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*Department of Administration and Organization Theory*

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**Master's Thesis in Public Administration**

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**[Democratization in Swaziland]**

**[Beheading yet another king whilst the world watches]**

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## **Acronyms**

ACTSA	Action Trust Southern Africa
AU	African Union
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations
ANC	African National Congress
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreements
EU	European Union
FSEJ	Foundation for Socio Economic Justice
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
PEPFAR	U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PUDEMO	People's United Democratic Movement
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SWADEPA	Swazi Democratic Party
SUDF	Swaziland United Democratic Front
SNAT	Swaziland National Association of Teachers
SNL	Swazi Nation Land
SSN	Swaziland Solidarity Network

SWAYOCO	Swaziland Youth Congress
TDL	Title Deed Land
TUCOSWA	Trade Union Congress of Swaziland
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## **Swazi Concepts**

**Imimemo**-gatherings summoned by the king or chief in traditional households for subjects to provide tribute labour

**Incwala**- annual ritual performed by the king

**INgwenyama**- the King in Council

**Kuhlehla**- providing tribute labour to the king or chief

**Kukhonta**-the process of getting allocated Swazi Nation Land under a chief

**Kwetfula**- giving of gifts to the king or chief

**Libandla**- community elders

**Emabandla**- committees of appointees of the king/iNgwenyama

## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates why Swaziland remained authoritarian state in a context where all its neighbours democratized. The world was overwhelmed by the democratization wave that swept the global south and Africa. Scholars and students of political science, public administration and economics have been trying to understand the democratization period and the reasons behind the advent demise of military regimes and one-party rule. Democracy became a household name across the globe. Western governments championed democracy and good governance in their foreign policies. The World Bank, the IMF and other supranational bodies used democracy and good governance as indicators for governance to access loans.

The extensive study on '*Democratic experiments in Africa*' by (Bratton and Van de Walle1997) points out that in 1989 there were 29 countries that were under one party rule and 11 ruled by military regimes. But by 1994 not even one party rule remained. Most countries had competitive multiparty elections in the beginning of the 1990's. In Southern Africa, the armed struggles in Namibia and South Africa and the civil war in Mozambique came to an end in the beginning of the 1990's and ushered these countries into multiparty democracies. Despite the global democratization euphoria about the democratization in the world some regimes were untouched by the wave. Swaziland is one of those. The Swazi monarchy has been able to sustain its grip on political power without giving any space to political parties. To me as a student it is a puzzle how the regime could maintain its grip onto power and not democratize when all its neighbours did so.

The thesis focuses on the failure of Swaziland to democratize at the peak of the democratization wave and the subsequent years after the wave stabilized. The thesis specifically studies the role of the external actors who are all powerful enough to exert pressure on the regime. The study also outlines the nature of the Swazi regime and gathers a perspective of the internal actors who are lobbying the external actors for support and the kind of support they seek from the external actors. The theoretical framework of the thesis is founded in three theories; historical institutionalism, linkage and leverage theory and international relations theories. The study uses these theories to uncover a deeper understanding of the role of the external actors. Historical institutionalism helps to trace the roots of authoritarianism in Swaziland, which the paper shows has its roots in the advent of colonial rule. The institution of the monarchy transformed itself to

cooperate with the colonial government to benefit from the exploitation the general population. A path dependency developed over the decades as the monarchy centralizes power around itself and eliminating any political threats to its rule. The unholy relationship between the monarchy and some external actors was not only political but also economic. This relationship helped transform the monarchy into a conduit for foreign investment in Swaziland. The linkage and leverage theory developed by Levistky and Way (2010) for studying democratization argues that democratization is influenced by the Western external actors who pursue democracy. Their hypothesis is that whereby there are linkages between the external actor and the target regime, the external actor has more leverage and a high chance of democratization. These ties are economic, social, technocratic, inter-governmental, transnational civil society and communication. The study uses the international relations theories; realism and liberalism, to understand the behaviour of the external actors. The establishment of a democratic political dispensation is not only limited to internal actors but the international context matters too (Whitehead 1996). Lastly, the thesis concludes that the transition to democracy in Swaziland could have best been achieved by the cooperation between the internal and external actors pilling pressure on the regime. Democracy cannot be imported from abroad, however the internal actors need solidarity from the external in pursuit of democracy.

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This study could not have been possible without the support I received from individuals and organizations. I cannot name all those who significantly contribute to this work because of limited space. I would however give special thanks to SAIH and NSO for pioneering the new programme in Norway called Students at Risk. My special thanks go to the Norwegian government that offered me the opportunity to study in Norway.

My supervisor Tor Halvorsen has played an important part in guiding me in this study. I acknowledge the contributions I received from the Democracy and Development research group. I cannot forget to thank my colleague and comrade Sait Matty Jaw from The Gambia who was studying an equally authoritarian regime led by then dictator Yahya Jammeh. I have learnt a lot from all these great students, scholars and researchers.

Special thanks go to my family back in Swaziland for the continued support. I might not have seen them in over three (3) years now since I left home for exile and do not know when to see them. Their unconditional love has kept me going during my stay in Norway.

**Dedications**

This work is dedicated to the people of Swaziland who are in a bitter struggle for freedom and democracy. My work is dedicated to the magnitudes of our people who are living in precarious situation of poverty, disease, hunger and deprivation because of poor and bad politics that enriches a few at the expense of the majority.

Special dedication to my comrade and fellow co-accused Zonke Dlamini who is serving 15 years in Swaziland for fake terrorism charges. We were together in prison from 2010 until I left him in 2014 in prison, when I was acquitted of the charges I was facing. I do not know when we shall meet but this study goes a long way in our quest for freedom and democracy. He has remained an inspiration to me. When I remember my comrade I vividly remember the cold prison floors. This work is further dedicated to all my comrades who are in exile, and the suffering masses of our people and those comrades killed by the regime. I pay my respect with this study. The struggle continues and victory is certain.

**My role in democratization struggle**

My personal interest in this study has been triggered by my political activism as I am part of the movement that calls for democracy in Swaziland. I have been engaged in mass mobilization and organizing for democracy. I have been a political activist in Swaziland for over 10 years now. I joined the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), which is the youth league of People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and became its President in 2010. Both organizations are fighting for constitutional multiparty democracy and are banned under the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. And the journey has not been easy, it has had personal costs to me. I have endured torture, beatings, detentions and imprisonment for my political activism and eventually being forced into exile. Currently, I am living in exile after I was forced to leave home in 2014 in fear of yet another arrest. Being in exile has afforded me to advance our struggle for democracy at a different level. One has been able to raise the political profile of our cause outside Swaziland. It is part of my organization to raise awareness and lobby for external actors to act against the regime.

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to understand why Swaziland remained authoritarian state in a context where all its neighbours democratized. This chapter provides a general basis for the study. It presents a brief background of the kingdom of Swaziland which is the study case, a statement of the problem, the objective of the study and the research questions that the study seeks to uncover.

### 1.1 Background of the study setting

Swaziland is a tiny kingdom bordered by Mozambique and the Republic of South Africa. It has a population of about 1.2 million. Swaziland became a British protectorate at the end of the Anglo-Boer war in 1902 and gained its independence in 1968. At independence Swaziland was a constitutional monarchy with political parties allowed to contest for parliamentary seats. This was short lived as political parties were banned by the then King Sobhuza in 1973 up to the present day.

Swaziland is classified by the World Bank as a lower middle-income country. The GDP of the country stands at 3000 USD and the economic growth rate is at 1.7 percent in 2015<sup>1</sup>. The economy of the Kingdom is agro-based; sugar cane farming and sugar production is taking the lead in the economy. The country has over the years received over 50 percent of its revenues from the Southern African Customs Union which was established in 1910. Despite the country being classified as a lower middle income one, there are glaring inequalities that exist amongst the people. Currently, Swaziland is sitting at the top as the most unequal country in the world<sup>2</sup>, according to the Oxfam report of 2017. Swaziland has 63 percent of the population living in poverty. This is coupled with a high percentage of HIV/AIDS prevalence in the world standing at 26 percent. The life expectancy has been tragically low for decades, presently it stands at 49 years.

### 1.2 Statement of the problem

In the late 1980's to early 1990's democracy became the household name for the world politics promoted by the USA and the European Union and international financial institutions

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/swaziland/overview>

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/bp-inclusive-growth-africa-020517-en.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp-inclusive-growth-africa-020517-en.pdf)

emphasized good governance. The wave of democracy was sparked by the collapse of the Soviet Union and many countries in Eastern Europe started embracing democracy. Military dictatorships began to fall in Latin America (Bratton and Van de Walle 1997). Most Sub Saharan Africa countries started to open for multi-party democracy when the one-party state regime crumbled (Huntington 1991). There were however a few exceptions and one of these is Swaziland.

In all parts of the world, people have been (and still are) engaged in bitter struggles against authoritarian regimes in quest for freedom and democracy. These struggles by ordinary people have not come easy as they face persecution from such authoritarian regimes. Swaziland is one of those countries that do not allow the exercise of civil and political liberties. Freedom House report (2016) states that Swaziland is no free<sup>3</sup>. Political rights are curtailed, as political parties cannot contest for political power. All political powers are centralized around the institution of the monarchy and there is no political space for the general population.

Swaziland gained her independence from Britain in 1968, during that period it was a fully-fledged constitutional monarchy with political parties allowed to contest for political parties until 1973. Swaziland had the last multiparty elections in 1972. On 12<sup>th</sup> April 1973, the then King Sobhuza decided to ban all political parties and all political activities and assumed all judicial, legislative and executive powers onto himself. This is an extract from the King's proclamation of 1973; (Appendix 1)

***'Now THEREFORE I, SOBHUZA II, King of Swaziland, hereby declare that, in collaboration with my Cabinet Ministers and supported by the whole nation, I have assumed supreme power in the Kingdom of Swaziland and that all Legislative, Executive and Judicial power is vested in myself.'***

It was not unique to Swaziland to repeal the independence constitution, rather it was a trend in the newly independent African states to establish absolute centralized power under a one-party system. The only difference in Swaziland is that this all political parties were banned and power centralized around the monarchy and which is interesting part for this study is that when the democracy wave was sweeping across Africa in the 1990's and 2000's, Swaziland remained

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<sup>3</sup><https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2016/swaziland>

unchanged. The absolute monarchy established in 1973 still stands and political parties remain banned.

The advent of a new national constitution in 2005 did not change the political landscape in Swaziland. All powers are still conferred to the King as was in the 1973 King's Proclamation. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland, 2005, Chapter II, 11, guarantees the protection of the King and *iNgwenyama* in respect of legal proceedings.' 'The King and *iNgwenyama* shall be immune from: (a) suit or legal process in any cause in respect of all things done or omitted to be done by him; and (b) being summoned to appear as a witness in any civil or criminal proceeding.' The lack of democracy negatively affects the protection of human rights. The regime enacted the Suppression of Terrorism Act in 2008, and this Act outlaws the leading political movement, People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and its Youth League, Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO). Torture, arrests, some extra-judicial killings and forced exile of activists is a reality in Swaziland.

Internationally respected governance assessments paint a gloomy picture of Swaziland with respect to human rights. Ranking Swaziland 140<sup>th</sup> out of 167 countries, the Economist Intelligence Unit's *Democracy Index 2014* classified Swaziland as an authoritarian state.<sup>4</sup> The *2015 Ibrahim Index of African Governance* ranks Swaziland 49<sup>th</sup> out of 54 countries on Participation and Human Rights, the lowest in the *Southern African Development Community (SADC)* region.<sup>5</sup> The ranking succinctly shows the lack of democracy and political freedom. The International Trade Union Congress (ITUC) in 2015 ranked Swaziland amongst the worst ten (10) countries for workers rights<sup>6</sup>. This study is therefore relevant in understanding why the international community has not pressured the Swazi regime to democratize.

### **1.3 Justification of the study**

Swaziland is in the Southern African region where there are thriving democracies such as Botswana and South Africa. In all the Southern African countries, except Swaziland, political parties are allowed to contest for political office, but not in Swaziland. The King continues to

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<sup>4</sup><https://knoema.com/GDI2015JAN/democracy-index-2014?country=1001410-swaziland>

<sup>5</sup>[http://static.moibrahimfoundation.org/u/2015/10/02201455/48\\_Swaziland.pdf](http://static.moibrahimfoundation.org/u/2015/10/02201455/48_Swaziland.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.itucsi.org/IMG/pdf/survey\\_global\\_rights\\_index\\_2015\\_en.pdf](http://www.itucsi.org/IMG/pdf/survey_global_rights_index_2015_en.pdf)

rule with unlimited powers as political parties are outlawed and he appoints the head of Cabinet, the Prime Minister. The members of public are spectators in the political affairs of the country. Those who are brave enough to call for change are severely suppressed through blatant force by the regime

It is however important to note that democratization took a slump in the past decade argues Freedom House report 2016<sup>7</sup>. The Freedom House report cites the wavering support for democracy promotion beyond the borders of democratic states as one of the main explanatory factors for the decline of democracy in the past decade. The beginning of the 1990's is when external actors, such as USA and EU were taking an active role in promoting democratization. But Swaziland managed to escape the scrutinizing eye of the external actors.

“Swaziland as the last absolute monarchy in Africa remains a serious stain in democratic South Africa's immediate neighbourhood. Yet contrary to most authoritarian regimes in Africa at the end of the Cold War, the Swazi king and his royalist entourage in Swaziland found themselves in a comparatively better position vis-à-vis both external leverage and internal threats to their rule. They were able to successfully delay demands for multi-party elections until the third wave of democratization in Africa lost momentum” (Booth 2000, p. 17–38) cited in van Eerd 2016, p. 151)

The reluctance of the regime to democratize coupled with the apathy of the international community is interesting in the case of Swaziland. International actors have made significant strides in pressurising regimes to democratize, especially in the developing world and in Africa. In the context of Swaziland external actors have overwhelming leverage that they could have used and use to pressurize the regime to democratize. The motivating question for this study is what has made the international actors fail to put pressure of the Swazi regime, yet Swaziland is a small country with an economy that is dependent on donations from outside and trade (including preferential trade). The lack of democracy is so easy even for a layman to understand, because Swaziland is not even a pseudo democracy, it is a non-democracy since political parties are not allowed to contest for political power.

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<sup>7</sup>[https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH\\_FITW\\_Report\\_2016.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_FITW_Report_2016.pdf)

Many studies have been conducted on the transition to democracy in sub Saharan Africa generally and Southern Africa specifically. I appreciate the cross-sectional study by Bratton and van de Walle (1997) on the transition of regimes to democracy in Africa provides good insights about the history and the complexity of the transition to democracy in most African countries, but like most studies on democratization in Africa, they fail to locate the democratization in Swaziland. One reason may be that the Swazi regime is an absolute monarchy based on ‘culture and tradition’ and it differs from most dictatorships in Africa which were mainly one party authoritarian regimes, military regimes or regimes based on religion as the monarchies of the Gulf States, or Arab world. This study therefore intends to enrich the study of transition to democracy by studying a ‘deviant case from those African regimes that have embraced democracy in the third democracy wave of the 1990’s.

There is growing literature on the study of international organizations as promoters of democracy across the world and in the developing world in particular. In the case of Swaziland, the external influence dimension of regime transition has been understudied. Emphasis has been on the internal actors weaknesses to explain their failure to bring about democratic change. Not much academic research has been done to study the role of external actors in the democratization of Swaziland. This study aims to make a meaningful contribution to the literature about the understanding of the role of external actors in the transition process in Swaziland and to serve as a basis for future research.

#### **1.4 Objective of the study**

The objective of this research is to study the democratization struggle in Swaziland and why it did not succeed during the third wave of democratization in the 1990’s that swept across Africa to the present day. The main focus of the study focuses on studying the role of external actors in the democratization struggle.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

Developing the research question is the most critical stage in the research design after the selection of the research topic. Research questions must be easy, clear to understand and unambiguous to be able to lead to the data anticipated. Research questions should be “...specific so that data can be analysed” (Creswell 2007, p. 105)

***Main Research question***

What has been the role of external actors in the democratization struggle in Swaziland?

***Specific questions:***

1. What kind of pressure has the external actors applied on the Swazi regime to compel it to democratize?
2. How has trade agreements and donor aid been used to foster democracy in Swaziland?
3. What are the expectations of the internal Swazi actors from the external actors?
4. How has the Swazi diaspora lobbied the external actors to pile pressure on the regime?

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Context and the History of Swaziland**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the history of Swaziland beginning with the first interaction the Swazi people had with the white settlers who were expanding their territory in Southern Africa. It further highlights events that unfolded in the pre and post-independence era that were critical in laying the foundation for the absolute monarchy that exists today.

#### **2.1 Understanding the Swazi Regime.**

Looking back into the historical events that are the bedrock of the development of the undemocratic regime is significant in seeking to understand the regime. For the purpose of this paper, the discussion of the historical events and the integration of Swaziland into the international economic system are limited to the period of the first interaction of the Swazi monarchy with the settlers/colonialists which happened around 1850's under the rule of King Mswati 2. Swaziland was isolated from colonial rule that was quickly spreading throughout the Southern African region until the period around 1850's (Crush 1980). Swaziland was quickly integrated into the regional economy dominated by white settlers. The development of colonial rule introduced Swaziland into the international economic system. The need for labour in the mines in the Transvaal (now South Africa) opened Swaziland as a source of labour and arable land for plantations and grazing area. The interaction of the monarchy with the settlers is what changed the whole social and political fabric of the Swazi society, creating the royal supremacy disguised as culture that is at the centre of the undemocratic nature of the regime. The state of Swaziland functions on a dual tier governance model (traditional and modern), whose roots are entrenched in the colonial past of indirect rule brutally introduced by the British administration. (Levin 1998)

In understanding the dualism in Swaziland, it is important to look back during the colonial period. Mamdani (1996) argues that indirect rule was used by the colonial powers to conquer the colonies whereby colonies were divided by land and law. Swaziland was annexed by the British from the Boers in the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer war which ended in 1902 with the defeat of the Boers. The hut tax was introduced in Swaziland in 1898, by the Transvaal administration, but

was not enforced as the Anglo-Boer war broke out in 1899. Eventually, the first hut tax was collected in 1903 after the annexation by the British (Gillis 1999). The proliferation of a police force in the Swaziland was in 1902, after the end of the Anglo-Boer war and their duty was to quell any resistance from the Swazi and collect the newly introduced taxes. The beginning of the hut tax was not supported by chiefs until 1907 when the land partitioning took place crippling the power of chiefs. But as the dwindling revenues collected because of defaulting, the colonial administration compelled chiefs to be part of the tax collection. Chiefs were given the powers to arrest and bring defaulters forth for prosecution. Colonial tax pushed more males into the wage labour primarily in the mines in South Africa (Gillis 1999).

It is the land partitioning done in 1907 by the British that negatively changed the socio-economic and political landscape. The land partitioning took two thirds of the most arable land to the control of the settlers and the local population was crammed into the remaining third. Simelane (2002) asserts that this made land to be scarce for the local people thus “providing powerful leverage for the monarchy and Swazi chiefs over their subjects who were on the whole peasants who depended on access to land for their reproduction” (Neocosmos 1987 cited in Levin (1990, p. 49). “The patent inequity of alienating two thirds of the land surface to the crown ...while providing the Swazi with the remaining one third is explicable both in terms of the desire to expropriate land for direct white settlement and capitalist production, and secondarily, as being a concrete means to re- structure the self-sufficient indigenous agricultural base to acquire control over Swazi labour power ...” Crush (1980, p. 85).

The establishment of rural and urban areas was founded on inequality between the settlers and the native Swazis. The urban areas were strict preserve of the white settlers. Rural areas were strictly for the native Swazis. The duality of the system introduced under colonial administration and enforced by the monarchy post-independence meant to create a division between the rural and urban. “Political inequality went alongside civil inequality. Both were grounded on legal dualism” (Mamdani 1996, p. 17). “The important role of Swazi law and custom, even today, is endorsed by the fact that Swaziland is still practising a system of legal and judicial segregation...More-over, this system of legal segregation resulted in a dual court system: Swazi law and custom may be applied only in Swazi courts and common law in magistrate's courts and the High Court” (Whelpton 2005, p. 146). Those living under freehold land had rights and were

protected by modern (civil) laws whereas those in the rural areas do not have rights but they are subjected to customary law which is only defined by the king and chiefs. Those in the urban areas and freehold farms were the white settlers and then years later a few 'civilised' local people who worked for the colonial administration. To further illustrate the lingering legacy of the colonial legacy, in 2011 Lawyers were engaged in a protracted boycott of Swaziland's courts after the then chief Justice had issued a directive that all traditional (customary) matters are outside the jurisdiction of courts. This effectively means that those subjected under customary law in the rural areas cannot get seek justice from civil courts.

Under indirect rule the local people did not have political rights. Customary land tenure introduced foreign elements such as tribute labour, forced labour, collection of taxes, forced removals from land (Mamdani 1996) and '*kukhonta*' fees (paid to the chief to access Swazi Nation Land) for Swaziland. In addition to the land rights, the King had judicial and administrative powers and legislative to rule over native lands that was governed by customary law (Lange et.al 2005). These judicial and administrative powers and control over land was extended from the King to the chiefs for effective control of rural areas. There was no separation of powers which is central in building a modern and democratic state. Mamdani argues that "...indirect rule signified a mediated-decentralized-despotism" (1996, p. 17). The crux of customary power was its authoritarian nature as it was oratory and not written (Mamdani 1996). This marked the beginning of an absolute monarchy. The first taste of absolute powers for the Monarchy in Swaziland was supported by the colonial administration through indirect rule.

## **2.2 Political struggles pre and post-independence era**

The run-up to independence from the beginning of the 1960 was a politically turbulent moment for Swaziland. This was a period of political jostling for Swazi political groupings, the monarchy and the white settlers who wanted to extend their economic gains in Swaziland, all pushing for their interests in the constitution making process in preparation for independence that was around the corner. Political parties started emerging, from the now educated elites in Swaziland who wanted a truly democratic state. The pan African NNLC was the strongest party fighting for independence.

Sobhuza formed his own political movement in 1964 named Imbokodvo National Movement (INM). The INM was established through the advice to Sobhuza by "Van, Wyk de Vries a

lawyer and member of neo-fascist wing of the Nationalist party, the Broederbond Society” (Kowet 1978, p.174). In the preparation for the independence national elections held in 1967, INM formed an alliance with the whites only United Swaziland Association (USA), an anti-British but pro South African conservative group, dominated by white settlers from South Africa, who wanted to maintain the King’s grip on minerals and land and their policy was an extension of the National Party of South Africa. Their business interest would be secure under a monarchy’s dictatorship than with a truly democratic state that would have had a pan-African agenda as was espoused by NNLC, a strong party at the time. (Kowet 1978; Booth 1983)

The colonial administration granted the monarchy (INM) and the white settlers alliance (United Swaziland Association) its wish in 1965 by adopting a new document that was latter (1967) was to be adopted as the independence constitution and the opposition (NNLC) were denied participation in the exercise. The adopted document “did not establish a Westminster kind of constitutional monarchy with little political power” but it created a state whereby the wealth of the nation is held by the King with no checks and balances. (Booth 1978, p. 68). The same document granted the monarchy to appoint a fifth (1/5) of the 30 members of assembly whilst the rest were elected from constituencies and half of the 12-member senate. In the election in 1967 the INM and United Swaziland Association won all seats in the legislature beating the Swaziland Democratic Party (SDP) and NNLC. This was first past the post system modelled along the British electoral system. The opposition parties contested the outcome of the elections and sent appeals to OAU and UN, but nothing changed on the ground. Swaziland was officially granted independence on 06 September 1968.

In 12 April 1973, the monarchy was able to finally consolidate its powers by abrogating the independence constitution which had curtailed some of its powers. It assumed executive, judicial and legislative powers unto itself and banned all political parties and activity. This was the beginning of an absolute monarchy and the death of democratic governance in Swaziland. The abrogation of the independence constitution could be traced to this ugly past where his power as the king was unlimited in controlling rural communities. Presently, the rural people are still subjected to customary rule defined by the King and chiefs.

At present, there are few ruling monarchies in the world including Swaziland (Brooker 2009). Bratton and Van de Walle (1997) in an extensive comparative study on transition to democracy

in Africa classified Swaziland as a personal dictatorship. The ruling monarchy falls under the personal rule. “Personal rule is an elitist political system composed of the privileged and powerful few in which the majority are usually immobilized, unorganized, and relatively powerless to command the attention and action of government” (Jackson and Rosberg 1984, p. 423-4). According to Hyden (2012), personal rule is founded on building relations of power based on the control of access to resources that other members of the public need but cannot get on their own. The Swazi regime as Bratton and Van de Walle rightly pointed out has some traits of personal rule. Some of these important traits include the supremacy of the King, the use of patronage and clientelism. However, I argue that it is not entirely personal rule as the power is institutionalised under a monarchy and where power is inherited making it slightly different from ‘big man’ rule as Hyden attests. The King assumes a well-established system of power and domination in the institution of the monarchy. In controlling the disbursement of resources to loyalists and friends the Swazi regime is in two folds. The Swazi regime is based on dualism between tradition and modern systems.

### **2.3 The traditional system.**

The absolute monarchy in Swaziland is different from military regimes or one party regime because it is based on traditions. A hereditary monarchy lies securely on subjects unquestioning acceptance of immemorial tradition (Rostow 1970). The rule of the King manifests itself in the traditional belief that the King has supreme authority over the nation and is immune from criticism. The legitimacy of the monarchy is not derived from charisma of the leader as in ‘big man’ rule. Its legitimacy is drawn from tradition rather than from any democratic institutions. (Woods 2012) points out that the legitimacy of the Swazi regime is founded on a myth that the nation cannot survive without the monarchy, as the monarchy is like a father figure. The performance of rituals such as *incwala* (annual ritual) helps to mystify the King and consolidate the power of the monarchy. The traditional system has its roots in a superficial culture carefully created by both colonialism and King Sobhuza as a form of political control and for capital accumulation. The actions of people, politically, socially, or economically are carried out as an in-built habit (Vilakazi, cited in Carter and O’Meara 1979).

Kowet (1978, p. 59) in his work on '*Land, labour and politics in Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland*' has been able trace the powers and responsibilities of a chief before the advent of colonial rule in Swaziland.

### ***The power of Chiefs before colonial rule***

- A) Distribution of dwelling lands
- B) Allocation of arable and grazing lands
- C) Judicial functions
- D) Religious functions

Before land appropriation in 1907, land was in abundance, people used to move from this chiefdom to the next and a good chief was the one who attracted as many people and distributed land as widely as possible to the people. Politically, chief's powers were constrained by the *libandla* (community elders) (Kowet 1978). "In principle chiefs were not allowed to be despotic" (Kowet 1978, p. 59). In Swaziland, there is still a saying that 'a king or chief is a king or chief by the people' meaning that there is an expected mutual respect between the people and the traditional leader. The relationship between the traditional rulers and the people does not however mean the political setup was democratic as it was purely feudal, but completely different from the prototype that developed with the advent of the alliance between colonial rule and the traditional leadership. This is no longer the reality now, but it is now frequently used by the monarchy to fool the gullible masses not to question its abuse of power.

The shortage of land because of the 1907 Land Appropriation Act, meant that land became a scarce resource. Chiefs realised the power they had over control of land allocation. Their political power shifted dramatically as they had to rely on the protection from the colonial administration instead of taking advice from the *libandla* (community elders). The alliance between traditional leaders and colonial administration left the masses helpless as they were now exploited by both the traditional leaders and the white settlers. This situation has not changed as chiefs are part of the ruling royal aristocracy and living through extortion of the rural people. "The chiefs were expected to control the political attitudes of their people and provide labour for European employment, thereby preventing the disruption of the colonial economy" (Kowet 1978, p. 147). The use of chiefs by the ruling regime has continued post-independence to control

the people from questioning the oppressive royal rule, through the threat of losing access to land. Evictions are reality to some who dare to question the existing powers that be.

