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Voting in the absence of ethical restraint: Decoys and dissonance in the United Nations

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Abstract

We investigate whether UN General Assembly voting reflects different ethical standards of political behavior in democracies and autocracies. Predictions are derived from a model in which autocratic regimes use logrolling to block censure resolutions against themselves and also vote expressively to deflect criticism to a decoy. Democracies vote self-interestedly but are sensitive to dissonance between accusations and evidence. The empirical application of the model provides support for the hypothesis that domestic ethical standards are reflected in governments' UN voting behavior. However, ethical voting by democracies is enhanced when dissonance between accusations and evidence is publicized in the media.

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1. Introduction

Ethical standards of truth in accusations differ with political institutions. In autocracies there is less regard for truth in accusations than in democracies. The local media in autocracies are in general not independent of ruling elites, and with the judiciary also not independent, false accusations are a means of repression of political opposition. The false accusations and repression are part of characteristically observed patterns of disregard for the rule of law (Hillman, 2004; Dixit, 2004; North, Wallis, and Weingast, 2009). The United Nations General Assembly brings together in the one voting forum governments with measurable differences in political institutions. There is no requisite that UN resolutions satisfy ethical criteria of truth in accusations. Do democracies and autocracies vote differently when confronting dissonance between truth and accusations in UN resolutions?

Before proceeding to answer this question, in section 2 we review the evidence on political institutions and ethical standards. With democracies more ethical and in particular choosing governments through political competition and having no need for repression, we set out in section 3 a model of UN voting that predicts differences in ethical standards of voting by democratic and autocratic government. Utility-maximizing autocratic governments are shown to have incentives to form a logrolling coalition that has the dual purpose of preempting resolutions critical of a coalition member's domestic policies and deflecting accusatory resolutions to a decoy. Democracies may have an interest in joining in the deflective accusatory voting but can be deterred by high dissonance between truth and accusations in a UN resolution and in particular media attention that publicizes the dissonance.

Section 4 describes the empirical specification of the model. Section 5 links the model to voting patterns in the UN General Assembly and presents empirical results on representative benchmark UN resolutions against the decoy. Section 6 applies the model to voting on a UN resolution for which high dissonance between accusations and truth was publicized and criticized

in the western media. Section 7 reports empirical results on voting on a UN resolution with high dissonance between truth and accusations that did not receive significant attention in the western media. Section 8 reports robustness tests. The empirical results confirm the predictions of the model. In the votes on the benchmark resolutions, there was no difference in behavior of democracies and autocracies. In the case of publicized high dissonance between truth and accusations, voting reflected domestic ethical standards associated with domestic political institutions. When dissonance between truth and accusations was high without media attention, democracies and autocracies again voted differently but democracies were more likely to abstain than to vote in support of the decoy.

2. Political institutions and ethical standards

Although our model and hypotheses concern ethical standards in political behavior, we have no direct measure of ethical standards in democracies and autocracies. We shall associate the degree of democracy or autocracy in a country's political institutions with politicians' ethical standards. The evidence supports such an association. In democracies, decisions and actions of governments are subject to judicial processes, media review, and the rule of law. Autocrats rule by arbitrary personal discretion, providing scope for truth to be displaced for political benefit by "public lies" (Kuran, 1995). The public lies and false accusations can be used as means of repression of opposition to the regime. Ethical standards in autocracies are low in other ways. Governments in autocracies are often corrupt, offer limited economic freedom, and are exploitative of labor. Policies and public finance are used for privileged benefit. Standards of education and health for the general population (not to the elites) are low. There is less care for the environment in autocracies. Absence of ethical restraint in autocracies can result in the "strong" using force to exploit and control the "weak"; women, being usually physically weaker than men, may be unwilling tools of servitude and service. Ethical standards are reflected in evidence that foreign aid intended for the

poor is appropriated by ruling elites and government officials. AIDS medications provided as aid or at concessionary prices to governments and intended for the ill among their populations are re-exported to high-income markets. At a lower level of social significance, but reflective of overall ethical standards, is evidence that UN representatives of autocratic regimes ignore parking restrictions and do not pay parking fines.[1]

3. A model of UN voting

In a model of UN voting, we define as unethical behavior as voting in support of false accusations and we associate the degree of autocracy in a country with the degree of repression that the autocratic ruler and elites require for regime security.

3.1 Autocratic behavior without UN censure

We consider n discretely measured UN members on a continuum $(\underline{\theta}, \overline{\theta})$ from maximal autocracy to maximal democracy. Country i exogenously located at $\theta_i \in (\underline{\theta}, \overline{\theta})$.[2] The government of country i chooses a level of repression $R(\theta_i) \in (0, \overline{R})$ for regime security to maximize:

[1] For perspectives on the relation between institutions and economic outcomes, see Helpman (2008). Evidence on the relation between democracy and economic freedom is provided by De Haan and Sturm (2003). On income and democracy, see Acemoglu et al. (2008) and Gundlach and Paldam (2009). Rodrik and Wacziarg (2005) provide evidence that democratization is beneficial for economic growth. Rodrik (1999) shows that democracies pay higher wages and Kim and Ghandi (2010) find consistently that workers in autocracies are exploited. On education in autocracies, see Hillman and Jenkner (2004), Stasavage (2005), and Castelló-Climent (2008); on life expectancy and health, see Besley and Kadumatsu (2006) and Klomp and De Haan (2008). For the evidence that democracies are more caring of the environment, see Congleton (1992) and Farzin and Bond (2006). Unethical relations between strong and weak are described in Hillman (2004); Di Tommaso et al. (2009) describe consequences for women. On economic development and effectiveness of foreign aid, see Easterly (2001) and Doucouliagos and Paldam (2008). On corruption in autocracies, see for example Becker et al. (2009) and Kahana and Liu (2010). On autocratic rulers' disincentives for economic development, see Hillman (2007). The use of repression in autocracies is often associated with common ethnic and tribal identity of opposition groups: see Easterly and Levine (1997). Fisman and Miguel (2007) report on parking fines.

[2] We specify here a continuum for the measure of democracy. In our empirical estimates, we use discrete measures; one measure is dichotomous and the other differentiates several levels of democracy and autocracy.

$$U(R(\theta_i)) = B_i(R(\theta_i)) - C_i(R(\theta_i), Y_i)\,. \qquad (1)$$

The costs C_i of repression increase with the level of repression through resources required by the "secret police" and armed forces, which are used for suppression of civilian populations. Y_i indicates exogenous influences on the cost of repression, for example, the terrain, ethnic fractionalization, and tribal loyalties. The functions in (1) are concave and the level of repression is chosen according to:

$$R(\theta_i)\left[\frac{\partial B_i(R(\theta_i))}{\partial R(\theta_i)} - \frac{\partial C_i(R(\theta_i), Y_i)}{\partial R(\theta_i)}\right] = 0, \quad i = 1, .., n\,. \qquad (2)$$

The condition (2) partitions governments into those that are not repressive and those use repression for regime security. For m governments with sufficiently autocratic institutions:

$$R(\theta_i) > 0, \quad \left[\frac{\partial B_i(R(\theta_i))}{\partial R(\theta_i)} - \frac{\partial C_i(R(\theta_i), Y_i)}{\partial R(\theta_i)}\right] = 0, \quad i = 1, ..., m\,. \qquad (3)$$

The remaining *(m-n)* countries:

$$R(\theta_i) = 0, \quad \left[\frac{\partial B_i(R(\theta_i))}{\partial R(\theta_i)} - \frac{\partial C_i(R(\theta_i), Y_i)}{\partial R(\theta_i)}\right] < 0, \quad i = 1, ..., n - m. \qquad (4)$$

We now set aside the *(n-m)* governments of countries in (4) are not repressive and consider the m repressive governments in (3). Utility-maximizing levels of repression for the m governments in (4) are, from the most to the least repressive government:[3]

$$R^*(\theta_1) > R^*(\theta_2) > ..... > R^*(\theta_m) > 0\,. \qquad (5)$$

3.2 Disutility from censure

The levels of repression in (5) are chosen without external constraint on the behavior of repressive governments. External restraint is introduced by the disutility of UN censure resolutions.

