

Power 3.0 Blog Style Guide

Blog Concept and Audience:

The *Power 3.0* blog, overseen by the International Forum for Democratic Studies at the NED, explores how savvy authoritarian governments survive and thrive in a globalized age, and the ways that democracies are contending with this challenge. Modern authoritarianism now takes advantage of the features once chiefly thought to empower democracies—the interconnected economic and financial system, ubiquitous communication networks, international norms and institutions, and global media and culture. In doing so, the authoritarians have in some ways leapfrogged the capabilities of democracies, whose very openness can be more easily exploited. *Power 3.0* seeks to unpack this phenomenon, exploring the strategies authoritarian regimes use to exert broad influence in the political, informational, technological, and economic spaces, and how democracies are responding.

Policy debates often focus on recommendations for what governments can do, but our writing should underscore what democratic stakeholders in civil society and elsewhere *can* do locally and worldwide. Writers should underscore the advantages of democracy—and not just the many threats it faces from authoritarian models—in factual and straightforward terms.

Key audiences include civil society stakeholders (researchers, scholars, journalists, activists, and students) and also policy-makers based around the world. We do not comment on U.S. policy or provide in-depth treatment of developments in the U.S.

Come write for us! We encourage unsolicited contributions to Power 3.0. Please email JohnE@ned.org (the Forum’s editorial coordinator) with a brief, 1-paragraph description of your pitch and a short bio. We will get back to you whether or not we see your piece as a fit for Power 3.0 in a couple days.

Blog Post Guidelines:

- Attribution: Contributors will get full attribution as an author of the post. We will include a disclaimer that the views expressed are the author’s own. Please include links to any bios, references, or social media accounts you would like us to include;
- Word Count Target: 800-1100 words ;
- Point of View: We request blog posts written in third person, but authors may wish to use first person at times to reference their own research, experience, or publications;
- Links: Please include in-text hyperlinks to main news articles, publications, or events referenced. We do not use endnotes or footnotes in our blog;
- Visual Material: If you have photos, video, or infographics that you created yourself or which relate to your topic and you have permission to use, please attach them to your draft submission and include attribution. We often use a cover image with each blog;
- Interviews: If you plan to conduct any interviews, please make sure you alert participants to publication if they will be quoted or otherwise “on the record;”

- Editing: Forum staff will edit guest posts and titles for style, clarity, length, and occasionally substantive feedback. NED retains editorial discretion over the final product. Changes will be shared with the author for final approval before publication;
- Reposting: We welcome opportunities to cross-post your blog post on other websites or social media, and kindly ask that reposts include 1-2 paragraphs and ultimately link back to the *Power 3.0* blog webpage to view the full post.

Blog Writing Tips for Our Web-based Audience:

- We kindly ask contributors to use clear, concise, or active language to accommodate web readers' habits and our sizable ESL audience;
- A captivating introduction which starts with a notable illustration or by referencing a current global topic can help to hook web readers and appeal to their curiosity—This “lede” should introduce the question or problem to be analyzed and its timeliness to current events or debates;
- Short pieces do not have to be theoretical or abstract—concrete examples of the relevant topic are welcome;
- Authors may wish to use a list or bullet points to convey multiple points or examples in a brief manner;
- In our experience, social media users most often cite or reference the blog's final paragraph. A strong statement summarizing the main arguments and a call-to-action in the conclusion can aid social media users in promoting your post.
- Another publication in our field, *War on the Rocks*, includes some excellent [advice](#) for online, short-form writing.

Timelines & Process:

- For Power 3.0 blog articles and other short essays, the editorial process generally runs between **2-4 weeks** from when the first draft is received;
- For all publications, deadlines will be communicated to authors directly from our team, and it is important to maintain these deadlines in order to ensure that we—and our vendors—have all necessary materials to guarantee timely publication.

Style & Syntax:

- The Forum's preferred style for written projects largely follows [The Chicago Manual of Style](#). Though this style manual is accessible by paid subscription only, Purdue University's [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) has a good, free-access guide for reference. If in doubt, review [past Forum publications](#) for more information/references.
- Common style issues are below:
 - **Spelling:** Please use standard [American-English](#) spellings of words and grammatical conventions (e.g., color, aluminum, organization, and center). However, if it is the

- official name of an organization, publication, or title of a work, use the original spelling (e.g., Oxford University Centre for Islamic Studies).
- Abbreviations: Spell out United States when using it as a noun, and use its abbreviation (“U.S.”) as an adjective—the same rule applies to other specific names (e.g., United Kingdom; U.K.).
 - Please note: though periods are used for “U.S.” and “U.K.,” they *should not* be used in most other cases (for example, please write “UN” for United Nations, “PhD” for a doctorate degree, etc.).
 - Hyphenation: The question of when to use the hyphen is defined by ambiguity: if the potential for a word to be misunderstood is high, use the hyphen; otherwise, its use is not necessary.
 - Lists: The oxford comma is always used in a list of items or clauses that are three or more. (e.g., “Democracies must ensure international security, uphold domestic and international laws, and safeguard human rights.”)
 - Citations: Citations should adopt an in-text hyperlink format. Please see the example below:
 - “[The four Ds of disinformation](#), a well-established tactical blueprint coined by Ben Nimmo, can help frame how those who spread (and consume) disinformation.”
 - Quotations that highlight key points and offer evidence for central arguments are encouraged, but the authors’ own words should be the centerpiece.
 - Foreign language translations and transliterations: When treating foreign language sources that are translated into English, please use proper transliterated terms. For example, when translating information from Mandarin to English, offer Pinyin script for in-text/citation language.
 - Countries vs. regimes: Please describe the actions of governments and regimes, not the country or the people (as one cultural bloc). While there are instances where the country name is best, citing the government/regime/or other similar shorthand is usually preferred.
 - Political Commentary: Finally, as NED does not operate within the U.S. and comment on U.S. politics, we strongly urge authors to avoid overt references or in-depth treatment of U.S. policy or partisan debates.