“In Swaziland, it is not possible to develop a systemic account of state power in the absence of understanding the creation and the reproduction of traditional ideology.” (Levin 1990, p. 46). The reproduction of traditionalism is sugar coated as ‘Swazi culture’ meant to entrench the royal hegemony. The regime presents the dictatorship as Swazi culture. Bayart contends that “...tradition ...we now know to have largely invented first by the coloniser and then by the local social groups who hoped to gain some advantage from domination” (2009, p. 11). The King and chiefs were given powers by the colonial administration to make rules if they do not conflict with the ones of the colonial administration (Mamdani 1996). The traditional leaders “were given control of customary law and because it lacked formalization, were able to mould and wield it for personal benefit” (Lange 2005, p. 120). This has continued as customary law defined by the King then enforced through chiefs who administer rural communities on his behalf. The paradox on customary law is that the promulgation of laws is undemocratic as opposed to civil law whereby people participate directly or through their elected representatives. For example, the colonial administration through the Swaziland Native Administration Proclamation No. 79 of 1950 gave the King powers to establish Swazi courts (Mamdani 1996; Booth 1983) and “...sole authority for issuing any orders which were enforceable in the Swazi courts” (Levin 1990, p. 50).

Authority in Swaziland is based on the King who is the head of the monarchy. The King is then working with traditional Chiefs who have delegated authority to the different rural areas of Swaziland. The Chiefs are appointed by the King. ‘Traditionally’ the King is supposed to lead the country through the Chiefs, using the un-codified Swazi Law and Custom. But the Chiefs have been effectively “castrated” politically and economically as they are not even given a salary. They derive their source of livelihoods through extortion of their subjects and patronage from the king. The Chiefs allocate land to subjects through the ‘*kukhonta*’ system. The subjects are made to pay a certain amount of money or a cow to the Chief. From time to time the subjects are called (*kumemeta*) to provide manual labour to the Chief’s homestead. This may be in the Chief’s fields or the construction of his homestead. After the harvesting season subjects of the Chief are supposed to pay a portion of their produce to the chief (*kwetfula*). Those who are in gainful employment are expected to pay in cash or other ‘gifts’ fit for the Chief. These practices

of *kwetfula* and *kumemeta* also extend to the King who also subjects the nation to such feudal practices. According to Vilakazi (cited in Carter and O'Meara) failure to perform these feudal services strains the relationship between the chief and subjects, and may result in eviction from the 'Chief's land' (1979, p. 275). Chiefs also benefit through patronage as some of them are appointed into senior government positions, in the security forces or parastatals.

### **2.3.1 Family lineage at the centre of traditional rule.**

The rule by traditional leaders is primarily founded on patrimonialism and were selected based on their lineage (Lange 2005). The key pillars of the regime that is the monarchy and the traditional chiefdoms are based on family lineage. The ascendance of a King or a Chief is hereditary and it is always men who inherit the position. In the Chiefdoms level, the family of the Chief decides who would be the next Chief and then that appointee is taken to the King for blessings. The community is never involved in the appointment of the chief. The communities are reduced to spectators in a family affair. The King has the powers to reject an appointed candidate. "Chiefs are most often princes or heads of important clans" (Booth 1983, p. 35) Most of the non-Dlamini chiefs are related to the royal family through marriage (Kowet 1978). This makes it difficult to have chiefs that are against the royal or to have chiefs that could be mobilised to be on the side of democratic change.

The King also has powers to appoint a chief outside the family lineage and revoke a chieftaincy from a chief. The appointment of the King is also an affair of the royal family, surrounded by a cloud of uncertainty as it was witnessed after the demise of the then King Sobhuza in 1982 and the crowning of the current King in 1986. The 2005 National Constitution also fails to address the issue of succession for both the Kingship and chiefdoms.

### **2.4 The modern system**

The Swazi regime also has a modern bureaucracy that was inherited from Britain's colonial administration. The King is an executive head of state that exerts control in the modern bureaucracy. The modern system is based on laws and rules that are expected to govern the modern part of government. The King is an embodiment of power and a patron for his clients. In all spheres of the social, political and economic life he has appointing authority. He appoints the Prime Minister and the Cabinet ministers. He appoints 10 of the 65 members of parliament and 55 are elected under the undemocratic *Tinkhundla* system. He further appoints 20 of the 30

members of the House of Senate. On the judiciary, he appoints the Chief Justice, Supreme Court judges, High Court judges, and Magistrates. There are a host of other bodies such as boards of directors of parastatals where the King makes appointment. This state of affairs makes it easy for the King to disburse patronage and favours to allies and economically suffocate those who are not 'loyal subjects'.

The 'big man' rule presupposes that the ruler needs more resources to share with the clients. In Swaziland, it is not just one 'big man' that is in charge but the institution of the monarchy as led by the king. According to Daloz (2002, as cited in Hyden, 2012) the 'big man' needs to display his wealth to appear credible to his clients. This is the reason personal rule and corruption or abuse of public resources is intertwined as the ruler needs more resources for clients. Hope attests that "one type of significant corruption gaining in currency in the Kingdom is that of nepotism and favouritism" which is key to dispersing patronage to clients of the royal family and friends (2016, p.134).

King Mswati has amassed huge sums of wealth using the state. According to Forbes magazine cited in Nsehe<sup>8</sup>, Mswati has an estimated personal fortune of at least US\$50 million, as well as control of the US\$140 million Tibiyo taka Ngwane fund which was established in trust for the Swazi nation, yet it is currently used by the King as personal fund to finance his extravagant life style and that of the royal family. A report by Freedom House on Swaziland published in 2013 claims that the King controls 60 percent of the Swazi economy.<sup>9</sup>

Patronage and clientelism thrives under weak political institutions with limited checks and balances, whereby institutions are insignificant in controlling or restricting the behaviour of politicians. Knill and Tosun (2012) outlined the constitution, separation of powers and the electoral system as key institutions for a polity as key determinants of the policy cycle. Poor institutions make politicians less accountable to the citizenry. Acemoglu et al (2004, p.163) argues that "when institutions are strong, citizens punish politicians by voting them out of power; when institutions are weak, politicians punish citizens who fail to support them. When institutions are strong, politicians vie for the support and endorsement of interest groups; when institutions are weak; politicians... control interest groups. When institutions are strong, citizens

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<sup>8</sup><http://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2014/06/03/the-5-richest-kings-in-africa/2/#2715e4857a0b346f88b72154>

<sup>9</sup>[https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Swaziland-%20A%20Failed%20Feudal%20State%2015%20September%202013\\_1.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Swaziland-%20A%20Failed%20Feudal%20State%2015%20September%202013_1.pdf)

demand rights; when institutions are weak, citizens beg for favours.” In an undemocratic regime citizen have no chance to influence the political life as institutions are meant to systematically to politically disempower the people.

The members of the Public Service Commission responsible for the recruitment and management of public servants is appointed by the King. This creates a hot bed for nepotism, favouritism in the recruitment and promotion of civil servants. The recruitment of staff in the civil service is meant to reward loyalists, friends and family of those closer to political power resulting in a bloated civil service. This is a deviation from the ideal type of bureaucracy by Weber premised on the principles of impersonality and meritocracy (Von Soest et al 2011). According to a study conducted by African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) published in 1984 one of the reasons for a bloated civil service in Swaziland is the need to employ ‘the boys’. According to Transparency International corruption index report of 2014, Swaziland ranked 69<sup>th</sup> out of 175 countries and this was the lowest ranking since 2005. The average in that period (2005-2014) has been 88.4 percent<sup>10</sup>. This shows that corruption is endemic in the country. This resulted in a situation whereby some are employed without clear job description. According to the Minister of Finance budget review statement of 2014/15, the recurrent expenditure was at 76 percent and 24 percent for the capital expenditure.<sup>11</sup> The IMF has always complained about the increase of the wage bill. But then for the regime the civil service is an effective way of dispersing patronage.

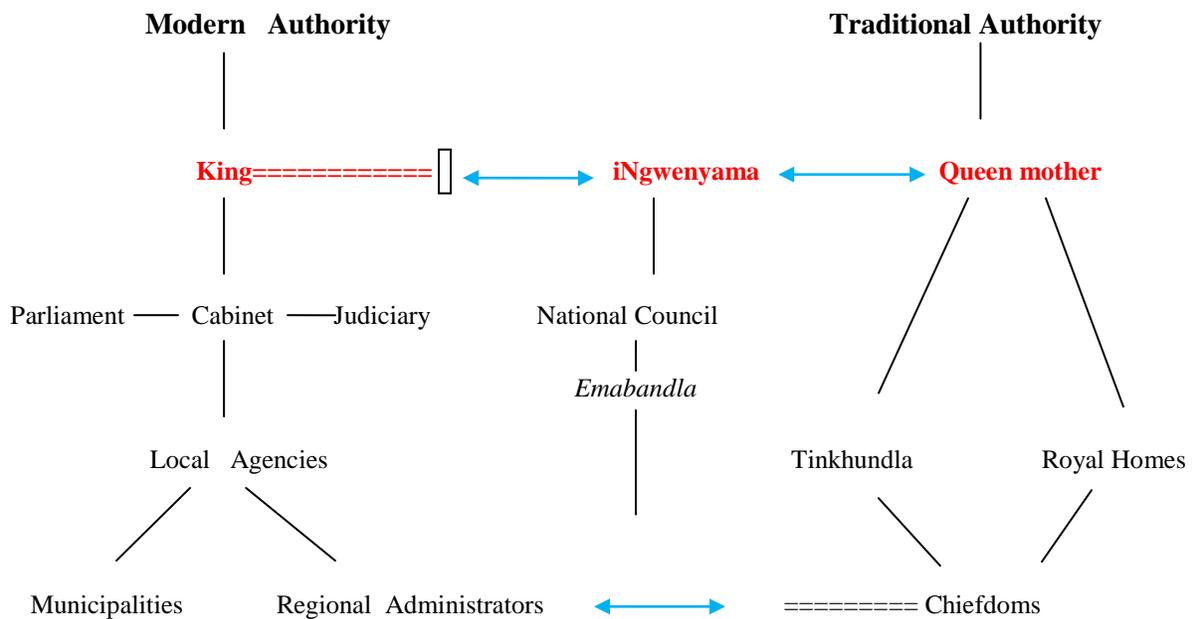
The absolute monarchy does not promote democratic governance as this would shift the balance of power. Democracy good governance and accountability are mutually interconnected none can survive without the other. E.E. Osaghae and V.A. Osaghae argue that “good governance... depends on the extent to which citizens are able to vote governments in or out in competitive elections (2013, p. 394). People’s participation is a main feature of democracy and the ability for citizens to elect a government of their choice through regular, free and fair elections. The democratization agenda is promoting political reforms that strengthen democratic governance. Democratic governance cannot be complete without accountability, responsiveness and transparency of the government to its citizens. The demand by the international community for

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<sup>10</sup><http://www.tradingeconomics.com/swaziland/corruption-rank>

<sup>11</sup><http://www.gov.sz/mid%20year%20budget%20review%20statement%202014-15%20v11%20final.pdf>

transparency, accountability and good governance is incompatible with the ‘big man’ ruler. The key question to be asked is can the international community pressurise the monarchy to embrace transparency and accountability? In analysing the regime, I would now turn my discussion into the class structure of the Swazi society, to better understand the balance of power between the forces that are for and/or against democracy.



**Figure 1.** Illustrates the dual administrative structure of Swaziland (taken from Rose 1992 with variations from author)

## 2.5 The class question?

“A class is a group of people who by virtue of what they possess are compelled to engage in the same activities if they want to make the best use of their endowments” (Elster 1985, p. 330-1, cited in Rueschemeyer et al 1992, p. 52). In analysing class under the Swazi regime, it is important to highlight that class is not clearly defined in the country. Class differentiation is fluid because of the colonial economy that was imposed on Swaziland. Colonial rule did not allow an economic process leading to the development of classes as is the case of the Western developed world. The advent of a capitalist mode of production in Swaziland after the appropriation of land in 1907 has led to the proletarianization of Swazi people and a complex social and class structure has come out (Levin 1986; Davies et al 1985).

### 2.5.1 Swazi Class and class interests

The dominant class sitting at the top of the class structure is the **bourgeoisie class** which are the capitalist who own and control the means of production. The means of production are historically foreign capital in the hands of individuals and multi-national companies. They have benefitted under colonial rule and in a post-independence Swaziland in partnership with the monarchy. This class has no interest in democratization because its interests are better secured without the organization of the working class that would demand better working and living conditions.

The development of the indigenous bourgeoisie class (what Mao referred to as **comprador bourgeoisie**<sup>12</sup>) is based on using politics as an economic force to coerce. Historically, the development of the national bourgeoisie in Europe was embedded on the aristocracy (Bayart 2009). The contrary is true in Africa the development of this class is linked to international capital through gate keeping and rent seeking. The indigenous bourgeoisie partners with the settler capitalists and foreign capital to make a fortune. Cohen (1972) argues that the exploitative relationship in Africa primarily rests on the control of the means of production, the distribution and exchange, rather than on ownership. In Swaziland, this class whose patron has always been the monarchy used its power of control over land and mineral wealth. Accumulation from above comes from political relations and the reproduction of this form of accumulation depends on basis of extra-economic coercion (Mamdani 1996). In the case of Swaziland, this form of accumulation has been fundamental in the production of indigenous bourgeois class (Levin 1990). The monarchy, foreign capital and its cronies has been able to use political coercion to advance its economic power.

The next stratum of class is the small but growing **middle class**, whose definition is fluid and has been a cause for disagreements amongst social scientists. The term middle class is a relatively modern term to refer to what has been traditionally called the petty bourgeoisie<sup>13</sup> (Davies et al 1985). The middle class is a small group including high ranking civil servants, businessmen and those in high paying jobs in the private sector. The middle class in Africa is not united, as

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<sup>12</sup>They are not real capitalists but owes its existence to foreign capitalists and cannot exist on its own as a capitalist class

<sup>13</sup>Are exploiters but not on the same scale as capitalists. They own some means of production or professional skills but are not able to quit working in order to finance their good lifestyle.

everywhere else in the world. The middle class is also fragmented into the upper and lower middle class. The formation of classes in Africa is unique compared to experiences of the industrialized world as it was not created by market forces. Nationalization and localization played a crucial role in expanding the middle class. "...these patterns in Africa countered the expectations of Marx or Weber, who never saw the state as the inherent locus of the process of class formation and of class domination" Resnick (2015, p. 576). Bayart, argues the power of the petty bourgeoisie does not stem from their control of the means of production and trade but...are rather a result of the place they occupy in the state apparatus" (2009, p. 93) Their point of access to state power guarantees their wealth accumulation. The lack of political unity amongst the middle class is created unequally, as most of the middle class in Swaziland rely on the state or political networks to be maintain its privilege. "This petty bourgeoisie is subject to complex and contradictory pressures" the petty bourgeoisie is hurt by the presence of Tibiyo Taka Ngwane (here in referred to as Tibiyo) which serves as a gatekeeper for the royal family's business interests. Foreign capitalists coming into Swaziland partner with the royal family through Tibiyo thus compromising the business interests of the middle class (petty bourgeoisie) whose growth is affected by Tibiyo, contends Davies et al (1985, p. 43).

The middle class is further compromised by its proximity to the regime. The only viable and safe way for the petty bourgeoisie to pursue its interests is through the patronage and clientelist system set up the royal regime. This place the petty bourgeoisie at a precarious and vulnerable position. The scramble for the crumbs falling from the masters table leads to increased individualism which is counter-productive in building a democracy movement to challenge the autocratic rule of the monarchy. The middle class should not therefore be seen as a united force. This is more made obvious in a struggle for democracy, which is essentially a struggle for political power. Modernization theorists argue that the expansion of the middle class is a necessary condition for democratization. However, as stated above this class has a variety of conflicting interests. Those who are closer to the political establishment are more likely to be conservative and against democratization. Davies et al (1985) argue that this situation makes it difficult to build alliances between the petty bourgeoisie and the deeply subordinate class in Swaziland.

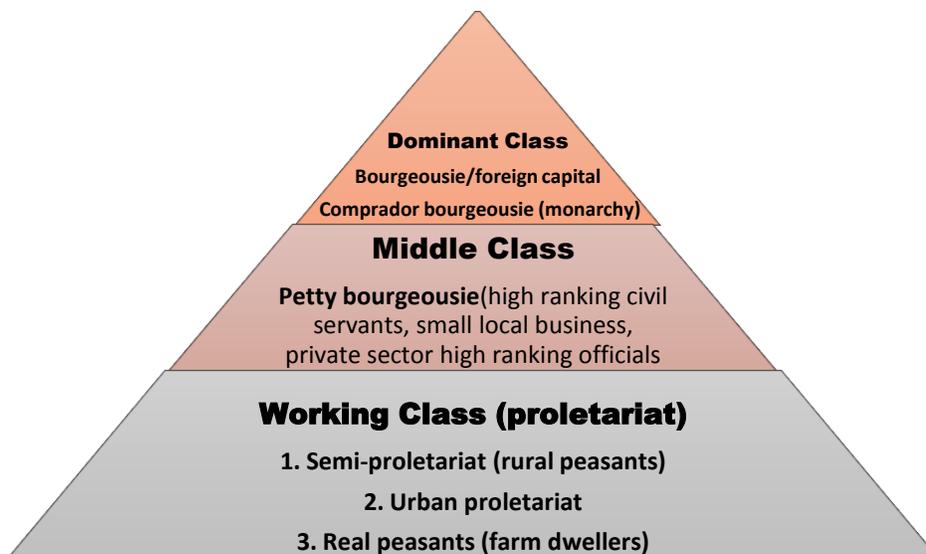
The largest group is the **working class** also referred to as the proletariat. This class primarily sells its labour to make ends meet. The working class like anywhere else in the world is not a homogenous class. Despite the glaring differences within the trade union movement remains a critical voice for the working class in general. The trade union movement has historically been in the fore front in the fought for democratization. In Swaziland, it has been involved for decades now into pursuing democracy.

Davies et al (1985) assert that in Swaziland the typical proletariat (in Marxian sense) is the **urban proletariat** that has no other means of survival except the sale of its labour. The urban proletariat is a small section, considering that more people (70 percent) reside in the rural areas and some continue have links with rural areas. Because of high unemployment a huge number of people in both rural and urban areas are in the informal economy to make ends meet. It is not uncommon to find someone owing a home in the urban area and a home in the rural areas. However, there are those who have only freehold land (TDL). I classify peasants (also referred to as rural people) as part of the working class because of the historical development of the Swazi economy. This is an economy that dramatically changed after the land appropriation in 1907, from an agrarian one into a capitalist one, making the Swazis who have lived off agriculture to start looking for employment in mass in the mines and plantations mainly in South Africa (Levin 1990). These historical events developed a complex class differentiation for the peasants which I explain below.

Peasants in Swaziland are divided mainly between into sections depending on their access to land and ability to migrate to cities, agricultural plantations and neighbouring countries for wage labour. The most vulnerable segment of peasants is those who are literally landless, they are called squatters living under terrible conditions in farms. Farm dwellers are the most marginalized peasants as they are at the mercy of farm owners. This paper refers to farm dwellers as the real peasants because their livelihood is dependent on the farm owner. The farm owner determines how much land they can use and are often made to provide labour for the farmers. They are not allowed to build permanent structures on the farm land. Evictions, forced labour and poor working conditions for this group is a living reality. Swaziland started having farm squatters after the land partitioning in 1907. Peasants in the land demarcated as white settler farms were given a five-year period to leave their ancestral land (Levin, 1990). The colonial

administration did not want to force people off the land through mass removals), as this would likely activate resistance as it was witnessed in Natal after the partitioning. Those who remained in the farms after the lapse of the five years were evicted or forced to pay a rent to the farm owner or provide ‘free’ labour. The Farm Dwellers Act of 1982 has failed to address the challenges faced by farm squatters. As Matthews rightly argues, unlike the other peasants 'on Swazi Nation Land, whom the state ostensibly wishes to ‘develop’, farm "squatters" are seen as an obstacle to such agricultural development, an obstacle which is to be removed' (1987, p. 216 as cited in Levin 1990).

The largest strata of peasants in Swaziland is what Mamdani refers to as free peasant, the one who “...is a direct producer on land partly shielded from the impact of market forces- and ...subject to compulsion by Native authorities- because of a customary right to land.” (1996, p. 219). Davies et al (1985) put it more succinctly in Marxian terms for class stratification by refers to this group living in the rural areas as the semi-proletariat because they use both subsistence agriculture and wage employment to make a living. These are mainly the rural people who are live on subsistence agriculture and have the chance migrate in search of jobs in the cities, plantations and mines and in neighbouring countries for employment. To increase their income, they rely on both the meagre wages and subsistence agriculture. The Swazi peasants can be classified into three categories; the poor, middle and rich peasants.



**Figure 2.** Illustrating the Swazi class structure (developed by author)

### **2.5.2 Capital accumulation by the ruling royal family**

The accumulation of wealth by the royal family has its roots on the colonial administration, which customary land rights over to the monarchy. The monarchy was weakened politically by the land partitioning in 1907. Post the land partitioning the monarchy wanting to reclaim its control, it was left with two options, either to plead with the British to reverse the partitioning or extort funds from the peasants to ‘buy’ back the land to resettle the now landless people and subsequently chose the latter. With the booming mining industry in South Africa the monarchy had common interests with the colonialist. It served well in recruiting the much needed labour to the mines. “Queen Labotsibeni and Prince Malunge encouraged labour migration of the masses to work in the mines” citing the need to make money to buy back the land that was taken by colonial administration (Levin 1990, p. 49). “The royal house set its own levy on each migrant, amounting to a neat one-quarter of the annual mining wage” (Mamdani 1990, p. 171; Levin 1990, p. 49). Under the guise of the need to buy back land the royal family substituted traditional labour gatherings, *imimemo* with money. *Kukhonta* fees, money or cow was introduced. The chiefs also started extorting money from their subjects. This was happening at a time when there was a huge demand for labour in the mines in South Africa and Swaziland was one of those neighbouring countries where labour was recruited from. The introduction of money and the capitalist mode of economic relations by colonialism changed the traditional elites. Traditional institutions were changed by the capitalist mode of relations. They became fond of money and wanted to accumulate more by exploiting people and natural resources in the name of tradition.

The unprecedented change of policy by the British administration in the way they managed colonies led to the passage of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940, meant that British Empire allocated 5 million Pounds for the development of colonies each year and this was going to be the case for the next 10 years (Simelane 1991). Swaziland eventually benefitted from this new arrangement. The British administration in Swaziland channelled the funds to Land Resettlement Scheme as a response to the growing demands for land amongst the Swazi peasants. Simelane further contends that by 1944 over a quarter of a million Pounds had been used on Swaziland and 44 percent of that was used on the Land Resettlement Scheme.

“By the end of 1943, a total of 229,160 acres of land had been bought from European land holders, particularly absentee landlords residing in South Africa. At the end of 1944

approximately 134,922 acres of Crown Land were added to the 1943 total” (Simelane 1991, p. 731). Furthermore, by 1949, the British administration had resettled about 492 squatter families on the purchased land, in Nkwene, Herefords and Pigg’s Peak settlement. The biggest challenge with the settlement is that the British wanted it to be under free hold tenure yet the King on the other had wanted to be under SNL so that it is under his control through chiefs. The king knew very well the power of controlling land through the customary way. Eventually, the Swazi monarchy won on this one as it was able get the land to be administered under the customary law. This meant an increase on the land under the direct control of the king and more power.

The land partitioning opened the floodgate the exploitation of both natural and human resources of Swaziland by the imperial capitals of South Africa and Britain. Britain was the major exploiter of the Swazi resources. For example, in 1938, the asbestos mine was opened in Bulembu by Turner and Newall a British company. The accumulation of the monarchy is not a new thing but its roots are entrenched in the colonial history. It is prudent to illustrate the relationship between the monarchy and foreign business that is in Swaziland. This will help establish the interests of foreign business in Swaziland and assist in the analysing the attitudes and behaviour exhibited by the external actors in relation to the undemocratic nature of the regime and the quest for democracy.

For the first time the monarchy received directly from foreign investment on Swaziland was in establishment of the pulp industry in Bhunya. The Usuthu Pulp Company eventually bought up the area which had been afforested by the Colonial Development Corporation (CDC) now called Commonwealth Development Corporation for 'the nation' in 1962, in return for which the emergent comprador bourgeoisie acquired a 50 000 British pound interest in the company (Halpern 1965, p. 391). This reveals a specific level of comprador accumulation whereby the material basis of this class is formed by a 'joint investment with foreign capital in units producing for export' (Taylor 1979, p. 249; Levin 1990, p. 51)

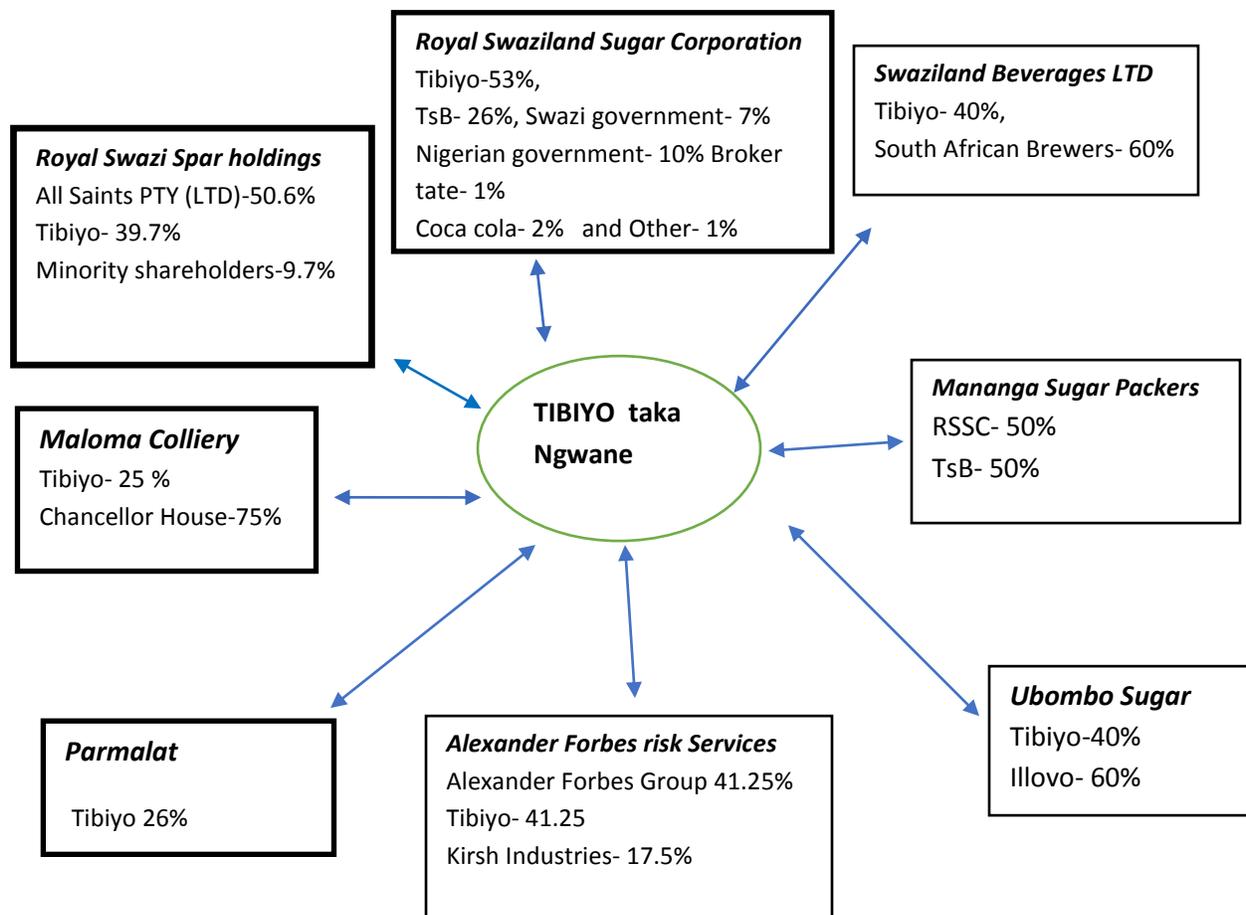
The now lucrative sugar industry, popularly referred to as the ‘Swazi Gold’ by the political elite, began in 1958 with the opening of the Sugar mill in Big-Bend. That very same year the Mhlume (Swaziland) Sugar company was registered in 1958 under the ownership of Tongaat-Hullet Sugar (a South African company) and CDC (Lincoln 2006). In 1966, CDC bought-out Tongaat-Hullet Sugar and became the sole owner. In 1977, then king Sobhuza ‘in trust’ of the Swazi

nation acquired 50 percent shareholding from CDC<sup>14</sup>. “The establishment of the third sugar mill at Simunye estate in late 1970’s led to a removal of over 550 families from kaNgomane and they were taken to the barren lands of KaShewula and Mafucula to give way for the sugar estate” (Levin 1990, p. 46) These families had never been compensated for their removal from their land.