A censure resolution reduces a repressive ruler's expressive utility. We view expressive utility as derived from confirmation of a chosen sought

[3] The exogenous variables Y_i in (1) can result in repression not perfectly correlated with the measure of democracy.

identity. Repressive rulers seek to confirm the identity to other governments and to themselves of bring benevolent and "loved by the people". A UN resolution censuring a ruler for repression publicizes the contradiction between actual repressive behavior and the sought identity.[4]

Votes on resolutions censuring repressive behavior of governments take place independently for each censured country. We denote expressive disutility of a government *i* from a censure resolution by Λ_i.

The disutility Λ_i increases with the number of other governments V_i that support the censure resolution against government *i*. V_i increases with the level of repression that government *i* chooses.

The inclusion of expressive disutility from a censure resolution results in the utility function:

$$U(R(\theta_i)) = U_j(B(R(\theta_i)) - C_i(R(\theta_i), Y_i) - \Lambda_i(V_i(R(\theta_i)). \quad (6)$$

With repression evoking a censure resolution, the *m* governments indicated in (4) and (5) re-evaluate the benefits and costs of repressive policies and maximize (6), which results in:

$$R(\theta_i) = 0, \left[\frac{\partial B_i(R(\theta_i))}{\partial R(\theta_i)} - \frac{\partial C_i(R(\theta_i), Y_i)}{\partial R(\theta_i)} - \frac{\partial \Lambda_i(V_i(R(\theta_i))}{\partial V_i} \frac{\partial V_i(R(\theta_i))}{\partial R(\theta_i))} \right] < 0, \; i = 1,..m. \quad (7)$$

UN censure resolutions reduce repression. With repression determined by (7), *k* governments that chose positive repression in (3) choose zero repression and the remaining *(m-k)* governments choose lower levels of repression in (5).

Direct and indirect costs are imposed on repressive governments by the censure resolutions. The direct cost is the expressive disutility of being the subject of a censure resolution. The indirect cost is reduced regime security because of reduced repression. A censure resolution therefore results in lower benefits B_i and lower expressive utility Λ_i. We denote the total utility loss from a censure resolution for government i by $L(\theta_i)$. From a welfare

[4] On expressive behaviour, see Brennan and Hamlin (2000), Hillman (2010).

perspective, reduced repression as desirable and we therefore identify a social benefit of censure resolutions:

3.3 Deflective voting

The utility function of repressive governments has one further component. Repressive rulers benefit expressively from the opportunity to vote to censure other rulers or governments. Governments participate in voting on UN resolutions because of the expressive utility from deflection of criticism. By voting to support censure resolutions against others, an autocratic ruler deflects attention from his or her repressive behavior by showing "they and not we are repressive".

We denote by Ψ_{ij} the expressive utility of government i from deflective voting in support of a resolution against government j. Ψ_{ij} is independent of dissonance between accusations and truth in a censure resolution. Credibility is imparted by larger numbers of supporters of a censure resolution. An increase in the number S_{ij} of other countries that join government i in a censure resolution against government j therefore increases Ψ_{ij}.[5]

The expressive utility from deflective voting against others completes the utility function as:

$$U(R(\theta_i)) = U_j(B(R(\theta_i)) - C_i(R(\theta_i), Y_i) - \Lambda_i(V_i(R(\theta_i)) + \Psi_{ij}(S_{ij}(R(\theta_j)). \qquad (8)$$

Utilities in (8) are interdependent through two types of votes that do not take place simultaneously. By voting to censure each another in independent votes, autocratic governments benefit expressively but mutually impose costs on one other.

Government i incurs the loss L_i when its behavior is criticized in a censure resolution and gains Ψ_{ij} from the opportunity to participate in censuring another government j. We propose that, for government i, in voting on the *(n-m-k-1)* resolutions censuring other repressive governments:

[5] If all censure resolutions are supported by all governments other than the government that is the object of censure, in the equilibrium for each censure resolution V_i and S_{ij} are equal.

$$L_i > \sum_{j=1}^{n-m-k-1} \Psi_{ij} \,. \qquad (10)$$

It follows from (10) that:

Proposition 1

Repressive governments prefer that there be censure resolutions against all repressive governments other than themselves but, if they are themselves to be censured, they prefer that there be no censure resolutions at all.

3.4 Logrolling

Proposition 1 implies that repressive governments gain from a logrolling agreement amongst themselves that blocks all censure resolutions.[6] When freed by a majority logrolling coalition from the disutility of censure resolutions, all repressive governments return to maximizing utility under the conditions of (1) without external restraint.[7]

The logrolling agreement is socially disadvantageous.

Proposition 1

A logrolling agreement allows governments to be more repressive.

3.5 A decoy

The benefit from the logrolling coalition is at the cost of expressive utility lost from deflective voting against other repressive governments. The expressive utility from deflection is restored by use of a decoy.[8] The purpose of the decoy is to attract all criticism for unethical behavior.

We shall not consider the disutility of the country that is designated as the decoy. Choice of a decoy is subject to distinctive criteria. Choice of a

[6] On parallel incentives for cooperation, see also Heller and Sieberg (2010) on "honor among thieves".

[7] No censure vote will ever be proposed against a member of the logrolling coalition, if the coalition is decisive in determining subcommittee decisions that set the General Assembly voting agenda. Fasulo (2004) describes the different UN collective decision-making bodies.

[8] Deflecting attention to the decoy distracts attention from those placing the decoy. In the context of ducks, the decoy is placed by the ducks themselves. The case here differs from that in which a decoy results in preference reversals. On the latter decoys in voting, see Herne (1997).

democracy as a decoy disassociates autocracy from repression. The decoy, although a democracy, is ideally not necessarily supported by other democracies and is not part of a grouping of countries with commonality of religion or language. A decoy should ideally face persistent threats allows acts of self-defense that can be deflectively redefined by majority voting as acts of aggression or repression.

We summarize regarding voting behavior of autocratic regimes:

Prediction 1:

Autocratic regimes will form a logrolling coalition with the dual purpose of blocking censure votes against themselves and deflecting criticism to a decoy.

