

What are the biggest challenges to global democracy?

October 10 2012

In the new fall issue of the *World Policy Journal*, the editors liken today's period of politics to an "electoral tsunami." With more of the world's population heading to the polls than ever before, this new issue of WPJ includes a collection of articles that take an in-depth look at democracy: the opportunities it presents, and the dangers that put it at risk.

The issue begins with reflections from international experts on the "The Big Question" – What is the biggest threat to democracy? Some of the world's most distinguished commentators such as Patrice de Beer, whose career has brought him from charnel house of the Khmer Rouge's "Democratic" Kampuchea, to London, Paris, and Washington, pull together years of expertise to analyze the challenges of democracy.

De Beer wrote, "Too many potential voters take democracy for granted, treating it like a habit that has hung around for ages ... When you fail to use a privilege won by your forbears, when you let it decay as a useless tool. It runs the risk of becoming obsolete."

Other contributing experts include:

- James L. Creighton, a retired U.S. Army colonel, who chronicles his experiences securing elections in Afghanistan and discusses what is needed to sustain democracy in war-torn nations.
- Ai Weiwei, an inspirational challenger to China's single-party

rule, an artist, sculptor, and the brains behind the venue of the Beijing Olympics, who discusses his experience as a detainee who stood up to the Chinese Communist Party.

- United Nations Secretary, General Ban Ki-moon, who shares his personal experiences as a student activist under the Korean dictatorship and later as a negotiator with the governments in Syria, Mali, Libya, and the Ivory Coast.

"I think that democracy cannot be established over one or two elections," wrote Ki-moon. "We need to continuously engage with people, so that, first of all they can conduct elections credibly and in a fair and objective manner."

This issue of WPJ contains pieces written by many more journalists, activists, and politicians, who tackle the issue that threaten [democracy](#) from Estonia to Bahrain and Tibet to Finland. It also includes a visual demonstration of a ranking of the world's top 10 most authoritarian leaders based on time in power, prison population, military expenditures, freedom of the press, and the opinion of experts.

Provided by SAGE Publications

Citation: What are the biggest challenges to global democracy? (2012, October 10) retrieved 13 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-10-biggest-global-democracy.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.