The control of SNL and minerals has allowed the monarchy to enrich itself and also reproduce its traditionalism ideology that places the monarchy above everyone else. The formation of Tibiyo in 1968 is vital in the discussion about the development and consolidation of the comprador bourgeoisie class in Swaziland (Levin 1990). Tibiyo was established by the late king Sobhuza under the guise that it will buy back land from the foreign owners and resettle the peasants. The monarchy was able to extort income from peasants in establishing Tibiyo. The establishment of Tibiyo was followed by yet another company formed by then King Sobhuza called Tisuka taka Ngwane (herein referred to as Tisuka) in 1975 using the revenue from Tibiyo. The intention of Tisuka was to be a fund for all the proceeds that are generated through mineral wealth held by the King in trust of the Nation. Tibiyo has fundamentally not delivered on its promise of buying back land for resettlement of the people, all the farms bought are generating income for the royal household. Rose (1992) points out that the regime has maintained political power in post-colonial period because it has total control, without public accountability, of Tibiyo taka Ngwane which is a public entity. Secondly, it has controlled the customary institutions by banning political parties, thus silencing the voice that could challenge the undemocratic nature of traditional rule. Over the years Tibiyo has grown to be a big conglomerate through partnership with foreign companies, this is illustrated below.

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<sup>14</sup>[http://www.rssc.co.sz/about\\_us/company\\_history/](http://www.rssc.co.sz/about_us/company_history/)



**Figure 3.** Illustration of the foreign companies that Tibiyo has partnership with (Freedom House report 2013 with additions from author)

Land ownership and control is significant in understanding the class question and royal capital accumulation in Swaziland. Land tenure is made of two types; Swazi National Land (SNL) under the control of the King, with delegated administrative powers to the Chiefs and Title Deed Land (TDL); privately owned land, which accounts for 54 and 46 percent respectively.<sup>15</sup> More than 70 percent of the population resides in the rural areas under the control of chiefs who are doing it on behalf of the King. The rural areas are under the Swazi Nation Land which is ‘held in trust’ by the King. Section 211(1) of the National Constitution of 2005 states that “... all land including existing concessions in Swaziland, save privately held Title-Deed Land shall continue to vest in *iNgwenyama* in trust of the Swazi Nation as it is vested on the 12<sup>th</sup> April 1973.” There

<sup>15</sup><https://www.ifad.org/documents/10180/19c94d55-7d78-4fdc-a494-3a6702e9f8b6>

is no security of tenure on Swazi Nation Land, as rural people do not own the land. The rural people live on less productive subsistence agriculture.

Levin points out that “...the concept of capital resources being 'held in trust for the nation' by the king, was a colonial creation produced through a constitutional settlement of the national question in Swaziland” (1990, p. 56). The argument by Levin holds water in relation to the definition of tradition which the royal regime has used in to justify its stranglehold on land and minerals. This argument is further strengthened by Mamdani (1996) who asserts that customary law which gave control of communal land to Kings and chiefs was a creation of indirect rule to subjugate the peasants. There is nothing Swazi or customary about the control of land and mineral rights by the King. Culture and chieftdom has been used to deny Africans the taste of democracy. Govan Mbeki, anti-apartheid figure and father to former South African President Thabo Mbeki in the 1960's summed it up well when he said, “If Africans have had chiefs, it was because all human societies have had them at one stage or another. But when a people have developed to a stage which discards chieftainship...then to force it on them is not liberation but enslavement” (Oomen 2005, p. 3). The evolution of society illustrates that kings and emperors were once a very renowned political institution but over time they were removed by their people and some had to transform to allow sharing of power with the people. The notion of arguing that that kingships are traditional institutions that must be maintained in Africa in general and Swaziland in particular is a superficial one and a creation of indirect rule to subjugate the majority whilst they colluded with the traditional leaders in the exploitative colonial and imperial project.

Simelane (2005) argues that the capitalization and accumulation by the monarchy became more clearly post-independence and the banning of political parties in 1973 was not only political but also influenced by the monarchy's intention of wadding off any opposition to its accumulation project using politics. The central role of the customary land tenure is to control political relations, as well as a major condition of capital accumulation by the monarchy at the expense of the poor majority (Levin 1986). A typical example that buttresses this point was witnessed in 2000 when two Chiefs and two other men together with their dependants were forcefully removed from their homes by the military and police for failure accept the removal of the Chiefs

from their positions to pave way for the King's brother to become a Chief of the two chiefdoms. One of the deposed Chiefs is currently in exile in South Africa.<sup>16</sup>

The economy is under the direct control of the King, thus leading to a few local and foreign people who are close to the King as a means of survival. In Swaziland, there is no real national bourgeoisie as in the sense of developed countries. The few local business people do not own the means of production, but mainly rely on government contracts for providing services. The regime's economic outlook has thwarted the emergence and growth of a thriving private sector. This makes the middle class to be very slim, and weak. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its country report (14/223 P.61) has raised its concerns about the Swazi Nation Land in relation to the economy. These are the salient points raised by IMF "(i) lack clarity and documentation of Swazi Nation Land (SNL) smallholders, which may limit some room to negotiate a more effective use of the land and may lower the incentives to invest in productivity-enhancing technology; (ii) limited access to credit, fragmentation and coordination problems for SNL smallholders, and (iii) unclear legal framework governing commercial investors' access to land<sup>17</sup>". The lack of a clear way of managing SNL has negatively affected the growth of a vibrant private sector.

The economy was centred on the royal family, its cronies and a few foreign investors on the eve of independence. After the repealing of the constitution in 1973, land and mineral rights remained to be under the control of the monarchy. The King controls land and has mineral rights. According to the Mineral Act 4 of 2011, article 133(1)<sup>18</sup>, "The *iNgcwenyama* 'in trust' of the Swazi Nation shall acquire 25% shareholding without any monetary consideration in a large-scale mining project for which a mining licence is granted." The King is a business man with stakes in most big companies in the country. Local and foreign business people have realised that it is rewarding to partner with the 'big man' (Hydén 2012).

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<sup>16</sup>[http://www.swazilii.org/sz/judgment/high-court/2002/4/SZHC\\_2002\\_4\\_0.rtf](http://www.swazilii.org/sz/judgment/high-court/2002/4/SZHC_2002_4_0.rtf)

<sup>17</sup><http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14223.pdf>

<sup>18</sup><http://www.osall.org.za/docs/Swaziland%20-%20Mines%20and%20Minerals%20Act%204%20of%202011.pdf>

## **Chapter 3**

### **Theoretical framework**

#### **Introduction**

Firstly, this chapter discusses the concept of democracy as it means different things to different people. The chapter dwells into the theories that are the foundation of the study; historical institutionalism, leverage and linkage theory and the international relations theory. The use of this multi-disciplinary approach allows one to have a deeper analysis using these theories about the complex democratization process. Historical institutionalism helps to explain the history of the development of the absolute monarchy and how its power structures are reproduced through path dependency. This history is important in understanding the composition of the power structure, both formal and informal, existing in Swaziland that has made democracy an illusion for the people.

The development of the authoritarian rule cannot be separated from events that were unfolding internationally. The linkages that exist between the Swazi regime and the external actors are founded on historical events and they shape the regime through trade and aid that the regime receives. The leverage and linkage model helps in explaining these linkages and show the leverage that the external actors have over the regime. As the study's focus is on external actors role, it also draws insights from literature by international relations theories (realism and liberalism). Realism is founded on the premise that states maximize their own benefits and interests, centred around the economy and security. In drawing in international relations theory, the study also looks into the literature provided by a counter school of thought propagated by liberalism, which argues that norms are important in international relations. Liberalism also brings forth transnational civil society actors whose work plays an important role in democracy promotion. The aim is to develop an analytical explanation of how democratization has happened elsewhere and systematically use these experiences in my analysis of the possible ways that could have been explored in the democratization of Swaziland. Lastly, chapter explores on the roles of both local and external actors in the democratization process

#### **3.1 Defining Concepts**

Transition to democracy in most parts of the world has been a protracted struggle between the actors involved. A perpetual debate amongst social scientist is evident as they search for a

theoretical perspective that could explain the path to democracy. In the theoretical discussion, part of what is contested is the very concepts of democracy and democratization.

### ***What is democracy?***

The concept of democracy, in its simplest form, can be defined using the two Greek words *demos*(people) and *kratos* (rule) that combine to make the word democracy, meaning “rule by the people”. This is the classical idea of democracy. American President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 defined democracy as “*the government of the people, for the people, by the people.*” Providing a broad definition is widely used by students of democracy and political activists. Liberal democracy emphasises the protection of individual liberties, and property rights. Sandbrook cited in Riley (1992, p. 540) defined liberal democracy as “a political system characterised by regular and free elections in which politicians organized into parties compete to form the government, by the right of virtually all adult citizens to vote, and by guarantees of a range of familiar political and civil rights”. Liberal democracy is therefore built on the premise of political democracy.

This study will focus on the political democracy. Political democracy provides a framework that guarantees political and civil liberties, which provides for regular, and competitive multiparty elections. These conditions do not exist under the current regime in Swaziland.

### ***What is political democracy?***

Robert Dahl’s (1971) polyarchy has focused on two critical components of democracy, competition and participation. The definition provided by Dahl did not include the aspect of the civil and political rights which are central to make sure there is competition and participation. Scholars of democracy such as Diamond and Sørensen have developed his work further to include the crucial aspect of these rights in defining democracy. Diamond right pointed out that “Polyarchy encompasses not only freedom to vote and contest for office but also freedom to speak and publish dissenting views, freedom to form and join organizations and alternative sources of information” ( 1999, p. 8). From the work of Dahl, Sørensen (2008, p.14) also developed a comprehensive definition of political democracy as a system of government that guarantees the following conditions;

- “*Competition*” among individuals and political parties for positions of government and political power.
- “*Political participation*” in the selection of leaders and policies.
- “*Civil and political liberties*”-freedom of expression, freedom of press, freedom to form and join organizations.

The definition by Sørensen and diamond focuses on input side of democracy. My study is only limited to studying the input side of democracy, participation and guarantee to civil and political rights, that is why I am studying it as political democracy, the opening up of the political space. This involves the unbanning of political parties and the institutionalisation of multiparty democracy. The focus on the narrow definition of democracy is motivated by Schmitz (2006) on his work on ‘*transnational mobilization and domestic regime change: Africa in comparative perspective*’, whereby he contends that “democracy is defined as a method or procedure of government rather than as a commitment to any particular set of social and economic objectives” (2006, p.12). Moreover, defining democracy this way allows comparison across states as this provides clear indicators of democracy, making it easy to locate the Swazi regime as undemocratic.

**Democratization** is the process of change towards more democratic forms of rule (Sørensen 2008, p. 194). It involves breaking down of the non-democratic regime. According to Haerpfer et al (2009, p. 11), “democratization is a change from an undemocratic regime to a democratic regime”. Rijnierse contends that the democratisation process "involves the introduction of universal suffrage and genuine political competition with free and fair elections to decide who will take power" (1993, p. 652-653). Democracy is about the “institutionalisation of people’s power” through civic liberties that entitle citizens to determine their private and public life (Haerpfer et al (2009, p. 75).

As Haerpfer et al (2009) attests that the institutionalisation of people’s power is paramount in the democratization process. Rueschemeyer et.al (1992, p. 75) conceives “...democracy as a political form that must be seen ...as a matter of power.” The most important determining factor that differentiates a democracy from a non-democracy is the distribution of political power. In an undemocratic regime power is in the hands of a few elite. Political parties remain a critical

feature of a democratic regime because the people can contest for political power in regular, free and fair elections. The polyarchy (competition and participation) by Dahl presents a pluralistic view of democratization which allows competition for public office.

Democratization is not an event but a process that starts with the breaking down of the authoritarian rule. There is a disagreement about when the process ends. I limit myself to the polity side of the process because the focus of the study is on the input side of democracy without going into the discussion on social and economic rights which is equally central in the consolidation stage. Subsequently, the breakdown of the authoritarian regime is replaced by regular multiparty elections which should be free and fair. Sandbrook (1996) contends that free and fair elections are the first step in the process democratization process. In the beginning of the democratization the most important indicators for democracy are that civil and political rights, political competition and freedom for people to participate in the political life. The consolidation stage is the building of institutions that will safeguard the freedoms. This will involve the strengthening of the separation of powers, judicial, legislative and executive, freedom of the media, accountability, transparency of the government (Ringen 2011; Freedom House measurement indicators). Most African countries democratization process is stalled in the first stages, they have regular multiparty elections, but these hybrid regimes are engulfed by the failure to deepen democracy because the lack of it guarantees their stay in power. Their action does not allow the strengthening of key institutions that are central to a consolidated democracy.

### **3.2 Democratization; a complex process**

The route to democracy is an uncertain one as there are many roads leading to democracy. Transition is not a uniform involving only the same social classes (Rostow 1970). Different countries have taken different routes to achieve democracy. From armed struggle, to mass insurrection and the divisions within the ruling elites have all been a manifestation of the long road to democracy. The 'third wave' of democracy has come because of both internal actors and external actors pressure on the undemocratic regimes. Trade unions, student's movement, the church, civil society and banned political parties have taken centre stage in pressurising regimes to democratize in the beginning of 1990's in Africa.

Modernization theorists were the first to make an argument that democratization comes as a by-product of economic prosperity. They argue that the economic prosperity of a nation leads to

social change by creating an independent middle class that shall demand a stake in the running of the state. Their argument was based on the development of democracy in Europe. With the advent of industrialization and urbanization and high levels of education the existing social structure was changed as an independent middle class grew and demanded more political rights. Gibbon et al (1992) countered the modernization theorists argument by pointing out that under development by itself is not an obstacle to democratization. A classic example is India which has established and maintained a democratic dispensation even with glaring development challenges. The causal relationship between democracy and economic development has been challenged by events that unfolded at the peak of the wave of democratization especially in sub-Saharan Africa where democratic forms of government have been established without a significant middle class as the modernization theorist have predicted. Bratton and Van de Walle (1997) illustrate that the middle class is not always in favour of democracy as the modernization theorist articulate. This was witnessed in Latin America where business colluded with the military to establish military regimes.

The agency based perspective (contingency) of understanding democratization is also limited as it focuses on the domestic elites within the ruling regime as key actors in deciding the fate of the regime. In Latin America, this proved to be the case military regimes collapsed because of cracks within the ruling elites. However, this has not been the case in the democratization wave in sub-Saharan Africa. Both models, modernization and agency based fail to locate the role that is played by external actors in the democratization process. Western governments and the Western donors have contributed significantly in coercing African regimes to democratize, for example in Kenya, Zambia, Malawi amongst others. The work of Levitsky and Way (2005) on leverage and linkages shows how external actors influence regimes to democratize. The study focuses on the external actors because they are important as they sustain the Swazi regime through donations and preferential trade. They (USA and EU) also relate well with the internal actors who are calling for democracy in the country.

It is ironic that both liberals and Marxists “see the bourgeoisie as the protagonist of democracy” as they view the development of the dominance of capitalist mode of production as key in destroying feudal system and absolutism thus establishing a democratic rule (Rueschemeyer et al 1992, p. 46). They go further to argue that however the democracy that develops in a capitalist

society is the bourgeoisie democracy which has nothing good for the working class. This is a fatalistic view as we have seen working class movements fighting for democracy and making sure they get out the best deal from a democratic setup in advancing workers rights. "...democratization is a product of the action of the subordinate classes" (Rueschemeyer et al 1992, p. 47). In the context of Africa, the development of democracy has been a different trajectory from the Western world whereby the peasants have contributed in for democracy. In most African countries, the class structure is not the same as the one that was in Europe that led to the establishment of bourgeoisie democracy in Europe and Swaziland is no exception.

The democratization process is ignited by a protracted political struggle and those calling for change must represent entrenched social classes (Rostow 1970). The democratization process is not only limited to internal actors but it also draws the attention of external actors. The class struggle is not limited within national borders. All affected classes and groups mobilise for support from their counterparts outside. The development of classes as illustrated earlier in the paper shows that the royal regime is not alone as a dominant class but it has its allies who are in the main foreign capitalists. I will now focus my discussion into the role that has been played by the external actors in the democratization struggle by referring to the democratization literature.

Brown (2011) argues that democratization is not entirely a domestic process. Most scholars studying democratization in the 'third wave' focused on domestic forces and were biased against the external forces. External actors are often perceived as secondary to internal actors in the democratization process. The rapid spread of democracy throughout the world showed that the external actors were involved in the process. The powerful states of the world, international institution, and supranational institutions such as EU supported the spread of democracy. International actors have used a range of means to promote democratization; "...funding of opposition groups and civil society movements, sanctioning democratic backtrackers, funding and monitoring elections, and providing technical and financial assistance for strengthening key institutions such as political parties and judiciary." (Brown 2011, p. 10)

Democratization can be as a result influence of external actors, as witnessed in former Soviet Union States in Eastern Europe. Teorell (2010) identified three non-domestic factors that could play a role in democratization namely; neighbour diffusion, international trade and regional international organizations. Vanderhill and Alexander (2009) in their study on the influence of

international community in regime change underline three measures that could be applied by the international community to promote the democratization process namely; incentive, diffusion and resource based approaches. The incentive model is based on the premise that states are rational actors, so if they have to choose they will do a cost-benefit analysis of whether to continue with repression or to open up for democracy (Vanderhill and Alexander 2009). The incentives may also be political instead of being economic for example suspending a state from participating in regional, continental or international bodies because of the failure to embrace democracy.

International organizations, donors, regional bodies and Western governments have embraced democracy and its promotion across the globe. The international community has relied also on the incentive based approach which encompasses the use of sanctions, conditionality and rewards. These are some of the measures used by international community to persuade and coerce undemocratic regimes to democratise; used trade agreements, arms embargo and donor aid. Diffusion (or socialisation) of the culture of democracy from neighbouring countries seems not to be happening in the case of Swaziland. Swaziland is in a sea of democracy in the region but continues to an island of dictatorship.

Lastly, democracy can be achieved because of both internal and external actors collaborating to bring about democracy. Sørensen (2008) correctly points out that democracy cannot be embedded without the democracy forces growing strong inside the country. External forces, alone cannot create these forces where they do not exist. The collaboration between external and internal forces has been the most common one in the transition to democracy, for example in South Africa, where economic sanctions against then apartheid government and the mass democratic movement inside South Africa preceded the negotiations to constitutional multiparty democracy.

I now focus the discussion on the main theories for the study; historical institutionalism, linkage and leverage and international relations theory. The use of the three theoretical paradigms is to have a deeper analysing of the role played by the external actors in the democratization in Swaziland.

### **3.3 The study theories**

#### **3.3.1 Historical Institutionalism**

History is important in understanding the Swazi regime and the undemocratic culture it espouses. Steinmo (as cited in Della Porta and Keating 2008) outlined reasons why history matters in this kind of study. Firstly, history helps one to realize that political events happen within a historical context and has a direct effect on decisions or events. Secondly, history matters because actors involved in political events learn from experience (path dependency). Pierson contends that path dependent processes involves three stages – “(1) the initial “critical” juncture, when events trigger a movement toward a particular “path” or trajectory out of two or more possible ones; (2) the period of reproduction, in which positive feedback reinforces the trajectory initiated in phase one; and (3) the end of the path, in which new events dislodge a long-lasting equilibrium” (Pierson 2000, p. 76)

In this paper, I illustrate the regime type and how its power was built and how it is entrenched and reproduced now in modern history, that is, since the advent of colonialism and post- colonial era. The paper goes further to demonstrate that the incorporation of the Swazi economy to the international economic system in the advent of colonialism has helped empower the regime at the same time marginalizing the ordinary people. Following the argument of Pierson on path dependency I argue that the trigger for establishing the path of political marginalization of the majority and the centralization of power around the traditional leadership was colonialism through indirect rule and the dispossession of by the draconian Land Appropriation Act of 1907.

The post- independence era has also helped transform the royal family into a comprador bourgeoisie class collaborating with international capital at the expense of the gullible masses. In tapping into the historical context in Swaziland, historical institutionalism is therefore a critical approach in providing a link between the past and the institutionalisation of dictatorship in the state. The monarchy would never have been able to maintain and reproduce its exploitative rule without its financial ties with foreign capital. The democratization of Swaziland is the third stage (the end of the path) according to Pierson (2000), which is the changing of the existing trajectory. The research is concerned about uncovering the role of the external actors in bringing an end to the path of institutionalised dictatorship. Therefore, in an attempt to bring to an end to

the established path, it is crucial to understand the way it was developed and the factors that contribute to its reproduction.

The study of institutions has played a significant role in political science as it is believed that they serve as an incentive and shape norms in society. Institutions go beyond the legal formal features but are basically norms and values (Steinmo as cited in Della Porta and Keating 2008). They “...have an ordering effect on how authority and power is constituted, exercised, legitimated, controlled and redistributed” (March and Olsen 2005, p. 9) There is both formal and informal institutions that shape behaviour. The informal institutions; tradition and culture have played a critical role in shaping nurturing the dictatorship and making people to be less critical of the monarchy. The dimension brought forward by March and Olsen about power is central in the study because it shows that power is in institutions and is executed in institutions. In my conceptual framework, I argued that democracy is about the institutionalization of people’s power. In a democratic dispensation, this means that the institutions must fundamentally redistribute power and serve the interests of the majority. In a dictatorship/undemocratic regime the opposite is true.

Historical institutionalism acknowledges the economic cleavages that exist between groups in society and this is at the centre of politics (Hall and Taylor 1996). Historical institutionalism’s reference to the ‘path dependency’ helps to explain that the institutions that were inherited at independence by the royal regime have laid the foundation for the current undemocratic state. The Swazi regime has successfully tried to maintain its stranglehold onto political power since 1973 when political parties were banned. In dealing with challenges of dissent to the despotic rule the regime draws the tactics inherited from the colonial administration, such as police brutality, evictions from customary land amongst others. The argument of ‘path dependency’ compliments the argument by Mamdani, on the role of the colonial legacy in making democratization complex in Africa. “The most important institutional legacy of colonial rule.... lie in the inherited impediments to democratization” Mamdani (1996, p. 25). The ‘bifurcated state’ has continued post-independence. The legal duality (customary law and civil law) still exists, further dividing the rural from the urban, and between citizens and subjects with different rights.

Historical institutionalism helps in the providing a “deeper understanding of institutions genesis, reproduction and change” (Thelen 2002, p. 92). Studying regime change is not an event but it is embedded in a series of events that happen over time and ultimately change the balance of power. The contexts under which institutions are founded; “political, economic, demographic and sociological are always shifting” (Thelen 2002, p. 100). It is therefore paramount in studying regime change to know what sustains these institutions, in a dictatorship, what sustains, it and what reproduces the system of political oppression is key to uncover. It is intriguing to note that external actors, from colonial power to apartheid South Africa and business from other Western countries contributed not only in the establishment of an authoritarian system but they continued to help reproduce it decades latter. The paper further argues that the undemocratic regime is partly reproduced by the support it receives from the external actors, politically and financially. The proliferation of foreign capital into the country and their dealings with Tibiyo and the king helps in the reproduction of the regime.

Thelen (2002) further argues that institutions affect the articulation of collective interests, so they are not only responsible for constraining behaviour of individuals. Steinmo, et al (1992, p.8) contends that “the goals that actors pursue are shaped by the institutional context. Any political system is fraught with the contestation of interests from different segments of society. This contestation manifests itself in class interests. Class interests are formed and shaped by class position mitigated by state and social institutions (Steinmo et al 1992). Class politics in democratization struggles underlines that the subordinate classes that are likely to pursue democracy. In studying change historical institutionalism provides insights into the influence of institutions in shaping group capabilities to identify and realise their shared interest. This is a significant point as it affects to alliance formation amongst groups in pursuit of their interests, because when that foundation, material or ideational is shaken change is likely to happen. It may be for the best or the worst in terms of democratization but the shaking up of foundation opens up the possibility for change. It is then up to the different contesting class or group interests to take advantage of the cracks in the system.

Historical institutionalism brings to the fore that the formation of institutions shapes political relations and outcomes by facilitating the organization of certain groups while demobilizing and disorganizing others. In an undemocratic regime, the ruling class is empowered and organized

whereas the subordinate class is unorganized. The great work done by Theda Skocpol (1979) in her book, *'States and social revolutions'* clearly shows the importance of history. Her classical comparative study on the three revolutions in France, Russia and China, did not only analyse the class structure but looked back into the historical context under which certain classes were marginalized in the three political systems.

In bringing up the historical context helps one to be aware that the concept of democratization being studied is not entirely independent from the other events that have unfolded and are currently unfolding both inside Swaziland and internationally amongst different actors. As outlined previously, the accumulation of both political and economic wealth of the monarchy would have not been possible without the influence of the international forces; be it colonial administration, apartheid South Africa and other business actors, therefore in studying democratization struggle locating history is paramount. A historical analysis explains why actors (in my work both external actors and the regime) are trying to capitalize on certain goals over others (Steinmo et al 1992).

Bratton and Van de Walle (1997) in their classical work on *'Democratic Experiments in Africa; regime transitions in comparative perspective'* used the politico-institutional approach to study the different regime transitions that have unfolded in the continent. Their justification for their choice is in line with the discussion presented by historical institutionalists above. It is based on the importance of history in studying political events the path dependency and distribution of power. This work is slightly different from theirs as it draws the international actors dimension. It would be counter-productive to only study the Swazi regime by only looking at the domestic factors without locating its relationship with international actors; be they business, states, regional, continental or supranational bodies. The argument is that the development of the modern Swazi state and its institutions is interlinked with external actors through colonialism then through international trade and regional and international governmental organizations.

### **3.3.2 The linkage and leverage theory**

The advent of the third wave of democratization has resulted scholarly work on democratization focusing mainly on the internal factors such as civil society, regime type, ruling elites and level of modernization as explanatory variables for the democratization process (Lebanidze 2014). External actors have been considered to play a secondary role in the democratization process

(O'Donnell et al 1986). A significant number of studies that have focused on the influence of external actors in the democratization process have been focusing on Eastern Europe regimes after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Most of those states wanted to be part of the EU, so they were coerced to democratize to join the family of European states and also reap the economic benefits of EU.

The collapse of the Soviet Union brought about a serious challenge to undemocratic regimes as they had face the drying of their coffers as the soviet financial backup ran dry. The Western countries (mainly USA) aid which was used as a buffer to Soviet penetration also dried up. The creation of a unipolar world super power, the USA and its allies meant that the Western countries had a powerful leverage in coercing regimes to democratize. The post- Soviet era meant that external pressure to democratise intensified, making authoritarian regimes vulnerable to external pressure and this pressure included; political conditionality, democracy assistance programs, human rights and democracy networks expanded.

The leverage and linkage model is important in understanding the international dimension of pressure from external actors in the democratization process. Democratization studies have often focused on the democratization process as an outcome of either domestic or external pressure. The international actor's role in democratization is poorly understood in democratization studies (Levitsky and Way 2010). There has been an overemphasis on the domestic factors in studying democratization and treating of external actors as secondary in the process. The linkage and leverage model helps one to get a comprehensive understanding of the external actors power of influence and the context under which they use their power to pressurise regimes to democratize.

Levitsky and Way came up with the model on studying democratization and the power of influence that external actors have over the undemocratic regimes. They analysed this as leverage, linkage to the West and organizational power of the ruling regimes. Leverage is the "...authoritarian regimes vulnerability to external democratizing pressure" (Levitsky and Way 2005, p. 21). The most important factors are size, economy and military strength of the target regime. Economically weak states that are dependent on aid are more vulnerable to external pressure. Such pressure includes political conditionality, punitive sanctions, diplomatic and military intervention. Organizational power or capacity refers to the regimes "capacity to resist the oppositional challenges" (Levitsky and Way 2010, p. 54).

The theoretical model by Levitsky and Way (2010, p. 71-3; Lebanidze 2014, p. 205) delineates both internal and external factor as important in democratization and these are outlined in three stages.

1. The higher the linkage, the higher the probability of democratization regardless of the degree of leverage and organizational power.
2. In cases of low linkage and high organizational power, authoritarian stability is expected.
3. In cases of low linkage and medium or low organizational power, the degree of leverage is a decisive factor: a high degree of leverage might cause a turnover without democratization, whereas low leverage contributes to regime survival.

