# INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

## Democratization in a Volatile Political Landscape

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**ABSTRACT**

The debate on the benefits of internal party democratization is inconclusive. Both sides of the debate seem to provide valid arguments, but neither are totally convincing. In this article it is argued that intra-party democracy can have positive consequences as well as adverse affects, depending on the specific instruments deployed as well as the political context of parties. Focussing on a context of high political volatility with many occurrences of coalition building, floor crossing and new party formation, five main challenges will be formulated that aim to provide more clarity in the debate on the advantages and disadvantages of a number of internal democratic instruments. It is concluded that certain conditions need to be met in order to implement a number of instruments and that the political context should be severely considered in the choice of most effective measures.

**KEY WORDS:** Intra-party democracy – democratization – candidate selection – political participation – electoral volatility

### I. Introduction

No consensus seems to exist on the justification and benefits of intra-party democracy. Some scholars emphasize the benefits of intra-party democracy, while others doubt that it really contributes to the main functions of political parties. Certain views on democracy value above all the capability of political parties to collect and provide policies (interest aggregation and policy formulation) and qualified personnel (recruitment) that reflect interests of broader electorates, and give less value to internal participation, transparency, and internal elections. Too much internal party democratization can be argued to 'overly dilute the power of a party's inner leadership and make it difficult for that party to keep its electoral promises' (Scarrow, 2005). Furthermore, internal democratic procedures may raise possibilities for party splits and crises, possibly harming democratic stability. Moreover, open candidate selection methods may in some instances actually increase power of small elites (Pennings et al., 2001). On the other hand, it can be argued that internal democracy enhances a necessary viable democratic culture within the party as well as society at large (NIMD, 2004). Furthermore, democratic procedures may have positive effects on the representation of ideas of the electorate and may strengthen the organization by attracting new members and creating space for fresh ideas. Finally, it can be argued that democratic

internal procedures will provide necessary vertical linkages between different deliberating spheres, as well as a horizontal linkage between competing issues (Teorell, 1999).

It seems that both lines of reasoning may be valid, but depend very much on the modalities of intra-party democracy and the political context that political parties face. It will therefore be argued below that internal democratic procedures may be very useful, but that no one-size-fits-all approach should be adopted. The benefits of intra-party democratization depend on the specific instruments used, the implementation method and interaction with the political context. Focussing on democratization processes in developing or young democracies with highly volatile political landscapes, different modes of democratization will be examined and major challenges will be formulated. The results are based on a qualitative research including field work in Guatemala and Kenya. The elaborated challenges involve the confrontation of intra-party democracy with other important characteristics of democracy, such as internal unity of political parties, low volatility in the political party system and the democratic legal framework. In the next section, firstly, an overview of the concept of intra-party democracy will be given.

## II. The concept of intra-party democracy

No universal definition exists of the concept of intra-party democracy, although many scholars agree on some basic principles of electivity, accountability, transparency, inclusivity, participation, and representation. Below, two essential instrumental elements of intra-party democracy are examined. A first group of internal democratization instruments involves the organization of free, fair and regular elections of internal positions as well as candidates for representative bodies. The second group involves a different group of instruments that entail the equal and open participation of all members and member groups in such a way that interests are more or less equally represented. These both groups of instruments are important in creating an open and deliberative political party in which people can participate in elections equally but may also engage in participation or be represented in other ways. To what extent both kinds of instruments are beneficial depends on the state and context of political parties. Regarding both kinds of instruments, however, arrangements can be based on mere party regulations as well as legal requirements in party law. Moreover, actual practices need to be examined to fully analyze the concept of internal party democracy. This observation provides three levels of analysis: (1) legal requirements, (2) party regulations, and (3) actual practice, which will be used below in analyzing and contributing to the debate on internal party democracy.