3.6 UN voting by democracies

For geopolitical reasons, it may be in the national interest of a democracy to vote together with the predicted autocratic coalition. Voters in democracies may, however, be ethically sensitive to dissonance between accusations and truth. Public opinion can therefore deter governments in democracies from voting with the autocratic coalition. For public opinion to influence on UN voting, voters need to be informed regarding a deflective UN resolution. UN resolutions are however usually not publicized in the media.

Public opinion is not predicted on true information if voters "believe what they want to believe" and choose beliefs to maximize utility (Caplan, 2007). Similarly, the media may not inform by providing objective "news" but may be biased in reporting, because of profit-maximizing incentives to cater to the preconceptions of the audience (Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2005). The preconceptions can reflect personal identity as liberal or conservative or supporting one side or the other in conflicts. "Minimal morals" (Kirchgässner, 2010) in democracies can nonetheless make voters sensitive to exaggerated dissonance between truth and accusations. Voters may also fear that they themselves can be disadvantaged by opportunistically exaggerated unwarranted accusations. The media influences political decisions and may

reflect the moral stance of voters.[9] The probability that a democratic government will join in deflective voting against a decoy thus depends on influences specific to the government or country and to the resolution on which a vote takes place.

We denote by $\chi_r \geq 0$ a measure of dissonance between truth and accusations for UN resolution r and denote the saliency of χ_r by $S_r(\chi_r) \geq 0$. Saliency is greater, the more media attention a UN resolution receives.

How the government of a democracy votes also depends on public opinion through a measure of the extent of sympathy Ω_i among the country's population for the decoy – or, if not sympathy, dislike of the decoy. If $\Omega_i > 0$, sympathy provides an incentive for a government to support the decoy; if $\Omega_i < 0$ there is conversely an incentive to vote against the decoy.

The voting decision also depends on a measure of the national interest Φ_{ri} perceived by government i in showing solidarity by voting with authoritarian regimes on resolution r. The national interest can for example be predicated on natural-resource supply or post-colonial commercial ties.

The probability P_{ri} that a democratic government i will refrain from joining the authoritarian coalition in voting for a resolution r is therefore:

$$0 \leq P_{ri} = P_{ri}(\chi_r, S_r(\chi_r), \Omega_i, \Phi_{ri}) \leq 1 \tag{11}$$

where

$$\frac{\partial P_{ri}}{\partial \chi_s} > 0, \frac{\partial P_{ri}}{\partial S_s}\frac{\partial S_r}{\partial \chi_r} > 0, \ , \frac{\partial P_{ri}}{\partial \Omega_i} \geq 0, \frac{\partial P_{ri}}{\partial \Phi_{ri}} < 0 \qquad . \tag{12}$$

The data will reveal how a government votes on a resolution. However, we propose three predictions based on the probability function (11) and characteristics in (12).

[9] On the media and public polices, see Strömberg (2001). Strömberg (2004) provides evidence showing that, because of the expectation of greater political support, voters with whom political decision makers could more readily communicate received greater benefits from public spending from the U.S. government's "New Deal" policies.

Case A: Prediction 2a

With no media attention given to a resolution that is perfunctory through repetition over time, governments of democracies participate in deflective decoy voting because of Φ_s *and* $\Omega_{i,}$.

Case A provides a benchmark case in which we expect minimal support for the decoy.

Case B: Prediction 2b

With $\chi_s > 0$ *high, and with* $S_s(\chi_s)$ *high because of media attention, the likelihood increases relative to prediction 2a that governments of democracies will vote in support of the decoy.*

Case B results in maximal support for the decoy. Case B is predicated on sufficient media attention and, because UN resolutions are in general not subject to media attention, a special case is required.

Case C: Prediction 2c

With $\chi_s > 0$ *sufficiently high but* $S_s(\chi_s)$ *low because of lack of media attention, governments of democracies signal their moral dilemma by abstaining rather than supporting the decoy.*

4. The empirical specification

To test our hypotheses empirically, we define the variable "Vote" for the voting behavior on a resolution in the UN General Assembly, with three possible outcomes: 0 for a country voted in favor of the resolution, 1 for a country that abstained, and 2 for a country voted against the resolution. The variable "Vote" has an ordered structure and we therefore employ the ordered probit model as an estimator. Abstentions are an option between

voting in favor and against a resolution in our base-line model.[10] To measure democracy, we use the Chief Executive component of the POLITY IV index[11] and also the Cheibub et al. (2010) Democracy and Dictatorship (DD) measure of political regimes, which distinguishes regimes according to whether executive and legislative offices are filled through contested elections. The POLITY IV index distinguished seven levels from most autocratic to most democratic institutions. The DD measure is dichotomous and takes on the value one for democracies and zero otherwise.[12]

The base-line ordered probit model has the form:[13]

$$Vote_i = \alpha + \beta Democracy_i + z_i Z_i + u_i , \qquad i = 1,...,192 \tag{8}$$

$Vote_{ij}$ is the voting behavior of country I on resolution j. $Democracy_i$ is the democracy measure. Z_i is a vector of controls that may contribute to explaining how countries vote.

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the explanatory variables. The control variables take us outside our model but are included to preempt concerns about omitted variables bias in the empirical estimations. Real GDP per capita accounts for the possibility that ethical behavior is related to democracy independently of a country's income. A set of regional dummy variables allows a test of whether ethical voting is influenced by the voting of

[10] For a discussion on how to treat abstentions in UNGA voting see, for example, Boockmann and Dreher (2011).

[11] Democracy and its converse autocracy have been measured using the Freedom House and the POLITY IV indices but these measures have been criticized on several grounds (Munk and Verkuilen 2002, Vreeland 2008, Cheibub et al. 2010). The POLITY IV index is useful because of the components of the dataset (Cheibub et al., 2010, p. 76. The five components of the POLITY index are XCONST (Constraints on chief executive), XRCOMP (Competiveness of executive recruitment), XROPEN (Openness of executive recruitment), PARCOMP (Competiveness of political participation), and PAREG (Regulation of political participation). Cheibub et al. (2010) describe the Chief Executive variable as providing "useful information about whether the chief executive has unlimited authority, whether there is a legislature with slight or moderate ability to check the power of the executive, whether the legislature has substantial ability to check the executive, or whether the executive has parity with or is subordinate to the legislature".

[12] See Cheibub et al. (2010) for an encompassing discussion on classifying democracies and dictatorships.

