstandardized coefficients displayed by all control variables are presented for discussion, and are used to highlight preliminary trends in internet saturation's interaction with the phenomenon of interstate conflict. The dependent variable for both regression analyses is the SUM of all ICEWS conflict variables (both diversionary and non-diversionary). To provide context to the outcomes yielded through these tests, a graphical representation which outlines trends in both regime types' participation in the SUM conflict variable is included. As this hypothesis intends to establish merely that trends in internet saturation and conflict onset have both trended upwards over the course of this thesis' research period, it is considered valid if the results derived from the bivariate (Pearson) correlation test indicate a (regardless of strength) positive relationship.

### **Hypotheses 2, 3**

Hypotheses 2 and 3 aim to establish the impact of internet saturation on autocratic regimes' participation in non-diversionary and diversionary respectively. Here, multivariate regression analyses which conform to both of the models (*sans* and *avec* internet) applied under hypothesis 1 is applied to dependent variables which capture each regime types' participation ICEWS ACCUSE, THREAT, REJECT, DEMAND, and SUM variables respectively. Model R-Squared values – a value which can range between 0 and 1, and which denotes what percent of changes in the dependent variable can be explained by changes in the regression model – are presented per regime and per variable to facilitate discussion of observed differences. The unstandardized coefficients of the control variables included

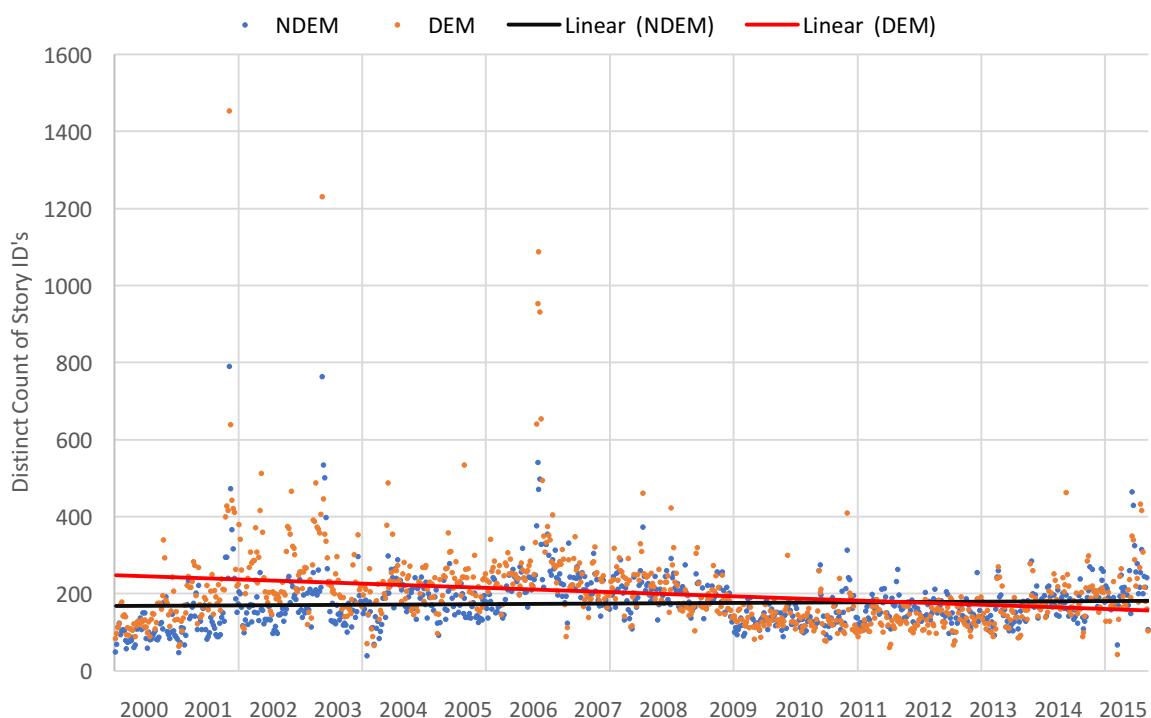
in these tests are also presented for discussion. Both hypotheses are considered validated if model 2 – when applied to the nondemocratic category – consistently yields results which explains a larger number of changes in the respective dependent variable than does model 1.

## Chapter V: Analysis, Discussion & Findings

### 5.1 Introduction

Increasingly affected by culpable leader syndrome as internet access increases propensity for collective action, democracies should – as time progresses – record *reduced* appetite for conflict; conversely, non-democracies – due to concerns over large-scale preference falsification and civil unrest – should record an increased appetite. These assumptions are largely validated by the trend lines displayed in Figure 3, which provides an overview of both government types' aggregated (all CAMEO codes outlined in Appendix II) conflict variables between 2000 and 2015.

Figure 6: ICEWS Event Data All Variables Per Government Type 2000-2015



The NDEM (non-democratic) trendline is yielded through the following equation:  $y = 0.0175x + 167.36$ . The DEM (democratic) trendline's equation is as follows:  $y = -0.1081 + 247.27$ . Their slopes are 0.0175 and -0.1081 respectively.

This means that – in accordance with previously outlined expectations – states' propensity for international conflict has reduced over the course of the past 16 years while the propensity for such engagements has *increased* among non-democracies. Interestingly, the distribution of data points in the 2000-2005 & 2010-2015 timeframes indicates that these periods have been marked by

comparatively high levels of conflict, with the period bridging them being characterised first (2006-2008) by relatively stable levels and then (2008-2010) by reducing levels.

Moving on to regression results, preliminary bivariate (Pearson) correlation indicates a relatively weak correlation of .147\*\* between internet saturation and the SUM of all conflict at the aggregate level. Applying multivariate models 1 (*sans* internet) and 2 (*avec* internet) to the SUM of all ICEWS conflict variables observed during the 2000-2015 period, the per-variable breakdown yielded by this test is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Unstandardized Coefficients SUM of all Conflict Variables 2000-2015

VARIABLE	MODEL 1	MODEL 2
COUPS	384.638*	389.132*
GDP Per Capita	-0.058**	-0.045**
SFI	151.909**	151.626**
POPULATION SIZE	1.16E-06	5.08E-09
UNEMPLOYMENT	120.289**	117.606**
PRESS FREEDOM	-20.028*	-18.503*

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level  
 \*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

The values presented in this table can be interpreted as follows: for each variable (i.e.: COUPS, GDP Per Capita, etc.) a one point increase yields an increase in the SUM dependent variable that corresponds to the number displayed under each model header. A one point in the COUP variable, for example, causes an increase of 384.638 in the count of SUM ICEWS conflict events.

