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# Democratic Transitions in Africa: A Long and (Often) Winding Road

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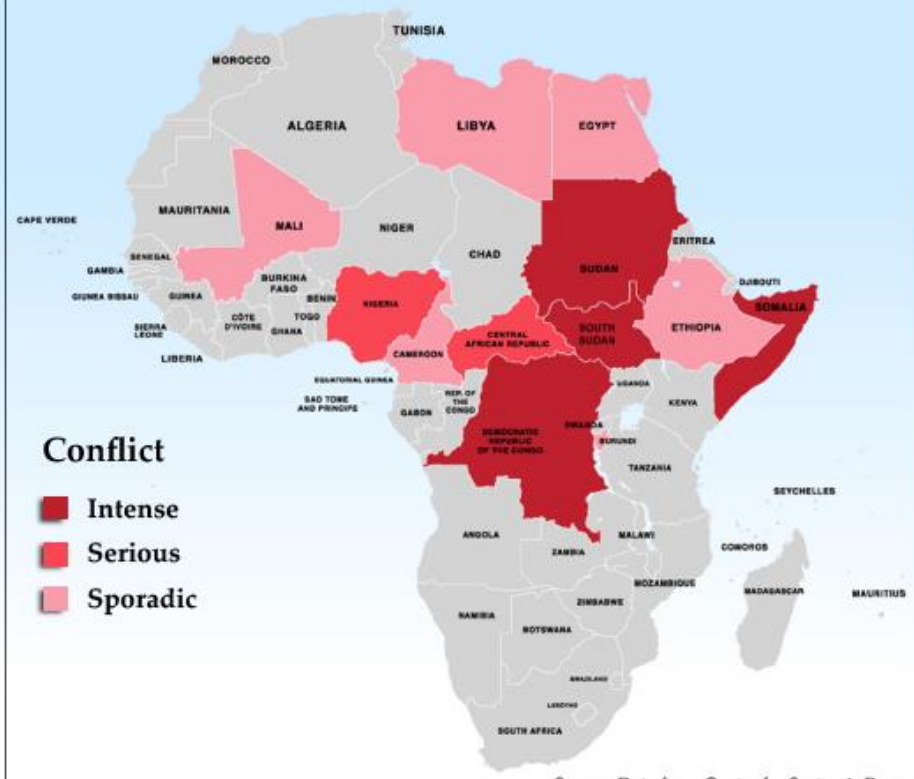
# Demand for Democracy Remains High



# Overlapping Effects of Autocracy and Conflict in Africa



Source: Data from Freedom House



# Why Democratic Transitions Matter: Stability

- 10 of 12 Africa countries in conflict have authoritarian-leaning governments
- 80 percent of 27 million forcibly displaced in African have repressive governments in their country of origin
- Leaders in countries without term limits have been in office for an average of 18 years vs. 4 years for those with term limits
- 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of countries where leaders have evaded terms limits are in conflict compared to less than 10 percent of those that uphold such limits
- 41 percent of security sector leaders in autocracies see the risk of political crisis as a serious threat vs. 11 percent with democracies

# Why Democratic Transitions Matter: Development

- Africa's democracies have per capita growth rates a third higher than autocracies even though more than half of latter are natural resource rich
- Life expectancies in African democracies are 9 years longer
- 40 percent lower infant mortality rates
- 40 percent greater chance of attending secondary school
- FDI in democracies is higher
  - Respect for civil liberties and rule of law