[13] In our estimates we use the data on regime characteristics for the year 2007. There appears to have been little change in political institutions in countries in the two years before the Goldstone vote.

neighboring countries.[14] We distinguish countries according to different legal origins[15] with French as the reference category, and include OECD and Warsaw Pact dummy variables;[16] and we include Muslim religion and corruption for robustness tests.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Source
Vote (Goldstone – A/RES/64/L.11)	176	0.455	0.675	0	2	United Nations Own calculations
Vote (A/RES/64/185)	180	0.13	0.45	0	2	United Nations Own calculations
Vote (A/RES/64/92)	178	0.09	0.39	0	2	United Nations Own calculations
Vote (A/RES/64/94)	176	0.13	0.47	0	2	United Nations Own calculations
Vote (A/RES/64/95)	178	0.07	0.28	0	2	United Nations Own calculations
Vote (A/RES/64/91)	175	0.53	0.60	0	2	United Nations Own calculations
POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	154	4.91	2.06	1	7	Marshall and Jaggers (2006)
Democracy-Dictatorship	191	0.60	0.49	0	1	Cheibub et al. (2010)
GDP per capita (real)	177	13636.65	15679.55	408.71	104707.50	Penn World Tables 6.3 Summers and Heston (1991)
Africa	192	0.28	0.45	0	1	Own Calculation
Asia	192	0.24	0.43	0	1	Own Calculation
America	192	0.18	0.39	0	1	Own Calculation
Oceania	192	0.07	0.26	0	1	Own Calculation
Europe	192	0.22	0.42	0	1	Own Calculation
OECD	192	0.16	0.36	0	1	Own Calculation
Warsaw Pact	192	0.12	0.33	0	1	Own Calculation
Legal Origin (British)	185	0.34	0.47	0	1	La Porta et al. (1999)
Legal Origin (German)	185	0.03	0.16	0	1	La Porta et al. (1999)
Legal Origin (French)	185	0.43	0.50	0	1	La Porta et al. (1999)
Legal Origin (Scandinavian)	185	0.03	0.16	0	1	La Porta et al. (1999)
Legal Origin (Socialist)	185	0.18	0.39	0	1	La Porta et al. (1999)
Muslim	192	23.65	36.15	0	100	Alesina et al. (2003)
Oil Exporter	192	0.08	0.26	0	1	Easterly and Sawedeh (2001)
Control of corruption	172	3.98	2.09	1.4	9.4	Transparency International (2010)

[14] We distinguish Africa, Asia, Europe, America and Oceania and to avoid multicollinearity between the regional dummies one of the region dummies, with Europe as the reference category.
[15] See La Porta et al. (1999).
[16] See also Boockmann and Dreher (2011).

5. Logrolling and deflective decoy voting in the UN

Our model predicts an autocratic logrolling coalition that preempts votes critical of repressive governments and votes to deflect attention to a deflective decoy. Patterns of UN voting reveal autocratic logrolling coalition and identify the decoy (Kim and Russett, 1996; Dreher and Jensen, 2009; Potrafke, 2009). Table 2 shows representative votes against the decoy. Senior UN officials have expressed wonderment about the "disproportionate focus" on the decoy "given the range and scope of allegations of human rights violations throughout the world".[17] Voting against the decoy in our model is dispassionate utility-maximizing deflective-decoy behavior by repressive governments.

Table 2: UN deflective voting against the decoy

UN vote	Against	Abstain	In favour	Not voting	Subject
A/RES/64/185 20091221	8	7	165	12	Limitations on Israel's borders and sovereignty
A/RES/64/92 20091210	6	4	168	14	Applicability of the Geneva Convention
A/RES/64/94 20091210	9	5	162	16	Practices by Israel affecting human rights
A/RES/64/95 20091210	1	11	166	14	Sovereignty by Israel over the Golan Heights

Source: United Nations

[17] See http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kyle-shamberg/the-objective-un-human-ri_b_776088.html.

The decoy role has been described in the following terms:

> *"What takes place .. more closely resembles a mugging than either a political debate or an attempt at problem-solving. Israel is caste as the villain in [a] melodrama .. that features .. many attackers and a great deal of verbal violence .. The goal is isolation and humiliation of the victim..*[18]

A democracy has reason to fear that it might become a decoy:

> *"… The attackers, encountering no obstacles, grow bolder, while other nations become progressively more reluctant to associate themselves with the accused, out of fear that they themselves will become the target of bloc hostility."*[19]

Exceptional circumstances can break autocratic logrolling solidarity. An example is Darfur. The case of Darfur however also substantiates the deflective role of the decoy. With deaths of an estimated half a million people, the displacement 2.5 million people, and mass rapes, the perpetrating government Sudan was the object of 7 UN censure resolutions. Over the same period, the decoy was the object of 30 resolutions.

The autocratic coalition is stable in voting against the decoy. We use the UN votes in Table 2 as our benchmark case A.[20] Our prediction is that there is no significant difference based on political institutions in voting on the resolutions in Table 2. The resolutions are perfunctory and not publicized in the western media. Democracies therefore incur little loss of expressive utility through their association with the autocratic coalition.

Table 3 shows regression results for the four resolutions in Table 2. Political institutions do not matter in explaining voting outcomes when only

[18] Jean Kirkpatrick, U.S. representative to the United Nations, in 1983, quoted by Rosen (2010).
[19] Ibid.
[20] The resolutions are UN votes taken in 2009 but tend to be repeated over time. The majority vote against the decoy was stable in these votes at between 84 and 87 percent.

democracy explanatory variables are included, and also when income and other controls are added to the estimations. [21]

Table 3. Regression Results.
Ordered Probit, robust standard errors.
Dependent variable: UNGA Votes on resolutions A/RES/64/185, A/RES/64/92, A/RES/64/94, A/RES/64/95.

	Resolution	A/RES/64/185 20091221		A/RES/64/92 20091210		A/RES/64/94 20091210		A/RES/64/95 20091210	
	Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Only democracy variable included	POLITY IV	0.1065 [1.12]		-0.0223 [0.21]		0.0823 [0.92]		-0.007 [0.07]	
	Democracy-Dictatorship		0.4241 [1.57]		0.2694 [0.88]		0.4954* [1.70]		0.13 [0.44]
GDP included	POLITY IV	0.0711 [0.79]		-0.0584 [0.64]		0.0627 [0.74]		-0.0363 [0.41]	
	Democracy-Dictatorship		0.2285 [0.81]		0.1244 [0.40]		0.3997 [1.36]		0.0089 [0.03]
Full model	POLITY IV	0.0002 [0.00]		-0.0924 [0.59]		-0.0188 [0.16]		-0.0516 [0.35]	
	Democracy-Dictatorship		0.2525 [0.58]		0.2497 [0.56]		0.361 [0.89]		0.0854 [0.18]

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10%

6. The UN Goldstone resolution

Case B requires a highly publicized issue with extreme and widely acknowledged dissonance between truth and accusations. We find such a case in the UN General Assembly vote on the Goldstone Report.[22]

6.1 Background to the Goldstone Report

[21] Table 3 reports the coefficient estimates. We have also calculated marginal effects.
[22] For the Goldstone Report, see http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/specialsession/9/docs/UNFFMGC_Report.pdf and http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/specialsession/9/FactFindingMission.htm

The Goldstone Report was commissioned by the UN Council of Human Rights following the incursion into Hamas-controlled Gaza by the armed forces of Israel beginning in late December 2008 and continuing in early 2009. Israel had withdrawn from Gaza in 2005. Some 8,000 Jewish residents were compelled to leave their homes, which were subsequently destroyed by the Gaza government. Although the justification for the withdrawal was the perception of "land for peace", the consequence was an ongoing rain of rockets from Gaza onto Israeli civilians. The government of Israel did not react immediately to the toll of casualties from the rockets.[23] Then, because of impending elections, government policy changed and the Gaza operation took place.[24] A committee headed by a South African judge, Richard Goldstone, was set up in May 2009 to report on the Gaza incursion and the report of the Committee was presented in September 2009. The Goldstone Report did not acknowledge the right of the government of Israel to act in self-defense of its citizens and made unsubstantiated accusations of purposeful and wanton destruction and targeting of civilians. The UN General Assembly vote on acceptance of the Goldstone Report took place on November 5 2009.