### *Internal elections and candidate selection*

Internal elections may involve the election of a wide range of political party officials as well as political candidates for different levels of political representation, e.g. national, regional, local and sub-local. For each level and position a different set of specific challenges can be formulated, although some challenges seem to cover all elections. Salih (2006), for instance, elaborates on some main challenges confronting internal party democracy in Africa, including the dominance of elites, non-competitive leadership elections, discriminatory selection of candidates, and clientelism. Following Carothers (2006), these characteristics basically coincide with the 'standard lament' about political parties all over the world, especially in developing democracies, and are reflected in parties' internal functioning and elections. It can be helpful to distinguish between different methods of electing candidates or party officials to consider their effectiveness in a developing political party. Rahat and

Hazan (2001) offer a categorization of four dimensions of candidate selection methods that can be applied to all political party elections: (1) candidacy (i.e. who can be selected, any restriction?), (2) party selectorates (i.e. who selects, any restrictions?), (3) decentralization (i.e. where are candidates selected, at which level?) and (4) voting/appointment systems (i.e. how are candidates nominated, according to which procedure?). According to these four dimensions, all candidate selection models can be categorized according to openness in procedures. A number of methods to select a party leader, for instance, ranked from open to closed procedures, include open primaries, closed primaries, delegates' conferences, consensus methods, or appointment. It must be noted that the procedures of candidate selection or any other election do not really tell the whole story, and the same kind of questions can be targeted at the informal procedures in trying to assess actual practices.

The legal framework can, however, have large influence on the adoption and implementation of electoral instruments of political parties. The extent of legal party requirements, however, differs quite strongly among countries. Many South Asian political parties, for instance, hardly face any legal regulations, while many African and Latin American countries are involved in constitutional reform discussions which regularly include a number of party requirements (Hällhag, 2007). Some of these countries already require political parties to uphold internal democratic procedures (e.g. the organization of national assemblies or the organization of primaries), although sound implementation is not always taken care of legally and often lacks in a number of young and developing democracies. Although the election of the party leader, political candidates, and other representatives is important for any democratic party, it does not seem to tell the complete story. Democracy is seen to be more than just the organization of elections.

### *Participation and representation*

Discussion with representatives from political parties in developing democracies regularly emphasizes that equal participation (possibilities) of all members and groups is perceived to be the central element of the concept of intra-party democracy, even more so than fair and open elections. Representation of ideas and interests of minorities or disadvantaged groups can often be better guaranteed by stimulating participation than by the sheer organization of elections. This participation involves the influence of rank-and-file members on the party's policies, as well as representation at party activities and in party bodies. In many cases continuous or at least regular consultation of grass-root level members is not present, which poses major threats to a representative relation between party leaders and members (Salih, 2006). Democratic policy making involves a participative process of policy development in forums, debates, consultation meetings and other platforms, and decentralizes the mandate of decision-making to the rank and file of political parties. Modalities of democratic decision making are numerous and involve classic instruments, e.g. party assemblies and congresses, as well as more innovative instruments, e.g. party referendums and public opinion polls. Legal provision of this kind of participatory instruments is very rare and usually entails not more than the sheer obligation to (regularly) organize general assemblies which are the highest decision-making bodies. The number of actually organized assemblies is sometimes, however, quite low, partially because of the very volatile political landscape. Furthermore, actual influence of rank-and-file members or single delegates at these gatherings is in many cases very low because of lack of time, manipulation and in some cases electoral irregularities.

The discussion on representation of minority or underrepresented groups is a more sensitive one, since it may involve quota legislation that can highly influence political parties'

discretionary power in proposing candidates. Most developing democracies have some groups that lack a representative participation in main decision-making bodies. Usually these groups consist of women and youth, and in some cases indigenous or ethnic groups or disabled people. In Southern Africa, for instance, the specified target of 30 percent women representation has only been reached by a small number of Southern African countries, such as Rwanda and Mozambique (Ballington, 2004). In many African as well as Latin American countries quota regulations have been subject to discussion in electoral reform processes or political party law discussion (Ballington, 2004; International IDEA, 2003). Although quota discussions are usually limited to women and in Latin America sometimes indigenous population, they may also involve other underrepresented groups such as ethnic minorities, youth or disabled. Quota may involve reserved seats in parliaments or other bodies, or they may apply to the number of women candidates put forward by political parties. A third set of quota systems involves the quota in the election of internal positions, e.g. in executive committees or selection bodies. The provision of representation though legally obliged or installed quota systems provides some challenges in intra-party democracy, which will be further elaborated below. Besides these legal measures the stimulation of participation of all groups can be enhanced by a large number of other measures, such as the funding of youth and women platforms, capacity building and awareness campaigns. In general, participation and representation are as much a part of internal party democracy as internal elections, and can be stimulated using different approaches.