Overall, the returned results – starting with the previously noted .147 bivariate correlation – are supportive of hypothesis 1. It is important to note here that the results presented in Table 1 are derived from a combination of all 167 countries' conflict data (both diversionary and non-diversionary). When compared to the results presented in model 1, the model 2 results indicate increases in internet saturation exacerbate the effects of coups, reduced press freedom (recall that higher press freedom scores are indicative of less freedom), and – to a minuscule extent – GDP Per Capita. Conversely, the introduction of the internet saturation variable reduces the impact of SFI, Population Size, and Unemployment. These results are telling, as they indicate that (at the international level), internet saturation reduces state propensity to go to war especially when it is combined with factors which are can be linked to phenomena in which governments are more likely to be held accountable. This is overtly so in the cases of population size and unemployment – both variables which can be linked closely to mechanisms relating to preference falsification (Makowsky & Rubin, 2011: 30) – and also

(though less pronouncedly so) for SFI, which is a mixed variable that proxies for a swathe of factors relating to civil and governmental instability.

## 5.2 Multivariate Regression Analysis Non-Diversionary Conflict

Table 2 presents results derived through the multivariate regression of two models which – in addition to incorporating the control variables outlined in the methodology section – omit (model 1) and include (model 2) data pertaining to internet saturation respectively. The results presented in Table 2 pertain to both Democratic and Nondemocratic regimes' participation in *non*-diversionary conflict. The presented results are derived from model summary (r-squared) values which may range between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating that the utilised model explains 0% of changes in the dependent variable and 1 indicating that it explains 100% of changes in the dependent variable.

Table 2: Model Summaries (r-squared values) Multivariate Regression Non-Diversionary Conflict

Regime	Model	THREAT	REJECT	DEMAND	CONV	ACCUSE	SUM
DEM	Model 1	.624**	.844**	.878**	.584**	.870**	.906**
	Model 2	.624**	.844**	.878**	.586**	.871**	.906**
NDEM	Model 1	.719**	.734**	.833**	.667**	.812**	.873**
	Model 2	.721**	.735**	.833**	.667**	.813**	.873**

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

With regards to the presented results, the inclusion of internet saturation in model 2 has a small (0.01%) impact on the occurrence in the ACCUSE variable under both regime types. In addition, the model increases the control variables' ability to predict nondemocratic use of the REJECT variable by 0.01% and nondemocratic use of the THREAT variable by 0.02%. Model 2 also increases the predictive power of the control variables under democratic participation in CONV events by 0.02%, though it should be noted that – given the fact that this variable still only explains 58.6% ICEWS' accrediting of this variable to these states – this increase is relatively inconsequential. The explanatory power of the models also differs by category and regime type, with democratic states recording exceedingly high levels in 'spectacle' categories such as DEMAND and ACCUSE and nondemocratic states – though they still score high in these categories – scoring relatively higher in the CONV and THREAT variables. This implies that between 2000 and 2015, democratic governments have generally responded to shocks by toning up their rhetoric surrounding conflict rather than increasing their factual engagement in it. Model 2's increased explanatory power under the THREAT is particularly interesting, as it lends support to the notion that autocrats may have a tendency – even if

the their targets cannot be classified as diversionary – of lashing diplomatically at foreign states as a means of mitigating the adverse effects of shocks.

Turning now to the unstandardized coefficients displayed by each regime type under the applied models, the results are displayed in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Unstandardized Coefficients Democratic Governments & NDIV Conflict

	ACCUSE		REJECT		THREAT		CONV		DEMAND		SUM		
	Model 1		Model 2		Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	
COUPS	63.702*	63.694*	8.943	8.941	4.573*	4.573*	* <sup>*</sup>	68.546	68.561	8.516	8.513	610.90 2 1	
GDP PC	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001*	-0.001*	-3.14E-05	-3.15E-05		-0.001	-0.001	0	0	-0.008 -0.006	
SFI	-8.443*	-8.887*	-2.006	-2.142	-0.082	-0.082		6.676	7.557	-2.313*	-2.478*	112.97 9* 7*	
POPULATION SIZE	-9.70E-06**	-9.44E-06**	-2.61E-06**	-2.53E-06**	-2.92E-07**	-2.92E-07**		-3.78E-06	-4.30E-06	-2.65E-06**	-2.56E-06**	0** 0**	
UNEMPLOYMENT	-0.831	-0.797	0.655	0.666	0.155*	0.155*		6.052*	5.985*	0.612	0.625	25.604 25.379	
PRESS FREEDOM	1.628	1.806	0.115	0.169	0.007	0.007		0.909	0.557	0.424	0.49	25.519 24.338	
INTERNET	.867		.265		.000				-1.722*		.322		-5.772

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level  
\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4: Unstandardized Coefficients Nondemocratic Governments & NDIV Conflict

	ACCUSE		REJECT		THREAT		CONV		DEMAND		SUM	
	Model		Model		Model		Model		Model		Model	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
COUPS	19.096	18.875	7.986*	7.911*	3.178*	3.161*	50.039*	49.594*	6.704*	6.712*	385.862 * *	389.195 * *
GDP PC	-0.002	-0.003	0	-0.001	-4.29E-06	-7.50E-05	-0.006	-0.008	-0.001*	-0.001*	-	-0.05** 0.064**
SFI	12.756	12.838	3.237*	3.265*	0.466*	0.472*	49.851*	50.018*	2.52**	2.518*	255.244 ** **	253.998 ** **
POPULATION SIZE	7.50E-07	6.87E-07	-1.12E-07	-1.34E-07	-8.36E-10	-5.48E-09	4.86E-06*	4.73E-06*	-2.58E-07	-2.56E-07	-1.85E-05	-1.76E-05
UNEMPLOYM ENT	19.108	19.422	4.016*	4.122*	1.205*	1.228*	78.958*	79.59**	4.587*	4.577*	383.734 ** **	379.005 ** **
PRESS FREEDOM	0.357	0.241	0.134	0.094	-0.014	-0.022	-3.659*	-3.895*	0.022	0.026	-15.261	-13.498
INTERNET	.845		.285*		.062		1.703		-.028			-12.740