6.2 The Goldstone Report in the media

Prior to the UN vote, the Goldstone Report was extensively discussed in the media in western countries and was widely acknowledged as untrue in its reporting and unjust in its interpretations and recommendations. The editorial position and reporting in the UK newspaper, The Guardian, are not generally sympathetic to Israel. We therefore present a representative sample

[23] Center-left governments in Israel, such as the then-government, are more expressively concerned about international public opinion than center-right governments, which tend to be more concerned with public safety and security of citizens.

[24] With elections due, the government had no choice, because of expected adverse electoral consequences, other than to take action to stop the bombardment – but in any event, the government lost the election.

of media criticism of the Goldstone Report from the Guardian. An article describing the Goldstone Report as a "moral atrocity" proceeds:[25]

> *It was to be expected that the usual suspects of the risible UN human rights council would be eager to condemn Israel for war crimes in defending itself against Hamas ... Go through the practices of all 25 states voting to refer Israel to the security council for the Gaza war, and you have to acknowledge they know a lot about the abuse of humans. Anything to divert attention from their own atrocities.*
>
> *Of course, here the fig leaf for being scared of dictators, especially oil-rich abusers, is the report by the South African judge Richard Goldstone. The terms of reference he accepted validate the torment of Israeli civilians. Hamas launched 7,000 rockets – every one intended to kill as many people as possible – then contemptuously dismissed repeated warnings from Israel to stop or face the consequences. .. The rockets were war crimes and ought to have been universally condemned as such.*
>
> *.. Hamas compounded its original war crime with another. It held its own people hostage. It used them as human shields. It regarded every (accidental) death as another bullet in the propaganda war. The Goldstone report won the gold standard of moral equivalence between the killer and the victim.*

Media reporting such as in the case of the Goldstone Report can influence how governments voted.[26]

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[25] Harold Evans, The Guardian, 20 October 2009: http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/oct/20/israel-goldstone-palestine-gaza-un.

[26] See also: War unchecked: The U.N.'s Goldstone commission missed a chance to promote accountability on 21st-century battlefields, The Washington Post, November 15, 2009: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/11/14/AR2009111402279_pf.html;

6.3 The UN vote on the Goldstone Report

Table 4 shows the UN vote on the Goldstone Report.[27] In comparison to the votes in Table 1, many more governments opposed the resolution or abstained.

Table 4: The UN vote on the Goldstone Report

	Against	Abstain	In favour	Not voting	Subject
A/64/L.11 20091105	18	44	114	16	Condemnation of Israel for military incursion into Gaza

Source: United Nations

6.4 Estimation results

Table 5 shows the regression results for an ordered probit model with robust standard errors. The dependent variable is coded such that a vote in favor of the Goldstone Report takes the lowest and a vote against the Goldstone Report the highest value. Positive coefficients on the explanatory variables thus indicate a vote against the Goldstone Report. Columns (1) and (2) show results without control variables. We present the base-line results to show that the inferences are not driven by potential collinearity problems because democracy is correlated with variables such as real GDP per capita. Columns (3) and (4) include the log of real GDP per capita as an economic control variable. Log GDP per capita has the expected positive sign and is statistically significant at the 1 percent level in columns (3) and (4), but is not statistically significant in columns (5) and (6) where the other control variables are

Ed Morgan, Goldstone report undermines faith in international law, The Toronto Star, October 22, 2009, http://www.thestar.com/comment/article/713921; Jeffrey White, Resistance and Rockets: Hamas Targeting of Israeli Civilians, February 25, 2010, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, http://washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=3179.

[27] The appendix lists votes of individual countries.

included. The results in columns (5) and (6) are based on reduced sample size because of a lack of data for all the control variables for all countries.

Table 5: Regression Results, Ordered Probit, robust standard errors

Dependent variable: UNGA votes on the resolution endorsing the Goldstone Report

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	0.2563***		0.2117***		0.0911	
	[4.05]		[3.32]		[1.16]	
Democracy-Dictatorship		1.1237***		0.8839***		0.7229**
		[5.52]		[4.07]		[2.50]
log GDP per capita			0.2987***	0.2343***	0.0528	0.0911
			[3.01]	[2.78]	[0.35]	[0.59]
Africa					-0.0074	0.3461
					[0.01]	[0.61]
Asia					-0.9629*	-0.7872*
					[1.95]	[1.70]
America					-0.0191	-0.1767
					[0.03]	[0.32]
Oceania					0.6629	1.7440**
					[0.99]	[2.45]
OECD					1.4839***	1.4264***
					[2.80]	[2.66]
Warsaw Pact					0.6533	0.6765
					[1.13]	[1.21]
Legal origin (British)					0.2528	0.1031
					[0.77]	[0.32]
Legal origin (German)					-0.0445	-0.066
					[0.07]	[0.11]
Legal origin (Scandinavian)					0.6868	0.7659
					[1.09]	[1.20]
Legal origin (Socialist)					-0.0977	-0.0906
					[0.25]	[0.31]
Observations	146	175	139	163	138	162
Pseudo R-squared	0.09	0.10	0.13	0.11	0.29	0.32

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

The control variables mostly display expected signs but often lack statistical significance. The Asia variable has a negative sign and is statistically significant at the 5 percent and 10 percent level in columns (5) and (6), indicating that Asian countries voted less ethically than European countries. The Oceania dummy variable has a positive sign and is statistically

significant at the 5 percent level in column (6); it is not statistically significant in column (5). Countries in Oceania voted more ethically than European countries. The other regional dummy variables lack statistical significance. The OECD dummy variable is statistically significant at the 1 percent level and indicates that OECD countries voted more ethically than non-OECD countries. The Warsaw Pact dummy variable and the legal origin variables are not statistically significant.

The coefficient of the Chief in Executive measure of democracy has a positive sign and is statistically significant at the 1 percent level in columns (1) and (3). The Democracy-Dictatorship variables in columns (2), (4) and (6) have positive signs and are statistically significant at the 1 percent level in columns (2) and (4) and at the 5 percent level in column (6). The higher measures on the democracy indices are associated with more ethical voting and conversely greater autocracy is associated with unethical voting.

6.5 Marginal effects

Table 6 shows marginal effects, which indicate the change in the probability of voting when the democracy indicators change. The results in column (1), first cell (only democracy variable included) show that when the Chief in Executive variable increases by one point (on a scale from 1 to 7), the probability of voting in favor of the Goldstone report decreases by about 8 percent; that is an entirely democratic country was about 48 percent more likely to vote against the Goldstone Report than an entirely autocratic country. Using the Democracy-Dictatorship dummy, the probability of a democracy voting in favor of the Goldstone Report is some 36 percent less than an autocracy.