## III. Challenges in intra-party democratization

Some reference has already been made to a number of major challenges in the development of political parties' internal democracy. The provision of these internal democratic structures, by law or by other means, and the implementation of these structures in proper democratic practice throughout political parties is a complex exercise in which a number of contextual characteristics are very important. Below follow five challenges that are of utmost importance in internally democratizing political parties, considering the volatile political context these parties operate in. This high volatility is not a common characteristic of all developing democracies, neither is it bound to one specific cultural or geographical region or political system. A diverse group of countries such as Georgia, Guatemala, Kenya and Zambia can be categorized as politically volatile, while other countries such as Colombia, Costa Rica, South Africa, and Mozambique are politically more stable. Although the origins of these volatile systems are usually complex and very context-specific, these systems share some of the same characteristics and problems.

Firstly, the majority of political parties usually does not have a long-lasting political life. In Georgia, for instance, no political party has achieved political representation as a single party in Parliament more than twice since 1990 (Nodia et al., 2006). Other countries can provide similar statistics of volatility. In Guatemala, for instance, only 63 percent of Members of Parliament (MPs) has not changed their political party since elections of 2004, while 28 percent changed once, and 8 percent even thrice. Processes of floor-crossing, party break-ups and new party formation have occurred very frequently. Similarly, pre-election coalition-building seems to be a dominant feature in many of these volatile political systems. Kenya provides us with a clear example in which continuous coalition-building processes characterize the political landscape. In recent years, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) did not survive and split in a number smaller parties that engaged in new coalition initiatives, one of which was the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) in 2002.

This coalition, however, did not achieve to remain a dominant force after elections and new coalitions emerged, such as the Orange Democratic Movement Kenya (ODM-Kenya) and NARC-Kenya. Coalition building seems to be a central element in Kenya as well as other volatile democracies. Furthermore, Kenya is also a clear example of the dangers of floor crossing, and shows that ties between MPs and their political party are very often weak, as MPs engage in a government without consent of their political parties. In sum, volatile political landscapes are characterized by frequent floor crossing, continuous coalition building and many party splits and new party formation. Below, five main challenges in intra-party democratization are discussed by taking this concept of political volatility into consideration.

### *Intra-party democracy and the legal framework*

Many developing democracies are characterized by political reform discussions. Examples include Guatemala, Kenya and Malawi. In many of these reform discussions, proposals have been put forward to develop political parties' internal functioning, as well as other modifications that could increase participation and representation in the political system at large. Furthermore, many characteristics of a political or electoral system influence the way internal party democracy takes shape. A parliamentary quota on women representation, for instance, in Tanzania, increases the role women can play in political parties by opening up possibilities to participate fully. Furthermore, the type of electoral system can highly influence the chances of underrepresented groups. Especially, first-past-the-post (FPTP) systems sometimes seem to be less inclusive on women and youth representation than systems of proportional representation. Thirdly, electoral systems and regulations can influence political pluralism and volatility. Some countries, e.g. Georgia and Turkey, pose high parliamentary thresholds, resulting in difficulties for opposition parties to participate and develop. Other countries pose penalties on floor crossing which – if properly implemented – may lead to less fluid political dynamics. In sum, many regulations can influence internal functioning as well as political volatility.