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level  
\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Several observations can be derived from the information contained in Tables 3 and 4. Perhaps most significant are the unstandardized coefficients attached to the INTERNET variable. These are not significantly higher *across the board* under autocracy within the non-diversionary category, but do record a significant increase (1.703 compared to -1.722) under the CONV variable. The introduction of the INTERNET variable in model 2 also modifies the impacts of several of the included control variables. With regards to COUPS, the variable increases in this variable have a remarkably high impact upon the occurrence of virtually all *non-diversionary* ICEWS conflict variables in democracies, but their effect remain all but unaffected by the introduction of the internet variable in through model 2. This trend persists under the nondemocratic regime type, which – generally speaking – records the COUPS variable as contributing to smaller changes in ICEWS conflict variables than it does under democracy. This discrepancy is surprising, but can at least be partially explained by this thesis' adherence to a methodology which defines regime type on the basis of average Polity IV scores between 2000 and 2015. While the results observed in changes under the GDP PC, SFI, and POPULATION SIZE variables are unremarkable, results derived from observation of fluctuations in the unstandardized coefficients associated with the UNEMPLOYMENT and PRESS FREEDOM variables warrant further discussion. Starting with the UNEMPLOYMENT variable, the discrepancy between the unstandardized coefficients associated with this variable under autocracy and the unstandardized coefficients associated with it under democracy are staggering. Results indicate not only that increases in unemployment have a much larger impact on state propensity for conflict under autocracy than they do under democracy, but that under autocracy (unlike under democracy) their effects are amplified by the inclusion of the internet saturation variable which is controlled for in model 2. This variable's comparatively strong explanatory power implies that authoritarian regimes' domestic legitimacy is at least partially rooted in their ability to provide their citizens with economic opportunities. Perhaps more interestingly, this variable's interaction with internet saturation indicates that the state's failure to do so is one which the civilian populations actively attribute to the state. Because this variable's impact is most pronounced within the CONV and ACCUSE categories, these findings serve to support the findings derived from the results presented in Table 2, which posit that autocrats have a tendency – even if their targets cannot be classified as diversionary – mobilizing risky foreign policy in an effort to mitigate domestic shocks.

Moving on to the PRESS FREEDOM variable, it pays to recall that increased numeric scores on the press freedom index are indicative of a reduction in press freedom. The PRESS FREEDOM variable's explanatory power increases vis-à-vis democratic states' propensity to use the ACCUSE variable. This finding is in line with previously outlined trends in democratic conduct, which posit that civilian access to increasing volumes of information incentivises these governments to tone up their rhetoric. Under autocracy, the PRESS FREEDOM variable's interaction within the CONV category is particularly fascinating, as the variable's impact here becomes *more* negative as press freedom

decreases. This indicates that – as autocrats gain greater control of the media outlets that inform their citizenry – increasing societal degrees of internet saturation become a boon rather than a burden vis-à-vis their need to mobilize military force. The implication here is that state controlled media outlets – particularly when combined with a citizenry which has access to information – allow regimes to weaponize disinformation campaigns that reduce the need to wage wars which are not overtly diversionary. This is a potentially significant observation which would benefit from further research in the future.

### 5.3 Multivariate Regression Analysis Diversionary Conflict

Table 5 presents results derived through the multivariate regression of two models which – in addition to incorporating the control variables outlined in the methodology section – omit (model 1) and include (model 2) data pertaining to internet saturation respectively. The results presented in Table 2 pertains to both Democratic and Nondemocratic regimes' participation in *diversionary* conflict. The presented results are derived from model summary (r-squared) values which may range between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating that the utilised model explains 0% of changes in the dependent variable and 1 indicating that it explains 100% of changes in the dependent variable.

**Table 5: Model Summaries (r-squared values) Multivariate Regression Diversionary Conflict**

<b>Regime</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>THREAT</b>	<b>REJECT</b>	<b>DEMAND</b>	<b>CONV</b>	<b>ACCUSE</b>	<b>SUM</b>
DEM	Model 1	.203**	.662**	.703**	.409**	.650**	.844**
	Model 2	.204**	.662**	.703**	.410**	.650**	.845**
NDEM	Model 1	.719**	.657**	.692**	.551**	.690**	.689**
	Model 2	.721**	.659**	.695**	.556**	.693**	.691**

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

The results presented in Table 5 are significant for several reasons. Referring first to the most obvious trend, model 2's ability to consistently predict a greater degree (relative to model 1) of variation across dependent variables within the nondemocratic regime category supports the notion that increasing levels of internet access can be associated in these governments' increased participation in diversionary conflict. Though the increases in the model's explanatory power – with the CONV variable's 0.5% increase representing the most sizeable jump on record – are universally incremental, the consistency with which the results yielded through model 2 top those yielded through model 1 constitute a trend which validates hypothesis 3. The most significant increases here take place in (as previously outlined) the CONV variable, but the DEMAND and ACCUSE variables – which both record increases of 0.3% – also constitute relevant findings. Taken in their whole, these results indicate that internet saturation increases these governments' propensity to participate in diversionary spectacles (DEMAND, ACCUSE) as well as diversionary conflicts (CONV). Results within the nondemocratic category stand in stark contrast with those recorded in democratic category – which, aside from a 0.1% increase in the THREAT and CONV variables – attached no increased explanatory power to model 2 whatsoever. When compared with the results derived through the regression of *non-diversionary* data, the results presented in Table 5 can also be used to conclude that – in general – democratic governments almost universally respond to 'shocks' through conflicts which are not (within the context of this research) coded as diversionary. This is especially evident within the

democratic THREAT variable, as its explanatory power vis-à-vis diversionary instances of such events is over 40% lower than its explanatory power vis-à-vis non-diversionary conflicts.

Moving on to the unstandardized coefficients associated with the included control variables, the results are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6: Unstandardized Coefficients Democratic Governments & DIV Conflict

	ACCUSE		REJECT		THREAT		CONV		DEMAND		SUM	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
COUPS	6.673*	6.674*	0.706	0.706	0.948	0.947	6.673	6.674	0.383	0.384	200.01	200.03
GDP PC	0	9.52E-05	-9.00E-05	-9.35E-05	-2.50E-05	-3.30E-05	0	-	-4.95E-05	-4.01E-05	-0.002	-0.002
SFI	-0.384	-0.316	0.078	0.073	-0.056	-0.068	-0.384	-0.316	-0.011	0.003	0.946	1.904
POPULATION SIZE	2.35E-07	1.95E-07	-2.26E-07**	-2.22E-07**	-1.81E-07**	-1.74E-07**	2.35E-07	1.95E-07	-1.99E-07*	-2.08E-07*	6.85E-06	7.41E-06
UNEMPLOYMENT	0.559	0.553	-0.08	-0.08	-0.009	-0.008	0.559	0.553	0.073	0.072	7.469	7.395
PRESS FREEDOM	-0.011	-0.038	0.058	0.06	-0.012	-0.007	-0.011	-0.038	-0.037	-0.042	-0.744	-1.128
INTERNET	.042			.010		.023		-.133		-.027		-.1874

