

# Can human rights conditionality reduce repression? Examining the European Union's economic agreements

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**Abstract** The insertion of human rights commitments into international economic agreements is now a widespread practice. We argue that the effect of such commitments depends on the degree of leverage held by one partner over the other. In a comprehensive analysis of the European Union's (EU's) relations with developing countries, we find that human rights clauses are conditionally effective; they are associated with improved political freedom and physical integrity rights only in countries that are more heavily dependent on EU aid. An in-depth look at the EU's enforcement of its human rights clause in the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) group reveals that the Union most often responds to violations of political rights—particularly coups and flawed elections—and that enforcement is indeed a more powerful catalyst for change in highly aid-dependent states. Alternative explanations—that the impact of the human rights clause depends on legalization, the country's strategic importance, NGO activity, or domestic institutions—find little support.

**Keywords** Human rights · European Union · Foreign aid · International law

## 1 Introduction

In December 1989, the leaders of 68 African-Caribbean-Pacific countries and the 12 member states of the European Union (EU) signed the fourth Lomé Convention. This

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path-breaking document was the first of the EU's agreements in which aid and trade benefits were contractually linked to respect for human rights. In the coming years, as the EU negotiated new economic agreements with countries in Latin America, East/Central Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, human rights clauses proliferated. By 2009, the majority of non-OECD countries were party to a cooperation, partnership, or association agreement with the EU that contains a binding human rights clause.

The promotion of human rights is a core element of the EU's identity as a normative power. Yet, research on the EU's external relations has focused largely on its values and policies (Whitman 2011, Ch.1), rather than on its impact in the states it seeks to influence. As a result, we know surprisingly little about the effectiveness of the EU's strategy of embedding human rights commitments within economic partnerships. Do human rights clauses reduce repression? Exploring this question will shed light, beyond the EU, on important debates in international relations, namely, whether economic conditionality can (and should) be used to promote political change, as well as the conditions under which international law influences state behavior.

It is not initially obvious that human rights clauses should matter. Some have argued that their insertion into economic agreements is more an attempt to appease constituencies in rich countries than to influence outcomes abroad (Hafner-Burton 2009; Mosley 2010, 74). Moreover, many countries party to such clauses are entrenched rights abusers that are unlikely to be swayed by international pressure, and in any case international enforcement of human rights norms is known to be weak (Hathaway 2005; Kim and Sikkink 2010; Simmons 2009, 122–123). There is some evidence that human rights commitments may have a greater impact when they are legally binding and linked to preferential economic benefits (Hafner-Burton 2005, but see Spilker and Böhmelt 2013)<sup>1</sup>; but this line of inquiry fails to address which countries are likely to experience this effect, and why. All the while, mounting evidence indicates that international human rights law has an impact only in particular domestic contexts.<sup>2</sup> We argue that signing on to a human rights clause increases governments' expectation that they will be punished in response to rights violations; but, crucially, the cost of punishment varies across countries (and over time). It follows that the prospect of enforcement serves as a more potent threat for regimes that are more vulnerable to a loss of international benefits. Rather than having a uniform effect across countries, the power of the human rights clause depends on how much leverage the norm "supplier" holds over the target.

We test this prediction through an investigation into the EU's human rights clause. As a research design strategy, focusing on the EU has the advantage of mitigating some concerns about selection bias, since the human rights clause is inserted automatically in all of its external agreements. Our analysis proceeds in two parts. First, to assess the (conditional) effect of the clause, we examine changes in human rights practices in a comprehensive sample of developing and post-communist countries, from 1990 to 2012. We employ matching to mitigate imbalances in the characteristics of countries with and without agreements. Our subsequent analyses yield robust evidence that the

<sup>1</sup> Spilker and Böhmelt (2013) find that after correcting for selection, PTAs with hard human rights standards are not associated with reduced repression.

<sup>2</sup> On human rights treaties, see Conrad and Ritter (2013); Lupu (2015); Neumayer (2005); Simmons (2009). Compared to global treaties, human rights clauses within economic agreements activate very different mechanisms of influence and are likely to be effective under different conditions.