Their assumption is that where there is high linkage and leverage, the external democratizing pressure is more likely succeed and push the regime to democratize. This was the case in Zambia, Malawi and Georgia (Levitsky and Way, 2010).

The leverage by Western powers is in a number of cases conditioned by other factors. Firstly, it is limited whereby the target authoritarian regime gets an alternative source of financial support. This was witnessed in Southern Africa whereby South Africa supported Mugabe's regime in Zimbabwe after Zimbabwe was sanctioned by the Western governments. Lebanidze (2014) refers to these counter hegemonic states as the black nights. This was about the role played by Russia as a counter force in Azerbaijan against the influence of the West leading to that regime not moving towards democracy. Secondly, Western countries are less likely to use leverage whereby they have economic (as witnessed in oil producing Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and security interests; Egypt and Pakistan (Levitsky and Way, 2010). This is the case when the Western countries economic and security interests are not threatened by the incumbent regimes.

Leverage would not be effective if it goes alone. There must be linkage between the external actor and the target regime. Linkage "...encompasses the myriad networks of interdependence that connect individual polities, economies and societies..." (Levitsky and Way 2010, p. 43). They categorised linkages into six; economic, social, intergovernmental, communication, technocratic and transnational civil society.

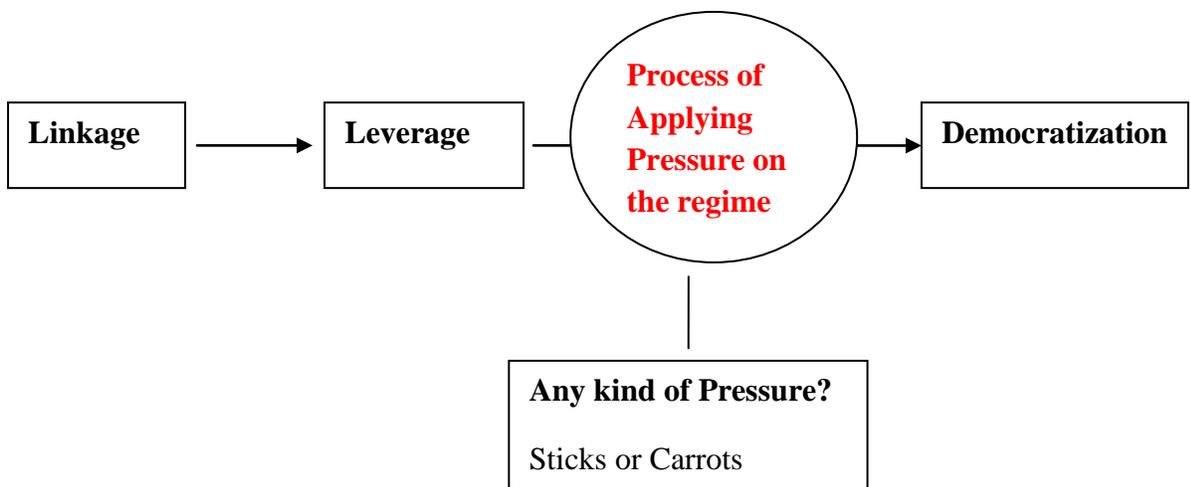
**Table 1.** *Showing linkage to the external actors taken from (Levitsky and Way 2010:43-44)*

<b>Linkage</b>	<b>Features</b>
Economic	Credit, investment, assistance
Social	Tourism, migration and diaspora communities
Inter-governmental	Ties to Western governments, Military, diplomatic, alliances and international organizations
Communication/information	Cross border telecommunications, internet connection, foreign media
Transnational civil society	International NGO's, churches, political parties, other networks
Technocratic	Elite education, link to Western universities, Western led multilateral institutions

Levitsky and Way continue to argue that linkages in the post-cold war era have contributed to democratization by helping establish constituencies that are committed to democratic values. Linkages have increased the cost of repression for the authoritarian regime in the following ways: Firstly, by strengthening the democratic forces resistance against the regime; Secondly, by increasing the chance of international response to the authoritarian nature of the regime by raising awareness to the outside world about the repression.

The leverage and linkage theory was focused on the Western actors as the democratizing force. However, a number of studies have used the leverage and linkage model to study the impact of regional bodies in democracy promotion in Africa. There is also a study by van Eerd (2009) that uses the leverage and linkage model in the democratization of Lesotho and its relationship with South Africa. In the study, I however not only use it when analysing Western bodies but on all external actors (including South Africa, AU and SADC) that I have included in the study. The interest of the study is on the role that is played by the external actors considering that there is a high linkage between Swaziland and the external actors which have to provide a strong leverage

for democratization. I am interested in whether there is pressure being applied and the kind of pressure applied by the external actors on the external regime. The linkage and leverage model has been used to study African countries democratization, not only in relation to western democracy promoting institutions but also the power of regional dynamics. Hartmann (2015) illuminates this well in his study on ‘*How regionalism shapes regime dynamics in Africa*’ primarily focusing on ECOWAS and SADC. In the context of Swaziland external actors have high leverage on the regime. The Swazi regime is linked to the international political and economic system; through trade, financial support, and membership to many regional and international bodies; SADC, AU, Commonwealth and the United Nations.



**Figure 5.** Illustration of the process (linkage + leverage = democratization) the study focuses on (by author)

**Linkage, leverage and organizational power**

The aim of this sub-section is to apply the three dimensions (linkage, leverage and organizational power) of Levitsky and Way’s model to Swaziland. The section provides an assessment of the actors that have linkage with Swaziland, their leverage and the capacity of the Swazi regime to resist their pressure for democratization.

**1.Linkage**

Swaziland like any other country does not exist in isolation from the rest of the world. The authoritarian regime thrives and sustains itself with the political, financial and technical

assistance from the external actors. The linkages that exist between external actors and the target regime are classified by Levitsky and Way (2010) into six (6) categories; economic, social, inter-governmental, technocratic, transnational civil society, and communication. The amount of linkage is determined by the deeper connections that exist between a country and the external actor(s).

In drawing the linkage that exists between Swaziland and the international community, I limit myself to the external actors that I have included to be part of my study. Swaziland has extensive links with South Africa because of the history of colonial penetration and the control of the economy of a modern Swaziland by South Africa (outlined in detail the history earlier in the paper). Swaziland became entangled into South Africa's economic system through the advent of Southern African Customs Union (SACU) in 1910, which comprised of South Africa as major economy, Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana<sup>19</sup>. The development of SACU was unequal it was meant to benefit South Africa's economy at the expense of the economies of its small neighbour states. Aye (1988) contends that the disbursement of SACU revenues was politically motivated; it was used as a carrot and stick in political affairs for weak SACU members in the region after the establishment of apartheid rule in South Africa. "From 1969, SACU was utilised by the white-minority apartheid regime in South Africa to maintain a powerful control over policy in the newly independent neighbouring BLS states" (Gibbs and Treasure 2014, p. 2). The ultimate projected end-result of the apartheid regime was to create a "constellation of states" to support apartheid South Africa whilst isolating the liberation movement. Since the post-independence era SACU has provided a financial cushion to the regime in Swaziland.

The history of SACU is important in this study as it shows it has roots in apartheid South Africa which wanted to use SACU receipts as a buffer for the then liberation movement. The collapse of apartheid and the ushering of a democratic regime in South Africa in 1994 was expected to compel South Africa to review the sharing formula did not change immediately triggering long negotiations that led to the 2002 Agreement. The proposed Revenue Sharing Formula (RSF) seeks to pool resources into a development fund for the region as compared to bankrolling national budgets of these states. It is no longer in a democratic South Africa's interests to bankroll its neighbours as history shows that SACU was used by colonial administration and apartheid

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<sup>19</sup><http://www.sacu.int/show.php?id=394>

government to subdue BLS. During a briefing to a standing committee in the South African Parliament it was stated: “SACU payments to the ... BLNS is seen increasingly by the SA public and Parliament as a fiscal burden and ... in the light of the fact that South Africa itself remains a developing country” (Gibb and Treasure 2014, p. 832)

Swaziland has been reliant on SACU, which accounted for over 60 percent of the national budget until it took a dive in 2011. However, in recent years, since 2011 the SACU receipts have been dwindling for Swaziland, partly due to the poor economy in the region as the South African economy has not been growing as expected. The wave of protest witnessed in 2011 and 2012 in Swaziland was a direct response to the reduction of government revenue coming from SACU. The protests were a catalyst to an already existing struggle for democratization, “showing that SACU revenues may have been a prop to unpopular regimes through direct funding” (Gibb and Treasure 2014, p. 825). The argument by Skocpol and Green that events that happen internationally can trigger dissent domestically explains the events of 2011 in Swaziland. According to Gibbs and Treasure (2014) Swaziland will likely be driven into bankruptcy or turned into a failed state with a predicted decrease from 9 per cent in 2010 to only 3 per cent in 2019.

Swaziland has preferential trade agreements (EPA) with the European Union. It is only last year (2015) she lost preferential trade, Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA) with the USA for failure to respect human rights. South Africa is major trading partner with Swaziland, about 90 percent of imports come from South Africa and 60 percent of Swazi exports go to South Africa. Swaziland’s linkage to the Western countries (mainly EU members) and also the USA has a historical background, the economy was driven by mainly British (the colonising power) companies and USA companies. After independence, the economy became more dominated by South Africa as a lot of British companies slowly moved away. However, the linkage has continued in terms of preferential access to USA and EU markets and donations that are flowing to Swaziland from the West. The USA provides military training to the Swazi military. Swaziland also receives technical and financial support from the Commonwealth since being a member at independence in 1968.

Swaziland has a high concentration of its diaspora in South Africa whose remittances support thousands of Swazi’s. In terms of communication there is a high proliferation of South African

media, both print and electronic. There has been a steady increase in the use of internet and mobile phone network coverage since the introduction of mobile phones in 1998.

## **2.Leverage**

According to Levitsky and Way 2010 leverage is vulnerability of the target authoritarian regime to the pressure from the external democratizing actor(s). Swaziland receives development funds and humanitarian assistance funds from USA and EU. South Africa is a key trading partner with Swaziland making South Africa to have great leverage on Swaziland. These external actors (USA, EU and South Africa) have overwhelming leverage on the Swazi regime. The reduction of SACU receipts in 2011 crippled the Swazi regime's capacity to settle its bills. Preferential trade agreements with the USA (AGOA) and EU (EPA) are central to the Swazi economy as they give access to external markets for the Swazi products. Without the preferential trade agreements, the Swazi economy would suffer. This was witnessed in when the USA removed Swaziland from countries that benefit from AGOA in 2015. Swaziland has a high HIV prevalence rate in the world at 26 percent and relies heavily on the funding from USA's PEPFAR to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

## **3.Organizational Power**

Organizational power is the ability of the target regime to resist external pressure. Leverage is influenced by economy and security. Levitsky and Way (2010) presented three (3) criteria that determine the leverage an external actor has: possession or access to nuclear weapons; a large economy (GDP greater than 100 billion USD); a major oil producer. Swaziland does not conform to the criterion set by the leverage and linkage model, as it does not have oil neither nuclear weapons. The economy of Swaziland is not too big; it has a GDP of 3000 USD. The Swazi economy is based on agricultural products (mainly sugar, citrus, forestry) which are exported to EU and South Africa.

A state needs a strong economy to have a well-functioning security apparatus to have the coercive capacity to deal with political dissent. Swaziland has less organizational power because it does not have discretionary control over its own economy. According to Levistky and Way for a regime to sustain its coercive capacity it must have a "large, well trained and well equipped security apparatus with an effective presence across national territory...with demonstrated

capacity to penetrate civil society and monitor repress civil opposition activities at the village and/ or neighbourhood level across the country” (2010, p. 376).

Swaziland’s military was established when the Constitution was abrogated in 1973. It has not developed into a very sophisticated army. The most coercive force that has been used by the regime to suppress resistance by the people has been the police. The regime has over the years been resorting to call the prison warders to assist the police when there are mass demonstrations by pro-democracy groups. This illustrates that the security apparatus is not sophisticated, although in recent years there has been an increase in the amount resources allocated to security. Over the years, the security has been a priority for the regime, as more financial resources are channelled to it. In 2016 security got a lion’s share compared to health on the national budget allocation<sup>20</sup>. The military receives more funding followed by the police and the prison warders. The junior officers in these forces are not content with their conditions of service and this was witnessed in 2007 when the junior officers in the police and prison warders established a workers union which led to a protracted battle with the government. The government did not want the union, as unions are perceived to be an extension of the pro-democracy movement and it was eventually destroyed through expulsion of a few and intimidation from the government. Despite the increases of the budget for security over the years the Swazi security forces cannot be said to be sophisticated to a level where they could help the regime resist both domestic and external pressure to democratize.

### **3.3.3 International Relations theories (realism and liberalism)**

In analysing the role of external actors in the democratization process in Swaziland the study draws from the international relations theories. I use both realism and liberalism. The realist school of thought argues that the international system is anarchic, therefore states are in a perpetual struggle to promote and secure their interests (Walt 1998). Realism argues that international relations is primarily driven by economic and security interest and the balancing of power amongst states. Realism contends that domestic and international differ and are separate. This explains foreign policy of democratic states is usually undemocratic and fails to propagate the norms and values their citizens believe in.

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<sup>20</sup><http://allafrica.com/stories/201603100454.html>

Liberalism on the other hand asserts that states do not only care about balancing power, security and the economy but they also care about norms and values. These norms are enforced through legalism and moralism. Keohane defines moralism and legalism as “Legalism is the belief that moral and political progress can be made through the extension of law. Moralism is the belief that moral principles provide valuable, if not necessarily sufficient, guides to how political actors should behave, and that actions by those in power can properly be judged on the basis of their conformity to general moral principles developed chiefly to govern the actions of individuals” (p. 2012, p.129). The promotion of human rights and democracy is viewed by most people as morally acceptable even when pursued by external actors. According to the liberal school of thought cooperation amongst states is fundamental to world peace. USA President Woodrow Wilson saw the promotion of democracy as key in establishing world peace. Miller asserts that in democracy promotion “...realists allegedly emphasise the use of military force in a unilateral way, while liberals favour the resort to economic sanctions and incentives and the use of international institutions multilaterally” (2010, p. 566). Liberalists believe that pressure from the outside is needed to coerce stubborn authoritarian regimes to democratize. The changing of states behaviour could be enticed through the use means such as foreign aid, support of democracy movement, to build its capacity to challenge the incumbent regime. These are soft forms of power to effect change rather than the offensive use of military force to enforce regime change.

One is persuaded by the argument pursued by liberalism about (moralism) norms playing a major role in shaping the behaviour of external actors to promote democracy in Swaziland because they have less to benefit to benefit from the small economic wealth of the country. Furthermore, the liberal school argues that not only the state is an important actor as realist would argue but other non-state actors are equally important in international politics. These actors may be individuals and trans-national civil society actors; NGO's, labour movements and social movements amongst other. These transnational actors are distinguished by their different values which they espouse (Keck and Sikkink 1998). The interesting part about these actors is that they are not driven by the economy, security interests, but their passion about the values they believe in. And over the years they have proven to be a force that shapes international politics. This has been witnessed in the anti-apartheid struggles, labour rights movements and women's right movement amongst others.

In understanding democratization process it is important to note that arguments presented by the two theories are real and have manifested in different contexts. States do promote democratization through imposing sanctions and other democracy promotion instruments such as support for the opposition and public condemnation of an authoritarian regime. This goes a long way in undermining the legitimacy of the target regime. On the other hand, transnational NGO's, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have been instrumental in 'name shaming' and exposing human rights violations in authoritarian regimes (Peksen 2012). Transnational civil society organizations also help mobilize financial resources to help their counterparts in the authoritarian countries.

Transnational non-state actors are essential in lobbying their governments regional and multi-lateral institutions to take action against authoritarian regime. Their action helps to set the agenda for their governments and other bodies they lobby about the suffering of their less powerful counterparts living under the authoritarian regime. The leverage that the external actors have over the target authoritarian regime is activated by transnational actors even when their governments were reluctant to take action against the target regime. It is more feasible when these transnational actors are lobbying democratic governments and institutions that have a respect for democratic values and people's power. The leverage and linkage theory asserts that transnational civil society linkages are central in developing the leverage that that is needed by the external actors to exert pressure effectively on an authoritarian regime (Levitsky and Way 2010).

The Swazi internal actors are also part of a broad network of different transnational actors; the trade unions, main banned political parties and non-governmental organizations are affiliated to international organizations; the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) is affiliated to International Trade Union Congress (ITUC) and PUDEMO is affiliated to Socialist International (SI). The FSEJ is part of a network of civil society organizations in Southern Africa called the Southern African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN). The international affiliation avails avenues for the internal forces to launch a political campaign against the regime at an international level. Therefore, the linkages that exist between the Swazi pro-democracy movement and transnational actors are fundamental in establishing a constituency that will influence their governments to put pressure on the Swazi regime.

### **3.4 Transition to democracy; a domestic or external mission?**

The achievement of democracy “cannot be mandated, either from above, or externally” (Grosh and Orvis 1996, p. 48). The transition to democracy is an organic process that develops from within. This has been the case in Swaziland since political parties were banned, different political groupings, and individuals have championed the return to multiparty democracy. Their calls have thus far failed to make a break-through. By analysing the regime type and how it relates to external actors one argues that the achievement of democracy would be an outcome of collaboration between internal and external players. Swaziland like any other country is entangled to the international economic system. The regime draws a big chunk of financial support from Southern African Customs Union (SACU), external donors and development partners.

The external actors use many mechanisms to help activate the process of democratization. This could be done using political conditionality, economic sanctions, use of trade sanctions to pressurise regimes to democratise and now there is a growing trend of what Vanderhill and Alexander (2009) refers to as the ‘resource enhanced approach’ whereby financial support is given to the civil society actors and political opposition in pursuit of democracy. There are key determinants that affect the success rate of external pressure in the democratization process; size, geographic location power of the targeted state and its ties with the outside world. Tolstrup (2013) contends that democracy is conditioned by leverage (vulnerability of the targeted state) and linkages a state has with the external democratizing force. Swaziland is one country that befits all the conditions for external pressure to succeed if applied. Swaziland is a small country geographically, economy and its economy is linked to external actors through trade and development aid. The international community has not capitalised on the favourable conditions outlined by Tolstrup (2013) all these years, the opportunity is still there for the international community to exert pressure on the regime to democratise.

Nevertheless, internal factors act as bedrock for a transition to democracy as democracy cannot be imported from abroad without some of these internal factors. Skocpol (1979) and Green (1984) as cited in Schutz and Slater (1990) argue that there are basic factors for a revolution; underlying causes, precipitating and facilitating causes. The underlying causes include historical exploitation and inequalities existing in society leading people to challenge the existing status

quo. The precipitating factors include domestic political unrest, and economic crisis, which may be domestic or international. The underlying causes together with the precipitating factors are the objective factors favourable for a mass insurrection and with a good leadership and organization on the ground; the ruling regime would be challenged. All these factors alluded to by Skocpol and Green emphasize the importance of the internal factors in activating the need for democratic change. At the same time, they highlight the importance of the international economy in determining change in nation states.

The exertion of pressure from the international community on the Kingdom is likely to coerce the regime to democratize. The coercive power of the international community was witnessed during the period leading to democratization in Malawi and Zambia in the early 1990's whereby the donor community compelled the one-party regime to democratize. "International norms, models of democracies from outside, and processes of transnational cooperation provide specific inputs to the domestic arena in different phases of democratization" (Grugel 1999, p. 31). Mohan and Zack-Williams summed it well in their work about democratization in Africa that "the democracy fire has been smouldering for a long time albeit contained and suppressed" (2004, p. 228). The advent of democratization in sub-Saharan Africa should not be only seen as externally driven as the local people had been engaged in struggles for democracy. The support from external pressure has helped a number of Sub-Saharan African countries to democratise.

### **3.4.1 Mobilization from below**

Democratization literature argues that the development of a vibrant democracy has to come from below, meaning that internal actors are important in the transition. A study by Haggard shows that mass mobilization was an important factor in more than half of the democratic transitions that happened between 1980 and 2008 (Haggard and Kaufman 2016). Without a consistent internal pressure democracy remains an illusion.

Skocpol (1979) summed it up well when she argued that it is not enough to only identify the underlying tensions between classes understood in a Marxists perspective. What is more significant is how the subordinate classes can successfully fight those who exploit them? This is a fundamental question in addressing the lack of democratization in Swaziland. "Organized class power stems not only from socio-economic factors but also from but also from the power social classes are able to invest in political institutions...There is definitely a dialectical relationship

between government institutions and class formation” (Steinmo et al 1992, p. 52). The isolation of other classes through the banning of political activity in 1973 was a brutal way by the monarchy to isolate others from the political institutions that are instrumental in pursuing class interests. This explains why the subordinate classes are poorly organized in Swaziland.

In the development of democracy in the western countries the bourgeoisie struggled for its share of political participation from royal autocracy and aristocracy (Rueschemeyer et.al 1992). In more recent history the subordinate class encompasses the working class, middle class political parties and peasants who are fighting for democracy. It is therefore, critical to mobilize and organize the subordinate class. The struggle for democracy is pursued and resisted by class interests. It is a struggle over the right to rule between the subordinate and the dominant classes that places the struggle for democracy on the agenda in any society.

The subordinate class has historically tried to organize itself to challenge the ruling and dominant class. According to Rueschemeyer et al (1992) in the absence of a vibrant trade union movement (labour movement has been classified by Marx as the revolutionary class as it is closer to the exploitation by capitalism mode of production) and the civil society fills the void by enabling the inclusion of previously excluded social classes in the promotion of democracy. The countering of the dominant ideology of the ruling class is a critical component of the civil society. This is important for peasant and urban middle class because they are easily co-opted by the ruling elites more than the working class thus making them less interested in the struggle for democracy. Civil society organizations play a pivotal role in political mobilization and articulating the class interests of the subordinate class.

The social stratification determines the protracted path to democracy for any given society. The alliances that are formed by the subordinate classes are important in tilting the balance of forces in favour of the forces calling for democracy. Historically, alliances have been formed by the trade unions, rural and urban petty bourgeoisie, farmers and peasants. Under a monarchy rule such as the one in Swaziland, proximity to the ruler determines who is likely to benefit from the ‘crumbs’ that fall on the table of the master. The logic behind personal rule is that ordinary people who are outside the eating circle (ruling elite) would scramble to be part of the circle so that they can benefit from the feast provided by the ruler. This seems to be the most significant factor that divides and weakens the subordinate class. The co-option of some individuals within

the urban middle class sows division and mistrust between the working class, peasants and the broader pro-democracy forces. The co-option of former trade union activists has been effectively used by the regime in Swaziland.

Mamdani (1996) in his book *'Citizen and Subject'* clarifies that democratization and governance in Africa cannot be understood only by looking at the mode of production or from the studies from the basis of theories of democracy. He argues that it is important to draw experiences from the past by looking at the 'mode of rule or domination' rather than only focusing on the 'mode of production and the mode of accumulation'. The bifurcated and unequal state was introduced into Africa by colonial administration through indirect rule (Mamdani 1996). This point raised by Mamdani is crucial in the Swazi context where by urban proletariat is a minority compared to the army of people living on subsistence agriculture or informal economy because of the semi feudal and semi capitalist economy that prevails in the country. Presently, the democracy forces are divided amongst several banned political formations, their power base is mainly in the urban areas, and they are weak in the rural areas where the great majority of the people reside.

In the Swazi context waging a struggle for democracy cannot only come from the organized labour as it was witnessed in the western world because the labour force is limited due to high unemployment. There are magnitudes of people living on the informal economy, who are not organized under trade unions. The building of alliances by the different segments of society that are suffering is central uniting forces against the regime. In an agrarian society, the rural people who leave off the land are important in fighting for democratic change.

The agrarian question and the duality of law is at the centre of the subjugation of the rural masses in Swaziland has been used by the monarchy to politically and economically disempowering the majority. "...Swazi Nation Land is at the heart of the repressive regime which facilitates forced labour, forced contributions and forced removals. These forms of repression are inconsistent with democracy, and are central to an understanding of why there can be no democracy under the tribal nationalist state in Swaziland (Levin 1990, p. 62). The point buttressed by Levin is crucial as it shows the glaring reality of the power question in Swaziland which is important to understand for the mobilization for democracy. The rural people are a majority in Swaziland and they take the brunt of the repression and exploitation of the regime. It is therefore central to

mobilize these magnitudes in the rural areas if the building of democracy from below is to be a realized.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

The theoretical framework chapter has provided a solid foundation for the use of democracy literature and blending it with international relations to understand the complex process of democratization. The chapter has also brought to the fore the theoretical basis for the analysis of the thesis is premised on three (3) theories; historical institutionalism, linkage and leverage theory and international relations. Swaziland has been in an unbroken relationship with the international community for generations; from colonial rule, to apartheid South Africa and a post-independence era. In establishing the linkages between external actors and the Swazi regime it was prudent for the paper to go back to history and draw patterns that are critical for analysing the role of the external actors. The linkage that exists between the Swazi regime and the external community is enormous meaning that the leverage by the external actors is high for democratization to take place as Levitsky and Way argue. International relations theories have provided an understanding about the shaping of national interest by states. The interests of states shape their foreign policy, which is fundamental in democracy promotion beyond borders. It has also illuminated the understudied role of transnational civil society actors in promoting democracy. The chapter has dwelled on the democratization literature that focuses external determinates of democratization which are equally key to the democratization process as the internal factors. The argument presented is that democratization cannot only be a product of external actors alone in as much as democracy cannot be imported from abroad. It needs the collaboration from external actors and the internal actors to pile pressure on the regime. Building a strong pro-democracy movement inside Swaziland has been adequately argued in the part of the thesis.

## Chapter 4

### Research Methodology

#### Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and the rationale for the choice of the design. Furthermore, the unit of analysis and the data collection phase is clearly spelled out in this chapter. The chapter also specifies the data analysis, reliability and validity of the research, limitations and ethical considerations considered in the research.

#### 4.1 Research Design

This is a qualitative study where both primary and secondary sources of data are used. Creswell (1998, p. 15) defines qualitative research as "...an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting". Qualitative study seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as "real world setting [where] the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton 2002, p. 39). The intention of this design is not to establish a causal relationship between variables nor find statistically significant findings for generalization to the population generalize as quantitative research designs do. The goal is to achieve a deeper understanding of the study phenomenon.

Creswell (2009) contends that a researcher using the qualitative approach focuses only on a single concept and in this study that concept is democratization. According to Yin and Creswell, a qualitative inquiry has to answer *what* and *how* question. This study is a qualitative case study, whereby I study Swaziland as a single case. The main research question of the study is to unpack and provide a deeper understanding about the role of the external actors in the democratization of Swaziland.

One of the key components of qualitative research is the utilization of data from multiple sources (Creswell 1998; Yin 2009). The use of multiple sources of evidence is important for triangulation. Triangulation is essential for ensuring validity of the research. For this study, primary sources of data were semi-structured interviews conducted by phone and emails. For the

informants who could not do interviews as per their request, they responded to the interview questions through email.

Secondary sources of data include documents, reports, speeches, newspaper articles, press statements, documentaries and audio-visual materials from the bodies in the unit of analysis. Secondary sources of data were used for purposes of triangulation. The study also relies on secondary sources of data for several reasons. The study has sourced data that relates to aid that is given to the Swazi regime, especially from the EU and USA that are both donors and trading partners to the regime, whereas South Africa is only a trading partner but not a donor.

The choice a qualitative design over a quantitative one is premised on the intention of the study to have a deeper understanding of the democratization process by focusing on the external actor's role in Swaziland. Generalizing of findings for any scientific study is a difficult academic endeavour for case studies like this one as generalizing is often argued to be more salient in quantitative studies whereby the sample is representative of the population and respondents randomly selected. This is what Yin termed statistical generalization. He goes further to argue that generalizing is also possible on the basis of inductive approach which emphasises theory building as is the case in this study and thesis described as 'theoretical or analytical generalization. Analytic generalization is different from statistical generalization because it does not draw inferences from the data to a population but rather it contrasts the results of the study to an existing theory. The study contributes to theory development by using theories presented in the theoretical framework chapter in drawing inferences that about the role of the external actors in the democratization process of Swaziland considering the leverage that is held by the different external actors. Flyvbjerg argues that there "...cannot be a predictive theory in social science. Social science has not succeeded in producing general, context independent theory and, thus has in the final instance nothing else to offer than concrete, context-dependant knowledge" (2006, p. 223). The findings in the study show that the case of Swaziland is different as it does not attract the expected pressure from external actors considering the leverage they possess as the linkage and leverage theory hypothesizes.