Similarly, with income included, the results in column (1), third cell, show that when the Chief in Executive variable increases by one point (on a scale from 1 to 7), the probability of voting against the Goldstone Report increases by 6.7 percent; that is an entirely democratic country was about 40 percent more likely to vote against the Goldstone Report than an entirely

autocratic country. When the Democracy-Dictatorship dummy changes from Dictatorship to Democracy, the probability of voting against the Goldstone Report increases by around 28 percent.

Table 6: Marginal Effects, Ordered Probit

		(1)	(2)	(3)
	Variable	Country voted in favor of the resolution	Country abstained	Country voted against the resolution
Only democracy variable included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.083***	0.044***	0.040***
		[4.99]	[4.64]	[3.36]
	Democracy	-0.363***	0.181***	0.181***
		[7.01]	[6.74]	[3.92]
GDP included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.067***	0.036***	0.030***
		[3.82]	[3.51]	[2.98]
	Democracy	-0.280***	0.152***	0.128***
		[4.68]	[4.77]	[3.14]
Full model	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.022	0.013	0.010
		[1.13]	[1.14]	[1.10]
	Democracy	-0.167**	0.094***	0.073**
		[2.45]	[2.62]	[2.08]

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

The marginal effects for the full model (last row of Table 6) are somewhat smaller for the Democracy-Dictatorship measure but remain statistically significant at the 1 percent or 5 percent level. The marginal effects for the Chief in Executive variable in the last row of Table 6 are not statistically significant. The lack of data may well explain why the democracy-induced effects are weaker for the Chief in Executive variable than for the Democracy-Dictatorship variable.[28]

[28] The Chief in Executive variable is not available for Afghanistan, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominica, Finland, France, Grenada, Iraq, Kiribati, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, Marshall Islands,

The results in Table 6 show that the probability of voting against the Goldstone Report is considerably greater for democracies. Autocracies were more likely to support the Goldstone Report or abstain.

7. A vote on an accusation of human-rights violations

The four UN votes that we have taken as a benchmark for deflective decoy voting and voting on the much publicized and criticized Goldstone Report are the extreme cases for our hypotheses. We also tested our predictions on data from another 2009 UN vote not publicized in the media in which the decoy was accused of human rights violations. The UN voting outcome is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Vote on accusation of human-rights violations

UN vote	Against	Abstain	In favour	Not voting	Subject
A/RES/64/91 20091210	9	74	92	17	Work of the special committee to investigate Israel's human rights practices

Source: United Nations

The pattern of voting in Table 7 differs from the benchmark cases and from the Goldstone Report. The number of governments that voted in support of the decoy in the human-rights violation accusation in Table 7 is half of that of the Goldstone resolution. However, a large number of governments abstained.[29] Table 8 shows the regression results for the vote in Table 13. Both measures of democracy are statistically significant at the 1 percent level in columns (1) to (6).

Micronesia, Monaco, Nauru, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Somalia, Suriname, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

[29] The number of countries not voting is similar to that in the case of the Goldstone resolution.

Table 8. Regression Results.
Ordered Probit, robust standard errors.
Dependent variable: UNGA Votes on resolution 64/95 20091210.

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	0.3846***		0.3480***		0.2399***	
	[5.85]		[5.08]		[3.13]	
Democracy-Dictatorship		1.3078***		1.0785***		0.8231***
		[6.20]		[4.70]		[2.72]
log GDP per capita			0.4645***	0.3532***	0.2077	0.213
			[3.93]	[3.81]	[1.27]	[1.46]
Africa					-0.6843	-0.6537
					[1.33]	[1.26]
Asia					-0.6273	-0.8224**
					[1.51]	[2.06]
America					0.1287	-0.388
					[0.28]	[0.84]
Oceania					0.7662	1.6009***
					[1.12]	[2.72]
OECD					0.8873*	0.7376
					[1.82]	[1.59]
Warsaw Pact					0.1895	-0.1844
					[0.50]	[0.53]
Legal origin (British)					0.0314	-0.1763
					[0.09]	[0.58]
Legal origin (German)					0.1058	0.1714
					[0.27]	[0.49]
Legal origin (Scandinavian)					0.3361	0.539
					[0.72]	[1.29]
Legal origin (Socialist)					-0.0688	-0.2772
					[0.22]	[1.57]
Observations	143	174	137	163	136	162
Pseudo R-squared	0.19	0.14	0.27	0.18	0.35	0.33

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%

Table 9 shows the marginal effects. The democracy measures are significant at the 1 percent level whether a government participated in voting against the decoy, abstained, or voted in support of the decoy. The results in column (1), first cell (only democracy variable included), show that when the Chief in Executive variable increases by one point (on a scale from 1 to 7), the probability of voting in favor of the resolution decreases by about 12 percent; therefore an entirely democratic country was about 72 percent more likely to vote against the resolution censuring the decoy than an entirely autocratic country. Using the Democracy-Dictatorship dichotomous measure, the probability of a democracy voting in favor of the censure resolution is some 43 percent less than an autocracy.

Similarly, with income included, the results in column (1), third cell show that when the Chief in Executive variable increases by one point (on a scale from 1 to 7), the probability of voting against the resolution increases by 10 percent; that is, an entirely democratic country was about 60 percent more likely to vote against the resolution than an entirely autocratic country. With the Democracy-Dictatorship dichotomous measure, the probability of a democracy voting against the resolution increases by around 34 percent.

The marginal effects for the full model (last row of Table 9) are somewhat smaller for both democracy measures but remain statistically significant at the 1 percent or 5 percent level.

Table 9: Marginal Effects. Ordered Probit.
UNGA Votes on resolution 64/95 20091210.

		(1)	(2)	(3)
	Variable	Country voted in favor of the resolution	Country abstained	Country voted against the resolution
Only democracy variable included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.117***	0.091***	0.026**
		[10.56]	[8.33]	[2.53]
	Democracy	-0.430***	0.304***	0.126***
		[9.69]	[8.29]	[3.22]
GDP included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.100***	0.074***	0.022***
		[7.65]	[6.51]	[2.61]
	Democracy	-0.337***	0.253***	0.084***
		[5.93]	[5.76]	[2.69]
Full model	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.058***	0.044***	0.015**
		[3.27]	[3.38]	[2.14]
	Democracy	-0.210***	0.153***	0.055**
		[2.73]	[2.83]	[2.09]

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%

In the Goldstone vote, democracy made governments more likely to vote against the resolution but being a democracy made a government less likely to abstain. For the resolution accusing the decoy of violating human rights, democracies are more likely than autocracies to vote against the

resolution but also more likely to abstain. The increased likelihood of democracies abstaining is greater the increased likelihood of democracies voting against the resolution and the differences are large.[30]

8. Robustness tests

The robustness of the results on the Goldstone vote was checked in several ways. First, we treated abstentions as votes against the Goldstone report and estimated a common probit model with robust standard errors.[31] The Scandinavian legal origin dummy variable was excluded from these regressions because no country with Scandinavian legal origin voted in favor of the resolution. The results in Tables 10 and 11 reveal that inferences regarding the influence of the democracy variables remain unchanged. In Table 10, the Chief in Executive variable is statistically significant at the 1 percent level in columns (1) and (3) but lacks statistical significance in column (5). The Democracy-Dictatorship dummy is statistically significant at the 1 percent level in columns (2) and (4) and at the 10 percent level in column (6).