Before we delve into a number of these regulations more specifically, we briefly discuss a number of challenges these regulations entail in general. Firstly, many countries are confronted with lacking implementation of many regulations. In Kenya, for instance, floor crossing is officially not allowed, but no real enforcement measures are in place to guarantee floor crossing does not occur. Similarly, some political parties say they lack the power to implement quotas at local levels of their political party. If no enforcement measures are included in legislation, members will remain dependent on the good intentions of their political leaders, which in many instances do not serve them well. A second challenge in democratization discussions involves the realization of a parliamentary majority in favour of a substantive package of reform proposals. In many cases – although maybe not intended – legislation favours either opposition or government parties, or either small parties or large parties, while politically damaging the other group. This often results in difficult reform processes and minimum package reforms. The challenge is to stimulate consensus on substantive democratic reforms, while not favouring one group of parties above another. Thirdly, any reform discussion should take party differences into account, meaning that each party may prefer or need a different set of mechanism to realize a certain democratic objective. For instance, one party would include quota systems to raise women participation while another would rather stimulate and fund women capacity-building events. If specific instruments or objectives are not carried by political leaders or rank-and-file members they are bound to result in adverse effects. Finally, women or youth participation are often

proclaimed to be misused in window-dressing attempts by placing so-called puppets in political bodies. Capacity building and awareness strategies should therefore be considered as central element of any democratization strategy. Without proper commitment no strategy will ever accomplish the desired goals. Taking these challenges of reform discussion and implementation into account, we now move towards some specific areas of discussion within the process of democratization.

### *Intra-party democracy and party funding*

'Democracy has a cost,' is elaborated regularly when talking to political party representatives in developing democracies, referring to the considerable amount of finances that political parties need in order to fulfil their democratic tasks. Money and democracy have a complex relationship, especially since the affluent role of private money in politics can have many distorting effects, involving corruption, buying of votes and clientelism (Griner et al., 2005). Nevertheless, the provision of public funding for political parties can have positive effects, to democracy although it might also entail some negative side effects and may be hard to realize in some countries. Many developing democracies are, however, currently involved in discussion on party funding or have just initiated or increased public funding (Hällhag, 2007). Although South Asia still lacks public funding in most countries, virtually all Latin American (excluding Venezuela) and Central and Eastern European countries have engaged in funding. In Africa the situation is still somewhat mixed with about half of the countries providing public funding in 2003. Many African countries, however, are more and more involved in discussion on public funding and include this aspect in reform discussions. Public funding has already been constitutionalized in Malawi, Mozambique and Namibia, and is currently being discussed in a number of other countries, e.g. Kenya. In contrary to Africa, Latin America has a long-standing tradition of public funding – like many European countries – which originated from an attempt to avoid the influence of private funding and provide more or less equal opportunities for all parties (Griner et al., 2005). Possible adverse effects may be the lesser need to get in touch with grass roots, an increased bureaucratization, and possible misuse of government resources by political parties.

Under certain conditions, the provision of public funding can have considerable positive effects on the development of internal party democracy. A first condition to consider involves the method of allocation. In general, public funding can be distributed (1) equally among all (parliamentary) parties, (2) according to the number of votes cast, or (3) according to the number of parliamentary seats, or any combination of these methods. A majority of Latin American countries has adopted the second option, while many other countries use a mixed method (Griner et al., 2005). In some African cases it has been difficult to implement the provision of public party funding because it might empower one political party more than another. Equal distribution among parties for instance would empower opposition and small parties and is therefore not very likely to be agreed upon by a large government party or coalition. A mixed or proportional system is therefore more likely to be adopted. A second issue to consider is the amount of funding provided. In Guatemala, for instance, an eightfold increase of funding has recently been approved in order to provide sufficient funding for parties. If public funding is not sufficient to cover for at least a considerable part of total funding, effects will be insignificant. Thirdly, if one considers internal party democracy to be an important public asset, one could decide to direct an amount of funding specifically to participatory events or long-term development of political parties. In stead of disbursing resources right before or after elections – which is common practice in a number of countries – a yearly disbursement would stimulate spending on