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 7: Unstandardized Coefficients Nondemocratic Governments & NDIV Conflict

	ACCUSE		REJECT		THREAT		CONV		DEMAND		SUM	
	Model 1	Model 2										
COUPS	-2.1	-2.472	0.381	0.319	-0.133	-0.143	-1.535	-1.857	-1.229	-1.329	-33.973	-37.217
GDP PC	0	-0.002	1.42E-05	0	-6.59E-06	-5.17E-05	2.35E-05	-0.001	1.40E-05	0	-0.002	-0.016
SFI	1.025	1.164	0.154	0.177	0.053	0.056	2.469	2.589	0.286	0.323	17.775	18.988
POPULATION SIZE	8.55E-06**	8.44E-06**	1.18E-06**	1.16E-06**	2.49E-07**	2.46E-07**	5.72E-06**	5.63E-06**	2.09E-06**	2.07E-06**	6.88E-05**	6.79E-05**
UNEMPLOYMENT	-1.155	-0.627	0.101	0.189	-0.092	-0.077	1.224	1.682	-0.758	-0.616	-1.053	3.55
PRESS FREEDOM	0.357	0.16	-0.046	-0.078	0.007	0.002	-0.114	-0.284	-0.079	-0.132	-2.289	-4.005
INTERNET		1.422**		.237**		.040**		1.233**		.382**		9.087**

\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

The most striking observation here presents in the form of the negative coefficients which can be associated with the INTERNET variable. These register as significantly higher across variables in nondemocratic systems than in democratic ones, with a particularly notable spike occurring (when

compared to the non-diversionary equivalent) in the ACCUSE variable. These results offer strong support for hypothesis 1, and facilitate – due to the INTERNET variable’s modification of several control variables under model 2 – the outlining of policy recommendations.

Starting with the nondemocratic COUP variable, the finding – which records INTERNET as *reducing* rather than *increasing* the impact of coups – stands in stark contrast with the results recorded within the corresponding *non-diversionary* category, and implies that coups constitute a type of shock which disincentivises these regimes from participating in diversionary conflict. This finding may indicate that diversionary conflict – a phenomenon which, under a ‘rally around the flag’ model, should typically be combined with public diplomacy initiatives which are geared towards generating nationalist sentiment – does not serve to effectively mitigate shocks which originate from within the regime. This can be explained at least partially by the fact that leaders which face coups have typically not yet consolidated their power (Svolik, 2009: 478). Though additional research is needed to confirm, it is entirely possible that – under these circumstances – leaders do not yet control local news agencies. This facilitates scenarios in which rival elites can leverage such outlets – especially in societies where internet saturation is high – *against* the incumbent, which may disincentivise the incumbent’s participation in conflicts which have an overtly self-serving purpose to them. Outside of the COUP variable, some interesting findings present within the nondemocratic UNEMPLOYMENT and SFI variables. These record positive coefficients within the ICEWS’s CONV and ACCUSE, REJECT, THREAT, CONV, DEMAND event categories respectively. Results pertaining to the SFI variable support the notion that countries which are more shock prone are also more prone to participation in diversionary conflict. As the model 2 coefficients within this variable increase across conflict types, this can be viewed as further confirmation of the hypothesis 3. Moving on to unemployment, this variable’s negative coefficients within all non-CONV categories is particularly noteworthy because it differs from the corresponding variable’s impact on *non-diversionary* conflict occurrence and (in doing so) implies that *diversionary* spectacles do not divert attention away from economic woes.

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## Chapter VI: Conclusion

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The final chapter of this study serves the purpose of summarising its findings as they relate to the following research question:

**Has the advent of the internet & social media led non-democratic regimes to increase participation in diversionary conflict?**

This research question was tested through the operationalisation of five hypotheses; namely:

1. **H1:** a positive correlation exists between global access to the internet and the number of active international conflicts;
2. **H2:** a positive relationship exists between the prevalence of non-democratic states' populations' access to internet and non-democratic states' propensity to participate in international conflict, and;
3. **H3:** a positive relationship exists between the prevalence of non-democratic states' populations' access to internet and non-democratic states' propensity to participate in diversionary international conflict.

In the following sections, the results yielded through the operationalisation of these hypotheses is summarised to address this thesis' research question. These findings are subsequently transposed into policy recommendations. The thesis' shortcomings (as well as potential research venues which derive from these shortcomings and findings) are also discussed.

### 6.1 Outcomes of Hypothesis Operationalisation

#### Hypothesis 1

Over the course of this research's focus period, autocracies' propensity for an aggregated measure of conflict (all ICEWS variables, both diversionary and non-diversionary) saw a slight increase. Democracies' propensity saw a slight decrease. Simple bivariate correlation confirmed that the worldwide internet saturation displayed a weak but statistically significant of .147\*\* with an aggregate measure of the ICEWS variable included in this study. As a positive correlation (even a weak one) between Internet Users per 100 and any of the predefined ICEWS variables utilised in this research would have confirmed **H3**, the hypothesis was considered valid.

#### Hypothesis 2

Operationalisation of **H2** offered strong support for the notion that, over this research's focus period, autocracies' propensity for non-diversionary increased as a result of increasing levels of internet

saturation. While increases were less significant than within the diversionary category, nondemocratic regimes displayed increased use of the ICEWS THREAT, REJECT, and ACCUSE variables. This indicated that internet saturation mainly impacts – when it comes to nondemocratic regimes – propensity to engage in spectacle diplomacy internationally. Propensity to participate in conventional conflict (CONV) did not increase, but had a higher baseline r-squared value in autocracies (.667) than was recorded in democracies (.584). Model 2’s increased explanatory power in these variables offered support for the notion that autocracies’ participation in non-diversionary conflict is impacted (if ever so slightly) by internet saturation, and thus validated hypothesis 2.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The r-squared values obtained through the multivariate regression of models 1 and 2 against *diversionary* ICEWS conflict variables reveals a trend in which inclusion of the internet saturation variable increases the accuracy of the model as a whole. This trend applies to all regressed dependent variables, but is particularly significant in the case of the DEMAND, CONV, and ACCUSE variables. These variables respectively record a model 1 – model 2 increase of 0.3%, 0.5%, and 0.3%. This places the significance of model 2’s explanatory power under autocracy squarely ahead of significance of model 2’s explanatory power under democracy, as the latter government type peaks at a model 1 – model 2 increase of 0.1%. The distribution of model 2 increases – which favours (at 0.5%) the CONV variable – indicates that, when combined with high levels of internet saturation, domestic shocks incentivise leaders to participate in a form of diversionary conduct which is associated with particularly high stakes. As the trends presented within this section indicate not only that internet saturation (under autocracy) has a consistent impact across variables, but that this impact is – when compared to the democratic control group – far more significant in the former regime type than in the latter, hypothesis 3 is considered validated.