The choice of a qualitative methodology is motivated by that the study aims to use the data to deduce more inductive theoretical assumptions on the role of the external actors in the democratization of Swaziland. An inductive approach is best suited in a qualitative method. The

theoretical framework outlines the importance of historicity in this kind of research. An inductive approach does not imply the total disregard of theory in guiding the research in-terms of developing research questions. (Yin 2009; Creswell 2009) The study is founded three (3) theories as a foundation for this study; historical institutionalism, the leverage and linkage and international relations as stated in my theoretical framework chapter. Rather than deducing hypotheses from the basis of global assumptions or theory and prior to the analysis, historical institutionalists generally develop their hypotheses more inductively, in the course of interpreting the empirical material. The more inductive the approach of historical institutionalists reflects a different approach to the study of politics that essentially rejects that political behaviour can be analysed with the same techniques that may be useful in economics. Bratton and van de Walle (1997) in their study of democratic experiments, argue that the institutional approach provides a variety of analytical bridges thus giving researchers the potential to construct a middle range theory.

### ***My participation in the struggle***

My political activism did not compromise the research work as I apply the principle of participatory action research model. Participatory action research model is premised on the belief that people examine their own realities and organize themselves to deal with challenges they face (McIntyre 2008). It is a model that allows people especially the oppressed to combine the interaction of theory and practice to improve their conditions. As stated earlier my motivation for this research was driven by my passion to see a democratic Swaziland. In the struggle for democratization I am not a bystander but I have been and continue to be involved. I am part of those who are oppressed. Participatory action research has been widely used in studies of the oppressed, such as feminist studies and race studies. My political activism over the years helped me in the research especially getting access to my key informants from the internal actors and the diaspora. This has been an advantage for data collection as interviews were done on phone, skype and email. It would have been extremely difficult to create rapport had the informants not known me as an activist.

### **4.2 Selection of units of analysis**

This study is a single case study taking Swaziland as a case of analysis. The selection of the units of analysis is purposive sampling because the intention is to get in-depth information about the

issue being investigated. Creswell (2009, p. 178) contends that “purposefully selected participants...will best help the researcher understand the problem...” The selection of the informants was both based on the motivation to get a balanced perspective from the external actors and the internal actors who are more knowledgeable and more likely to provide relevant information to my research issue. The informants are key individuals in organizations/bodies as outlined below. The informants are only those who are high ranking officials and providing a position of the organizations they represent.

### **Key regional and international bodies**

#### ***Southern African Development Community (SADC)***

SADC is the regional body that has democracy and good governance as its key principles. Swaziland has been a member of SADC since its inception in 1980 when it was still called the Southern African Coordinating Committee (SADCC). When it transformed itself to allow a South Africa and Namibia to join in 1992, Swaziland was continued to be part of the body. The founding treaty of SADC, Article 4 (C) espouses Human rights, democracy and rule of law. SADC has been actively engaged in the political problems of both Zimbabwe, Madagascar and most recently in Lesotho. SADC as a regional body is relevant for this study to investigate its role in democracy promotion in Swaziland. Studies of democratization have shown that regional bodies are critical in promoting democracy, through both diffusion and pressure. The development of the leverage and linkage model by Levitsky and Way was influenced by their work in studying the role of the EU in promoting democracy in the former Soviet Union States in Eastern Europe. It is therefore paramount for me in this study to investigate the role of SADC.

#### ***African Union (AU)***

The African body since the adoption of the African Charter on Civil and political liberties adopted in 1981 and entered into force in 1986. Article 31 of the Charter established a very important body, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, “to promote human and peoples' rights and ensure their protection in Africa. “The AU claims to promote democracy and good governance. It’s role in the democratization process in Swaziland is important to investigate.

### ***European Union (EU)***

The European Union is a major trading partner and donor to Swaziland. For the period 2014-2020 the EU has budgeted 62 million Euros for Swaziland<sup>21</sup>. Swaziland's economy is largely based on agriculture. Sugar is the main export to the EU. The EU has developed several mechanisms to promote democratic governance and political reforms beyond its borders. The EU and Africa Caribbean and Pacific group of countries signed the Cotonou Trade Agreement in year 2000 which included human rights and good governance under Article 96 of the Cotonou agreement.<sup>22</sup> The EU has used aid and negative conditionality in the form of sanctions to promote democratic governance. Interestingly, Swaziland has continued to enjoy full benefits under the Cotonou Agreement without getting pressure from the EU to respect human rights and democratise. The presence of the EU in Swaziland is important because none of the EU Member States accredited to Swaziland are resident in the country. The EU has been outspoken in publicly condemning the authoritarian regime in Swaziland. Interestingly, the public condemnation does not transcend into action that pressures the regime to democratize.

### ***Commonwealth***

The Commonwealth is a body of 52 member states including Swaziland whose membership started in at independence in 1968<sup>23</sup>. The Commonwealth's Secretariat has a responsibility to promote democracy. In 2015, the Commonwealth commissioned a process led by Dr Muluzi, the former President of Malawi to start negotiations in Swaziland between the pro-democracy actors and the King. However, the process is fraught with challenges and there is less optimism that it will succeed.

### ***Action Trust Southern Africa (ACTSA)***

ACTSA is a non-governmental solidarity group based in the UK that was established to pile pressure on the apartheid regime in South Africa. After the demise of apartheid in South Africa, ACTSA has focused on promoting democracy in Southern Africa. Swaziland has been one of the targeted regimes by ACTSA. This involves providing financial support to local groups that are

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<sup>21</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/nip-swaziland-20140619\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/nip-swaziland-20140619_en.pdf)

<sup>22</sup>[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/03\\_01/pdf/mn3012634\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/03_01/pdf/mn3012634_en.pdf)

<sup>23</sup><http://thecommonwealth.org/about-us>

fighting for human rights and democracy. ACTSA has been playing a significant role in lobbying the EU, Commonwealth the UK government to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratize.

### **Countries/States**

The intention here was to interview the foreign mission of these countries because of their countries strategic influence on Swaziland to get to understand what they are doing about the continued lack of democracy in Swaziland.

#### ***Republic of South Africa.***

Swaziland and South Africa are economically tied together since the advent of the Southern African Customs Union in 1910. The Swazi currency is pegged to the South African Rand through the Rand Monetary Area (RMA) established in 1974, latter replaced by the Common Monetary Area (CMA) in 1986. Economically Swaziland is entangled to the South African economy through trade. This was before even Swaziland achieved her independence and South Africa became independent. Swaziland receives about 85 percent of her imports from South Africa and sends about 60 percent of her exports to South Africa<sup>24</sup>. Swaziland has continued to receive a huge percentage of her revenues from the SACU receipts. The only time South Africa tried to intervene in Swaziland was in 1996 when a meeting between Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa was convened to pressurise the Swazi King to institute a constitutional review process. “While South Africa and regional institutions insist on democratic governance as one of the overarching regional values, they have until recently, been remarkably silent on the Swazi government” (Motsamai 2011, p. 47).

My choice of South Africa in the region is influenced by the linkages that have existed between the two countries since colonial rule up to present day. South Africa is also a hegemony in the region because of its economic and military strength. This is also my rationale towards not choosing Mozambique which is a another neighbouring state to Swaziland, however it does not have the economic and political linkages South Africa has because of the colonial history. Mozambique was colonized by Portugal and had a protracted civil war immediately after

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<sup>24</sup><http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/swaziland/overview>

independence until the ushering of multiparty democratic elections in 1994. Therefore, the linkages between Mozambique and Swaziland have not been strong compared to South Africa.

### ***The United States of America***

The USA is a world superpower that has been committed to the promotion of human rights and democracy. The USA is a donor and trade partner to Swaziland<sup>25</sup>. Swaziland has benefitted from the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA) since year 2000. This is despite the known lack of democracy and human rights violations in Swaziland. The human rights democracy and good governance are some of the key tenants for beneficiaries of this trade agreement (AGOA). The USA has been one country that has over the years been publicly denouncing the authoritarian rule, although without applying any pressure on the regime. The USA strategy on sub-Saharan Africa<sup>26</sup> under the Obama administration pronounces four principal objectives, one of them being to ‘strengthen democratic institutions’. Until recently in early 2015, Swaziland was removed by the USA government from the list of beneficiaries of the AGOA for human rights abuses. As it stands now the goods from Swaziland are no longer accepted under the preferential trade to the USA markets.

### ***The United Kingdom***

The UK is a colonial power to Swaziland. It has had a High Commission mission in Swaziland until it was relocated to South Africa in 2005. The UK has been less active politically on Swaziland. It has however channelled its energies on both the Commonwealth and the EU, who are more engaged on Swaziland. Interestingly Swaziland still has a High Commission office in London even though the UK closed its office in Swaziland. The Swazi regime still holds the UK in high regards because of the colonial past.

### ***The Republic of Taiwan***

Taiwan and Swaziland has had a bilateral agreement since 1968. Swaziland has received donor funding from Taiwan since the inception of the relationship between the two states. I intended to interview the ambassador of Taiwan in Swaziland, but the response I received from the embassy

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<sup>25</sup><http://us-foreign-aid.insidegov.com/l/168/Swaziland>

<sup>26</sup>[https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/africa\\_strategy\\_2.pdf](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/africa_strategy_2.pdf)

was not positive. The embassy refused to have an interview with me for this study. This is an extract from the email.

*“We regret to inform you that the ambassador, or any diplomat (as per protocol and procedures in place), is not allowed to comment on the issues you stated”*

### ***The Swazi Diaspora***

The purpose of including the diaspora in the study is to get their demands and expectations from the external actors as they do their lobbying. The diaspora interacts more frequently with the external actors as they engage in lobbying activities calling for pressure on the regime. The diaspora is critical according to the leverage and linkage model when looking at the amount of social linkage between the external actor and the target regime.

The Swazi diaspora comprises of those who have left Swaziland for political reasons, in fear of persecution (political exiles) and those who have left Swaziland for economic reasons. There is a loose network of the Swazi diaspora. Swaziland has a small population (approximately 1.2 million), so the diaspora is just a small fraction of that. The Swazi diaspora is organized in South Africa, the UK and Canada. The diaspora that is more organized and doing political work is in South Africa and UK hence they were chosen for my sample. One representative from the Swazi Vigil based in the UK and the one representative from the Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN) based in South Africa had been interviewed in this study.

### **Internal Actors**

The inclusion of the internal actors in this study is to get their perspective about the role of the external actors in the democratization struggle that they are engaged in as Swazis. This has helped deepen my understanding about the expectations of the internal actors in relation to the attitudes shown by the external actors in the democratization. There are many actors that are involved in fighting for democracy, such as other outlawed political parties and non-governmental organizations. I have however chosen the following to be part of the unit of analysis because they seem to be in the forefront and more organized. It is important for this purposeful sampling to target organizations that are engaged in the struggle for democracy as

they provide an insight about their engagements with the external actors as they lobby them to act.

***Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA)*** is the biggest trade union federation in Swaziland it was formed as a merger of two federations; Swaziland Federation of Labour (SFL) and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) and Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT). It is one of the organizations that have been targeted by the regime because of its persistent call for democracy. It has external links in the international trade union movement and has been instrumental in putting Swaziland's lack of democracy in the International Labour Organization's agenda (ILO).

***Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF)*** is a broad front of organizations that are calling for democracy in Swaziland. It was established in 2008 to mobilize and build a mass movement to challenge the status quo.

***People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO)*** is the largest political party in the struggle for democracy in Swaziland. It was founded in 1983 and was proscribed as a terrorist entity in 2008 together with its youth league, Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) under the Suppression of Terrorism Act. Its leaders and members have been exposed to the worse abuses and brutality from the state security agents.

***Foundation for Socio Economic Justice (FSEJ)*** is a non-governmental organization partnering with social movements that are concerned with the socio-economic justice in Swaziland. These partner organizations are Swaziland National Ex-mineworkers, Swaziland Cross Border Traders, Swaziland Labour Academy, Swaziland National Union of Students, Swaziland Rural Women's Assembly and Swaziland Economic Justice Network. These partner organizations under the FSEJ have been vocal in calling for socio economic justice and to greater extent democratization. The FSEJ has been included in the study because it received funding in the past from EU and USA embassy in Swaziland for civic education on human rights and democracy. This is important point because the study focuses on the role of the external actors in the democratization process and funding of strategic civil society organizations is one way of supporting the building of democracy from below.

***Rationale for choice of informants***

The choice of these external actors outlined above is motivated by that these bodies have long standing relations with Swaziland. In the interviews with their representatives one could solicit primary data about their role in the democratization process of Swaziland. From SADC and AU, one intended to solicit information about mechanisms that these organizations are applying to pressurise the regime. This is based on the backdrop that both bodies claim to espouse the promotion of democracy and good governance as per their resolutions and declarations.

The choice of these internal actors was based on that they have been a critical opposition to the ruling regime. The purpose of interviewing the internal actors and the diaspora is to get a sense of what they expect from the external actors to do in the democratization struggle. The expectations of both the internal actors and the diaspora are important in this study to understand whether the action and, or non-action by the external actors are compatible with the expectations of the internal actors. Understanding their expectations helps in explaining the behaviour shown by the external actors.

### **4.3 Data collection techniques**

Data collection is an essential part of any research. Poor data collection techniques can lead to poor data that does not answer the research questions asked by the researcher. Yin (2009, p. 101) identified six most important sources of data for case studies: “documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artifacts.” A case study is a qualitative study. He went further to suggest that the list of data sources can include films, and videotapes. For this study documents, semi structured interviews and audio-visual materials have been used.

#### **4.3.1 The use of Documents**

The documents collected in this study include; official reports, press statements, newspaper articles and letters of communication between two or more bodies. Press statements, resolutions, country reports and declarations made by the relevant bodies. The intention of some documents in action is to influence actor B to do as actor A would like and this is captured in the language used in the documents (Silverman 2011). In this case, the targeted actor is the regime, so one considered the documents that seek to influence, persuade, or coerce the regime to embrace democracy. The documents are from both the local and external actors. Language is important in determining categorising the documents such as the document by the EU parliament calling for

the release of political prisoners in 2015 and the USA government withdrawing Swaziland from the beneficiaries of AGOA. These include petitions, press statements and resolutions from internal actors to the external actors and statements from the external actors directed to the Swazi regime.

For this study, the focus was on the contents of documents to understand the positions taken by these bodies in the democratization process in Swaziland. The use of documents in action helps in understanding how the resolutions or declarations that have been taken to advance democracy in the world have been enforced to democratize Swaziland. These document sources allow me to scrutinize the relationship between the regime and those bodies that have made resolutions or declarations calling for the advancement democracy worldwide.

The advantage of the use of documents as a source of data is that it is readily available and can be used by the researcher at a convenient time. It also captures the exact words or language used by the respondents being studied (Creswell 2009). The study has used formal government documents, such as statements touching on foreign policy and trade. This is for the USA and South African government which are the only countries selected as units of analysis. For the EU, I have collected formal documents relating to trade and its relationship to democratic governance, such as Cotonou agreement and the EPA. I have also collected into documents of the EU parliament resolution on Swaziland for 2015. Communication between these bodies and the Swazi government would also be some of the targeted documents for this study. Press releases associated with human rights, governance issues from the bodies and governments in my unit of analysis have been used in this study. Letters and petitions from the diaspora and the actors inside Swaziland to the external bodies about the situation in Swaziland and the appeal for support have been gathered. Newspapers are part of the documents that have been used to solicit articles and press statements about action by the actors being studied.

Documents are however limited as they do not provide a full picture about the exact events unfolding within an organization. This is the reason I also interviewed representatives from the unit of analysis. Documents such as newspaper articles may not be accurate or may have some biases as different media houses have different intentions. To verify data from newspaper articles, I used official reports and the interviews.

### 4.3.2 Interviews

“Interviewing can enable a researcher to explore causation, that is, to enquire into *why* individuals or organizations behave in the way that they do...” (Gorman and Clayton 2005, p. 125). Conducting interviews with the officials of the external actors would help me unearth their role in Swaziland’s democratization. The interviews were being conducted to solicit information from key representatives from the outlined organizations and countries. The initial plan in the design stage was to interview only one informant from these bodies. The plan changed as the data collection started because of procedures of doing phone or skype interviews on the side of some informants. Some informants, they requested written questions so they could give written responses through email. This was the case with South African High Commission, TUCOSWA, Commonwealth, USA and SADC. However, no responses were received from USA and SADC, this is explained further below). Informants from internal actors; SUDEF, PUDEMO and FSEJ were interviewed over the skype. (*Refer to appendix 2 for a list of all informants*)

I have sent them the exact open ended questions that were meant for the interview. I have used semi-structured interviews to get a deeper understanding of the positions of these bodies on the democratisation of Swaziland. The study design anticipated a problem with getting ambassadors of USA, EU and South Africa as informants. This is why an informant referred to me by the South African High Commission in charge of political affairs as it transpired that it was difficult to get hold of the ambassador was welcomed.

According to Creswell (2009, p. 16) a qualitative design uses “...open ended interviewing”. This study has used semi structured interviews with open ended questions which are superior to close-ended questions for soliciting in-depth information from respondents, as respondents have the leeway to explain in detail. The advantage of interviews according to Creswell (2009, p. 179) is that it allows respondents “...to provide historical information.” The interview with key respondents has helped to unearth more documents that I could not have come across.

The study does not classify the diaspora as external players because they are Swazi activists living outside Swaziland for both economic and political reasons. The diaspora is organized in two folds; there are those who left Swaziland in fear of persecution from the regime and then those who left for economic reasons, but they also want democracy. I have interviewed those in South Africa and the United Kingdom, because they are more organized and more engaged in the

struggle for democracy in Swaziland. They have been in the past been engaged in protest action in the Swazi embassies in both countries. The diaspora has been engaging international bodies to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratise.

The interviews have been conducted using video calling and phone calls. The rationale behind this is that it would be financially draining to travel to all these places to conduct face to face interviews. The other reason is that I cannot go to Swaziland to interview the targeted respondents, such as the EU, South African and USA embassy representatives who are resident in Swaziland. I could not go there for political and safety reasons as I am currently in exile. Doing interviews online has huge benefits for the environment as it limits travelling

My plan to conduct interviews with all respondents had to be changed as some respondents asked to have a set of questions sent to them through email and they responded to those questions. Their justification was the internal processes that did not allow phone interviews, and time factor the interviews between 30-60 minutes. These respondents are from TUCOSWA, SA High Commission, TUCOSWA, SADC and Commonwealth.

**Note:** With SADC I faced challenges of securing an interview with SADC. This is after I received a written letter from the head of the SADC secretariat to get help with an interview. The SADC informant then asked not to do an interview but respond to written which were dully sent. But I was sent from pillar to post sending a lot of emails and it took me about four (4) months to finally get someone who was meant to respond to my questions. And when the official was meant to respond to the question she declined to respond to the questions as she argued they are demeaning to a fellow member state. Eventually, the informant gave me several documents about SADC policies on democracy promotion. This almost the same experience I had with the USA embassy in Swaziland, after waiting for months for the response. I was eventually forwarded several documents related to the USA work in Swaziland. I have not been able to conduct interview with African Union because there has been no response to my emails requesting for the interviews. Therefore, data about SADC, AU and USA is only from secondary sources.



**Figure 5.** Total number of informants (10 interviews were done)

### 4.3.3 Use of audio and visual materials

Audio-visual materials include documentaries, pictures, videotapes, audiotapes. These are good sources of data like documents as they are readily available for use by the researcher at a point convenience. I have gathered visual material from both Swazi Vigil (a video from Press TV) in the UK and documentary from South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). In analysing this data it was transcribed and coded the most relevant parts of the videos whereby there are representatives of the actors that are part of my research.

### 4.4 Data Analysis

The study being a qualitative and an inductive one all data is coded. Coding is “the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data” (Strauss and Corbin as cited in Kvale and Brinkmann 2009, p. 202). After the data collection through interviews, I had to undergo the exercise of transcribing the data. All interviews for the study were conducted in English. This made transcribing easier and accurate as no information was lost in translation, which is an issue when interview data has to be translated to another language. The data that came as written responses (South African High Commission, TUCOSWA,) was easy to handle as it was in English, therefore, there was no need to transcribe. The coding was done manually.

The secondary data in the form of written statements, petitions, press statements, resolutions and material from websites was coded using the same format as for primary data. The only difference with the secondary was the documentary evidence. I had to listen over the videos, transcribe the important parts and code it accordingly. In the coding exercise the data was categorized according to the research questions that the study seeks to answer.

#### **4.5 Validity (internal and external) of the study**

There is no common definition of validity amongst qualitative and quantitative researchers. Patton (2001) argues that validity and reliability are two significant factors which any qualitative researcher should take into consideration when designing a research. The stages of data collection, analyses and evaluation are critical in determining the quality of the study. Internal validity deals with the data whether the data I used in the study is relevant. One has been able to use both primary and secondary data to answer the research questions the research sought to answer, meaning that the data used was relevant to the study. External validity talks to the relationship between the data used and the world. As this is a qualitative study it has been able to use the data in relation to the existing theories that provide an explanation about democratization, illuminating the role of external actors.

#### **4.6 Reliability**

Yin (2014) denotes that the primary objective of reliability is to ensure that when a latter researcher would use the same methods and procedures used earlier in conducting the research, the latter researcher would arrive at the same research findings and conclusions. To ensure reliability I have provided the interviews guides for both the external and internal actors that are in my unit of analysis (refer to Appendix 3). To further show reliability the data used in the study has a relationship with the existing theories used. The proof of external validity confirms reliability in a study.

#### **4.7 Limitations of the study**

My main data collection technique was interviews made through the phone and Skype. I faced challenges with managing time in this research at the stage of creating rapport and getting the interviews on time. I had to extend time on my research plan, as some respondents asked for postponements of the scheduled interview appointments.

Another limitation is that the written responses were rather too brief considering that on average the interviews lasted 45 minutes. I am of the view that had conducted interviews with all the respondents I could have sourced more information from them. It was a shortcoming to rely on interviews that would be conducted through the phone or Skype, as some informants made it clear that it is against their policy to offer interviews through the phone or Skype. To deal with this concern they requested written questions. This was a limitation considering that an interview

allows an in-depth digging of information through follow up questions rather than rigid questions sent to informants.

The units of analysis included the USA embassy, the AU and SADC, however I have not been able to do interviews with them (*explained above*). The failure to secure an interview with the SADC, USA and the AU deprived me of vital information that I could have sourced from these bodies. To compensate for the lack of an interview I have relied on documents to examine the roles of these actors. This limitation is due to the method of relying on telephone or online interviews. With face to face interviews the outcome could have been different as the researcher would be physically going into the respondent's offices to secure the interviews.

#### **4.8 Ethical considerations**

In conducting the interviews, I have clearly stated the purpose of the research and asked for consent from informants to use the information for this study. Consent was granted by informants to record the interviews using a voice recorder and take notes. The primary data will only be used for this research.

## Chapter 5

### **Analysis: Explaining the lack of democratization in Swaziland**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides the empirical findings of the study which is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data has been sourced from documents, web-pages, visual, and documentaries. This study is a qualitative study and I have used coding to categorize the raw data from interviews, explained in detail in the methodology chapter. Most importantly, in presenting the findings of the study it is important to revisit the research questions that the study aimed to answer in the beginning. The main research question of the study is; Why Swaziland did not democratize and more specifically; What has been the role of external actors in the democratization struggle in Swaziland? The other sub-questions for the study are as follows:

- What kind of pressure has the external actors applied on the Swazi regime to compel it to democratize?
- How has trade agreement and donor aid been used to foster democracy in Swaziland?
- What are the expectations of the internal Swazi actors from the external actors?
- How has the Swazi diaspora lobbied the external actors to pile pressure on the regime?

This chapter therefore presents the findings in relation to the main question and the sub-questions. The discussion and explanation of the findings is founded the study theories; leverage and linkage theory, historical institutionalism and international relations theory (refer to theory chapter). Lastly, the chapter provides a conclusion that seeks to contribute to theory development in the field of democratization.

#### **5.1 Findings and analysis**

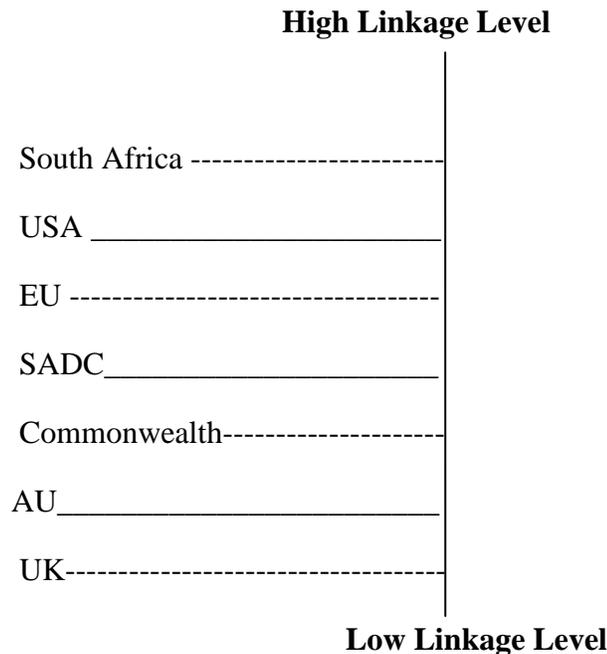
The role of the external actors in the democratization process of Swaziland has not been an encouraging one considering that Swaziland has not had a democratic rule since 1973. The democracy wave sweeping across Africa did not mean anything for Swaziland in terms of democratization. Both Swaziland's neighbouring countries achieved democracy in the beginning of the 1990's with the end of apartheid in South Africa and the end of the civil war in Mozambique. The Swazi regime continues to enjoy unlimited international legitimacy despite its lack of democracy and poor human rights record. Its legitimacy is shown by that it draws

financial and political support from democratic governments and bodies that claim to be committed to promoting democracy beyond their borders. The external actors have varying levels of leverage on the small and largely dependent economy of Swaziland. It was not the intention of the study to measure the amount of leverage amongst the external actors being studied. But it is prudent to highlight the linkages that exist between Swaziland and the external actors using the measuring model provided by Levitsky and Way in their linkage and leverage theory. The amount of linkage signifies the leverage that an external actor has on Swaziland. Therefore, the different actors studied have varying degrees of leverage and importance to the Swazi regime. The most important actors are South Africa, USA and the EU, as they have overwhelming ties to Swaziland and equally overwhelming leverage to pressure the regime to democratize.

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Transnational Civil Society</b>	<b>Inter-Governmental</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Technocratic</b>
<b>EU</b>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>USA</b>	✓		✓	✓		✓
<b>UK</b>		✓				
<b>Commonwealth</b>	✓	✓				✓
<b>SADC</b>	✓	✓		✓		✓
<b>AU</b>				✓		
<b>South Africa</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*Table 1. Showing level of the types and level of linkage of Swaziland and the external actors made by author; using the framework from (Levitsky and Way 2010, p. 43-44)*

*Ranking the level of linkage amongst the external actors*



*Figure 6. Illustrating ranking of leverage of the external actors*

**5.1.1 Role of external actors in democratization**

The main research question as stated above is to study the role of the external actors in the democratization process. This section looks into the specific actions of the different actors in the democratization of Swaziland. The findings are presented in relation to each external actor's action towards the Swazi regime. The discussion is on order of their importance as illustrated in *Figure 6*.

**South Africa**

The collapse of apartheid in South Africa in 1990 was welcomed by an unprecedented euphoria across the globe as it paved a way for a constitutional democracy in the Republic. The hegemony of a democratic and economic power house of the region, South Africa had a high leverage and moral high ground in the region to promote democracy (Levitsky and Way 2010). The then President of the ANC Nelson Mandela in presenting the future South African foreign policy stated clearly that "South Africa will therefore be at the forefront of global efforts to promote and foster democratic systems of government" (1993, p. 2). He argued that long-lasting solutions to a host of challenges facing the world would best be addressed through the promotion of democracy

across the globe. However, the vigour and optimism of promoting democracy in the Southern African region and the continent as a whole was not witnessed as Mandela became the first black President of a democratic South Africa in 1994. Van Eerd (2016) argues that South Africa failed on this historic mission of democracy promotion in the region. The lack of intervention from South Africa especially in Zimbabwe and Swaziland shows that South Africa is primarily concerned with regional stability.

