



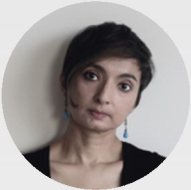
# State of Democracy Today

The aim is to establish a shared understanding of global democratic trends and the current state of democracy.



**ANN LINDE**  
FORMER MINISTER FOR  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF  
SWEDEN

Ann Linde is a seasoned Swedish diplomat and former Minister for Foreign Affairs, representing the Social Democratic Party. With over 40 years in international politics, she is recognized for her leadership in EU affairs, global security, and crisis management.



**SEEMA SHAH**  
INTERNATIONAL IDEA

Seema Shah is Head of the Democracy Assessment team at International IDEA, leading key initiatives such as the Global State of Democracy (GSoD) report, the GSoD Indices and the Democracy Tracker. She previously served as Research and Strategy Lead for the International Rescue Committee's humanitarian innovation team in the Middle East and has more than two decades of experience in electoral reform around the world.



**MARINA NORD**  
VDEM INSTITUTE

Marina Nord is a postdoctoral researcher at the V-Dem Institute (University of Gothenburg) and is one of the authors of the V-Dem Institute's annual Democracy Report. Her research focuses on explaining autocratization and democratization processes, and interplay between economic processes and political transformation. Before joining the V-Dem Institute, she worked on several research projects at the Hertie School and at the German Institute for Economic Research, where she became passionate about bridging the gap between academic research and policy domains.



**JOAR FORSELL**  
LIBERAL PARTY SWEDEN

Joar Forsell is a Member of Parliament for Sweden's Liberal Party and serves as the party's spokesperson on foreign affairs. He sits on the SILC board and is active in foreign and security policy through roles in the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the OSCE, the Committee on Science and Technology, and the Swedish Export Control Council.

# Disinformation and AI

The session explores threats to democracy, possible countermeasures but also opportunities for democracy.



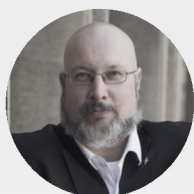
**MAGNUS AG**  
INTERNATIONAL  
MEDIA SUPPORT

Magnus Ag is Head of Public Interest Tech at International Media Support and leads IMS' contribution to Good Commons, a collective run by JamiiAfrica, Splice and IMS, that wants to help you build strong communities. He is a human rights advocate, journalist, and researcher, as well as the founder of Bridge Figures, a project exploring human rights in a data-driven world. With more than a decade of experience defending freedom of expression, Magnus has previously worked with Freemuse, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and reported on the 2019 pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong.



**JULIANE MÜLLER**  
INTERNATIONAL IDEA

Juliane Müller's work focuses on the impact of AI in electoral processes, providing research, policy analysis, and project support. Previously, she worked for International IDEA's where she primarily focused on constitutional and human rights in the digital age. Prior to joining IDEA, she worked on issues related to democracy, the rule of law, and human rights at various institutions and international organizations, including the Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU, the European Parliament and the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law.



**PATRIK OKSANEN**  
STOCKHOLM FREE  
WORLD FORUM

Patrik Oksanen is a Senior Fellow at the Stockholm Free World Forum and a leading voice on hybrid threats and democratic resilience. With over 30 years in media, he specializes in countering disinformation and influence operations, bridging journalism, policy, and security to defend democracy in Europe's evolving digital landscape.



**EVA ŠAFRÁNKOVÁ**  
TOP09 PARTY,  
CZECH REPUBLIC

Eva Šafránková is the International Secretary of TOP 09 Party in the Czech Republic and also Executive Director of the think tank TOPAZ. An organization dedicated to the defense of human rights, civil society, the development of democracy and the rule of law, drawing on the legacy of Karel Schwarzenberg, founder of TOPAZ and chancellor to the Czech President Václav Havel. Over the past 16 years she has been engaged in Czech and European politics in a wide range of positions, including advisor to members of parliament or to a Deputy Governor, and specialist in international, security and cross-border issues and communication.



**MARTIN ÄNGEBY**  
HYBRID COE

Martin Ängeby is a Senior Analyst at the Hybrid CoE – the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats. Previously, he served as Country Director for the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Moldova. He has also been Secretary General of the Swedish Liberal Center (SILC) and worked at International IDEA.



# Swedish PAO 30 years

The Swedish system with Party Affiliated Organizations (PAOs) was created in 1995. In this session we will look back and reflect on 30 years of Swedish democracy aid.



**HADAR CARS**  
LIBERAL PARTY,  
SWEDEN

Hadar Cars has a lifetime of dedication to a united, strong and democratic Europe. He has been member of the Swedish Parliament, Minister of Trade and European Affairs and Member of the European Parliament. The formation of the Swedish PAO system came after his initiative, where he drew inspiration from the German system.



**HELENA BJUREMALM**  
SIDA

Helena Bjuremalm has more than 25 years of work experience of international relations ranging from diplomacy to development cooperation, primarily within democracy assistance. Currently she is leading SIDA's work with the PAO programme. SIDA (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) is the Swedish government's agency working to create better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression.



**EMMY OTIM**  
KIC

Emmy Otim has 18 years of experience managing Democracy and Governance programs across Africa, including Uganda and South Sudan. He is currently working for KIC - Christian Democratic International Centre, running the Program for Young Politicians in Africa and the Empowering Women in Politics program in Uganda and Tanzania.