## **6.2 Resolution of Research Question**

This thesis has endeavoured to resolve the following research question:

**Has the advent of the internet and social media led non-democratic regimes to increase their participation in diversionary conflict?**

The data presented within this research has established that – at the global level – conflict occurrence has correlated positively with increasing internet saturation. Autocratic regimes have additionally been confirmed as being more prone to participate in conflict as a response to domestic shocks. This predisposition has been observed as being exacerbated by internet saturation, and has been shown to be particularly significant within the diversionary category. As these results validate (see section 6.1)

all hypotheses presented in the theoretical framework section of this thesis, the answer to the research question can be considered a resounding ‘yes’.

### 6.3 Policy Recommendations

The findings derived from this research have identified a causal link between internet saturation and autocratic governments’ participation in diversionary conflict. From a policymaking perspective, the implications of this phenomenon are considerable. The mechanism presented to explain it is relatively simple. As internet saturation levels increase within autocratic populations, individuals gain increased access to not only information regarding government activity and the living conditions enjoyed by those beyond national borders, but to knowledge of the dissent expressed by their peers. Explained through the framework of preference falsification, this dynamic is one in which revolutionary thresholds at the individual level experience significant reductions. The state exacerbates this problem by actively discouraging networks from participating in collective action. This measure circumvents the initiation of cascade revolutions in the short term, but has the potential of inspiring widespread frustration. For simplicity’s sake, this can simply – once again – be understood as a further reduction of revolutionary thresholds at the individual level. Governments whose populations enjoy widespread access to internet thus find themselves faced with the challenge of ensuring that minor shocks (whether internal or external) do not garner sufficient public outrage to initiate a revolutionary bandwagon. This challenge can, in part (as previously investigated), be addressed through the state’s participation in diversionary conflict.

This study has concluded that autocrats rely more heavily on diversionary mechanisms which align with expectations outlined by the ‘rally around the flag’ hypothesis than on mechanisms which align with the ‘gambling for resurrection’ hypothesis. Within the context of this study, this trend manifests as a disproportionately large reliance on ICEWS’ CONV and ACCUSE variables for diversionary purposes. As accusations have the potential (particularly when used in a diversionary context) of rapidly escalating into conflicts, it pays to note that the negative externalities associated with them are similar to those which are endemic to the phenomenon of conventional conflict. What is more, governments are unlikely to end their engagement in conflicts past the point of initial participation. In many cases, it may even pay to engineer participation in a way which ensures the conflict’s continuation: lengthy engagements facilitate extensive press coverage and the creation of national myths, which can – especially in regimes where press freedom is low and internet saturation is high – easily be propagated throughout society. Keeping the human suffering associated with increases in CONV in mind, policy deriving from this research should be geared towards pre-empting the initiation of such diversionary engagements altogether. Within a framework in which increases in

internet saturation incentivise leaders to participate in violent engagements, the following policy recommendations can be prescribed:

1. **Development of indices which can predict shocks:** internet saturation's causal relationship with diversionary conflict stems from the internet's tendency to exacerbate shocks within society. As a result, a continued allocation of resources into projects which utilise big-data for predictive ends is recommended.
2. **Pre-emptive use of private channels:** because diversionary conflict is – by definition – geared towards generating public engagement, it is recommended that (once the onset of a shock is identified as being imminent), private channels are used to communicate behavioural red lines. Public channels are not recommended because their use may incentivise escalatory posturing. Such red lines should communicate clearly that breaching them will lead defeat and embarrassment, and should be backed by credible enforcement mechanisms. While regimes whose conduct follows a 'rally around the flag' model crave conflict, the precarious position internet saturation puts them in discourages forms of excessive gambling.
3. **Focus on economic indicators:** unstandardized coefficients presented under the diversionary (nondemocratic) category imply that economic woes are typically mitigated through the use of conventional force. This ties economic underperformance to a particularly impactful form of diversionary conflict, and incentivises the raising of policymaker awareness of authoritarian states' economic status. Depending on perspective, this may also adjust the viability equation surrounding the use of different types of sanctions.

While the previously outlined policy recommendation offer useful guidelines to structure policymaking, it should be noted that they represent – partially due to the generalised nature of the research itself – a catch-all approach. On a micro level, it is advised that case-specific adaptations & improvisations are leveraged, and that – particularly with regards to backing red lines with credible enforcement mechanisms – special attention be paid on a case-to-case basis to the relational context which surrounds the concept of credibility.

#### 6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The explanatory power of this research was limited by several factors. These limitations stemmed, first and foremost, from the fact that this study was conducted using a large (167) country sample size. This design yielded results which – while they provided a high degree of generalisability (autocracies tend to participate in more conflict when their populations have more access to internet) – did not exhibit a high degree of explanatory power in the way of identifying indices through which to operationalise underlying causal mechanisms. Internet user per 100 – when applied at in a large-N, averaged context – was (by design) a variable whose explanatory power within this research derived

from the theory-based argument that a higher score would lead to the exacerbation of domestic shocks, but which could be applied only to a limited range of domestic shocks which had been adequately operationalised in a country-year-compatible format by previous scholars. As the development of predictive indices to guide policymaking will depend greatly upon the ability not only to measure, but – indeed – to further identify such contributing domestic shocks, further research at the micro-level (ideally aimed at looking into trends socio-economic phenomena such as level of unemployment or literacy rate) is recommended. Such a study should ideally explore the relationship between various socio-economic factors, level of internet saturation, and participation in diversionary conflict in states which have achieved a ‘critical mass’ of internet users. It should ideally provide a ‘pre-critical-mass’ time period as a control study to ascertain whether such factors indeed become stronger predictors of diversionary conflict as internet saturation rises.

A second limitation stemmed from the fact that the definition of diversionary conflict (as outlined in the second chapter of this paper) can be criticised as lagging behind the real-world manifestations of the phenomenon. It is, for example, problematic that state participation in proxy wars is not coded as diversionary. The very advent of the internet age arguably changes how diversionary conflict is framed and experienced civilian populations, and publishing news articles which chronicle an affiliate (3<sup>rd</sup> party) group’s successes – whether in the form of combat victories or atrocities committed against generally reviled minorities – likely has significant diversionary value. This study was unable to account for such manoeuvres because, at the time of writing, no research has been done to ascertain their proposed diversionary value. It was furthermore impractical – given the ‘limited’ scope of publicly accessible ICEWS data – to codify groups as being affiliated with states fighting in conflicts where rival minorities or powers were involved. As participation in such proxy-based events may well represent the ‘modern’ incarnation of diversionary conflict, and because it has a sizeable impact upon the lives of the people which are affected by it (and, indeed, upon the course of geopolitically significant conflicts in general), further research into not only the diversionary value of such manoeuvres, but the mechanisms from which such value derives (i.e.: does value increase as internet saturation increases?) is welcomed.