The Republic has done nothing at all to help Swaziland democratize. Teorell (2010) argues that geography and diffusion is important in democracy promotion, however this has not been the case in Swaziland a country surrounded by fairly democratic ones. The democratization of South Africa raised hope that South Africa would promote democracy in the Southern African region. The internal actors in Swaziland expect South Africa to flex its political and economic muscles, which this paper has alluded is embedded on trade, and SACU. These two could be used to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratize. Political support to the internal actors pushing for democracy is one other action that South Africa could have taken to give moral support to the pro-democracy movement and undermine the legitimacy of the regime. The need for financial support to the pro-democracy movement could not be overemphasised.

South Africa is compromised by the historical economic interests (presented below) it has with Swaziland. The unequal relationship between the two economies has made Swaziland to be a good place for South African business and also a market for South African produce. This unequal relationship between the two countries was founded through the establishment of SACU. Domson-Lindsay (2014) argues that the relationship between South Africa needed Swaziland as a market for its goods as Swaziland heavily relied in South African produce. The advent of the new democratic regime in South Africa did not change the imperial policy of South Africa towards the Kingdom. Politically, South Africa is less interested in Swaziland. The imposition of economic sanctions by South Africa “would impose costs on both states....industrial and commercial class would be reluctant to take any major punitive action...” as this would cripple their business dealings (Domson-Lindsay 2014, p. 400).

Miller argues that some states whose motivations are based on defensive realism would be choose no “intervention in domestic affairs of non-democratic states even if an authentic democratic revolution is suppressed by force by these states” (Miller 2010, p. 564). Seemingly

this is the policy of South Africa on Swaziland. Swaziland is known as a dictatorship but South Africa is reluctant to pursue democratization in the kingdom.

When a question was asked about the role of South Africa in the democratization of Swaziland the South African High Commission's representative responded.

*“South Africa's freedom is a product of our people's struggles and international solidarity, we stand by the Sovereignty of every country and believe that change to any Government system can only be successful if the people of the country so wish for it to change and collectively engage through peaceful negotiations.” South Africa High Commission representative (07 November 2016)*

African states and bodies proclaim to respect the sovereignty of other states in the continent. This draws inspiration from the history of colonial experience in that independent states after colonialism should draw their own development path commensurate with the local needs without interference from others outside. The emphasis on sovereignty is under severe strain whereby AU member states, AU and other regional bodies have to pursue their objective, which includes democracy, and good governance. The prominence of states sovereignty compromises the other states and bodies from adequately intervening to promote democracy in the continent. Domson-Lindsay in his paper on South African-Swaziland relations contends that “clearly South African officials cite the norms of sovereignty, particularly non-interference to justify failure to promote human rights and democracy in Swaziland (2014, p. 402). He argues that the definition of sovereignty is normative in Africa, at AU and SADC level thus preventing states and these organizations from publicly condemning of authoritarianism and interference in the affairs of other states.

The argument about sovereignty raised by the South African High Commission's representative is fascinating as South Africa has a rather more radical approach when it comes to Lesotho which is a small country high linkage on South Africa. In 1998 violent protests broke out in Lesotho demanding democratic reforms and the military left the barracks, South Africa intervened militarily in Lesotho after being invited by the government of Lesotho led by new Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili . The justification for the military intervention was that South Africa was acting on behalf of SADC (van Eerd 2016; Hartmann 2016). The intervention by

South Africa at face value seems to condemn the attempted coup in Lesotho. Protecting the economic interest of South Africa is the real reason towards the intervention. The argument by van Eerd is persuading as a 'stable' authoritarian neighbour like Swaziland does not activate South Africa to act by ensuring democracy prevails.

*“The government of South Africa unapologetically does business with Swaziland. I have personally stopped going to SA embassy because it’s a waste of time. One of the most useless and reactionary embassies in Swaziland is the South African embassy. On human rights, it cannot pronounce itself, on good governance issues it cannot pronounce itself.” SUDF Coordinator (06 October 2016)*

*“Just recently look at Lesotho. It’s not SADC, its South Africa that is pushing SADC to act. The Deputy President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, is now and again in Lesotho, negotiating, bringing different powers together to ensure that Lesotho is in order. All that decisiveness, that power falls off when it comes to Swaziland. It makes things difficult as it gives a reason for everybody to be not decisive about Swaziland.” SUDF Coordinator (06 October 2016)*

This argument by the informant exactly points out to the leverage that South Africa has in the region. Lebanidze (2014) when doing his study on the failure of Western countries influence in countries such as Belarus, the biggest challenge was a balancing regional/neighbour in this case it was Russia. One would argue that the reluctance of South Africa to act decisively in condemning the Swazi regime, furthermore promoting democracy influences other external actors (Western) to take a lukewarm posture too. The geographic location of South Africa to Swaziland is central in democracy promotion. When the foreign policy of South Africa is based on democracy promotion in the region rather than quite diplomacy in the face of stable authoritarian regimes, democracy would be strengthened in the region.

The ruling party of South Africa, ANC has been supportive to the democracy movement in Swaziland. It has made resolution at its highest decision making body, National Congress, most recently in Mangaung, 2012<sup>27</sup>. The biggest challenge is that there is no harmony between the party position and the government on Swaziland. It is not only the ANC that is clear on

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<sup>27</sup><http://osf.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/ANC-policy-conference-resolutions-on-international-relations.pdf>

Swaziland but this includes its alliance partners, COSATU and SACP. COSATU has been instrumental in openly supporting the democracy movement in Swaziland (Domson-Lindsay 2014). The government is mum on the issue of democratization in Swaziland, yet the ruling party shows support.

The SA ruling party ANC is further compromised by the historical ties it has with Swazi monarchy. In the ANC's formative days, the Swazi Queen regent, Labotsibeni, grandmother to Sobhuza gave financial support to the ANC. Sobhuza was also able to keep contact with both ANC and Apartheid during his reign. Eventually, the Swazi government's collaboration with the ANC went sour after the signing of the non-aggression, Komati Accord<sup>28</sup> in 1984 between South Africa and Mozambique changed the landscape for support of the ANC's military actions in the neighbouring states. After the signing of the Komati accord it was revealed publicly that Swaziland had signed a similar non-aggression pact with South Africa in 1982. Swaziland was promised back the land that was taken in the third-quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by imperial South Africa, a promise that was never full-filled (Griffiths and Funnel 1991). During this period raids were conducted by apartheid security agents against ANCs cadres in both Mozambique and South Africa. Despite these unfortunate events that befell the ANC in Swaziland, Queen Labotsibeni is still regarded as a hero to the ANC for her contribution in the formation years of the ANC. Her honour by the ANC has been extended to the whole institution of the Swazi monarchy. This is one factor which could be making the ANC led government not to be aggressive towards absolute monarchy in Swaziland.

Thirdly, the ANC's investment arm Chancellor House is doing business with Tibiyo in Swaziland, thus further contradicting with what the ANC says on paper. Simelane contends that "Tibiyo's policy of forming joint investment companies with foreign capital has resulted in the development of extensive ties to South African capital" (2015, p. 32). The relationship between the ruling political elites (ANC) is further compromised by the joint venture between Tibiyo and the chancellor house, the investment wing of the ANC in Maloma Colliery, where Chancellor House is a majority shareholder. Most of the companies that are in partnership with Tibiyo in doing business inside Swaziland are South African based companies.

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<sup>28</sup> [http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/MZ%20ZA\\_840316\\_The%20Komati%20Talks.pdf](http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/MZ%20ZA_840316_The%20Komati%20Talks.pdf)

The ties that exist between Tibiyo and foreign capital are not limited to only the business venture by the political elites of South Africa but also business elites who have since colonial and apartheid times have always benefitted together with the monarchy in exploiting the Swazi economy. One would argue that the posture taken by the South African government on quiet diplomacy towards Swaziland be influenced by the relationship between South African business and the royal family. The relationship between the two economies as stated earlier on in the paper that about 90% of the imports to Swaziland come from South Africa. Swaziland continues to be a market for South African products. This has been the trend since Swaziland started relating with white settlers of South Africa over a century ago. The dependence of the Swazi economy on South Africa is a significant explanatory variable in understanding the lack of decisiveness by the South African government on Swaziland's democratization. The argument within the South African politics is that the transition to democracy in South Africa in 1994 provided political freedom but not economic freedom, as the economy is still dominated by whites who benefitted under colonialism and apartheid. A transition to democracy in Swaziland will most likely change the economic system in the country thus affecting South African business whose interests are relatively being protected under the current royal regime.

South Africa indeed is not providing any support for the pro-democracy movement, whereas it is responsible for SACU revenues that the Swazi regime receives. SACU was initiated by the then apartheid regime. In a democratic South Africa, nothing changed in SACU, it has continued to provide over fifty percent of the Swazi government's budget. The Swazi pro-democracy movement has always called for South Africa to use attach political conditionality to SACU revenue with regards to Swaziland. The South African High Commission representative responded, negatively when asked about whether they considered using SACU to coerce the Swazi regime to democratize.

*“No. Economic Sanctions impacted South Africa during apartheid but did not bring the end to the system. Once again as a Sovereign State the Kingdom of Swaziland's people should engage the Government if change is what they wish for.” South Africa High Commission's representative (07 November 2016)*

The democratic government is reluctant to do that which helped it bring down apartheid in South Africa, solidarity with its neighbours that are fighting for democracy. It is true that sanctions to

apartheid South Africa did not single handed bring down the regime, but helped to weaken it and ultimately leading to the negotiating table. Political and economic pressure is likely to succeed when accompanied with resistance from those calling for democracy (Baylies 2005). This singles out the importance of not only placing conditionality on the regime without providing support to the pro-democracy movement. Diamond (1993) strengthens the debate for political pressure on authoritarian regimes by reminding us, that "steep or sudden declines in either political legitimacy or material or coercive resources or very often, both of these can split an authoritarian regime and induce it to vacate power" (p. 45). Considering the level of leverage and linkage between South Africa and Swaziland, political pressure would compel the regime to consider democratization.

*“SSN rightly believes that South Africa has the leverage to influence the region at SADC level to take a position on Swaziland. The influence of South Africa has been witnessed in numerous incidents in Lesotho.” SSN statement (02 August 2016)*

The SSN has been persistently calling for South African government to act to help Swaziland transcend into democracy. South Africa is one actor that can make the Swazi regime feel the pressure because of its proximity to Swaziland, it's size, economy and the social ties that exist between the two countries. These are critical linkages highlighted by the literature on the international dimensions of democratization (Teorell 2010; Levitsky and Way 2010). The Swazi regime cannot afford to turn a deaf ear to an appeal for democracy coming from a big neighbour, South Africa.

In understanding the complex relationship that developed over the years between South Africa and Swaziland, historical institutionalism is central in unpacking the path dependency that has developed over the years as was been extensively discussed previous on background of the study (chapter 2) and theoretical framework (chapter 3) respectively. The subordination of the Swazi economy has not dramatically changed with a democratic South African government.

## United States of America

*“... the United States cares deeply about these issues in Swaziland and is committed to working with the government and people to strengthen democracy and human rights as essential elements that promote national development.”<sup>29</sup> Statement by US ambassador 03 July, 2014*

The USA has led the way by doing what none of the actors have done in the political history of Swaziland. The USA is the only actor that has not only condemned the regime for lack of democracy, but it has removed Swaziland from the preferential trade agreement (AGOA) in 2015 for failure to uphold human rights. The bold action by the USA has both political and economic implications for the regime. The regime is currently doing everything in its powers to get back its AGOA status. For instance, the Suppression of Terrorism Act which has been used to suppress opposition groups is currently being reviewed by the regime.

The USA has been instrumental in publicly condemning the regime as undemocratic. The diplomatic mission of USA and EU has attended high profile political cases in Swaziland. They both claim to be using diplomacy behind the scenes to persuade the regime to democratize. The USA is also supporting the civil society organizations through small grants under the package of *‘Encouraging Participation in Democratic Processes’<sup>30</sup>* to encourage citizen participation. The guidelines for the grants are clear that they do not support political party activities and activities that are political in nature, but it is limited to civil society organizations. The irony of such a program by the USA to promote democracy is that it lacks the understanding that Swaziland is a dictatorship with no space at all for people to participate in politics. The important action is to help people mobilize for democratization and the banned political parties should be part of the process. This however does not mean that civil society is not fundamental in bringing down authoritarian rule, but political parties are equally important and striking a balance would help limit antagonism between political parties and the funded civil society organizations. Such

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<sup>29</sup>[https://swaziland.usembassy.gov/spch\\_07-03-2014.html](https://swaziland.usembassy.gov/spch_07-03-2014.html)

<sup>30</sup> Encouraging civic education for active citizen participation in political, legal, economic, and social life; promoting increased participation in democratic processes at all levels by women, youth, and people living with disabilities; encouraging professional media coverage of civil society activities, government, as well as political, judicial, and human rights issues; and focusing attention on minority and disadvantaged populations.  
<http://photos.state.gov/libraries/swaziland/323264/fy2016/pd-grants-annual-program-statement-fy16.pdf>

antagonism weakens the movement for democratization as it was rightly pointed out by the EU representative.

However, the USA continues to give support to the regime through funding of HIV/AIDS programs under PEPFAR. This is justified by the USA as humanitarian aid. Currently, there are over 200 000 (1/5<sup>th</sup> of the population) Swazi's who rely of anti-retroviral treatment which PEPFAR goes a long way in financing together with Global Fund. One argues that aid could be used as a form of political conditionality to the regime to coerce it to implement democratic reforms.

The pressure from the suspension of Swaziland on AGOA coupled with the use of aid as political conditionality at the same period would exert enormous pressure on the regime compelling it consider democratization. Considering the financial weaknesses of the regime I see it succumbing to the pressure of an imminent threat of withdrawal of funding. In the long run when the regime does not cooperate the USA could mobilize its business community to reconsider investing in the Kingdom. The importance of supporting the institutionalization of democracy is one are the USA could be involved in especially supporting, financially and politically the internal actors calling for democracy. The data shows that the internal actors are looking not only for pressure from the external actors exerted onto the regime but also support to build a stronger movement to weaken the regime.

### **European Union**

*“The EU is extremely remains supportive and in denial of the true status of the Swazi feudal despot system they are forever soft and nice and endlessly negotiating with a demagogue.”*

*SUDF Coordinator (06 October 2016)*

The Swazi regime has continuously received benefits of donor aid, loans and preferential trade from Western institutions and governments, with less scrutiny on its undemocratic rule. The wave of protests inside Swaziland led by trade union movement calling for multiparty democracy in the 1990's presented an opportune moment for the external actors to coerce the regime to democratize (van Eerd 2016). However, this did not happen besides that it was at the peak of the era of the democracy wave in the continent and external actors were placing democracy as a condition for donor assistance in many authoritarian regimes in Africa. This led

to a breakdown of the authoritarian regimes legitimacy and subsequent demise of their rule and the ushering of multi-party democracy.

The EU ambassador pointed out clearly that *“As the EU our task is to engage, ‘put pressure’ is not the right word...I believe in constructive engagement from all levels from His Majesty to non-state actors, the media, etc in order to promote dialogue on democracy.”* (07 November 2016)

The EU is taking a softer approach towards the regime. There is reluctance from the EU to impose political conditionality and or sanctions on the Swazi regime. There has been less pressure coming from the EU, whereas according to Article 2, 9 and 96 of the Cotonou agreement for African Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) the newly signed Economic Partnership Agreements<sup>31</sup> (EPA's). Democratic reforms have become a central feature in negotiations for preferential trade even under the European Development Fund (EDF) (Hackenesch 2015).

*“EPA cannot be considered in isolation. The promotion of governance, promotion of fundamental rights and human rights is part of this equation. This EPA is also linked to our Cotonou Agreement.”* EU ambassador, 07 November 2016

Swaziland has benefitted unabatedly from all these EU said and trade initiatives yet it is undemocratic. EU parliament did a commendable move, for the first time in 2015 the EU parliament condemned the arrest of four political activists and called for their release from prison<sup>32</sup>. The parliamentary resolution however did not call for the democratization of Swaziland and did not affect the way Swaziland benefits from EU trade and aid as a new EPA deal was signed in 2016.

The content of the both the trade agreements and this statement from the EU ambassador are strikingly conflicting with what is happening on the ground as preferential trade between EU and Swaziland continues. In a study conducted by Del Biondo (2015) on the uneven application of sanctions as a tool for democracy promotion in sub Saharan Africa brings into the fore striking disparities in the enforcement of sanctions in their analysis of 17 countries. There were sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe (2002), Ivory Coast (2010), Guinea (2003 and 2009) and there were no

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<sup>31</sup>[http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2015/october/tradoc\\_153915.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2015/october/tradoc_153915.pdf)

<sup>32</sup>[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdfs/news/expert/infopress/20150513IPR55482/20150513IPR55482\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdfs/news/expert/infopress/20150513IPR55482/20150513IPR55482_en.pdf)

sanctions on, Rwanda, Kenya and Nigeria, Ethiopia for irregular elections and crackdown on protestors. International relations scholars, realists, argue that it is all about economic and security interests of the donor countries. However, idealists provide a counter argument by alluding to the importance of norms (human rights and democracy). This was witnessed by the imposition of sanctions on Apartheid South Africa which was an ally to most Western governments. The linkage and leverage model also alludes to the significance of security and the economy on the amount of external influence to an undemocratic regime. Ethiopia, Nigeria and Kenya are big economies in Africa and important for security that the Western countries could not afford to ignore. The only exception in that study is Rwanda which is not a big economy but escaped sanctions. According to the leverage and linkage theory, Swaziland is not of any significant importance to the studied external actors economically and in security. This implies that when the external actors are driven by the political will to have the Swazi regime democratizing, there is less in stake to lose. They could easily apply pressure on the regime to democratize.

*“...the EU did not look at the darker side of this regime, they (EU) looked at their battered side of the bread. They (EU) failed to use EPA to push for democratization in Swaziland. It is double standards on the side on the EU.” FSEJ Project Manager (21 February 2017)*

The EU is concerned about its economic interests in Swaziland and mainly the production of Sugar and the securing of markets for products from the EU members.

*“The Swazi people should not think that the EU ...will solve development or political problems of Swaziland. ...We can support, we can facilitate, we can provide some assistance but at the end of the day the destiny of the country is at the hands of the Swazi people.... The Swazi people should not think that the EU is here to solve their problems” EU ambassador (07 November 2016)*

*“Any change in Swaziland will happen because of the Swazi people and the Swazi government is not because of the pressure from the EU or someone else.” EU ambassador (07 November 2016)*

While it is true that the destiny of the country is at the hands of the locals, the statement by the EU representative shows the reluctance of the body to take a bold step and exerting pressure on the regime. The buck is thrown back to the internal actors to confront their struggle, then EU will only support them. The statement insinuates that the internal actors are not doing enough to

warrant the attention of the external actors. However, in the recent past such as 2011 there was a wave of protests calling for change in the country and the expected response from the external was not forth-coming. The mindboggling question is to how much is needed from the internal actors? The repression and undemocratic nature of the regime are well documented for the EU to take drastic steps in pressurising the regime to democratize. The statement by the EU ambassador shows that the EU is not ready to take drastic steps to pressure the Swazi regime. The EU has done very little to exert pressure on the regime in relation to the tools and amount of leverage it has over the Swazi regime.

*“They (USA and EU) are very clear by publicly criticizing the undemocratic nature of Swaziland.” FSEJ Project Manager (21 February 2017).*

The public condemnation of the regime by EU fails to translate into concrete action that seeks to transform Swaziland into a democracy. The EU has many tools at its disposal that it could use to pressure the regime in pursuit of democracy.

### ***Instruments of the EU to promote democracy***

According to Kotzian et al, the EU has three instruments for democracy promotion beyond its borders ( 2011, p. 103)

*1.EIDHR (European Instruments for Democracy and Human Rights) allocations*– a potentially intrusive bottom-up instrument to support democratization from within. Through the EIDHR, the EU is meant to fund groups that are openly opposing an authoritarian government or the current institutional setting in preference of a democratic set-up. If the support is not given to those groups openly opposing the authoritarian regime, then it does not serve the purpose of democracy promotion assistance. The shortcoming of the EIDHR in Swaziland is that targets only civil society organizations and not political parties whose mandate is clearly on the democratization of the country.

*2.Agreements* – categorized as ‘partnership’ or ‘co-operation’ agreements ( Cotonou and EPA for the case of Swaziland), these install political and economic co-operation.

*3. Sanctions* – these are the strongest and most negative instrument, both in the economic as well as in the political domain. Their explicit aim is to inflict costs – if not on the country, then on the

political elite in the country – to make certain forms of misbehaviour expensive in either political or economic terms.

The EU has not utilized these instruments, agreements and sanctions in Swaziland except the one on EIDHR which has been introduced three (3) years ago to fund some civil society organizations.

As outlined above (table 1), the EU has enormous leverage as a donor and a trading partner to Swaziland. Preferential trade agreements could be used as a carrot and stick to compel the regime to democratize. This is also the case for the financial aid that pours into the kingdom from the EU. The support of the internal actors calling for democracy through the EIDHR could not be overemphasised. As alluded to in the discussion earlier in the paper, the EU provides some support to some civil society organizations for human rights work. This financial assistance does not match the amount of aid given to the regime.

Western democracies usually pursue democracy promotion beyond their borders in authoritarian countries through support for civil society organizations as the EU has started doing in Swaziland. This is significant in establishing a viable democracy; however, the initial mobilization of the civil society against the dictatorship must be institutionalized. According to Fukuyama (2015, p. 19) the organization of “social movements into political parties that can contest elections” is an important step. He further contends that civil society organizations usually focus on narrow issues, and do not contest for political office; this is an exclusive task of political parties. Carothers contends that “if... donors wanted to craft civil society programs that actually produce powerful resistance to budding authoritarians; they would have to focus much more on social and political movements, complex enterprise entirely different from the safe, rational world of technocratic NGO’s” (1999, p. 227). This would call for long-term involvement of the external donors unlike the short term programs currently being rolled out in the democracy promotion endeavours.

The funding that the EU is giving to civil society is not enough in helping in the democratization process in Swaziland as civil society organizations are strengthened financially yet political parties remain weak. The real leaders for the struggle for democracy are the political parties who have the exclusive responsibility to contest for elections when political parties are eventually unbanned in Swaziland. The weaknesses of political parties exemplified by poor funding

presents challenges for the breaking down of the regime and future democracy consolidation, even after the opening of the political space.

## **SADC**

SADC espouses the promotion of same political institutions in the region, however its endeavour to promote democracy is caught wanting. The failure promote democracy by SADC in both Swaziland and Zimbabwe is incredible. The best SADC could do is to suspend Swaziland for failure to uphold the key principles of the body. SADC even fails to publicly condemn the undemocratic regime. Public condemnation of the regime for failure to democratize would show that the regime's undemocratic rule is not tolerated in the region and cripple its legitimacy.

*“On SADC community, I would say just forget. There is actually nothing that SADC is doing to foster democratization in Swaziland.” FSEJ Project Manager (21 February 2017)*

*“SADC has not even taken seriously the memorandums delivered by SAPSN in recent years where by the issue of Swaziland always been raised. The issue of democratization of Swaziland has never been entertained.” FSEJ Project Manager (21 February 2017)*

The FSEJ is a member of the SAPSN which is a network of civil society organizations from the region. It always has its people's summit as a side event at the annual SADC heads of state summit. These people's summit ends with a memorandum that is tabled to the SADC secretariat. The issue of Swaziland's democratization appears in several memorandums but it is not taken seriously by SADC

In line with the SADC principles and guidelines on elections adopted in 2005. SADC has been very committed in acting on rejecting unconstitutional change of government, but it is lagging behind in condemning undemocratic states. Madagascar is one typical example after Rajoelina took power of Ravalomanana, it was suspended from SADC and AU in 2009 and western governments withdrew non-humanitarian support to the country. Madagascar was readmitted to SADC in 2014 after holding democratic elections. SADC has also been deeply involved in the Lesotho every time there is a political problem in Lesotho as alluded to earlier in the paper, recently, in 2016 the SADC 'double' troika (troika on Politics, security and defence and the Presidential troika) made a recommendation to SADC heads to suspend Lesotho until the

political mess is sorted. *The SADC Treaty article 33 (a and b)* gives powers to SADC to impose sanctions on a member state that;

- a) “Persistently fails, without good reason to fulfil obligations under the treaty.
- b) Implements policies that undermine the principles and objectives of SADC.”

It is encouraging that SADC condemns the taking of power through unconstitutional means. This is however a good principle whereby all the member states are democratic to allow for the contestation for political power by the different political parties. In an undemocratic regime, what constitutional means do people have to change the regime? Their only option of course is to break the undemocratic constitutions that marginalize them from the political process. This is the challenge with regimes like the one in Swaziland, whereby SADC is not seen to impose sanctions on the regime that has deliberately undermined the key principle of the body such as democracy, good governance and human rights. SADC must be strong not only in condemning unconstitutional change of government but it must also be seen to be contributing positively by also condemning the undemocratic states that stifles the participation of the majority in a democratic dispensation. “Diplomatic pressures, suspension of membership and resulting regional isolation can help to delegitimize an authoritarian regime at home” (Bogaards 2007, p. 84). A strong regional condemnation bolsters the confidence of the forces fighting for democracy.

One other striking thing about SADC is its election observer missions to Swaziland’s parliamentary elections. SADC never declare the elections undemocratic although political parties are banned from contesting for political office. The expectation was that the observer missions would declare the elections as undemocratic but to the contrary the reports of 2008<sup>33</sup>, 2013<sup>34</sup> declare the parliamentary elections as free and fair and credible. The language used in the reports shows that SADC considers Swaziland as a democracy; even though it is obvious that it is not a democracy. This demonstrates a lack of honesty and will to promote democracy in Swaziland. It is therefore not surprising to see SADC not doing enough in promoting democracy

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<sup>33</sup><http://www.ecfsadc.org/index.php/election-reports/category/3-observer-mission-reports?download=12:observer-mission-report-swaziland-2008>

<sup>34</sup>[http://www.sadc.int/files/7813/7992/6719/Final\\_Version\\_of\\_Preliminary\\_Statement\\_-\\_Swazi\\_Elections.pdf](http://www.sadc.int/files/7813/7992/6719/Final_Version_of_Preliminary_Statement_-_Swazi_Elections.pdf)

in Swaziland. Hartmann (2015) in his paper on *'Leverage and linkage: how regionalism shapes regime dynamics in Africa'*, argues that ECOWAS has done considerably better than SADC in promoting democracy. Nigeria which is a hegemon in ECOWAS has a proactive approach in democracy promotion compared to South Africa in SADC. The failure of SADC in democratization of both Swaziland and Zimbabwe is glaring.

### **Commonwealth**

Commonwealth tried to broker negotiations between the pro-democracy movement and the King in 2015 to deliberate on the political future of the country. The process was led by former Malawi president Dr Muluzi. However, these proposed negotiations did not materialize. Besides trying to broker the negotiations the Commonwealth has done nothing to promote democracy in Swaziland. However, the commonwealth can exert pressure on the regime by suspending Swaziland from the organization as it has done with other member states that do not conform to its principles. This would be a great political statement to show the lack of support for the undemocratic regime. The continued participation of Swaziland in a body that claims to espouse democracy and good governance bolsters the legitimacy of the regime internally and externally. The legitimacy of the regime has to be undermined.

Commonwealth has a different approach as it has never financially supported the pro-democracy movement, but it is providing a substantial amount of technical and financial support to programs of the regime such as the constitution making and the judicial reform. These seem to be good initiatives but they do not address the root cause of the problems of Swaziland's governance. For example, the enactment of the Constitution in 2005 did not usher Swaziland into a democracy. The judiciary of Swaziland is still engulfed by numerous challenges as the political system does not guarantee the separation of powers. The commonwealth has to realize that the problem in Swaziland is the lack of democracy and this cannot be addressed by cosmetic changes in some sections of government.