EU's human rights clause is indeed associated with improved respect for both political and physical integrity rights, but only in states at higher levels of dependence on European Community (EC) aid. Trade dependence does not exert such a conditioning effect.

Second, to gain traction on the mechanisms underpinning these findings, we undertake a more fine-grained exploration of the EU's enforcement of its human rights clause in the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) countries. We construct a record of all instances of enforcement of the Lomé/Cotonou Agreement, the violations that triggered enforcement, the nature of punishment, and whether/when relations were later normalized. We find that most cases of clause enforcement occur in response to violations of political rights, primarily coups and flawed elections; that suspension of aid (not trade) is the typical form of punishment; and that enforcement is indeed associated with greater improvements in human rights in countries at higher levels of EC aid dependence. Qualitative evidence supports the notion that governments in aid-reliant states must take external pressure more seriously.

Our findings underscore that the power of human rights commitments within economic agreements depends crucially on the signatory's level of external vulnerability. We explore alternative explanations for variation in the power of such commitments, but these receive far less support: The EU's human rights clause does not appear to be more effective in partially liberalized regimes or in countries with more active civil societies; its effect does not increase with greater legalization; and we find only limited evidence that its effect varies by country size or distance from Europe.

## 2 The European Union and human rights promotion

A growing body of research argues that the EU is a distinctively normative power in world politics; that, unlike so-called military or civilian powers, its influence rests on the "ability to shape conceptions of 'normal' in international relations" (Manners 2002, 239). The EU transfers its norms, in part, through attraction and socialization (Checkel 2005; Leonard 2005), but also through the harnessing of material power for the pursuit of normative goals—that is, "transference through conditionality" (Manners 2002, 245). Nowhere is this fusion of the material and normative more evident than in the EU's application of human rights conditionality in its economic partnerships.

The fourth Lomé Convention (1989) was the EU's first agreement with non-member states to feature a legally binding reference to human rights (Smith 1998, 262).<sup>3</sup> Henceforth, aid and trade relations with the 68 (now 79) former colonies of the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) group would be predicated upon respect for human rights. Starting in the early 1990s, the EU went on to insert human rights clauses into a number of trade agreements with Latin American and Central/East European partners, and in 1995, the Commission mandated its inclusion in all subsequent agreements with third parties (Commission 1995). The clause is typically accompanied by a mechanism for consultation and suspension of cooperation should either party deem the other to be

<sup>3</sup> During the Cold War, the EC's development aid was non-political (Smith 1998, 258). Only in the post-cold war period has the West (EU included) exercised conditionality in earnest (Bearce and Tirone 2010; Dunning 2004).

in violation. A variant of this ‘essential elements’ clause appears in the Cotonou Agreement (which replaced the Lomé Convention in 2000):

Respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, which underpin the ACP-EU Partnership, shall underpin the domestic and international policies of the Parties and constitute the essential elements of this Agreement.

The EU is not the only actor in world politics that seeks to use economic leverage to promote human rights. Other Western powers, including the United States, employ conditionality in trade agreements, and the practice of reducing foreign aid in response to grave rights violations—particularly coups and failed elections—is now common (Goemans and Marinov 2014; Hyde 2011, Ch.3; Nielsen 2013; Apodaca and Stohl 1999; but see Neumayer 2003). But two aspects of the EU’s approach are distinctive. First, its human rights clause is broad—covering “human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law” writ large—unlike the narrower reference to labor rights that the U.S. has tended to favor in its Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and other trade agreements (Hafner-Burton 2009; Mosley 2010, 70–75; Orbie 2011). The EU’s clause thus provides leeway for more general enforcement of political and physical integrity rights.