structural development and participation of members. Furthermore, restrictions can be placed upon the spending of public funding, e.g. excluding campaign expenditures. Also, funding can be directed to specific participatory projects or may depend on party performance on a number of issues, e.g. quota implementation. Public funding might be beneficial for parliamentary pluralism in any case, but is not likely to have any positive effect on internal party functioning or an increased stability of the political landscape if no conditions guarantee the long-term spending aimed at empowering rank-and-file members and the strengthening of the party organization. It will, however, be difficult to agree upon above-mentioned conditions. In Kenya, for instance, the provision of party funding in the currently pending Political Parties Bill does not include any provisions on women participation, while earlier drafts included such conditions. Political opposition against these measures is usually high. A fourth and final vital issue on party funding and intra-party democracy is the role of underrepresented groups. Public funding can be targeted directly at the empowerment of these groups, without involvement of political parties' executive committees. This may raise the participation of rank-and-file members and increase decentralization of power. In sum, party funding can be very beneficial to internal party democracy but is dependent on the method of distribution, the moment of disbursement, and the conditions attached. Without these guarantees, some funding might have positive effects, while other funding only increases the amount of money involved in campaigns causing insignificant or only adverse effects.

### *Intra-party democracy and underrepresented groups*

The issue of underrepresentation of certain groups – notably women, youth, indigenous, ethnic groups and/or disabled people – is a very important subject of discussion in many African, Asian and Latin American developing democracies. No consensus exists on the preferred method of increasing participation and representation. In many developing as well as more established democracies, quota systems, especially for women, are subject of wide discussion. These quota systems may come in many forms, including (1) a (presidential) nomination of women in Parliament after elections (e.g. Kenya), (2) an obligatory party quota (e.g. Belgium), and (3) a voluntary party quota (e.g. South Africa). Quotas are considered to be very controversial, yet many countries, including Argentina, South Africa and Uganda, have introduced gender quotas in public elections in the last decade (International IDEA, 2003). Some see quotas as a violation of the principles of fairness and competence, while others see them as a compensation for structural barriers that prevent fair competition. The controversy in the debate has made it hard to agree upon a quota system and even harder to implement in many countries. Proponents argue that a fifty percent women representation in politics is beneficial to the representation of women's interests as well as in line with the justice principle of equality of results. Opponents, however, reject this line of argumentation by calling upon individualistic principles of justice that target equal opportunities in stead of equal outcome. Since the structural factors hindering women participation are usually cultural of nature and very difficult to grasp, the debate remains very complex. Although no consensus exists on the instruments to accomplish a higher level of women participation, the objective as such to stimulate participation and representation of women is not that often debated. Therefore, other – less controversial – instruments to stimulate participation need to be considered in cases in which quotas do not seem to work or are not likely to be accepted or implemented. This could avoid stigmatization of women – which is said to have happened in Uganda to some extent – and could leave some room for different party strategies or instruments to reach common objectives of increased women

participation. Furthermore, if one would engage in quotas, it might be wise to install temporary quotas for a number of two or more election periods, in order to test the consequences of these measures in the specific country context. Moreover, a temporary quota might be effective in giving a boost to women participation, structurally increasing the number of women in politics.

Alternatively, one could engage in other 'softer' approaches to stimulate participation of women and other underrepresented groups. Some reform discussions have, for instance, included measures to include party funding especially targeted at participation of these groups. One could distribute part of the public resources according to the number of women in Parliament or other political or party bodies. Furthermore, one could instead invest heavily in women's platforms and capacity-building events. Moreover, many members of political parties belonging to a specific underrepresented group would prefer to receive direct funding from the party, state or international organizations, in order to develop their own activities and policy. Economic empowerment of groups as well as individual candidates might overcome a number of financial barriers for youth or indigenous. However, although these instruments might have considerable results, it needs to be understood that a change in a dominant culture and the rule of money and networks will take a considerable amount of time. To conclude, quota systems might be profitable in internal party democratization, but only if implementation is guaranteed by a sufficient amount of political support. If this is lacking, one should look for softer approaches including economic empowerment of underrepresented groups or output steering.