[30] Based on the Constraints-on-Chief Executive measure, when democracy alone was included as the explanatory variable, moving from the most autocratic to the more democratic country, democracies were 15.6 percent more likely to vote against the resolution than autocracies, as against 54 percent more likely to abstain. The respective differences when with income included and in the full model with all controls are 13 percent for voting against and 44 percent for abstaining, and 9 percent for voting against and 26 percent for abstaining. Using the democracy-dictatorship dichotomous measure, democracies were 12.6 more likely to vote against but 30 percent more likely to abstain when only democracy is included; with income included, democracies are 8 percent more likely to vote against and 25 percent more likely to abstain; for the full model with all controls, the values are 5.5 percent and 15 percent.

[31] The dependent variable takes on the value zero when a country voted in favor of the Goldstone report and the value one when the country abstained or voted against the Goldstone report.

Table 10. Regression Results. Probit, robust standard errors
Dependent variable: UNGA Votes on resolution endorsing the Goldstone Report.
Abstentions and votes against grouped together

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	0.2563***		0.2117***		0.1075	
	[4.05]		[3.32]		[1.40]	
Democracy-Dictatorship		1.1237***		0.8839***		0.6202*
		[5.52]		[4.07]		[1.95]
log GDP per capita			0.2716**	0.2362**	0.0426	0.0981
			[2.47]	[2.44]	[0.27]	[0.61]
Africa					-0.323	0.1081
					[0.55]	[0.19]
Asia					-1.2748**	-1.0743**
					[2.44]	[2.20]
America					-0.5642	-0.5873
					[1.08]	[1.16]
Oceania					0.877	1.9477**
					[0.98]	[2.35]
OECD					1.1796**	1.3836***
					[2.33]	[2.70]
Warsaw Pact					0.9228*	0.9584*
					[1.67]	[1.78]
Legal origin (British)					0.0736	-0.0568
					[0.22]	[0.18]
Legal origin (German)					0.3169	0.1525
					[0.31]	[0.16]
Legal origin (Socialist)					0.1964	0.3271
					[0.36]	[0.57]
Constant	-1.7561***	-1.0765***	-3.9726***	-3.0776***	-1.3697	-1.9889
	[4.71]	[5.81]	[3.73]	[3.41]	[0.84]	[1.19]
Observations	146	175	139	163	138	162
Pseudo R-squared	0.11	0.11	0.14	0.12	0.34	0.40

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

The marginal effects of the common probit model are shown in Table 11. The results in column (1), first cell (only democracy variable included), show that when the Chief in Executive variable increases by one point (on a scale from 1 to 7), the probability of voting in favor of the Goldstone report decreases by about 8 percent; that is an entirely democratic country was about 48 percent more likely to vote against the Goldstone Report than an entirely autocratic country. Using the dichotomous Democracy-Dictatorship measure, the probability of a democracy voting in favor of the Goldstone Report decreases by about 35 percent. The marginal effects for the full model (last

row of Table 6) are smaller for the Democracy-Dictatorship measure but remain statistically significant at the 10 percent level. The marginal effects of the Chief in Executive variable are not however statistically significant.

Table 11: Marginal Effects. Probit.
Abstentions and votes against grouped together

		(1)	(2)
	Variable	Country voted in favor of the resolution	Country abstained or voted against the resolution
Only democracy variable included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.083***	0.083***
		[4.85]	[4.85]
	Democracy	-0.345***	0.345***
		[5.89]	[5.89]
GDP included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.069***	0.069***
		[3.93]	[3.93]
	Democracy	-0.262***	0.262***
		[3.98]	[3.98]
Full model	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.025	0.025
		[1.39]	[1.39]
	Democracy	-0.131*	0.131*
		[1.94]	[1.94]

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

The results could be subject to omitted variable bias. In particular, countries with Muslim majorities are in general autocratic (Borooah and Paldam, 2007; Rowley and Smith, 2009; Potrafke, 2011) and for religious and geopolitical reasons would be expected to vote in favor of the Goldstone Report. To control for this aspect of the vote, we employ data on religious fractionalization from Alesina et al. (2003). This database reports, for each country for the period 1980-1998, the percentage of the population adhering to the world's three most widespread religions. The database contains many missing observations. The most complete data is, however, that for Islam.

Alesina's database distinguishes "Shia Muslim" and "Sunni Muslim" for some countries and for other countries this distinction is not recorded. We combined the available data to obtain a single variable that describes the share of Muslims in a country's population.

Table 12. Regression Results. Robustness checks.
Muslim share included.
Ordered Probit, robust standard errors.
Dependent variable: UNGA Votes on resolution endorsing the Goldstone Report

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	0.1665**		0.0652	
	[2.40]		[0.82]	
Democracy-Dictatorship		0.7560***		0.6560**
		[3.42]		[2.26]
Muslim	-0.0200***	-0.0213***	-0.0154***	-0.0172***
	[4.50]	[4.95]	[3.18]	[3.73]
log GDP per capita			0.018	0.0386
			[0.11]	[0.23]
Africa			0.2354	0.6681
			[0.38]	[1.05]
Asia			-0.631	-0.4343
			[1.20]	[0.83]
America			-0.1656	-0.2831
			[0.28]	[0.49]
Oceania			0.6765	1.7303**
			[0.98]	[2.33]
OECD			1.4976***	1.4503**
			[2.61]	[2.50]
Warsaw Pact			0.826	0.8041
			[1.26]	[1.26]
Legal origin (British)			0.0348	-0.1185
			[0.10]	[0.35]
Legal origin (German)			-0.3827	-0.4133
			[0.60]	[0.70]
Legal origin (Scandinavian)			0.4448	0.5818
			[0.63]	[0.80]
Legal origin (Socialist)			-0.2714	-0.2394
			[0.67]	[0.78]
Observations	146	175	138	162
Pseudo R-squared	0.16	0.17	0.32	0.36

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

The results reported in Table 12 and 14 (ordered and common probit model) show that the coefficients of the Muslim variable are statistically

significant at the 1 percent level and have a negative sign. Including the Muslim variable does not change the inferences with respect to the democracy variables; the numerical impact of the democracy-induced effects is however slightly smaller. Tables 13 and 15 show the marginal effects of the democracy variables when the Muslim variable is included. Democracies are again indicated to be more likely to vote against the Goldstone Report.

Table 13: Marginal Effects. Ordered Probit. Muslim population share included.

		(1)	(2)	(3)
	Variable	Country voted in favor of the resolution	Country abstained	Country voted against the resolution
Muslim included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.048***	0.024**	0.025**
		[2.61]	[2.55]	[2.24]
	Democracy	-0.218***	0.100***	0.118***
		[3.68]	[4.03]	[2.89]
Full model	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.015	0.008	0.007
		[0.80]	[0.81]	[0.79]
	Democracy	-0.141**	0.076**	0.065*
		[2.23]	[2.39]	[1.94]

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

Table 14. Regression Results. Robustness checks.
Muslim share included.
Probit, robust standard errors.
Dependent variable: UNGA Votes on resolution endorsing the Goldstone Report.
Abstentions and votes against grouped together.