Further research into whether the internet saturation’s correlation with diversionary conflict stems from state concern over societal trends or from leader concerns over regime in-fighting is also (given sufficient data relating to the onset of coup’s etc.) encouraged.

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## Appendix

This section provides information to supplement the previously conducted research.

### Appendix I: Tabular Overview of Polity IV Scoring Scheme for Polity 2

DEMOC	AUTOC
<b>Competitiveness of Executive Recruitment</b>	<b>Competitiveness of Executive Recruitment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Election +2</li> <li>- Transitional +1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selection +2</li> </ul>
<b>Openness of Executive Recruitment</b>	<b>Openness of Executive Recruitment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dual / Election +1</li> <li>- Election +1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Closed +1</li> <li>- Dual / designation +1</li> </ul>
<b>Constraint on Chief Executive</b>	<b>Constraint on Chief Executive</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Executive parity of subordination +4</li> <li>- Intermediate Category +3</li> <li>- Substantial Limitations +2</li> <li>- Intermediate Category +1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unlimited authority +3</li> <li>- Intermediate category +2</li> <li>- Slight to moderate limitations +1</li> </ul>
<b>Competitiveness of Political Participation</b>	<b>Regulation of Participation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Competitive +3</li> <li>- Transitional +2</li> <li>- Factional +1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restricted +2</li> <li>- Sectarian +1</li> </ul>
	<b>Competitiveness of Participation</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repressed +2</li> <li>- Suppressed +1</li> </ul>

*Note.* Reprinted [adapted] from *POLITY IV PROJECT: Dataset Users' Manual*, by M.G. Marshall & K. Jaggers, 2007, Center for Systemic Peace. Copyright 2007 "Center for Systemic Peace".

Appendix II: Table of CAMEO Codes Used to Form Dependent Variables

CONFLICT		SPECTACLE	
<b>Conventional Force (CONV)</b>	CAMEO	<b>Accuse (ACCUSE)</b>	CAMEO
Refuse to de-escalate Military Engagement	1246	Criticize or Denounce	111
Use conventional Military Force (other)	190	Accuse of Aggression	1123
Occupy Territory	192	Accuse of Human Rights Abuses	1122
Fight with small arms and light weapons	193	Accuse of War Crimes	1124
Fight with artillery and tanks	194	Rally Opposition Against	113
Employ aerial weapons	195	Accuse, other	112
Employ precision-guided aerial munitions	1951		
Employ remotely guided aerial munitions	1952	<b>Reject (REJECT)</b>	CAMEO
Violate ceasefire	196	Reject Military Cooperation	1212
<b>Threaten (THREAT)</b>	CAMEO	Reject Economic Cooperation	1211
Threaten non-force	131	Reject Intelligence Cooperation	1214
Threaten to boycott, embargo, or sanction	1312	Reject Request for Economic Aid	1221
Threaten to reduce or break relations	1313	Reject Request for Military Aid	1222
Threaten to halt negotiations	134	Refuse to Allow International Involvement	1244
Threaten occupation	1382	Defy norms, law	128
Threaten conventional attack	1384	Veto	129
Give ultimatum	139	Reject, other	120
		<b>Demand (DEMAND)</b>	CAMEO
		Demand, other	100
		Demand military cooperation	1012
		Demand economic cooperation	1011
		Demand intelligence cooperation	1014
		Demand diplomatic cooperation	102

*Note.* Reprinted [adapted] from *Conflict and Mediation Event Observations: Event and Actor Codebook*, by P.A. Schrodt, Pennsylvania State University. Copyright 2012 “Pennsylvania State University”.

## Appendix III: Tableau Coding / 'Calculated Variables'

This appendix lists the Tableau codes used to filter data; codes used to create ICEWS variables, distinguish between democratic and nondemocratic countries, and to remove events which were target inwards (source country = target country) are provided.

### ***1.1: Diversionary Conflict Filter***

This section provides the code used to produce a 'calculated field' within the Tableau application which was used to order data for this research. Country names which occur after instances of "CONTAINS([Country]," are source countries, while country names which occur after "CONTAINS([Target Country]," are target countries. Events are marked as diversionary when they a source country targets them towards any of the countries whose names occur after the "Target Country" designation. All diversionary events are coded as DIV; all other events are coded as NONDIV. This creates a filter which can subsequently be applied to data in Tableau's data viewer.

```
IF CONTAINS([Country],"Afghanistan")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Pakistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkmenistan")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tajikistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Albania")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Montenegro")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kosovo") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Macedonia")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Greece") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Angola")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zambia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Namibia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Armenia")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Azerbaijan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Georgia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Azerbaijan")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Georgia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Armenia")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bahrain")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Qatar") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Arab Emirates"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bangladesh")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"India")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Myanmar"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Belarus")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Poland")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Lithuania")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Latvia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bhutan")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"India"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Burkina")
    AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mali")
    OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Niger") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nigeria")
```

OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Benin") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Togo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ghana") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cote d'Ivoire"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Burundi")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Rwanda") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tanzania"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cambodia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Vietnam")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Thailand")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Laos") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cameroon")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nigeria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Central African Republic")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Gabon")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Equatorial Guinea"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Central African Republic")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cameroon")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Gabon"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Chad")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Central African Republic") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cameroon")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nigeria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Niger")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Libya"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"China")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kazakhstan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mongolia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"North Korea") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kyrgyzstan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tajikistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nepal")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bhutan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Myanmar")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Laos") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Vietnam")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Indonesia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Philippines"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Congo")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Central African Republic")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uganda")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Rwanda") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burundi")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tanzania") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zambia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Angola"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cuba")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Djibouti")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ethiopia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Eritrea") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Somalia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Yemen"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ecuador")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Colombia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Peru") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mexico")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Egypt")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Libya")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Jordan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Equatorial Guinea")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cameroon")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Gabon"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ethiopia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Eritrea") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Djibouti")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Somalia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kenya"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Fiji")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Gabon")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Equatorial Guinea")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cameroon") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Gambia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Senegal"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guinea")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mali")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Senegal") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cote d'Ivoire")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Liberia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sierra Leone")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guinea-Bissau"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guinea-Bissau")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Senegal")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guinea"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Haiti")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Dominican Republic")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cuba"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Iran")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Pakistan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Afghanistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkmenistan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Azerbaijan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Arab Emirates") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Iraq")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Jordan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Syria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cote d'Ivoire")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ghana")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burkina") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mali")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Liberia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guinea"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Jordan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Syria"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kazakhstan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uzbekistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kyrgyzstan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"North Korea")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"South Korea")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Japan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kuwait")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kyrgyzstan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kazakhstan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tajikistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uzbekistan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Laos")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Myanmar") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Vietnam")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cambodia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Thailand"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Lesotho")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"South Africa"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Liberia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sierra Leone")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guinea") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cote d'Ivoire"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Libya")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tunisia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Algeria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Niger")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Egypt") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Madagascar")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mozambique"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Malawi")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mozambique")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zambia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tanzania"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Malaysia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Thailand") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Singapore"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mali")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Niger")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Algeria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mauritania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burkina") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Core d'Ivoire")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guinea") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Senegal"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mauritania")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Algeria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mali") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Senegal")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Morocco"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Morocco")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tunisia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Algeria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mauritania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Spain"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Myanmar")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"India") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Thailand")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Laos"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Nepal")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"India")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Niger")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mali")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Algeria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Libya")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nigeria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Benin") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burkina"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Nigeria")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Niger")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Benin") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cameroon"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Oman")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Yemen") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Arab Emirates")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Pakistan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"India")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Afghanistan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Papua New Guinea")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Indonesia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Japan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Peru")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ecuador")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Colombia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bolivia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chile"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Qatar")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Arab Emirates") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kuwait")

OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Russia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mongolia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kazakhstan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belarus")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Latvia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Estonia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Finland"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Rwanda")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uganda") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burundi")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tanzania"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Saudi Arabia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Jordan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Egypt") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Yemen") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Oman")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Arab Emirates"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sierra Leone")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guinea")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Liberia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Singapore")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Malaysia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Solomon Islands")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Somalia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ethiopia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Eritrea") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Yemen"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sudan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Egypt")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Libya") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ethiopia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Eritrea")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"South Sudan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"South Sudan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ethiopia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Algeria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Niger")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Central African Republic")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Libya")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Egypt"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sri Lanka")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"India")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Suriname")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guyana")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Swaziland")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"South Africa")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mozambique"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Syria")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Jordan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Lebanon"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Tajikistan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Pakistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Afghanistan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uzbekistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kazakhstan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Tanzania")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kenya")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uganda") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Rwanda")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burundi") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo")

OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zambia")OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Malawi")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mozambique"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Thailand")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Myanmar") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Laos")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cambodia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Malaysia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Togo")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ghana")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Benin") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burkina"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Tunisia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Algeria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Libya") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Italy"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Turkmenistan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uzbekistan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Afghanistan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"United Arab Emirates")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Oman") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Uganda")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kenya")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tanzania") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Rwanda"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Uzbekistan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkmenistan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kazakhstan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kyrgyzstan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tajikistan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Afghanistan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Venezuela")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Colombia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guyana"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Vietnam")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cambodia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Laos")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Japan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Yemen")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Oman") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ethiopia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Zambia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Angola")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Congo") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Namibia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zimbabwe") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Botswana")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mozambique") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Malawi")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tanzania"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Zimbabwe")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mozambique")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"South Africa") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Botswana")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zambia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Albania")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Greece")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Macedonia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kosovo") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Montenegro"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Argentina")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chile") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uruguay")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Paraguay") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bolivia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Australia")

AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Austria")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovakia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovenia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Hungary") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Czech Republic")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Italy")OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Switzerland"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Belgium")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"France")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Luxembourg") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Netherlands")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Benin")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Togo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burkina") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Niger")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nigeria"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bolivia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Peru")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Paraguay")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Argentina") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chile"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Botswana")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Namibia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zimbabwe") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zambia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"South Africa"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Brazil")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Suriname")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guyana") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Venezuela")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Colombia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Peru")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bolivia")OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Paraguay")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Argentina")OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uruguay"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bulgaria")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Greece")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Romania") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Macedonia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Canada")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cape Verde")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Chile")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Argentina")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bolivia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Peru"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Colombia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Panama")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Venezuela") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ecuador")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Peru") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Comoros")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Costa Rica")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nicaragua")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Panama"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Croatia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Hungary")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovenia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Italy") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cyprus")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Greece"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Czech Republic")

AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Poland") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Austria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovakia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Denmark")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Norway")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sweden"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Dominican Republic")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Haiti"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Timor")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Indonesia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"El Salvador")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guatemala")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Honduras") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Estonia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Finland") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Latvia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Finland")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Norway") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sweden")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Estonia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"France")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Kingdom")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belgium")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Luxembourg") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Switzerland")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Italy"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Georgia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Armenia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Azerbaijan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Germany")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Kingdom")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Denmark") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Netherlands")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belgium") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Switzerland")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Luxembourg") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Austria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Czech Republic") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Poland"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ghana")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Cote d'Ivoire")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Burkina") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Togo"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Greece")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Albania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Macedonia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bulgaria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Turkey") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guatemala")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mexico")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belize") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"El Salvador")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Honduras"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guyana")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Venezuela")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Suriname") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Honduras")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guatemala")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"El Salvador") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Nicaragua"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Hungary")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovakia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Romania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Croatia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovenia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Austria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Indonesia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Singapore") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Malaysia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Philippines"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ireland")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"United Kingdom"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Israel")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Jordan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Lebanon") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Syria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Egypt") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Italy")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"France")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Switzerland") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Austria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovenia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Jamaica")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Japan")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"South Korea")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"North Korea") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Philippines"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kenya")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Tanzania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Uganda") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ethiopia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Somalia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"South Korea")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Japan") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"North Korea")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kosovo")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Albania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Macedonia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Montenegro")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Latvia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Estonia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Lithuania") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belarus"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Lebanon")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Syria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Israel") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Lithuania")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Poland")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belarus") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Latvia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Luxembourg")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belgium")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"France")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Chad") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sudan"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Macedonia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Albania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Greece") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bulgaria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kosovo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mauritius")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mexico")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guatemala"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Moldova")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Romania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mongolia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Montenegro")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kosovo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Albania"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Netherlands")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belgium")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"New Zealand")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Australia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Nicaragua")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Honduras")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Costa Rica") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mexico"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Norway")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Sweden")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Finland") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Denmark") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Panama")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Costa Rica")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Colombia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mexico")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Paraguay")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bolivia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Argentina") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Philippines")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"China")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Indonesia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Vietnam")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Malaysia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Poland")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Czech Republic") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovakia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belarus")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Lithuania"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Portugal")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Spain")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Romania")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bulgaria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Hungary") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Moldova") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Senegal")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mauritania")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mali") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Guinea")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Gambia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Serbia")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Hungary")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Romania") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bulgaria")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Macedonia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kosovo")  
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Montenegro") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Croatia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Montenegro")  
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Serbia")

```

OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Kosovo") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Albania")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Croatia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Slovakia")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Austria")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Czech Republic") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Poland") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Hungary")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ukraine"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Slovenia")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Austria")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Hungary")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Croatia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Italy"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"South Africa")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Namibia")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Botswana") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Zimbabwe")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mozambique") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Swaziland")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Lesotho"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Spain")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Portugal")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"France") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sweden")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Norway")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Denmark") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Finland"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Switzerland")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"France")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Austria")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Italy"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Trinidad")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Venezuela")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Turkey")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Greece")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Bulgaria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Syria") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Armenia")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Georgia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ukraine")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Belarus")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Poland") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Slovakia")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Romania") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Moldova"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"United Kingdom")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Ireland")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Germany"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"United States")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"Russia") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Canada")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Mexico") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iran")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Iraq") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Saudi Arabia"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Uruguay")
AND (CONTAINS([Target Country],"United States") OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Argentina")
OR CONTAINS([Target Country],"Brazil"))THEN 'DIV'

ELSE 'NONDIV'

END