Second, The EU’s economic agreements afford a valuable opportunity to explore the effects of human rights commitments in a setting in which concerns about selection bias are mitigated. Since 1995, the clause has been included in all of the EU’s newly-negotiated association, partnership, and cooperation agreements.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the EU does not selectively impose a human rights commitment only in “easy” cases or in poor, weak states; even large or strategically important states like Russia, Nigeria, and Pakistan are not exempt. There is still the possibility that a partner country would choose not to accede to such an agreement; but our review of the record finds only one clear instance of this.<sup>5</sup> To avoid signing on to the clause, a country must take the costly step of refusing an agreement altogether. Particularly among developing countries, the economic incentives for reaching an agreement with the EU can be substantial. This alleviates concerns (prominent among those studying human rights treaties) that states may self-select only into commitments with which they already intend to comply.<sup>6</sup> Anecdotal evidence indeed suggests that reluctant states have proved willing to accept the EU’s human rights clause in order to reap anticipated trade and aid benefits. The clause was a point of contention during negotiations for a partnership agreement with Mexico, for example, but at the EU’s insistence Mexican authorities were forced to accept the first treaty in the country’s history that conditioned relations on respect for democracy and human rights (Szymanski and Smith 2005).

But does the human rights clause have teeth? While systematic evidence on the clause itself is sparse, general evaluations of the EU’s external relations provide some

<sup>4</sup> These include the association agreements with membership candidates, the Balkans, and the countries of the Euro-Med partnership; the partnership and cooperation agreements with former Soviet Republics; cooperation agreements with a number of countries in Asia and Latin America; and the Lomé/Cotonou agreement between the EU and ACP.

<sup>5</sup> In 1997, Australia declined a cooperation agreement based on its objection to the human rights clause (Smith 1998, 264); in our review of the literature, this was the only example we found.

<sup>6</sup> See for example Hill (2010) and Lupu (2013b).

grounds for optimism. Though many have noted inconsistencies in the EU's promotion of human rights (Balfour 2006; Bartels 2005; Bonaglia et al. 2006; Del Biondo 2011; Fierro 2003; Holland 2002; Smith 1998; Youngs 2004), others find that policies have become more coherent over time (Kreutz 2005) and that human rights atrocities are a strong predictor of EU military and economic intervention (Kreutz 2015).

Less clear is the impact of the EU's policies on the ground. In an analysis of EU trade policy, Orbie notes that the Union's activities are increasingly driven by human rights concerns, but that "its normative impact remains unclear" (Orbie 2011, 161).<sup>7</sup> Studies based on a few cases suggest that sanctions imposed under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) are not associated with improved protection of civil and political liberties (Crawford 2001; Portela 2010),<sup>8</sup> however such findings may also be driven by selection bias (Saltnes 2013). Moreover, the effectiveness of what is perhaps the signature element of the EU's human rights policy—the insertion of legally-binding human rights clauses in its economic agreements—has not, until now, been subjected to a systematic test.

### 3 External vulnerability and human rights conditionality

We are concerned in this study with human rights violations that are perpetrated by governments. Violations of *political rights* include repressing speech and media freedom, engaging in electoral malpractice, or, in the case of a coup, seizing power through force. Violations of *physical integrity rights* include, for example, the intimidation, torture, or killing of opponents or rival ethnic groups. From the government's perspective, such rights violations bring political benefits in that they serve to weaken, silence, or eliminate the opposition. But they can also trigger a reduction in international economic benefits. The EU does have a track record of using economic coercion, and it is more likely to do so in states with poor human rights records (Kreutz 2015; Hazelzet 2005). Rational calculations by governments (or coup plotters) must therefore account for the value of international benefits that are at stake when they perpetrate or perpetuate rights violations.

Signing onto an economic agreement with a human rights clause is a consequential act in that it directly links aid and trade benefits to respect for rights.<sup>9</sup> Formal commitments serve to focus expectations on compliance (Keohane and Martin 1995), and, from the perspective of the norm "supplier," provide greater justification for enforcement. Simply put, punishment is more likely to be viewed as appropriate and warranted when a state has violated a commitment to which it has voluntarily acceded.