*"The Commonwealth Secretariat has therefore worked with the Government and people of Swaziland to support areas such as the Constitution-making process, supporting the judiciary, and, through the deployment of special envoys, supporting inclusive political processes. The*

*Commonwealth believes in the power of, and adheres to principles of, soft diplomacy in its engagements with member states.” Commonwealth representative (18 January 2017)*

The Commonwealth is one body that claims to be using soft diplomacy to engage the regime to democratize. This was witnessed by the Dr Muluzi initiative which has been stalled for now. It is very difficult to measure the effectiveness of the use of diplomacy as Swaziland has consistently, refused to embrace multiparty democracy even the constitution making process that the Commonwealth financially helped in its crafting failed to make Swaziland a democracy. The status quo was maintained even with a new constitution in 2005.

*“Suspension of membership of the Commonwealth is a matter of last resort. Suspension only occurs when diplomatic channels have been exhausted. The Commonwealth continues to remain constructively engaged with the Kingdom of Swaziland in discussions pertaining to the values of the organisation.” Commonwealth representative (18 January 2017)*

The use of coercive means such as suspension of Swaziland from the Commonwealth seems far-fetched as considering that the government has not instituted democratic reforms since the beginning of the 1990’s. The Commonwealth argues that a suspension is used as a last resort. It is mindboggling to see that the regime in Swaziland is still treated with kid gloves even after close to three (3) decades since the start of the democratization wave in Africa. The Commonwealth has been proactive in condemning and suspending Zimbabwe in 2002, however the energy shown in Zimbabwe dissipates when it comes to Swaziland.

## **United Kingdom**

The UK had its mission office in Swaziland until it was closed in 2005. The missions head used to be critical of the regime’s abuse of human rights, especially when political activists were arrested. The UK is now not doing much in Swaziland since it closed its High Commission office in Swaziland in 2005 *“This was not for political reasons but for economic reasons.” UK High Commission representative (24 October 2016).* The office that deals with Swaziland is now the High Commission in Pretoria. However, Swaziland still has a High Commission office in the UK. The UK is important to the history of Swaziland since it ruled Swaziland from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until Swaziland’s Independence Day in 1968.

Asked about the UK's leverage on Swaziland, the representative responded "*it's certainly limited since our High Commission office was closed in 2005, which has changed the balance of the relationship.... A lot of our work in Swaziland has been done through the EU we have been closely working with the EU and have been very vocal within the EU.*" UK High Commission representative (24 October 2016)

The UK does not deal directly with Swaziland but through EU and the Commonwealth. The lack of leverage of the UK does not mean the UK could be considered out of the equation as there is also a linkage between both countries because of the colonial past. Levitsky and Way (2010) contend that a high linkage is good enough to influence a regime to democratize even when leverage is low. As a former colonial power the social ties between the two are intact. With the result of the referendum on Brexit the UK is set to leave the EU, the relationship between Swaziland and the UK might change as they might be compelled to work together through a bilateral cooperation. This would grant the UK the much-needed leverage for democracy promotion.

*"Of all the EU states the UK is still seen in high regard within the Swazi government. We have frank dialogue and discussions."* UK High Commission representative (24 October 2016)

## **African Union**

AU claims to be a body that seeks to promote democracy in the continent. The AU is expected to condemn the Swazi regime and exert pressure by invoking a suspension from the body. This is however very unlikely to happen in the AU, as all suspensions have happened when there is a military coup. Never has a member state been suspended for being undemocratic or abuse of human rights. The promotion of democracy by the AU is very weak.

## **Is there support for Civil Society or pro-democracy movement?**

The USA and EU gives some support to the civil society of Swaziland on both development and human rights issues.

*“The EU is the largest supporter of the Swazi civil society organizations. We award grants on a regular basis on developmental and human rights issues under the EIDHR (European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights). We consider civil society as a tool for development. We don’t believe that Swaziland can develop without the active support of its people and civil society.” EU ambassador (07 November 2016)*

The observation by the ambassador is indeed spot on about the importance of developing a civil society that is strong. However, the support given by the EU is not enough according to SUDF representative and doesn’t seek to target the real political problem which confronts Swaziland.

*“Most of the recipients of this funding happened to be in the main NGO’s, FBO’s. It’s a fact they don’t do mass work they don’t even attempt, they don’t even want to take a tougher stance openly against His Majesty’s government. They give money only to sweetheart NGO’s.” SUDF Coordinator (06 October 2016)*

The targeting of recipients that are not challenging the status quo is cause for concern as it weakens and fragments the civil society organizations making it more difficult for them to come together in pursuit of the struggle for democratization. There has been a trend in most authoritarian regimes to thwart foreign funding of civil society through tough legislations. However, in Swaziland this is not the case, thus showing the open opportunity for foreign funding of civil society. Beichelt et.al asserts that “...external democracy promotion produces a division between externally funded and non-funded civic actors...” (2014, p.15). The money given to the Swazi civil society could be perpetuating the division that the EU, UK has been complaining about in the Swazi civil society, thus derailing the democratization process. Especially when those organizations that are externally funded do not seem to be focusing on grassroots mass mobilization against the regime and never considered by the regime as a threat to its rule. Those who do not receive funding yet they take the heat from the wrath of the regime would be expected to be sceptical about the role of the externally funded organizations. This is the point that the SUDF is arguing by saying the EU seems to be supporting the ‘sweetheart’ civil society organization instead of supporting those that are calling for democratic change.

The civil society should not be treated as a homogenous group, not all civil society organizations conflict with the regime and not all of them are committed to bring about democracy. Therefore,

it is paramount for external actors to support organizations that are challenging the authoritarian rule. External democracy promoters have tendency of perceiving NGO's as natural agents of democratization. Yet not all civil society organizations are fighting for democracy. Some organizations are an extension of the regime. In extending the patron client-relationship beyond individuals an authoritarian may include elements of civil society in the patron-client networks. A politically strong and vibrant civil society is important for tilting the power scale against the undemocratic regime.

The USA is providing grants for civil education conducted by civil society organizations. The FSEJ has benefitted from this financial support from the USA embassy in Swaziland. The support to civil society had become overwhelmingly fashionable as an approach to supporting democratization and democracy consolidation, but the significance of political parties has been realized. "One of the areas where the foregoing remark seems especially pertinent is the building of stable effective political parties and party systems, which are necessary conditions for securing representative democracy ..." (Burnell and Calvert 2005, p. 434). Currently, there is no funding that goes directly to the banned political parties from EU or the USA.

Burnell and Calvert (2005) argues that the notion that civil society organizations who avoid being political can help build a democracy is false. Because when the external actors support mainly the civil society that an undemocratic regime feels comfortable with and that serves to confirm the political status quo and is counterproductive in the democratization process necessarily exerts political bias.

*"Neither will they (CANGO) be prepared to be part of alliances or coalitions that speak into the real issues."* SUDF Coordinator (06 October 2016)

The EU and UK have both raised the issue of fragmentation amongst the civil society actors. In Swaziland, there is usually antagonism between political parties and some civil society groups and this was evident in the process that was led by Commonwealth envoy, Dr Bakili Muluzi, former President of Malawi, to pave way for negotiations between civil society and the King. Disunity amongst civil society actors affects its development to be a counter force to the existing status quo. And indeed, it has largely delayed the building a strong civil society leading to crippling the struggle for democratization. The lack of unity, however not a good enough reason

for the external actors not to pile pressure on the regime. Unity of the pro-democracy movement is pertinent in building a domestic resistance to challenge the regime. However, the differences within the Swazi democracy movement are not something new in any struggle, such as ANC and PAC had serious disagreements but that did not warrant the lack of support from external actors. Squarely putting the blame on the fragmentation of the pro-democracy movement is unfair whilst the external actors continue to support the regime through the programs they have in Swaziland. The strategy for promoting democratization by external actors “...must address the weaknesses that afflict political parties” (Burnell and Calvert, 2005, p. 435). The relationship between civil society and political parties is critical in democratization.

*“The group (of 15 civil society representatives) was fragmented and probably not acquainted with the appropriate skills to engage in this kind of negotiations. “We organized training for this group in order to provide them with some negotiation skills unfortunately ...only 4 or 5 organizations attended the training at the end of the day it was a failure.” EU ambassador (07 November 2016)*

*“We would like to see the democracy movement speak in one voice on the Commonwealth dialogue for example.” UK High Commission representative (24 October 2016)*

The commonwealth however does not give any support to the pro-democracy movement. It only provides technical support to the government because its dealings are only meant for building government’s capacity.

*“The Commonwealth is an intergovernmental organisation of which Swaziland is a member. The Commonwealth does not have a mandate to provide support to local democracy or civil society movements in member countries.” Commonwealth representative (18 January 2017)*

When asked whether South Africa provides financial or technical assistance to the pro-democracy movement in Swaziland, the South African High Commission representative responded; *“No. South Africa and its accredited Mission engage through Government interaction and regional development goals.” South Africa High Commission’s representative (07 November 2016)*

The relationship between the pro-democracy movement and the ruling alliance (South African Communist Party, Congress of South African Trade Unions, South African National Civics Organization and African National Congress) in South Africa is fascinating, because all the member organizations of the ruling alliance do support the call democracy. The situation changes once the ANC led alliance is in government, it turns a blind eye on Swaziland.

*“The Alliance calls for the release of comrade Mario Masuku and all other political prisoners in Swaziland. South Africa must confer refugee status on those fleeing from political persecution in their home-country. We urge the people and government of Swaziland to speedily move towards democracy.”*<sup>35</sup> *Statement by the South African ruling alliance (12 September 2014)*

The contradiction by the South African ruling alliance is that as individual organizations they support the struggle for democracy, but once in government the situation is completely different. Quiet diplomacy becomes the policy of the government towards the democratization of Swaziland.

### **5.1.2 Action by the external actors**

The external actors have taken different approaches in applying pressure on the regime. These are some of the pressure shown by the studied actors in the democratization struggle in Swaziland.

**Public Condemnation-** The EU and USA have been vocal by publicly condemning the authoritarian rule. They have also shown support to some pro-democracy activists arrested by the regime. The EU parliament in 2015 called for the release of four political prisoners and the Swazi regime indeed released them but it was not an unconditional release.

The election observer mission reports by AU, EU and Commonwealth have been instrumental in declaring the current national elections that do not allow political parties to contest as a flaw to democracy and has repeatedly called for allowing of political parties. SADC has been the black sheep here as the last report for the 2013 elections fails to declare the elections as a flaw by not allowing political parties to contest.

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<sup>35</sup><https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/sa-swaziland-solidarity-eom-forum/ungMWIUSbSM>

***Use of Trade Agreements (Withdrawal of AGOA)*** - The withdrawal of Swaziland by the USA from the list of countries that benefit from AGOA for human rights abuses is one action that has been direct pressure on the regime by an external actor. This action is historic as it has never happened in the lifetime many years of the dictatorship.

***Democracy promotion-*** is “a set of actions of non-domestic actors who intentionally try to overcome authoritarian power by supporting domestic actors who share the same objective” (Beichelt 2014, p. 2). The objective of democracy promotion by external actors is to encourage a transition to democracy and democracy consolidation. The EU and USA has until recently started to fund civil society organizations that focus on civic education about human rights and democracy. Although this funding is limited, it is however a step in the right direction by these actors.

***No Action-***South Africa has not done anything to pressurize Swaziland’s regime to democratize. SADC and the AU have equally done nothing besides the election observer mission reports that highlight the need for political parties in elections.

It is worth noting that external actors interested in democratization in Swaziland missed a golden opportunity in the beginning of the 1990’s when the democratization wave was high in Southern Africa and the African continent at large. The backlash of democracy shown by the Freedom House report of 2015, does not point a positive picture for democracy promotion by external actors. It is highly possible that had the pressure been exerted on the regime in that 1990’s period the results could be different.

### ***Poor coordination amongst external actors***

*“The lack of coordination is disappointing amongst the bilateral and multilateral bodies.”*  
*ACTSA representative (07 October 2016)*

The lack of proper coordination between the external actors, resulted in another missed opportunity when the USA removed Swaziland from the beneficiaries of AGOA in 2015. Had there been coordination with the EU also using its leverage, preferential trade and donations as political conditionality, which could have been a huge wave of pressure on the regime coming at the same time. The EU ambassador admitted that the diplomats community does meet from time

to time but there has never been conclusive deliberations on how best to synergise efforts and pressurise the regime to democratize. Well-coordinated efforts would also help bring on board an important player, South Africa, into the discussion on democratization of Swaziland. As it is now it is only the EU and USA diplomatic missions that are concerned with lack of democracy, whereas South Africa remains mum. Molenaers, et al (2015), note that there is now increasing research related to the negative consequences of donor fragmentation. Donor fragmentation affects democratization process. In the case of Swaziland had there been proper coordination between EU and US to use political conditionality at the same time in 2015 when the USA removed Swaziland from the beneficiaries of AGOA, the results could be different.

### **5.1.3 Expectations of the Swazi internal actors from the external actors**

#### *The call for targeted smart sanctions on the ruling elites.*

The pro-democracy movement in Swaziland is not in favour of economic sanctions. They call for targeted smart sanctions that will be directed at the ruling elites. PUDEMO the leading pro-democracy movement has outlined in its document calling for Smart targeted sanctions<sup>36</sup> what the international community can do to put pressure on the regime. According to Drezner smart sanctions are meant “...to hurt elite supporters of the targeted regime, imposing minimal hardship on the mass public” (2011, p. 96). Targeted sanctions affect the ability of the authoritarian regime to provide support to its cronies as the system is entrenched on patron-client relationship. The regime finds it difficult to sustain its rent seeking supports thus undermining the authority of the regime. The pro-democracy movement’s call for targeted sanctions against the regime has fallen on deaf ears at an international level; the only positive that can be drawn is the removal of Swaziland from AGOA in 2015.

*“Targeted travel bans, freezing of specified people’s accounts, cultural and sports boycott and some elements of trade boycotts”. PUDEMO Secretary General (23 October 2016)*

*“We have made demands... to the EU that we need smart sanctions against the King, his immediate family and the cronies. We have also said to the international community that the*

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<sup>36</sup><http://www.pudemo.org/Docs/People%20sanctions%20External.pdf>

*reason why this dictatorship looks like it is sustaining itself it is because of funding from international organizations.” PUDEMO President Special Assignment documentary (June 2011)*

*“What we look for as we lobby are two things; targeted smart sanctions on the elite...” SUDF Coordinator (06 October 2016)*

*“...they (external actors) must apply smart sanctions, starting by targeting the leadership...” TUCOSWA representative (09 November 2016)*

The biggest concern for the pro-democracy movement is that outright economic sanctions will have dire consequences on the ordinary people, thus compromising the whole struggle for democratization. Fukuyama and McFaul (2007) argue that economic sanctions against authoritarian regimes have rarely yielded the expected results, such as in Iraq under Saddam Hussein. South Africa’s sanctions during apartheid are an exception as they succeeded in breaking down the backbone of the regime because there was a strong movement internally and internationally piling pressure on the apartheid regime. It is important for external actors in democracy promotion to “...take its cues about sanctions from the democratic opposition in the target country” (Fukuyama and McFaul 2007 p. 43). In the case of Swaziland total economic sanctions have not been imposed and the smart sanctions that internal actors are calling for have not materialized.

*“... economic sanctions may be harsh on the poor who are suffering already. Economic sanctions in their history have a devastating long term effect on the poor and not affect much the elite.” SUDF Coordinator (06 October 2016)*

The internal actors and the diaspora welcome the pressure applied by the USA by removing Swaziland from AGOA. *“The EU must use the same tactics applied by the USA on AGOA.” Swazi Vigil representative (16 October 2016)*

### ***Support for the pro-democracy movement***

The support for civil society and political parties is critical in building democracy from below. It is an important pillar for establishing people’s power to challenge the status quo and demanding democracy. Currently, there is less support that comes from EU’s EIDHR and the grants from the USA to civil society organization. The amount of money is not comparable to what is given

to the regime through donations and development projects. The pro-democracy movement is also looking for support to increase its capacity to have good leaders with skills to execute the struggle for democratization and these skills are critical after the transition in democracy consolidation.

*“... the international community must support the democracy campaign financially.” Swazi Vigil representative (16 October 2016)*

The need for financial support to the pro-democracy movement in Swaziland is paramount in the democratization process. This could be done through the support of trade unions, progressive civil society organizations and political parties who are engaged in the struggle for democratization.

*“We want also support for the persecuted activists to further their education to be even better and more effective contributors in the execution of the struggle. These could be in bursaries, leadership training, placement of activists in some agencies.” PUDEMO Secretary General (23 October 2016)*

#### **5.1.4 Bodies lobbied by the internal actors and diaspora**

The internal actors and the diaspora has lobbied all the bodies that are studied in the research to pile pressure on the regime. Although SADC and AU are the bodies that there isn't much vigour in lobbying compared to the other actors.

*“We have lobbied the AU and SADC but it's a joke... recently (August 2016) the king was given the position of SADC chairperson.” Swazi Vigil representative (16 October 2016)*

The lack of vigour in lobbying SADC and AU shows the linkage and leverage that these bodies have on Swaziland. As illustrated earlier on they have little leverage that they could use to pressure Swaziland. Besides leverage the AU and SADC are bodies seen as not keen on rigorously promoting democracy at continental and regional levels respectively. They are however quick to react and condemn military coups, this very energy dissipates when it is the abuse of human rights or lack of democracy amongst member states. SADC is primarily concerned with the economic integration and stability rather than promoting a coherent

democratic political system in the region, whereas one of its objectives, article 4 (b) of the SADC treaty stipulates that SADC shall “Evolve common political values, systems and institutions”

The Swazi Vigil has lobbied the UK government, Commonwealth and the focus will be more on the EU. The Swazi Vigil works closely with ACTSA in campaigns to lobby against the Swazi regime. One achievement of the lobbying was the pressure exerted by EU in condemning the arrest of Maseko, Makhubu, Maxwell and Masuku and the call for their release from prison. They are all out of prison now. Makhubu and Maseko appealed their conviction and the crown did not oppose their application. Masuku and Maxwell were released on bail. The action by the Swazi regime shows that it was responding to pressure from a very important player EU that has highest leverage second to South Africa. If such pressure could be directed to the root of the problem which is democratization, the regime would succumb.

#### **5.1.5 External actors help in regime reproduction**

The study has uncovered that the actions of the external actors consciously or unconsciously help in the reproduction and maintenance of the regime’s repressive machinery considering the amount of financial, and technical support the it receives from external actors.

*“In principle, they remain supportive of Swaziland, financially, technically, they are one of the most sustainers and defenders of this feudal despot with the kind of financial support to that they throw.” SUDF Coordinator interview (06 October 2016)*

*“It is becoming evident that the objective of these multilateral institutions is primarily business. It is to pursue their economic and business interests of their countries that form them as well as consolidation of markets.... At face value they... must decorate themselves as pursuing human rights ...and the DNA of their foreign policy being human rights, good governance democracy and green economy.” SUDF coordinator (06 October 2016)*

If institutions set the parameters on what actors can and cannot do, it is therefore, paramount to take into consideration the history under which those institutions were established (Steinmo et al 1992).It is important to note the primary mandate the external actors that I have been studying SADC, EU. Realists argue that the most important aspect for foreign policy is national interests; security and the economy (Smith et.al 2014).The issue of democracy promotion in the EU is a new phenomenon starting with the democratization wave beginning of 1990’s. This has been

made possible by the coming to an end of the cold war putting the Western countries to pursue democracy beyond their borders. The promotion of democracy abroad has been on made bold on the Cotonou agreement of 2000 between the EU and ACP countries. The Cotonou agreement's stance on democracy and good governance has been echoed by the EPA's which Swaziland benefits from. The history of the formation of the EU shows that the primary mandate is securing economic interests for the EU member states. Everything else is secondary to that goal. This explains why the EU shows some discrepancies into how it applies political and economic pressure on undemocratic regimes in the globe.

Economically and politically the regime receives overwhelming support from the external actors. Critics of foreign aid argue that it hinders democratization because it helps to keep authoritarian rulers in power who without foreign aid likely fail to maintain their repressive system (Wright 2009). The support of Mobutu's regime in the former Zaire as a classical example of a dictator kept in power by Western aid. As alluded to in the paper that the Swazi regime thrives because of the financial support it receives from external actors, without aid the regime cannot survive to maintain its authoritarian rule. The threat of aid slashing or freezing has propelled a significant number of authoritarian regimes in Africa to democratize. This is an open opportunity that external actors could explore to pressurize the Swazi regime to democratize.

There are those external actors who do not even attempt to talk about the democratization of Swaziland, such as Taiwan, Kuwait and Japan. All these countries give a lot of money to the regime as development assistance. They are totally concerned about their own interests in the country, and do not mind an undemocratic regime when their interests are served. Taiwan is primarily concerned with maintaining the relationship with Swaziland and expects Swaziland to champion its cause to be a full UN member state. The Swazi regime has constantly advocated for this position at UN general assemblies. Although no progress has been made yet. For further research, it would be interesting to study their interest in Swaziland. Taiwan is a democratic country but has been consistently supporting the authoritarian regime at the expense of democracy in Swaziland.

Besides those actors that prop up the regime without saying anything on the democratization, there are those that condemn and claim to be standing for democracy but their actions reproduce the regime. The EU and USA are the only actors that publicly condemn the democratic nature of

the regime but on the other hand they continue to give aid to the regime. The EU continues to trade with Swaziland and this is evidenced by the recently signed EPA in 2016.

The USA however continues to give funding that helps sustain the regime, through USAID and PEPFAR. PEPFAR has allocated USD 47,112.698 for the year 2015 to combat HIV/AIDS in the Kingdom<sup>37</sup>. The US through the USAID donated USD 9.6 million in food towards mitigating the effects of the drought in the Kingdom. This has not been used as a carrot and stick to compel the Swazi regime to democratize. South Africa is interesting player because the ruling alliance partners condemn the Swazi regime but not the government. South Africa doesn't give development money to Swaziland but its leverage is on the trade between the two countries and the SACU revenue that goes to Swaziland.

“What aid does is to help dictators cling to power and withhold freedoms.” (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2011, p.11). Lancaster et al (2016) argue that development aid that is given to developing countries provides more leverage for external actors to foster democratization through conditionality because the democracy aid, that is, funding for democracy promotion is insignificantly smaller in the total share of foreign aid. This is exactly what is happening in Swaziland the amount of support given to the Swazi regime is not comparable to that for democracy promotion. This argument highlights the point that both EU and USA are missing to cripple the Swazi regime. The financial support through aid given to the Swazi government could be used by the external actors as carrot and stick to compel the regime to democratize as opposed to have it given without any conditions for democratization as is the case now.

The challenge with the external actors that are doing little work on the democratization of Swaziland is that they are seemingly failing to locate the regime type. They treat Swaziland as a hybrid regime that is in the stage of consolidation stage yet it is a blatant authoritarian regime with no intention of democratizing. This poor analysis could be influenced by the fact that democracy promotion focused on African hybrid regimes and that makes Swaziland to be bundled with the rest in terms of international responses to democracy promotion. Swaziland deserves a different focus as the kind and amount of pressure it warrants is the one that was applied to most authoritarian regimes in the beginning of the democratization wave in Africa in

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<sup>37</sup><https://www.pepfar.gov/documents/organization/250268.pdf>

the beginning of 1990's that led to the collapse of authoritarian regimes. The kid glove treatment that Swaziland has been treated with is not helping propel it towards democracy, but the regime continues to renew itself, even twenty years after the democratization wave hit Africa. The external actors are aiding the regime to renew itself and keep its authoritarian rule through foreign support.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The chapter has presented the findings in relation to answering the research questions. The main question of the research was to study the role of the external actors in the democratization process in Swaziland. The findings show that little is being done by the external actors towards democratization in Swaziland. The only exceptions have been the USA and EU who have done shown that they do not appreciate the exploitative nature of the regime as they continuously condemn it.

The chapter has alluded to the paradox that exists in the condemnation of the regime by external actors as it is not followed by steps that seek to put pressure on the regime to democratize. Only the USA has used AGOA to foster democracy. A major neighbour, South Africa has decided to remain indifferent to the lack of democracy in Swaziland. The external actors have continued to provide financial support to the regime. This is counter-productive for democracy promotion as it gives enough resources for the regime to maintain its repressive state machinery. The external actors are therefore, contributing to the reproduction of the regime. The chapter has also provided a discussion about what the internal actors expect from the external actors to help Swaziland democratize; financial support to pro-democracy movement, smart sanctions and the use of trade and aid to pressurise the regime.

## Chapter 6

### **Conclusion: The quest for democracy in Swaziland.**

This study has located the political problem of authoritarian rule by the monarchy on the advent of colonial rule which led to the reinvention of tradition and culture to suit the colonial and latter monarchy's political and economic interests. This paper has drawn the political and economic history of Swaziland to be able to locate the relationship that has existed between the monarchy and white settler community. This history is significant in the establishment and consolidation of the unholy alliance that existed between the monarchy pre and post-independence with the white settler community. The white settler community was made up of the British and the Boers from South Africa who wanted to secure their economic interests in Swaziland. Their interests were best secure by having an absolute monarchy than to have a democracy. The post-independence era continued a path dependency to reproduce the authoritarian rule and with less scrutiny and action from the external actors that have benefitted under colonial rule.

Democratization is not a linear process, but it is a protracted struggle amongst competing class interests for the control of political power. The literature on democratization presupposes that there are many paths to democracy; armed guerrilla warfare, military invasion by external forces, domestic pressure and collaboration between external and internal pressure. The study concludes that it is important to note that democratization cannot be explained as an external or internal process only, but also as a synthesis of action by both the external and internal actors. External actors can either be a promoter of democracy or a stumbling to the democratization process through intended and unintended actions.

In the era of globalisation it would be naive not to consider the international actors influence in the internal affairs of sovereign states. National borders are continuously losing meaning and autonomy of the state in domestic decision making is being reduced, through the interdependence amongst states (Grugel, 1999). With the proliferation of internet, increased widespread to access to information and the spread of transnational non-state actors, all have accelerated the development of international norms such as democracy, human rights and good governance.

This study was premised on three theories; Historical insitutionalism, leverage and linkage and the international relations used in the analysis chapter. The process of democratization in Africa has not been an outcome of internal pressure only but also a result of pressure exerted by the external actors to the target regime. These forms of pressure include sanctions, diplomatic, economic, that is, use of trade and withdrawal of aid. The role of the external actors in the democratization of Swaziland presents itself as a unique case as highlighted by the findings. The democratization wave in the beginning of the 1990's has left the Swazi regime unmoved and the external actors have done very little to pile pressure on the Swazi regime to democratize, this is in comparison to other authoritarian regimes that collapsed in Africa. More than two decades later after the democratization wave, the Swazi regime is still left off the hook by the external actors.

The intriguing finding of this study is that despite the leverage that the external actors have on Swaziland, the external actors have failed to apply the necessary amount of pressure on the Swazi regime to democratize. The paper concludes that Swaziland is insignificant economy and geo-politically to make the external actors to take coercive action against it. The economy and security has compromised democracy promotion in some regions of the world such as the middle- east. Swaziland possess the most precious natural resources that the world to get the necessary attention. Liberalism argues that the promotion of norms (such as democracy, human rights) by the external actors could be the motivation for external actors to act in Swaziland rather than economic interests.

### **Theoretical implications of the study.**

Historicity has been significant in mapping the establishment of the unholy alliance between the white settler community with the monarchy immediately after the establishment of colonial rule. This trend of collaboration did not end with independence but it continued with apartheid South Africa taking a centre stage through the control of the economy using SACU. The development of the absolute rule of the monarchy follows a path dependency founded on colonial rule. The centralization of power around the monarchy and the demobilization of rural communities through customary law that is only defined by the King and the chiefs he appoints has made the democratization process cumbersome.

The leverage and linkage theory fails to explain the situation the lack of democracy in Swaziland when considering the amount of linkages that exists between Swaziland and the external actors. The linkages that prevail provide a higher leverage to the external actors to exert pressure on the Swazi regime to democratize. The theory argues that a higher leverage would possible lead to democratization but this has not been the case in Swaziland. The study has been able to illuminate the glaring shortcomings of the external actors who proclaim to promote democracy as one of their foreign policy objectives. By using the leverage and linkage theory it has been shown that the external actors have overwhelming leverage over the Swazi regime to pressure it to democratize, but the only pressure applied is minimal and inconsistent.

