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Democracy in the 21st Century: Relevant, Redundant or Risk?

Democracy as a form of governance has a tumultuous history. From the American and French revolutions, two models emerged. And throughout the following two centuries plus, a multitude of democratic style governments emerged, flourished, failed, or were forgotten.

The 21st century was inaugurated by an almost complete lack of other dominant forms of governance on the world's stage. Democracy became the catchword not only for aspirations of peoples but also for foreign policy goals of western governments.

If history is to teach us anything, it is that nothing is static and nothing is stable. What does this historical lesson have to teach us about the present and future formations of democracy? Is Democracy as we have known it still relevant in our present world? Is the form of governance born from revolution redundant in a world where revolution seems more and more impossible because of greater interdependence or merely concentrated power? And as more governments across the world sign on to the ideological front of the spread of Democracy, what are the risks for self-determination, independence, and the *demos*?

The AGS Graduate Student Conference 2009 will bring together students and academics, professionals and researchers in order to present studies on this immensely important topic. Themes that may be covered will include:

- What are the economics issues that threaten or propagate Democracy in this, our 'globalized' world? Is the increasing interdependency of the world harmful or helpful? What are the possibilities that the free market aspect of western Democracy will aid or hinder greater democratic representation?
- In this era of terrorism and global policing, will the new security challenges have a great or minute effect on Democracy? With a situation where all governments must work together to combat global security issues, from terrorism to black markets to drug trafficking, is there ample space for determination by the people?
- The twentieth century was ripe with regional organization formation. From the EU to ASEAN to MERCOSUR, states came to together to work for common goals. In such situations, the theoretical thought influences us to expect some sort of surrendering of sovereignty. What are the consequences of the proliferation of International Organizations and Regional Organizations for Democratic governance? Can a behemoth or a leviathan be governed by something called a *demos*?
- International Law is growing everyday as states come together in commerce and global governance. Issues such as Gender equality, Human Rights, Global Health, Global Commerce, and Global Security, to name a few, are not negotiated at an international level. This law is new and overarching. But does International Law trump National Law? Is the preservation on the world's stage more important than the internal determinacy of state mandated law? What effects may International Law have on the Democratic legislation of 'sovereign' nations in the 21st century?

These issues and more will be included under the theme: Democracy in the 21st Century: Relevant, Redundant, or Risk? Abstracts and Papers may be submitted to conference@agsird.edu. Abstracts of 500 words will be accepted for determination of participation. If entire papers are submitted, please include a 500-word abstract. All participants will be required to submit a full

paper 4 weeks before the conference. Questions can also be addressed to conference@agsird.edu.