<sup>7</sup> Although proponents of the normative power Europe (NPE) research program emphasize the importance of "...principles, actions and impact" (Whitman 2011, 8; Manners 2008, 46), attention has focused disproportionately on the former (Aggestam 2008).

<sup>8</sup> Research suggests that punishment imposed under the Cotonou Agreement may be more effective, but the impact may also depend on the political will of target country authorities, the attitude of fellow members of the ACP group, and the preferences of individual EU member states (Cuyckens 2010; Mackie and Zinke 2005; Portela 2007).

<sup>9</sup> The Lomé/Cotonou Agreement and all Association Agreements explicitly serve as the framework for both trade and aid benefits. Cooperation Agreements are primarily concerned with trade, but aid is incorporated under the agreements' mechanisms for political dialogue and cooperation. See Wu (2013, 348), Miller (2004, 21).

This is important in the context of a multilateral institution, like the EU, in which some members may oppose enforcing human rights due to their particular interests or ties with the country in question (Smith 1998, 272–3). In such situations, the presence of a formal commitment can serve as an instrument to pressure reluctant parties into supporting enforcement (Donno 2010). Human rights clauses also lower the transaction costs of enforcement by setting up a clear *ex ante* procedure for initiating consultations in response to violations.

Yet, we should not expect the impact of the clause to be uniform. Its power depends crucially on the target state's vulnerability to external pressure. The more costly the (threatened or actual) punishment to the target, the more influence the EU should have. For states that share only weak ties with the EU, a human rights clause will likely have little impact on the government's decision calculus, whereas for those that rely heavily on the EU, the threat of aid or trade withdrawal is a costly prospect.

Hypothesis 1: Human rights commitments become more effective at reducing repression as a country's dependence on EU aid increases.

Hypothesis 2: Human rights commitments become more effective at reducing repression as a country's dependence on EU trade increases.

Put differently, we expect a positive, significant interaction term between the human rights clause and aid/trade dependence. The clause sharpens expectations that the EU will exercise conditionality, but this conditionality only has "bite" at higher levels of economic leverage (aid and/or trade dependence). Thus, we do not expect the clause to be positively associated with improving human rights at very low levels of aid or trade dependence; nor do we expect aid or trade dependence, absent a human rights clause, to necessarily have a positive impact on rights.<sup>10</sup>

Importantly, the fact that EU aid and trade does flow with countries that are *not* party to an agreement allows us to compare cases with and without the clause at similar levels of aid/trade dependence (more on our research design below).<sup>11</sup> Aggregate patterns of aid and trade relations suggest that the EU's potential impact in the developing world is indeed substantial. The European Community (EC) is now the largest multilateral donor and the fourth largest overall donor in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Examining EC aid as a percent of recipient country GDP reveals that the EU's leverage is particularly high in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central/Eastern Europe (CEE) which are, on average, more dependent on aid from the EU than the U.S. An examination of trade relations reveals a similar pattern, with EU leverage strongest in Africa, CEE, former Soviet Republics and the Middle East.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Following the suggestions of Berry et al. (2012), we can identify two symmetric interactive hypotheses: (1) the effect of the clause is positive when aid/trade dependence is high, and (2) the effect of aid/trade dependence is positive in the presence of a human rights clause. When aid/trade dependence is low, we do not expect the clause to have a significant effect on rights performance. In the absence of a clause we do not necessarily expect aid or trade dependence to exhibit an effect.

<sup>11</sup> Among country-years party to a human rights clause, average annual EC aid is 67 million (constant USD); among non-clause country-years, the average is 53 million. Average export volume to the EU is higher in non-clause observations than in clause observations (authors' data).

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix Figure 1. The Appendix is available at the Review of International Organizations website.