### *Intra-party democracy, primaries and party unity*

One reason not to engage in opening up of the political party to include open primaries as election mechanism for the political leader is a possible threat to party unity and stability. There seems to be a perceived trade off between party unity and openness of leadership elections. The very first party leader primaries of Guatemala, for instance, organized by right-wing *Partido de Avanzada Nacional* (PAN) resulted in a winning candidate – Oscar Berger – that formed his own coalition party after primaries, *Gran Alianza Nacional* (GANA). A second attempt was made by this new coalition party in 2006 to organize another primary election in the road to the national elections of fall 2007. The primaries were, however, postponed after two out of three candidates withdrew their candidacies and only one candidate remained. This postponement meant that no successful primaries have been organized so far in Guatemala. Two African examples, Kenya and Zambia, can provide us with some experiences with primaries that have resulted in party splits as well. Especially when party structures are weak, or when parties are actually opportunistic coalitions of political leaders in the road to upcoming elections, primaries pose a large risk to party unity and stability. The quite new coalition ODM-Kenya, for instance, feared coalition instability in picking their presidential candidate, beginning of 2007. Consensus politics are often referred to and used as more stable strategy for weak or developing political parties. A weak party structure is often not sufficient to guarantee that defeated candidates will accept their loss and either support the new leader or leave politics altogether. A split from the party, including supporters, is often the result. Primaries are only effective in contributing to internal party democracy while not distorting the party's stability if some conditions are upheld. The first condition – as elaborated above – is a basic party structure and some cohesiveness within the party. A second condition is the ability of rank-and-file members to actually participate in elections, passively as well as actively. If primaries are by de-jure or de-facto circumstances only open to the same old rich and powerful elite that mainly takes care

of its own kind or if members are not well informed about the choices they face, no increase in decentralized decision-making or improvement in output will occur. Primaries have on occasion proven to be mere tools of a promotional agenda, while not contributing to the empowerment of the rank and file. Empowerment of at least a considerable part of the members through capacity building, the provision of more or less objective information on the different candidates, and the lowering of barriers to participate in primaries are fundamental conditions in providing democratic primary elections.

If these conditions of party organization, cohesiveness, empowerment, information and low entry barriers are not met, primary elections will not have their potential democratic result and other methods may need to be considered in order to improve internal party democracy while retaining party stability. The election by delegates' conferences and a consensus procedure are both viable options, although the former would require the same conditions as primaries, but only to a somewhat lesser extent. The latter option of consensus procedure is an interesting option to consider, since such a procedure could include all potential candidates as well as representatives from groups within the party. In this procedure, party policies and – usually more importantly – party positions can be agreed upon by all, which would result in a compromise that has benefits for all. Even if one would decide upon organizing primaries, such a procedure could keep the party stable by dividing party positions – e.g. potential ministers – equally among groups before elections. Although this procedure is obviously not as open to anyone as primaries, the end result could in many cases be more democratic than a totally open system , and needs therefore to be considered in democratization practices.

### *Intra-party democracy and floor crossing*

Finally, we discuss an important feature in many volatile political systems: floor crossing. It is considered a major element of political volatility, disrupting political clarity and causing especially problems for opposition parties. It entails that MPs basically leave their parties and vote with a new party while they do not give up their seat. This poses problems for political parties and their members, since accountability for voting behaviour is completely lost and the party ticket does not seem to have much value for the party. MPs can be seen as main decision makers in Parliament and when no link exists between these MPs and the party, the latter loses its influence in politics, exacerbating the role of person-based politics. It can be argued that the process of composing candidate lists, and internal elections, becomes worthless, if no link of communication and accountability between a party and MP can be upheld. Some countries have regulated floor crossing in order to address the problems of volatility and lack of accountability in order to strengthen the role of political parties in the system. The cases of Kenya, Malawi and South Africa provide some examples of regulation on floor crossing in Africa. Although Kenya actually has a regulation against floor crossing, implementation basically lacks and floor crossing informally occurs very often (Wanhoji, 2003). The Kenyan regulations, however, would demand a by-election in order to get a fresh mandate after defection. The problem in implementation is that this should be officially announced and put in writing, after which the Speaker has the possibility to call by-elections. In practice, this procedure never happens making some political representatives call for a better implementation. As long as implementation is not improved, a ruling government or president can continue to 'buy' many MPs in government. In Malawi, a similar discussion is causing a small riot. A famous section of the Constitution, section 65, forbids official floor crossing with the consequence of by-elections, but has been protested against in court by among others President Mutharika. At the time of writing, the case was still pending in