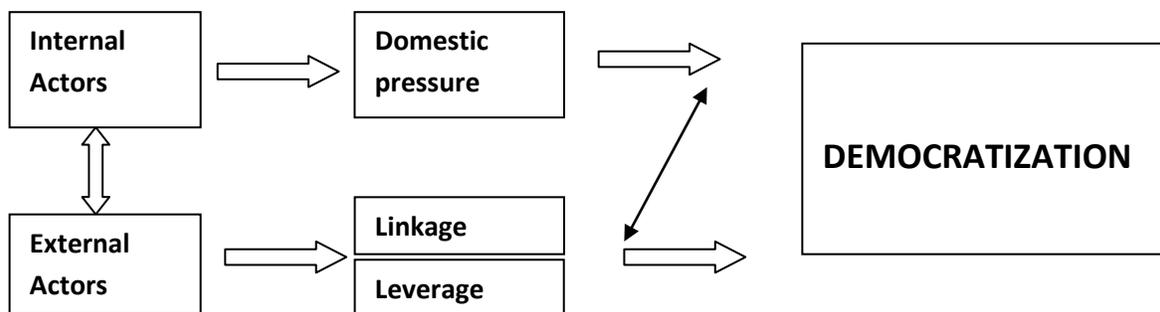
The EU and USA are the only actors that publicly condemn the regime and offer limited financial support to civil society organizations that do work on human rights and democracy. The rest of the actors from Africa (South Africa, SADC, and AU) are doing next to nothing to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratize. Despite the overwhelming leverage by the external actors over the regime, realism explains the actions by the external actors as they have less to benefit from the small economy Swaziland. However, through pursuing the liberal ideas, it is possible to pursue democratization even when there is less the external actors are to benefit when their action is driven by the norms, such as democracy and human rights. The contributions of the study to theory development are pursued further below in the chapter.

### **6.1 Combining internal and external efforts**

After the analysis of the data and the review literature of the literature, I put forward that democratization could be achieved by collaboration between the democracy forces inside Swaziland and the pressure from the external actors. It is evident from the data that the internal actors are looking for the external actors to intervene by both putting pressure on the regime and supporting the pro-democracy movement. My presumption is based on the continued dependence of the regime on the external actors through donations, trade and political support. Similarly, the simmering discontent inside the country because of the lack of democracy cannot be ignored forever.

The removal of Swaziland from the list of countries that benefit through AGOA in 2015 by the USA made the regime to jump. It has been forced to try to meet some of those benchmarks raised by the USA government. For example, TUCOSWA has now been registered as a workers

federation; the Suppression of Terrorism Act and the Public Order Act are undergoing review in parliament. These are signs that the regime is not immune to external pressure. Had the focus of the USA been on the one critical question of transition multi-party democracy, the regime would be under so much pressure until it legalizes political parties. These gains that have been made through the AGOA impasse are small in terms of the democratization process but key in protecting citizens against human rights abuses against the impunity of the regime. The pressure exerted by the EU parliament calling for the release of four political prisoners in 2015 also made a positive impact as the political prisoners were subsequently released from prison, although their release did not lead to any direction towards democratization. It only showed that the regime cannot ignore pressure from the EU. Had there been coordination between the EU and USA about applying pressure on the regime at the same period, the results could have been different, but because their actions were not coordinated, the regime has survived thus far.



*Figure 7. illustrates the pressure exerted by both internal and external actors on the regime for democratization (by author)*

The path to democracy is likely to be triggered with the political mobilization and organization of the subordinate class. The trade union movement, the banned political parties and the rural majority currently organized under many different non-political community based organizations need to be in an alliance to challenge the status quo. These are the rural poor and the urban poor and the working class under organized trade unions, thus forming a formidable worker-peasant alliance. Trade unions have been instrumental in the democratization struggles that took place in Africa in the late 1980's and 1990's. According to Bratton and van de Walle (1997) 1990 was the epic year as 14 cities across Africa faced mass protests resulting in 21 governments that started the process of democratization. Most of these protests were led by trade unions.

Rueschemeyer et al (1992, p. 271) pointed out that democracy is a product of the contradictory nature of capitalism which has created the working class which has the capacity to organize itself into a formidable force challenging the status quo. “The organizational strength of social class is based in its position in the relations of production” (Steinmo, et al 1992, p. 36). Trade unions are important because they are closer to the production line and are daily engaged in the exploitation of their labour. The nature of their work makes them more organized, in the factories, farms, etc and they have the capacity to organize nationwide. Trade unions are more interested in democracy because there is more for them to benefit under democracy. They are more empowered to bargain for workers improved working conditions.

Trade unions are the most organized segments of the working class or the subordinate class, and this gives them the role of being the vanguard of the working-class struggles. They therefore have a historic role to lead the other segments of the working class to democracy, such as rural farmers, political opposition, students and the urban middle class. This was the case in Zambia whereby trade unionist, Frederick Chiluba a leader of Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) formed a coalition with other civil society organizations to pressurise the regime of Kenneth Kaunda to allow multiparty democracy and went on to win multiparty elections under the ticket of the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD). The South African Trade Union Congress (COSATU) also played a significant role in bringing down the apartheid regime through mass protests between 1986 and 1990, when there was political liberalization.<sup>38</sup>

Trade unions are an integral aspect of civil society actors as they have engaged in the democratization struggle for decades in Swaziland. Unlike other civil society organization often targeted by democracy aid programs, “labour unions have genuine ties to a large number of citizens and are able to mobilize people for forceful action...” (Carothers 1999, p. 247). Yet democracy promotion initiatives rarely focus on trade unions but focus on NGO’s, civic education. The democracy promotion drive would go a long way if it would target an already organized force, like the trade union movement on top of the NGO’s or other civil society actors. This would bolster their resistance against the regime and the building of alliances for democratization which is discussed below.

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<sup>38</sup><http://www.sahistory.org.za/topic/congress-south-african-trade-unions-cosatu>

### *The worker-peasant alliance*

Regime change cannot start in a situation of complete powerlessness. Developing that power base that would challenge the status quo calls for the working together of the oppressed sectors of society. If peasants do not act upon their omnipresent grievances, peasants must have some “organized capacity for collective action against their exploitative superiors” (1979, p. 115). According to Skocpol the extent of internal leverage possessed by peasants is explained by structural and situational conditions such as, the degree and kind of solidarity of peasant communities (1979, p. 115). She further argues that the revolutions would not have been possible in China, Russia and France had it not been for the breakdown of the administrative and military capacity of the state culminating internal mass insurrection. The solidarity and cooperation between the oppressed class made these revolutions possible. In the mobilization for democracy such cooperation is needed to bring down a authoritarian regime and create a democratic political system.

The need for mobilizing the peasants is important as they are the most oppressed sector of the Swazi society. Mamdani (1996) contends that democratization has been confined to what he refers to as the civil society (urban people) and this is superficial. The large numbers of the population are in the rural areas where they are subjected to repressive customary law. The need for an alliance between the minority of the organized labour and the rural people is significant in forging a formidable force to demand democracy in Swaziland.

The urban upper middle class is less likely to be part of an alliance for democratization considering its proximity to the levers of power, as explained by Bayart (2009) their power stems from their engagement with the state through government as senior bureaucrats and business people doing business with the state. This deeply compromises their interest as a ‘privileged class’. The few business people that exist are less likely to engage in the struggle for democracy because they are also expecting contracts from the regime. Even those who are not currently benefitting they are patiently waiting for their turn to ‘eat’. The upper middle class could likely to join the call for democracy very late when their interests within the regime are seriously threatened and they are convinced that their future is not guaranteed under the now crumbling

regime. The threatening of their interests could be deeply affected by serious economic challenges faced by the regime. Such economic challenges would come by when the financial support that comes from the external funders dwindles. In the case of Swaziland the dwindling of SACU revenues, couple with a reduction in donor aid would be detrimental to the regime. It would struggle to maintain its grip onto power as it would find it hard to disperse patronage. This was witnessed partly in 2011 when the SACU revenues took a deep dive. A dwindling economy and donor aid could best be applied together with smart sanctions that target the regimes stalwarts and gatekeepers making it costly for them to continue with its repressive system.

The argument raised by both UK and EU representatives about the disunity and fragmentation of the civil society and political parties is a vital one that the leadership of the pro-democracy movement need to address. The mobilization and unity of all forces calling for democracy is paramount. The ideological and tactical differences should not make cooperation to achieve democracy a difficult endeavour but there should be unity in diversity.

### **People to people solidarity**

The reluctance of the external actors coming to the party could be countered by building what I refer to as people to people solidarity. This is whereby ordinary citizens organized under different formations provide solidarity to their fellow counterparts beyond their own borders. Diamond argues that in the context of African regime transitions to democracy “...was the formation of broad coalitions of civil society actors and linkages between these various groups and powerful, resourceful international actors” (1999, p. 237). Their inspiration is different from that of states. They are driven by the values they believe in rather than economy or security. The Swazi pro-democracy movement needs to be vigorous in expanding its networks for solidarity from such formations outside Swaziland. Generally, transnational non-state actors have played an important role in pursuing struggles for democracy across the globe. For example, the withdrawal of AGOA was pursued by the USA labour organization (AFL-CIO) which worked in cooperation with Swazi trade union movement. The USA labour lobbied the USA government to take action because of the human rights abuses in Swaziland. The above example strengthens one’s argument that people to people solidarity because governments and multilateral institutions have proved to be incapacitated to apply pressure on the Swazi regime.

Secondly, people to people solidarity enables these organizations to mobilise financial resources to pursue activities that are meant to democratize the country. This applies to both civil society and political parties. This tactic of mobilizing support from non-state transnational and national actors viable and presently two political parties (PUDEMO and SWADEPA) receive funding in Swaziland from their partner parties in Denmark through the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA). The literature on democracy promotion shows the traditional external actors are reluctant to fund political parties in favour of civil society organizations yet political parties are central in democracy transition and consolidation. The ruling alliance in South Africa (ANC, SACP and COSATU) has also been instrumental in providing political and financial support to the pro- democracy movement. Other non-state transnational solidarity movements such as Afrika Kontakt and ACTSA have played a significant role in funding civil society organizations to mobilize for democratic change.

Lastly, Keck and Sikkink (1998) contend that such transnational actors help target to change the behaviour of states and international bodies. Besides providing funding, Afrika Kontakt and ACTSA have also helped in information dissemination and advocacy work on behalf of the pro-democracy movement, specially targeting the external actors in Europe. This approach is essential as it is the citizens of those countries that persuade their own governments to address the problem at hand and it is more feasible in democracies. The political parties in Swaziland should consider doing more work in soliciting support from other political parties elsewhere rather than waiting for the external actors that have failed to help since the beginning of the 1990's. I argued earlier that the support of political parties is paramount in building institutions of a democracy. Without strong political parties a transition might not lead to a democracy consolidation in the future. Political parties together with civil society organizations would help in organizing the subordinate and channelling their energy in the right direction. For further research it would be interesting to investigate the role and impact of transnational civil society organizations in the struggle for democratization.

### **What external actors can do?**

The problem of lack of democracy cannot be squarely blamed on the royal family but it has its foundation on the proliferation of colonial rule which changed the socio-economic and political structure of Swaziland. External actors therefore cannot expect the internal actors calling for

democracy to deal with the democratization struggle alone. The external actors that benefitted out of the exploitation of the Swazi resources especially, South Africa, UK the USA and now the European block have a significant role to play in supporting the call for democracy in Swaziland. The exploitation of resources could never have happened without the indirect rule which gave so much power to the King and chiefs to run rural areas on behalf of the colonial administration. The taste of absolute power for the traditional leadership was under colonial rule. The continued financial and political support of the regime by the external actors has helped in the reproduction of the regime.

The role played by the external actors is currently not encouraging considering the high level of leverage they possess against the undemocratic regime of Swaziland. Yet they have the leverage and instruments at their disposal that they could use to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratize. It is therefore it paramount to conclude by highlighting the kinds of action the actors could be taking in the democratization process.

**1. Sanctions-** can be economic sanctions targeted to cripple the regime financially thus decreasing their power to maintain their patronage system. Sanctions are meant increase the cost of repression for the regime. However, it is important for external actors to listen to the internal actors before taking such drastic steps as sanction usually hit hard on the poor. The findings of the study have shown that the pro-democracy movement in Swaziland does not call for total sanctions but targeted smart sanctions other form of sanctions. Smart sanctions make life difficult for the regimes stalwarts forcing them to reconsider their choice of not democratizing.

**2. Financial assistance to pro-democracy movement-** the assistance to the progressive civil society and political parties is critical in building a strong resistance force against the regime

**3. Political conditionality-** this involves the use of trade agreements and donor aid as a carrot and stick for the regime to democratize or face negative consequences. Swaziland relies heavily on trade with the specified external actors and receives donations from some of the actors making it vulnerable to political conditionality.

**4. Political/diplomatic pressure-** it includes public condemnation for the regime, and suspension from bodies that value democracy and good governance. The Commonwealth, AU and SADC all

are bodies that espouse democracy as a key principle of governance. A suspension of the regime from these bodies would hamper the legitimacy of the regime both internally and externally.

These peaceful instruments for democracy promotion available to the external actors for peaceful democratization are not adequately used in Swaziland. These tools presented above could put enormous pressure on the regime and likely propel it to democratize. The analysis of the issue of class in Swaziland shows that the majority are very poor to be able to match pound for pound the regime in mobilising financial resources and setting up sustainable organizations that would socialize the majority to stand up and demand democratic change. However, it is important for this support to be effective “...local actors must be given sufficient freedom of manoeuvre to act on their own behalf and to establish their credentials as authentic groupings not “puppets” manipulated by external powers” (O’ Donnell et al. 1986, p. 25). This is essential for most African countries because of the bloody colonial past. For Political conditionality to be effective it is crucial to have a strongly organized internal opposition calling for democratization and in full support of the conditionality (Sørensen 1993). Without internal pressure, incumbent authoritarian regimes can be able to use to the weakness of the opposition to say it is only outsiders who want change.

The strengthening of the pro-democracy movement though financial assistance would imply that when now the external actors use economic conditionality such as sanctions, trade, stopping of donor aid to coerce the regime the democracy movement would be strong enough to push the regime towards democracy. This would be a huge step towards the transition to democracy. Political parties and civil society are key institutions of a functioning democracy. Their support and strengthening would guarantee the consolidation of democracy immediately after transition.

In recent years, donors have made donor aid conditional by linking it up to democracy, good governance and respect for human rights. Donor aid potentially contributes to democratization in several ways including conditionality (Knack 2004). Conditionality is critical in undermining the legitimacy of an authoritarian regime Lancaster et al (2016). The use of conditionality shifts the power game in favour of the struggling masses as the regime repressive machinery is not well oiled. Suspension of aid and trade takes away the financial resources from the patron which is disbursed to reward loyalists thus sustaining the regime. In a situation, whereby resources are dwindling the power base of the ruler is eroded. The beginning of the democratization wave in

Africa there were 25 cases of political conditionality (Bratton and van de Walle 1997) leading to bankrupting of the authoritarian states. For a regime that is dependent on foreign aid as the Swazi one cannot afford to ignore the calls for democratization whilst on the verge of losing out to donor aid which the regime critically needs.

Wright (2009, p. 552) argues that “dictators who stand little chance of surviving liberalization will not be swayed by promises of aid, but dictators who are likely to remain in power even if they liberalize may view the promise of future aid as an incentive to democratize.” The Swazi monarchy could likely survive political liberalization without losing much if it transforms itself into a constitutional monarchy and allow political power to be contested by the people through a democratic process founded on constitutional multiparty democracy. But if it does not accommodate the aspirations of the people it risks being toppled one day as I continue to argue below that an imminent uprising will erupt if the situation persists as is.

### **When the external actors do not come to the party?**

The reality the struggle for democratization in Swaziland faces is the lack of support from external actors. If hits reality that has manifested for over two decades, that is, since the democratization wave in the 1990's, persists, the Swazi people have to continue struggling on their own. The little resources which they are losing lobbying the external actors would have to be re-channelled to fuel the struggle at home. History has shown that oppressed people can take repression to a certain level. At some point their patience runs out. The topic of my paper is *'Beheading yet another king whilst the world watches.'* This is premised on previous revolutions that have taken place in the world such as the French revolution. The context might be different considering that there were no international, regional and continental bodies that provided international norms on governance. Now states have evolved by creating regional and international bodies that have a mandate to promote norms as democracy, good governance and a culture of respect for human rights. But when these international bodies and states that proclaim to promote democracy do not live up to their own values and expectations of the oppressed, the oppressed cannot wait forever for their freedom. This does not mean that one is in support of a violent route to democracy, but history has shown that people can be patient to a certain level. At some point the situation will explode when they take matters into their hands and confront the oppressor using every means necessary. Violence becomes the only feasible means for an

oppressed people (Fanon 1995). The leading force of such an insurrection is the most oppressed segments of society, the rural masses (subjects) who are held in feudal bondage of customary law. The people's uprising could take the world by surprise as there would not be any compromise on preserving what seems to be a darling of the external actors, the institution of the monarchy, which is at the centre of the denial of democratic right to the people. When the external actors finally wake up to their slumber, a bloody revolution would have unfolded.

*“Any move that they can have with their governments to push this regime to open the political system and allow political parties to participate in parliament. Any kind of pressure that is going that route is what we are fighting for, because we still believe that it is possible to get change in Swaziland without violence. We would not be interested for people to come late in the day when there is blood flow in the streets to try and assist that would be too late.”<sup>39</sup> TUCOSWA SG (interview with Press TV)*

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<sup>39</sup><https://youtu.be/FTNIKuJPK0Q>

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Full text of the 1973 proclamation “PROCLAMATION TO ALL MY SUBJECTS - CITIZENS OF SWAZILAND”**

1. WHEREAS the House of Assembly and the Senate have passed the resolutions which have just been read to us.

2. AND WHEREAS I have given consideration to the extremely serious situation which has now arisen to our country and have come to the following conclusions: (a) that the Constitution has indeed failed to provide the machinery for good government and for the maintenance of peace and order; (b) that the Constitution is indeed the cause of growing unrest, insecurity, dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in our country and an impediment to free and progressive development in all spheres of life; (c) that the Constitution has permitted the importation into our country of highly undesirable political practices alien to, and incompatible with the way of life in our society and designed to disrupt and destroy our own peaceful and constructive and essentially democratic methods of political activity; increasingly this element engenders hostility, bitterness and unrest in our peaceful society; (d) that there is no constitutional way of effecting the necessary amendments to the Constitution; the method prescribed by the constitution itself is wholly impracticable and will bring about that disorder which any constitution is meant to inhibit; (e) that I and all my people heartily desire at long last, after a long constitutional struggle, to achieve full freedom and independence under a constitution created by ourselves for ourselves in complete liberty without outside pressures; as a nation we desire to march forward progressively under our own constitution guaranteeing peace, order and good government and the happiness and welfare of all our people.

3. Now THEREFORE I, SOBHUZA II, King of Swaziland, hereby declare that, in collaboration with my Cabinet Ministers and supported by the whole nation, I have assumed supreme power in the Kingdom of Swaziland and that all Legislative, Executive and Judicial power is vested in myself and shall, for the meantime, be exercised in collaboration with a Council constituted by my Cabinet Ministers. I further declare that, to ensure the continued maintenance of peace, order and good government, my Armed Forces in conjunction with the Swaziland Royal Police have been posted to all strategic places and have taken charge of all government and all public

services. I further declare that I, in collaboration with my cabinet Ministers, hereby decree that:

(a.) The Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland which commenced on the 6th September, 1968, is hereby repealed; (b.) All laws with the exception of the Constitution hereby repealed, shall continue to operate with full force and effect and shall be construed with such modifications, adaptations, qualifications and exceptions as may be necessary to bring them into conformity with this and ensuring decrees.

**Appendix 2**  
**List of Informants**

**1. UK High Commission in Pretoria**

Mr Ashley Hilsdon

British Deputy High Commissioner in Pretoria

*Interview*

**2. Commonwealth**

Mr Koffi Sawyer

Political Officer (Africa)

Political Division

*Written responses over email*

**3. European Union (EU)**

Mr Nicolla Bellomo

Ambassador to Swaziland

*Interview*

**4. Action Trust Southern Africa (ACTSA)**

Mr Sunit Bagree

Senior Campaigns Officer

*Interview*

**5. Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA)**

Mr Vincent Ncongwane

Secretary General

*Written responses over email*

**6. Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ)**

Mr Dumezweni Dlamini

Project Manager

*Interview*

**7. Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF)**

Mr Wandile Dlodlu

Coordinator

*Interview*

**8. Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN)**

Mr Lucky Lukhele

Spokesperson

*Interview*

**9. Swazi Vigil**

Mr Vincent Mabhunu

Chairperson

*Interview*

**10. People's United Democratic Movement**

Mr Mlungisi Makhanya

Secretary General

*Interview*

**11. Southern African Development Community (SADC)**

Ms Mavis N. Matenge

*\*I was referred to her by Mr Cardoso, the Director of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, who was referred to me by the Executive Secretary, Dr Stergomona.*

*Could not receive written responses to the sent questions nor secure an interview. But received documents from Matenge.*

**12. South African High Commission in Swaziland**

Ms Anri Swart

1<sup>st</sup> Secretary Political

*Written responses over email*

**13. United States of America Embassy in Swaziland.**

Joia A. Starks

Public Affairs Officer

*No interview no written responses to the sent research questions but received documents from Starks*

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Interview Guides**

#### **Questions for the Internal actors (PUDEMO, FSEJ, SUDF and the Diaspora; Swazi Vigil and SSN and Internationalists, ACTSA)**

1. What has made Swaziland not to democratise when the democracy wave that was sweeping across Africa?

1.1 Why has Swaziland failed to democratize in the democratization wave that was sweeping across the region in the early 1990's?

2. How has the international community failed to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratise?

3. What has been the role played by the international community towards the democratization of Swaziland?

3.1 Have you lobbied the international community to pile pressure on the regime?

3.2 What kind of pressure do you expect from the international community?

3.3 Who have you lobbied? If any.

3.4 What has been the response of the international actors lobbied?

3.5 Are you getting any support (financial or technical) from the international community?

4. How can donor Aid foster democracy in Swaziland?

4.1 Do you think political conditionality (donor aid) can be used by the international community to pressure the regime?

5. How can trade agreements help foster democracy in Swaziland?

5.1 What do you think could be the role of trade agreements in pressuring the regime to embrace democracy?

5.2 Which trade agreements do you think are significant for the Swazi economy? And Why?

5.3 Why did the withdrawal of AGOA failed to push the regime towards democracy?

6. Why are political reforms and democratic governance not taking place in Swaziland?

6.1 Why is the deadlock going on forever? Is the regime invincible?

6.2 Is the democracy movement strong enough to bring about multiparty democracy on its own?

### **Questions for TUCOSWA**

*\*Did not do an interview but sent a set of questions*

Political parties have remained banned in Swaziland since 1973 and remain the only country in the SADC region with no political parties.

1. What has been the role played by the international community towards the democratization of Swaziland?
2. Has TUCOSWA lobbied the international community to pile pressure on the regime?
  - 2.1. Who have you lobbied? In the region, Africa and beyond
3. What kind of pressure do you expect from the international community?
4. What has been the response of the international actors lobbied?
5. Are you getting any support (financial or technical) from the international community?
6. Last year we saw the USA removing Swaziland from the beneficiaries of AGOA. Does TUCOSWA support the use of trade agreements as a carrot and stick to compel the regime to democratize?
7. Swaziland continues to receive a lot of donations from the international community, just recently the USA and EU donated towards drought relief. How does TUCOSWA view donor monies given to the regime? Could this not be used to compel the regime to democratize?

## **Question to External actors (EU, Commonwealth, South Africa, SADC, UK)**

### **Questions to the European Union**

#### *\*Interview*

Political parties in Swaziland have remained banned since 1973. And the EU has been one of the few organizations condemning the Swazi regime for Human rights abuses

1.1 What has the EU done to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratise? (Such as soft diplomacy power)

1.2 What is the attitude of the Swazi government towards the EU when you discuss the issue of democracy?

2. The EU is one of the donors for Swaziland in a number of sectors. Do you consider the use of donor aid (funding) as a carrot and stick on the Swazi regime?

3. The Swazi economy is reliant on Sugar production which finds its way to the EU markets. Does the EU consider using trade agreements to such as EPA's to pile pressure on the Swazi regime to democratize?

4. Are you supporting (financially / technically) the local democracy movement or civil society so that it is strong to match the regime to usher in democracy?

5. Last year there was a process initiated by the Commonwealth and led by Dr Muluzi about possible negotiations between the civil society and the King. Did the EU support this process?

6. Generally from the EU perspective, what could be the stumbling block to political reforms and democratic governance in Swaziland?

## **South African High Commission**

*\*Written responses*

1. Political parties in Swaziland have remained banned since 1973. Is the Republic of South Africa concerned about the promotion of democracy in Swaziland?

1. 1 If yes, what has the Republic done to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratise? (Such as soft diplomacy power)

2. SACU revenue covers over half of the Swazi Government's budget. Do you think SACU could be used to coerce the Swazi regime towards democracy?

3. The Swazi economy is deeply embedded on the South African economy. Do you think the economic might of South Africa could be used to push for democracy in Swaziland?

4. Are you supporting (financially / technically) the local democracy movement so that it is strong to match the regime to usher in democracy?

5. Generally, what could be the stumbling block to political reforms and democratic governance in Swaziland?

## Questions to the UK High Commission in Pretoria

### *\*Interview*

1. What has made Swaziland not to democratize when the democracy wave was sweeping across Africa?
2. How and why has the international community (including the UK) failed to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratize?
  - 2.1 What kind of pressure have you applied on the regime to democratize in Swaziland?
  - 2.2 Are you supporting (financially / technically) the local democracy movement so that it is strong to match the regime?
3. What has been the role played by the international community towards the democratization of Swaziland?
4. How can donor Aid foster democracy in Swaziland?
5. Have you not used this soft power of diplomacy to coerce the regime.
6. How can trade agreements help foster democracy in Swaziland?

## Questions to SADC

*\*No response except receiving documents*

Political parties have remained banned in Swaziland since 1973, when the then king abrogated the independence constitution.

1. Is the issue of lack of democracy in Swaziland in the Agenda of SADC?

1.1 If yes what is the standpoint of SADC?

2. Is SADC doing anything to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratise?

2.1 If yes, what kind of pressure have you applied on the regime to democratize in Swaziland?

3. How does SADC promote democracy in the region?

4. When does SADC apply political pressure such as suspension of an undemocratic regime?

## Questions to the USA Embassy

*\*No response except receiving documents*

Political parties in Swaziland have remained banned since 1973. And the USA has been one of the few organizations condemning the Swazi regime for Human rights abuses

1.1 What has the USA done to pressurise the Swazi regime to democratise? (Such as soft diplomacy power)

1.2 What is the attitude of the Swazi government towards the USA when you discuss the issue of democracy?

2. The USA is one of the donors for Swaziland in a number of sectors, such as PEPFAR. Do you consider the use of donor aid (funding) as a carrot and stick on the Swazi regime?

3. The Swazi economy is reliant of preferential markets. Does the USA consider any positive developments after the suspension of Swaziland in AGOA? And what else could the USA do to pile pressure on the Swazi regime to democratize?

4. Are you supporting (financially / technically) the local democracy movement or civil society so that it is strong to match the regime to usher in democracy?

5. Last year there was a process initiated by the Commonwealth and led by Dr Muluzi about possible negotiations between the civil society and the King. Did the USA support this process?

6. Generally from the USA perspective what could be the stumbling block to political reforms and democratic governance in Swaziland?

## Appendix 4



UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

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*Department of Administration and Organization Theory*

*To whom it may concern*

18.08.2016

### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Sir/Madam

This letter is to introduce Mr. Bhekumusa Dlamini 30.03.1983. He is pursuing an MPhil degree in Public Administration at the Department of Administration and Organization Theory, University of Bergen, Norway.

Mr. Bhekumusa Dlamini has completed one year of course work and is now doing research for his thesis on the topic:

*“Democratization in Swaziland; the role of external actors”*

He is conducting interviews online in the time period September 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to May 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.

As an important part of this exercise he has to interview various persons and collect relevant documents. I hope you may assist him in the research. The information provided to him is for academic purposes only.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidentiality. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Any assistance given to him is highly appreciated

The thesis is supervised by Associate Professor Dr. Tor Halvorsen.

Yours sincerely

Denise Fewtrell Flatmark  
Higher Executive Officer

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