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	0.1590**		0.0852	
	[2.24]		[1.01]	
Democracy-Dictatorship		0.6518***		0.5572*
		[2.61]		[1.65]
Muslim	-0.0207***	-0.0223***	-0.0190***	-0.0207***
	[4.69]	[5.09]	[3.99]	[4.44]
log GDP per capita			-0.0192	0.0179
			[0.11]	[0.10]
Africa			-0.0102	0.4972
			[0.02]	[0.72]
Asia			-0.871	-0.6451
			[1.60]	[1.21]
America			-0.7509	-0.7232
			[1.34]	[1.30]
Oceania			0.8816	1.9075**
			[0.97]	[2.17]
OECD			1.2059**	1.4266**
			[2.08]	[2.41]
Warsaw Pact			1.1770**	1.1596**
			[2.01]	[1.98]
Legal origin (British)			-0.2309	-0.3565
			[0.64]	[1.06]
Legal origin (German)			-0.0946	-0.2663
			[0.10]	[0.29]
Legal origin (Socialist)			-0.0779	0.1292
			[0.13]	[0.20]
Constant	-0.9394**	-0.4897**	-0.4017	-0.9317
	[2.18]	[2.21]	[0.22]	[0.50]
Observations	146	175	138	162
Pseudo R-squared	0.21	0.20	0.40	0.46

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

Table 15: Marginal Effects. Probit. Muslim share included.
Abstentions and votes against grouped together.

		(1)	(2)
	Variable	Country voted in favor of the resolution	Country abstained or voted against the resolution
Muslim included	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.045**	0.045**
		[2.46]	[2.46]
	Democracy	-0.189***	-0.189***
		[2.88]	[2.88]
Full model	POLITY IV – Constraints on Chief Executive	-0.018	0.018
		[1.00]	[1.00]
	Democracy	-0.105*	0.105*
		[1.65]	[1.65]

Absolute value of t statistics in brackets; * significant at 10 percent; ** significant at 5 percent; *** significant at 1 percent

The reported effects could also be driven or mitigated by idiosyncratic circumstances in individual countries. For this reason, we checked whether the results are sensitive to the inclusion/exclusion of particular countries. Our results, not reported here, indicate that this is not the case.

Democracies can be coded more expansively. Cheibub et al. (2010) have conservatively coded countries as a democracy only if there has been alternation in power. Some countries appear, however, to have contested elections for the executive and legislature, although there has never been an alternation of the government in power. The data by Cheibub et al. (2010) allow these cases to be considered as democracies in addition to their more conservative coding. When we included the more expansive democracy variables, the inferences did not change (results not shown).

We also considered the effect of inclusion of an oil exporter dummy variable that takes on the value one if exports of oil exceeds 50 percent (from Easterly and Sewadeh, 2001). This variable is statistically significant at the 1 percent level and has a negative sign. Many of the oil exporters are high per-capita income Muslim countries. Inclusion of the oil exporter variable does

not change the inferences regarding the democracy variable, nor the Muslim variable.

The extent of corruption in a country could also influence how countries vote. We therefore included the Transparency International´s Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) (referring to the year 2007). The CPI for 2007 was available for 172 countries. When we include the CPI together with one of the democracy variables without control variables, the CPI is statistically significant at the 1 percent level, the Democracy-Dictatorship variable is statistically significant at the 1 percent level, and the Chief in Executive variable is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. When we include all the control variables, the CPI and the democracy variables are not statistically significant.

Inferences are robust for the voting on the human-rights resolution. In particular, inferences do not change when the Muslim variable is included. The Muslim variable is statistically significant at the 1 percent level. When we estimate a probit model (0=in favor, 1= against or abstain), inferences hold for both democracy measures when the Muslim variable is not included. When we include the Muslim variable in the probit model, democracy only remains statistically significant when the POLITY measure is used.

8. Conclusions

We have proposed that ethical standards are higher in democracies than autocracies and have investigated whether the differences in ethical standards are replicated in UN General Assembly voting. Our hypotheses have been framed in a model in which autocratic regimes benefit from regime security through repression of their populations and also benefit expressively from deflective voting but are deterred in the extent of repression by expressive disutility from UN censure resolutions. The outcome in which repressive rulers vote to censure one other and also reduce each others' regime security is avoided by a logrolling agreement. Expressive utility from deflective voting is restored by designation of a decoy. We predicted that country-specific

characteristics and dissonance between accusations and truth could deter governments of democracies from participating in the autocracies' deflective voting. In particular, democracies were also predicted to be sensitive to media criticism of a UN resolution. Autocratic logrolling and deflective voting against a decoy are found in UN voting patterns that we used as benchmarks. Voting on the Goldstone Report confirmed sensitivity of democratic governments to publicized dissonance between accusations and truth. Because democracies remain more likely to refrain from participating in the autocratic coalition's deflective decoy voting when per capita income and OECD membership are included as explanatory variables, democracies voted more ethically independent of income. Voting on an accusation against the decoy of human-rights violations when the resolution was not subject to media attention reduced the level of support by democracies to abstention. We conclude that the morality of democracies in UN voting is subject to media attention.

Although beyond the benchmark cases democracies are more likely to vote ethically, autocratic logrolling prevails in majority voting in UN General Assembly. Majority-voting outcomes in the UN are sometimes regarded as having "moral weight" (for example, see Marín-Bosch, 1987). Our conclusions suggest the opposite. Our conclusions are consistent with other evidence regarding ethical standards of the UN.[32]

The UN vote on the Goldstone Report, which provided the data for a central part of our study, concerned a population's right, through its democratically elected government, to respond to state-supported terrorism. There has been no agreement among governments of the member-states of the

[32] Boockman and Dreher (2010) find that human rights offenders oppose UN human rights resolutions. The UN has been ineffective or complicit in allowing the Rwandan and Cambodian genocides to take place. Mass murders and rapes have occurred in Biafra, Iraq, Yemen, East Timor, South Sudan, Darfur and the Congo. See Verwimp (2003, 2005), Maogoto (2008), Maogoto and Kindiki (2007), Hagan and Rymond-Richmond (2008), Hagan, Rymond-Richmond, and Palloni (2009), and Olsson (2010). On the UN and rape, see "UN peacekeepers failed DR Congo rape victims" http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-11224656.

UN on the definition of terror.[33] State-supported terror emanates from autocracies. Another perspective on the UN Goldstone vote is that democracies are more likely to be respectful of the right of self-defense against state-supported terror.

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[33] Article 51 of the UN charter grants the right of self-defense but does not include self-defense against terror (see Maogoto, 2003).

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Appendix

Countries whose governments voted in favor of the Goldstone Report:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia' and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta,

Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, 'Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Abstentions:

Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Tonga, Uganda, United Kingdom, Uruguay.

Countries voted against:

Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Netherlands, Palau, Panama, Poland, Slovakia, Macedonia, Ukraine, United States.

Countries absent:

Bhutan, Cape Verde, Cote, d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Honduras, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Togo, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Vanuatu