court, but it has been noted that implementation could lead to 70 out of 139 vacant seats and a similar number of by-elections. Since any action like this would lead to a large loss in Presidential support in Parliament, the discussion is highly political and sensitive, making constructive policy-making and discussion a difficult task. Finally, South Africa has a somewhat different regulation allowing floor crossing only when it concerns a defection of at least 10 percent of the originating party, which is of course very opportune for dominant ruling party African National Congress (ANC), since they are large enough not to be bothered by small groups' or single persons' defections. Although ANC rarely faces problems of floor crossing, they do reap the benefits from a continuously growing parliamentary fraction. This strengthens the ANC even more. In all three cases, regulation seems to benefit one group of political parties more than another, making the issue highly politically sensitive.

The problem of floor crossing is quite universal and basically follows from the standard lament about political parties in developing democracies (Carothers, 2006). Some problems, however, are even more important to consider in the case of volatile political landscapes. These political systems are usually not well developed and a lacking structural organization of political parties even exacerbates the political system's volatility, and vice versa. The link between internal party democracy and floor crossing is highly relevant since the relation between MPs and their party determines the actual influence of rank-and-file members in any constituency. Since MPs can be considered to be a central element of a political party and elected by party members to participate in elections on a party ticket, their accountability is essential to the decentralization of decision-making power. Although the implementation of certain regulations can help circumvent floor crossing, it might also cause some negative effects with individual MPs frustrating their parties in other ways. Moreover, other instruments may be considered as well. A number of political representatives call for fines on floor crossing that need to be paid by floor-crossing MPs to their original party, since that party provided the national campaign that helped them get elected. Some call this compensation for campaign expenditures. The challenge is to find an implementable system in which stabilization is enhanced while not creating too many adverse effects. Conditions of anti floor-crossing measures therefore include implementation capacity by an independent authority while not creating too much barriers and frustration for individual MPs to fulfil their mandate.

## IV. Conclusions

In this contribution five main challenges in intra-party democratization processes in volatile political systems have been elaborated. It has been argued that conditions need to be set under which certain intra-party democratic modalities can operate effectively and contribute to the increased necessity for decentralization and empowerment of underrepresented groups in already weak and volatile political contexts. Volatile contexts call for specific measures that on one hand stabilize the political dynamics, while on the other hand contribute to the internal functioning and decentralization within political parties. It has been argued that measures and their effects need to be considered at three levels: the legal framework, party regulations and actual practice. The link between these levels points to the elaborated problems of implementation and can provide an integrated strategic plan of instruments targeting all three levels. The following five challenges have been elaborated.

Firstly, challenges have been identified on the legal framework, including (1) the proper enforcement of democratic mechanisms, (2) the stimulation of consensus procedures

in order to move beyond minimum reform packages, and (3) awareness and capacity-building events to embody rules and regulations. Secondly, the provision of sufficient public party funding should be disbursed yearly and structurally spent on long-term or participatory events or objectives. Discussion on public funding should be stimulated and proper regulation and targeting encouraged. Thirdly, the participation of underrepresented groups has been identified as major challenge. Strategies may involve controversial and difficult to implement quota systems or 'softer' approaches as funding and capacity building. It is argued that the consequences of the former may not be accepted by a majority and therefore may need to rely on guiding instruments as party funding or short-term instalment of quota systems only. Fourthly, a perceived trade-off between primaries and party unity has been discussed, which requires an adoption of elective instruments to the state of the political party's organization, cohesiveness, empowerment and information provision. Consensus methods may be necessary when primaries or delegates' elections would be an organizational problem or pose difficulties on the party's unity. Fifthly and finally, a decrease in volatility can be realized by an effective and implementable method of diminishing floor-crossing, using financial or legal incentives. Barriers should diminish floor-crossing activity while still leaving some options open for individual MPs to fulfil their individual mandate. These five challenges are the core of the development of internal party democracy in volatile political contexts, and provide on the one hand a wide spectrum of instruments of internal democratization, while on the other hand adapt the regular elective instruments to the specific context of high political volatility.

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