**PEDRO  
URRUCHURTU**  
VENTE VENEZUELA

Pedro Urruchurtu is International Secretary of Vente Venezuela and a political scientist dedicated to defending democracy and human rights. The Vente Party is a long-time partner with SILC via the Swedish PAO system.



**SANNA ELIASSON**  
OLOF PALME  
INTERNATIONAL  
CENTER

Sanna Eliasson is the Coordinator of Political Party Programmes at the Olof Palme International Center (the PAO of the Social Democratic Party). Sanna has a background in the Social Democratic Party and its Youth League.



**PER OLSSON**  
SILC

Per Olsson is Secretary General of SILC, Swedish International Liberal Centre. He has almost 10 years experience of managing political party support through PAO. Per has a long background in the Liberal Party and its youth wing and first joined SILC as an intern in 2013.





# Political Parties - indispensable or irrelevant?

This session addresses the challenges and future of political parties in upholding democracy. Are political parties fundamental to democracy and therefore only need to be renewed and defended, or lies the future of democracy in other ideas and solutions?



**HUSSAM ERHAYEL**  
BETTER POLITICS  
FOUNDATION

Hussam Erhayel is the Head of Projects at the Apolitical Foundation, with a background in political education. He has over ten years of experience, previously serving as Executive Director of the International Federation of Liberal Youth and Jordan Projects Coordinator at the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation for Freedom, focusing on political leadership projects.



**PETRA SCHLEITER**  
CENTRE FOR  
DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE

Petra Schleiter is the Director of the Centre for Democratic Resilience at the University of Oxford and a Professor of Comparative Politics. With more than 60 publications, Petra is a prominent scholar in the field of democratic institutions and institutional reform, party competition, and policy reform.



**LIZA MARIA NORLIN**  
CHRISTIAN  
DEMOCRATS,  
SWEDEN

Liza-Maria Norlin is Party Secretary for the Christian Democrats in Sweden. She has a long background in the party and has held prominent positions on local as well as national level, including as Member of the Parliament.



**HANNA GERDES**  
CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Hanna Gerdes is chair of Civil Rights Defenders that works for and together with human rights defenders fighting for democracy and civil and political rights across the world. She is also a human rights lawyer and speaker focused on democratic development and inclusion. This year Hanna held the opening speech at Almedalen, the yearly week of democracy in Sweden.



**SAMUEL ROSS**  
GREEN PARTY, SWEDEN

Samuel Ross is a student at Uppsala University and a member of the Swedish Green Party since 2022. Currently one of the Co-Spokespeople for the Swedish Green Party's Youth Wing in Uppsala County, and a member of the Young Greens International Committee with responsibility for Europe



**YULIA NETESOVA**  
OSCE

Dr. Yulia Netesova leads the Democratic Governance and Gender Unit at OSCE/ODIHR, driving democratic innovation with parliaments and political parties on checks and balances, integrity, and money in politics. Winner of the OSCE Gender Award, she champions inclusive democracies by advancing women's, youth, and disability participation, bringing field experience from the Western Balkans and Central Asia and a decade as a political analyst and foreign affairs correspondent.



# Authoritarian Opponents

The focus is on understanding authoritarian threats and sharing strategies to counter them.



**BIRGITTA OHLSSON**  
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC  
INSTITUTE

Birgitta Ohlsson is Director of Political Parties at the National Democratic Institute and a prominent advocate for liberal democracy and human rights. A former Swedish Minister and longtime Member of Parliament, she has consistently championed democratic resilience in the face of authoritarian threats.



**MIŁOSZ HODUN**  
PROJEKT:POLSKA

Dr. Miłosz Hodun is International Officer at Projekt: Polska and advisor to the Polish liberal party Nowoczesna. He serves on the Board of the European Liberal Forum and teaches law at Reykjavik University. His work focuses on strengthening liberal democracy and countering authoritarian influence across Europe.



**TIJMEN ROOSEBOOM**  
NETHERLANDS  
INSTITUTE FOR  
MULTIPARTY  
DEMOCRACY

Tijmen Rooseboom is Executive Director of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy. Formerly Special Envoy for the Sahel and Ambassador-at-Large for Youth, he has worked with the EU and UN to bolster democratic institutions and resist authoritarian influence across Africa.



**KAIJA DOREEN**  
NATIONAL UNITY  
PLATFORM, UGANDA

Kaija Doreen, National Unity Platform, Uganda. Kaija Doreen is Coordinator of the National Unity Platform School of Leadership and CEO of the Kohoniktha Autuha Foundation. As a youth leader within the People Power Movement and NUP, she works to empower young voices and build democratic resilience in the face of authoritarianism.



**PEDRO  
URRUCHURTU**  
VENTE VENEZUELA

Pedro Urruchurtu is International Secretary of Vente Venezuela and a political scientist dedicated to defending democracy and human rights. He has integrated the party into global liberal networks and promotes liberal values through youth education, media, and one of Venezuela's last independent radio stations.



**ERIK JENNISCHE**  
CIVIL RIGHTS  
DEFENDERS

Erik Jennische is an experienced human rights and organizational management professional, currently at Civil Rights Defenders, where he oversees security initiatives for human rights defenders in high-risk regions. In previous roles he has focused on human rights in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Latin America. Erik also brings experience as a journalist, research director, and policy advisor.