# Sudan: Power Sharing



# Algeria: Protests Continue

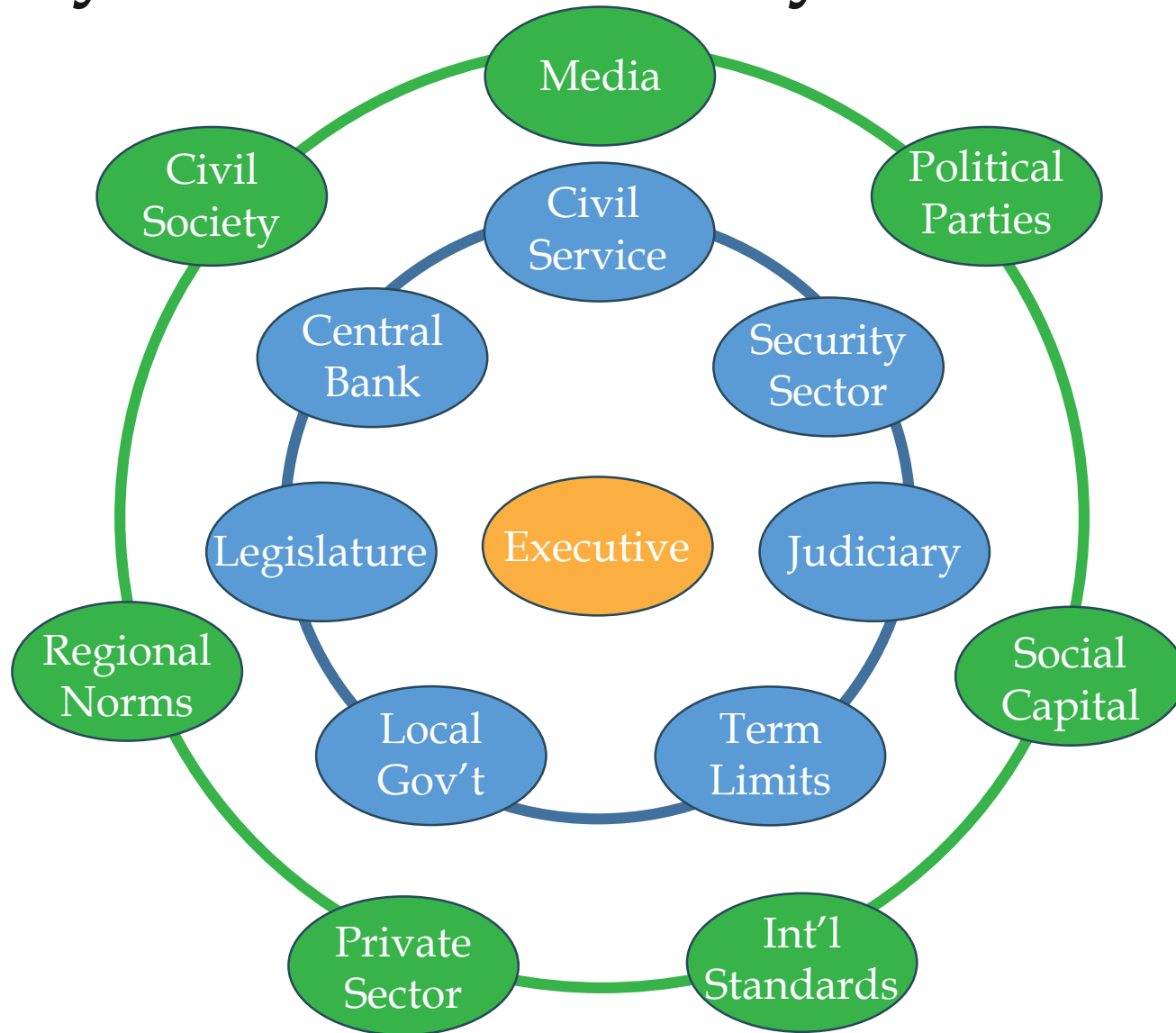


# Ethiopia: Fragile Next Steps





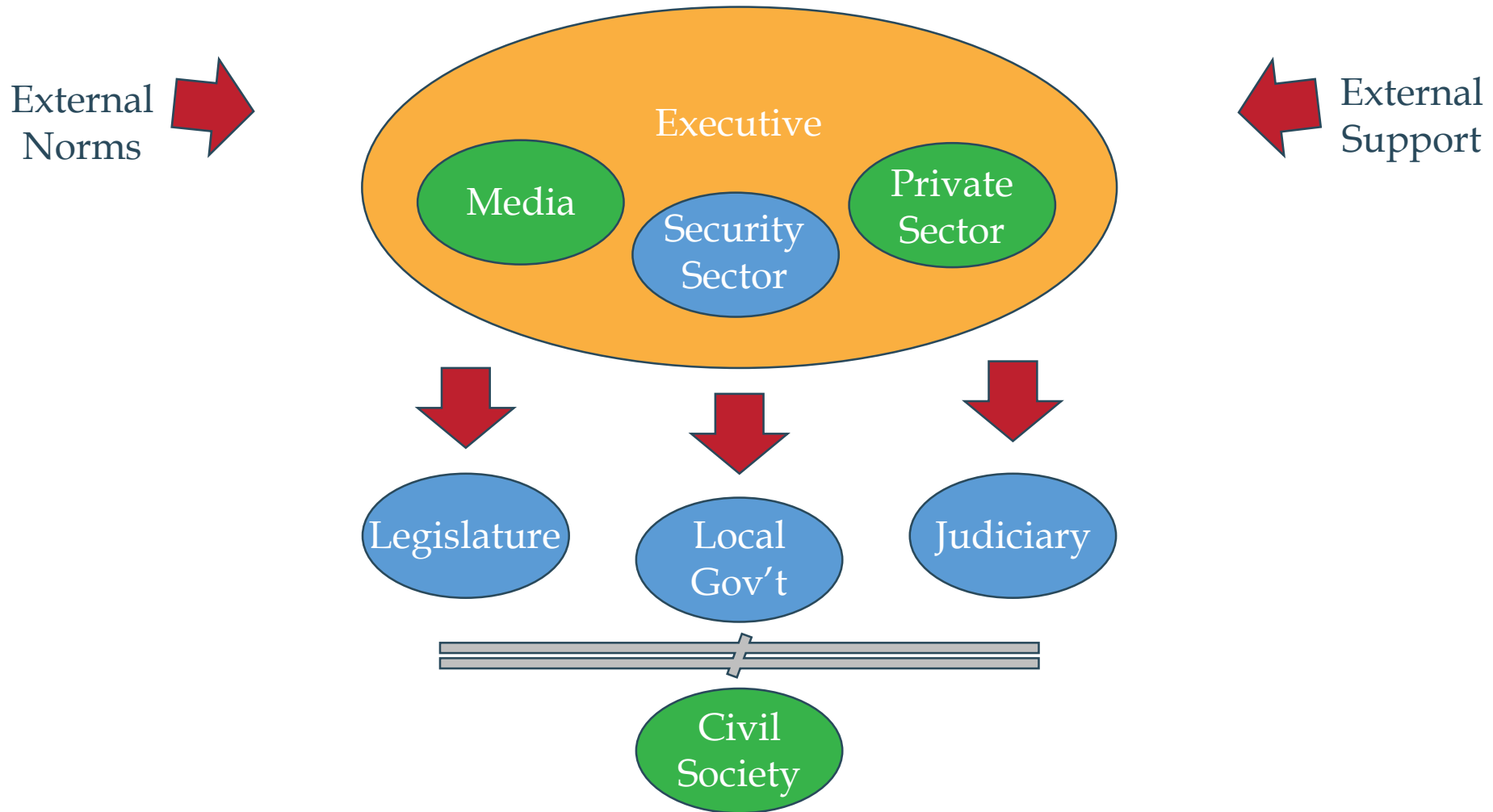
# Layered Accountability Structures



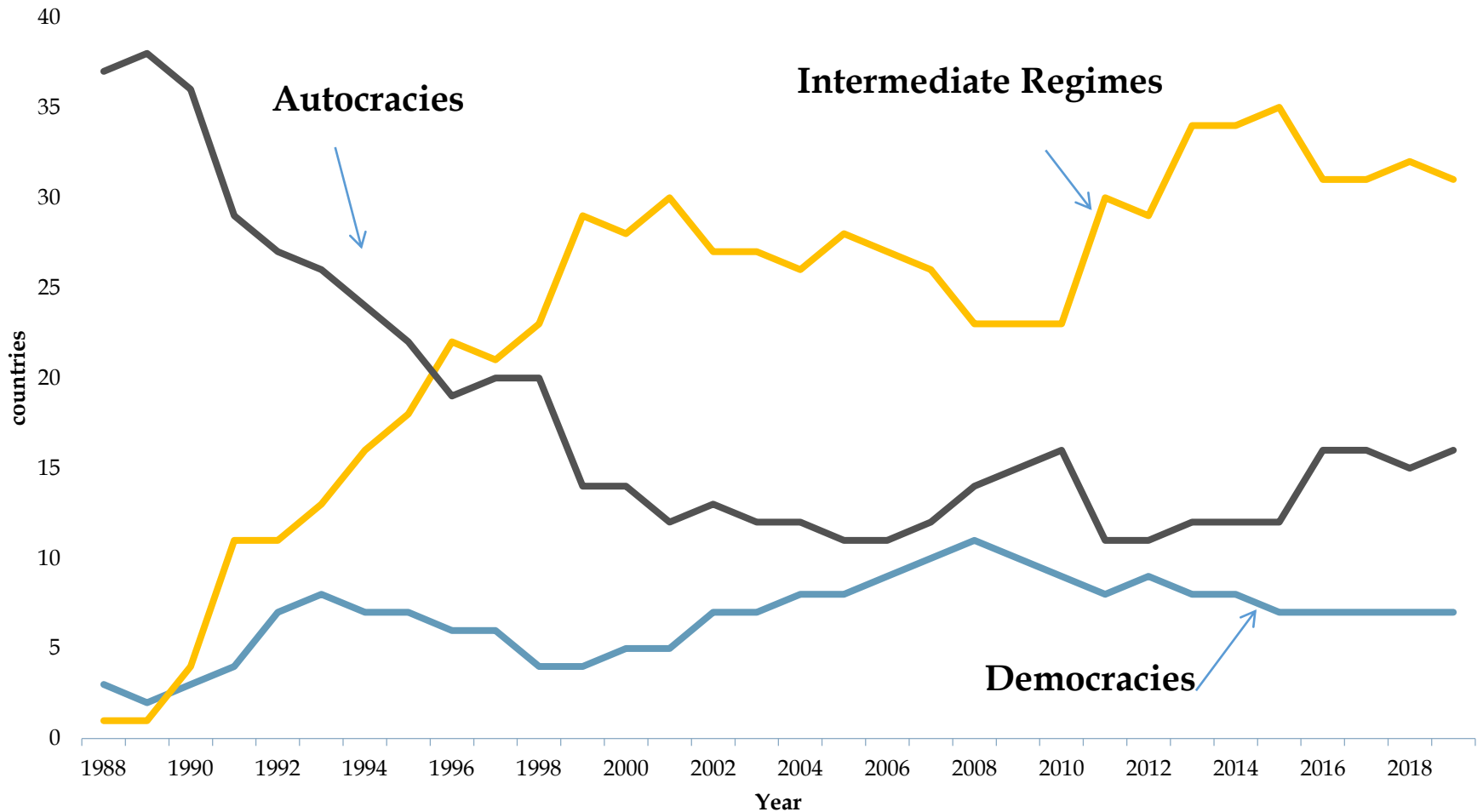
# Accountability is Stronger When it's Overlapping



# Dominant Role of Executive Branch in Contexts of Limited Accountability



# Trends in Regime Categories in Africa



# Africa Regime Classification 2019

## Democracies

Botswana  
Cape Verde  
Ghana  
Mauritius  
São Tomé & Príncipe  
Seychelles  
South Africa

## Democratizers

Benin  
Burkina Faso  
Côte d'Ivoire  
Ethiopia  
Gambia  
Guinea  
Guinea-Bissau  
Kenya  
Lesotho  
Liberia  
Madagascar  
Malawi  
Mali  
Mozambique  
Namibia  