## 4 Analysis

We begin by assessing whether being a party to an economic agreement with the human rights clause is associated with better respect for rights, and whether this relationship is stronger in countries that are more reliant on EU aid and trade. This approach has the advantage of comparability with many other studies that explore the association between human rights commitments and state practice.<sup>13</sup> In the next section, we undertake a more fine-grained analysis of how the EU's human rights clause is enforced. Our dataset covers all non-OECD countries with populations greater than 1 million (129 in total), from 1990 to 2012. The unit of analysis is the country-year. We begin in 1990 because this was the year in which the EU's first binding human rights clause was introduced; our research design therefore exploits variation in the presence of the clause, *given that it is possible to have a clause*.<sup>14</sup>

Our hypothesis predicts that the effectiveness of the clause varies with the target state's reliance on EU aid or trade. The key variable, *human rights clause*, takes a value of "1" when the country is subject to at least one agreement<sup>15</sup> that contains the EU's 'essential elements' clause. This includes clauses found in association, partnership, and cooperation agreements.<sup>16</sup> Sixty-five percent of country-years in the sample were party to a binding human rights clause. We then create the variable *EC aid as a percent of GDP*, measured as a two-year running average.<sup>17</sup> Note that this captures aid allocated by the European Community (EC), not that which is given separately by EU member governments. While there is likely correlation between EC and member-state aid, formally, it is EC aid that is on the line when countries violate the essential elements clause. Moreover, by examining aid as a percent of GDP, we are capturing a country's economic dependence on aid, rather than simply aid flows.<sup>18</sup> The second measure of economic leverage, *EU trade*, captures the value of the country's exports to EU member states as a percent of its GDP, as a two-year running average.<sup>19</sup>

While the EU has applied its human rights clause uniformly in all its economic agreements, these agreements themselves are not randomly assigned, raising questions about whether there may be differences in our "treatment" (human rights clause) and

<sup>13</sup> See for example Conrad and Ritter (2013); Fariss, The changing standard of accountability and the positive relationship between human rights treaty ratification and compliance, unpublished Hafner-Burton (2005); Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui (2005); Hathaway (2005); Hill (2010); Lupu (2013b); Neumayer (2005); Simmons (2009).

<sup>14</sup> Cold War observations are of little relevance to our theory, since the international community's willingness to employ human rights conditionality was low to nil (Dunning 2004; Fierro 2003, 70–75; Meernik et al. 1998).

<sup>15</sup> We code only for agreements that have entered into force.

<sup>16</sup> This variable was coded using the European Union's record of its legal agreements with third countries (available at <http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/searchByCountryAndContinent.do?id=4&letter=A>).

<sup>17</sup> Data on EC aid disbursements (gross, in constant USD) is taken from the OECD and from EuropeAid annual reports. Some data points for post-communist countries were missing during the 1990s; these were filled in using reports accessed by the authors in the European Commission archives (Brussels, May 2010). Data on GDP (constant USD) are from the World Bank Development Indicators.

<sup>18</sup> While aid may ebb and flow partly in response to human rights, a country's GDP (the denominator of our measure) is plausibly exogenous to any such interactions between the EU and the country in question.

<sup>19</sup> Data on exports to the EU (in constant USD) are from the IMF Direction of Trade Statistics (IMF 2011). We focus on exports because these represent a crucial source of revenue for developing economies. In a robustness test, we also explore the effect of total trade (exports and imports) with the EU.

“control” (no clause) groups. We first explored whether lower incentives for repression or already improving human rights records are associated with signing agreements, and we find that they are not.<sup>20</sup> We do find, however, that the clause and no-clause samples are unbalanced on some key covariates, including level of aid and trade dependence (both of which are, on average, higher among country-years with agreements). This can create inferential problems, in that statistical analysis may be based on extreme counterfactuals that do not exist in the data, rendering estimated effects model-dependent (King and Zeng 2007). We employ coarsened exact matching (CEM) to mitigate this problem (Iacus et al. 2012).<sup>21</sup> CEM first “coarsens” variables by assigning them to bins, then applies an exact matching algorithm to determine matches and prune unmatched units; finally coarsened data are discarded and original values of the matched data are retained. As a result, differences in the observed characteristics of treatment and control groups are reduced, and data are “highly amenable to being spanned by a statistical model without risk of much model dependence” (Iacus et al. 2012, 8).