```

## **1.2: Government Type Filter**

This section provides the code applied to create a filter through which to distinguish between events initiated by DEM (democratic) and events initiated by NDEM (nondemocratic) government types.

```
IF CONTAINS([Country],"Afghanistan") THEN 'NDEM'
```

```
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Albania") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Angola") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Armenia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Azerbaijan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bahrain") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bangladesh") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Belarus") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bhutan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Burkina") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Burundi") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cambodia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cameroon") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Central African Republic") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Chad") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"China") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Congo") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cuba") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Djibouti") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ecuador") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Egypt") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Equatorial Guinea") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Eritrea") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ethiopia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Fiji") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Gabon") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Gambia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guinea") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guinea-Bissau") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Haiti") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Iran") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Iraq") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cote d'Ivoire") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Jordan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kazakhstan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"North Korea") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kuwait") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kyrgyzstan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Laos") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Lesotho") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Liberia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Libya") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Madagascar") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Malawi") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Malaysia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mali") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mauritania") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Morocco") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mozambique") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Myanmar") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Nepal") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Niger") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Nigeria") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Oman") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Pakistan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Papua New Guinea") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Peru") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Qatar") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Russia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Rwanda") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Saudi Arabia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sierra Leone") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Singapore") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Solomon Islands") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Somalia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sudan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"South Sudan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sri Lanka") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Suriname") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Swaziland") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Syria") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Tajikistan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Tanzania") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Thailand") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Togo") THEN 'NDEM'
```

```
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Tunisia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Turkmenistan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"United Arab Emirates") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Uganda") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Uzbekistan") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Venezuela") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Vietnam") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Yemen") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Zambia") THEN 'NDEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Zimbabwe") THEN 'NDEM'

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Albania") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Argentina") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Australia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Austria") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Belgium") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Benin") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bolivia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Botswana") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Brazil") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Bulgaria") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Canada") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cape Verde") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Chile") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Colombia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Comoros") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Costa Rica") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Croatia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Cyprus") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Czech Republic") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Denmark") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Dominican Republic") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Timor") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"El Salvador") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Estonia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Finland") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"France") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Georgia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Germany") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ghana") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Greece") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guatemala") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Guyana") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Honduras") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Hungary") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Indonesia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ireland") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Israel") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Italy") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Jamaica") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Japan") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kenya") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"South Korea") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Kosovo") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Latvia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Lebanon") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Lithuania") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Luxembourg") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Macedonia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mauritius") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mexico") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Moldova") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Mongolia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Montenegro") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Netherlands") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"New Zealand") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Nicaragua") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Norway") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Panama") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Paraguay") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Philippines") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Poland") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Portugal") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Romania") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Senegal") THEN 'DEM'
```

```

ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Serbia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Montenegro") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Slovakia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Slovenia") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"South Africa") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Spain") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Sweden") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Switzerland") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Trinidad") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Turkey") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Ukraine") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"United Kingdom") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"United States") THEN 'DEM'
ELSEIF CONTAINS([Country],"Uruguay") THEN 'DEM'

ELSE 'IGNORE'

END

```

### **1.3: Target Country =/ Source Country Filter**

The following code was applied within Tableau to all events to allow for easy distinction between events which were targeted inwards (i.e.: instances in which the source country was *also* the target country). This filter was applied because the concept of diversionary conflict (in the cadre of this thesis) revolved around *international* (not domestic) conflict. All conflicts which *were* targeted inwards were marked as SAME; all others were marked DIFFERENT.

```
IF [Country]=[Target Country] THEN 'SAME' ELSE 'DIFFERENT' END
```

### **1.4: ICEWS Variable Filter**

The following code was applied within Tableau to create the THREAT, REJECT, DEMAND, ACCUSE & CONV variables out of ICEWS CAMEO codes as outlined in Table 2.

```

IF [CAMEO Code]=1246 THEN 'CONV'

ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=190 THEN 'CONV'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=192 THEN 'CONV'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=193 THEN 'CONV'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=194 THEN 'CONV'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=195 THEN 'CONV'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1951 THEN 'CONV'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1952 THEN 'CONV'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=196 THEN 'CONV'

ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=111 THEN 'ACCUSE'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1123 THEN 'ACCUSE'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1122 THEN 'ACCUSE'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1124 THEN 'ACCUSE'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=113 THEN 'ACCUSE'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=112 THEN 'ACCUSE'

ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1212 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1211 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1214 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1221 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1222 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1244 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=128 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=129 THEN 'REJECT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=120 THEN 'REJECT'

ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=131 THEN 'THREAT'
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1312 THEN 'THREAT'

```

```
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1313 THEN 'THREAT'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=134 THEN 'THREAT'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1382 THEN 'THREAT'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1384 THEN 'THREAT'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=139 THEN 'THREAT'  
  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=100 THEN 'DEMAND'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1012 THEN 'DEMAND'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1011 THEN 'DEMAND'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=1014 THEN 'DEMAND'  
ELSEIF [CAMEO Code]=102 THEN 'DEMAND'  
  
ELSE 'IGNORE'  
  
END
```