Niger  
Nigeria  
Senegal  
Sierra Leone  
Somalia  
Sudan  
Tanzania  
Tunisia  
Zambia

## Semi-Authoritarians

Algeria  
Comoros  
D.R. Congo  
Djibouti  
Gabon  
Mauritania  
Morocco  
Togo  
Uganda  
Zimbabwe

## Autocracies

Angola  
Burundi  
Cameroon  
CAR  
Chad  
Rep. of Congo  
Egypt  
Equatorial Guinea  
Eritrea  
Libya  
Rwanda  
South Sudan  
Swaziland

# Challenges to Democratic Transitions in Africa

- Legacy of “Big Man” politics
- Building institutions of accountability with limited precedent
- Patronage
- Politicized security sector
- Government control of information platforms
- China, Russia, Gulf states upholding authoritarian norms
- Weak regional norms
- Weak states

# Contributors to Democratic Transitions

- Active civil society, engaged across geography and sector
  - Enables sustaining push for reform
- Access to independent sources of information
- Strong social capital and norms of equity
- No previous conflict
- Diversified economy (not natural resource dependent)
- Higher expectations of youth
- International incentives

# Takeaways for U.S. and International Engagement on Democratic Transitions

- ❖ Democracy matters
- ❖ Help strengthen institutions of accountability
  - ❖ This requires sustained engagement
- ❖ Independent media and access to information is key
- ❖ Uphold international norms, create incentives for reform
- ❖ Reinforce principles of an apolitical, professional security sector





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