We enter the following covariates in the matching procedure, which we also include in our subsequent models predicting respect for human rights: *EC aid* and *EU Trade* (defined above); *GDP* per capita (logged) and a dichotomous measure of *democracy* (Geddes et al. 2014),<sup>22</sup> both of which are known to be associated with better respect for rights (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005; Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Poe and Tate 1994). We include a variable for *population* (logged), since previous studies have found that repression tends to be lower (perhaps because it is more costly) in more populous countries (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2007). An indicator for whether *civil war* was ongoing in the country (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Harbom and Wallensteen 2009) to control for the harmful effects of conflict on human rights (Davenport 2010). We confirmed that balance between treatment and control groups improves after matching. See Table 1.<sup>23</sup>

We proceed to estimate models applying the weights generated by the matching procedure. We employ three dependent variables. As a measure of *political rights*, we use the V-Dem Electoral Democracy index (Coppedge et al. 2015). This is a continuous interval variable which captures respect for freedom of association and expression, the quality of the electoral process, and whether the chief executive is chosen through elections.<sup>24</sup> Second, the *Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) physical integrity rights index* is a

<sup>20</sup> We run survival models predicting the ratification of an EU economic agreement containing a human rights clause. To proxy for the government’s incentives for repression, we use Conrad and Ritter’s (2013) measure of leader job security (where greater security is argued to be associated with a larger benefit to repression, see Conrad and Ritter 2013, 401). To capture improving human rights records, we use the change (over 1 year and 3 years) in the CIRI physical integrity rights index and the V-Dem electoral democracy index. We find, however, that none of these are significant predictors of economic agreements with the EU. See Appendix 2.

<sup>21</sup> This method is employed by Hill (2010) in an investigation of global human rights treaties. CEM is a monotonic imbalance bounding (MIB) method. For the advantages compared to other matching methods, see Iacus et al. (2012).

<sup>22</sup> This dichotomous measure is based on the presence of multiparty elections and is unrelated to other aspects of human rights performance, making this an ideal variable for our purposes. Moreover, a focus on multiparty elections resonates with Bueno de Mesquita et al.’s (2005) finding that electoral competition is the aspect of democracy that is most significant for reducing human rights abuses.

<sup>23</sup> Of 3483 observations, 1930 were matched.

<sup>24</sup> Our results hold when we instead use the Freedom House political rights index.

**Table 1** Balance after Matching, Standardized Difference in Means and L1 Distance between Treated and Un-treated

Covariate	Standardized Differences in Means		L1 Imbalance Measure	
	Un-matched	Matched	Un-matched	Matched
EC Aid (% GDP)	0.85	0.08	0.34	0.21
EU Trade (% GDP)	4.7	0.81	0.08	0.13
GDP per cap (log)	-0.62	0.01	0.26	0.12
Population (log)	-0.27	0.04	0.24	0.12
Civil Conflict	-0.07	0	0.07	0
Democracy	0.13	0	0.13	0

9-point scale coding for the presence and severity of: (1) political/extrajudicial killings; (2) disappearances; (3) torture (and other cruel, degrading or inhumane punishment); and (4) political imprisonment.<sup>25</sup> Third, *Fariss's (2014) measure of physical integrity rights* is a continuous variable derived from a dynamic ordinal item response theory model, which allows (and corrects) for changing standards of human rights accountability over time.<sup>26</sup> All measures are scaled so that higher values equate to better respect for rights.

We estimate OLS models with robust standard errors clustered by country.<sup>27</sup> The right-hand-side includes each of the covariates used in the matching procedure. To test our hypotheses, we incorporate interaction terms between the human rights clause and EU aid and trade. In robustness tests, we include a more expansive set of control variables but find our core results unchanged (Appendix 3).<sup>28</sup> Regional dummies are also included.<sup>29</sup> All time-varying right-hand-side variables are lagged by one year. One-year and two-year lags of the dependent variable correct for serial correlation and floor/

<sup>25</sup> Cingranelli and Richards (2008). The index captures human rights practices, not legislation. It is coded using annual human rights reports by Amnesty International and the U.S. State Department. Cingranelli and Richards (1999) show that rights violations in the four component areas are hierarchically related and, hence, can be aggregated into a single ordered index.

<sup>26</sup> There is some debate among scholars as to the relative merits of Fariss's approach versus CIRI (Fariss 2014; Richards 2016; Schnakenberg and Fariss 2014). For this reason, and because most prior research uses the CIRI index, we present results for both measures.

<sup>27</sup> The V-Dem and Fariss variables are continuous. Although CIRI is an ordinal variable, we nevertheless opt for OLS because of the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable. On the acceptability (and even advantages) of OLS for ordered dependent variables, particularly when the number of categories is large, see Aldrich and Cnudde (1975, 599), Andersen (2004), Lumley et al. (2002). We present pooled models as our main set of results, following prevailing practice in research on human rights (see Conrad and DeMeritt 2013; Hafner-Burton 2008; Kim and Sikkink 2010; Lupu 2013a). In robustness checks, we estimate models with country- and year-fixed effects (Appendix 8).

<sup>28</sup> We opt for parsimony in our main models (see Achen 2002; Schrodt 2014). Additional controls included in Appendix 3 are: oil and gas production; EU economic and military intervention (two separate measures); ratification of the ICCPR and CAT; and an indicator for whether a country is an EU membership candidate.

<sup>29</sup> These are: Sub-Saharan Africa, Former Soviet Union, Asia, and Middle East/North Africa (Latin America is the omitted category). Key results remain robust if region dummies are removed.

ceiling effects.<sup>30</sup> Note that inclusion of a lagged dependent variable means that our models are equivalent to estimating changes in the dependent variable. To account for measurement uncertainty in Fariss's latent variable, we adopt the recommended approach by creating multiple datasets with draws from the latent variable's posterior distribution, and then combine coefficients using the Rubin (1987) formulas.<sup>31</sup> Table 2 presents the results.

## 5 Findings

Models 1–3 present the results for political rights and models 4–9 for the two measures of physical integrity rights. If our hypothesis is correct, we should find positive/significant coefficients on the interaction terms between aid/trade dependence and the human rights clause.

Of note first is that the coefficients for the human rights clause in the baseline (non-interactive) models are not statistically significant.<sup>32</sup> Thus, averaged over all countries, the EU's human rights clause exhibits no significant association with human rights. This conclusion changes, however when we account for the partner state's vulnerability to economic pressure. Notably, the interaction terms between the human rights clause and EC aid dependence are positive and statistically significant for all three dependent variables.<sup>33</sup> Thus, signing on to a human rights clause with the EU is associated with improved human rights performance, but *only in countries that are dependent on EU aid*.

Figure 1 illustrates this finding in substantive terms, showing the marginal effect (and 95% confidence intervals) of the human rights clause conditional on the level of EC aid dependence.<sup>34</sup> Both graphs reveal that the effect of the clause becomes statistically significant when a country reaches a level of EC aid dependence of approximately 1% of GDP, which falls at the 70th percentile of the sample distribution.

In contrast, trade dependence does not condition the impact of the human rights clause. This runs counter to our initial expectations, but attests to important differences between the two types of economic flows. While foreign aid is a non-reciprocal concession from donor to recipient, trade fosters relations of interdependence. The incentives to use trade sanctions to enforce human rights are therefore weaker, and target governments should anticipate as much. The collective action problems

<sup>30</sup> We compare the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) and Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) for the AR(1), AR(2), and AR(3) specifications. In addition, we regress the residuals on the lagged residuals for each of these models. Based on these fit statistics and residual diagnostics, the AR(2) model is our preferred specification.

<sup>31</sup> This is performed using a modified version of Stata's procedure for multiple imputation; see Fariss (2014) and Schnakenberg and Fariss (2014).

<sup>32</sup> This is consistent with Spilker and Böhmelt's (2013) finding, also in a matched dataset.

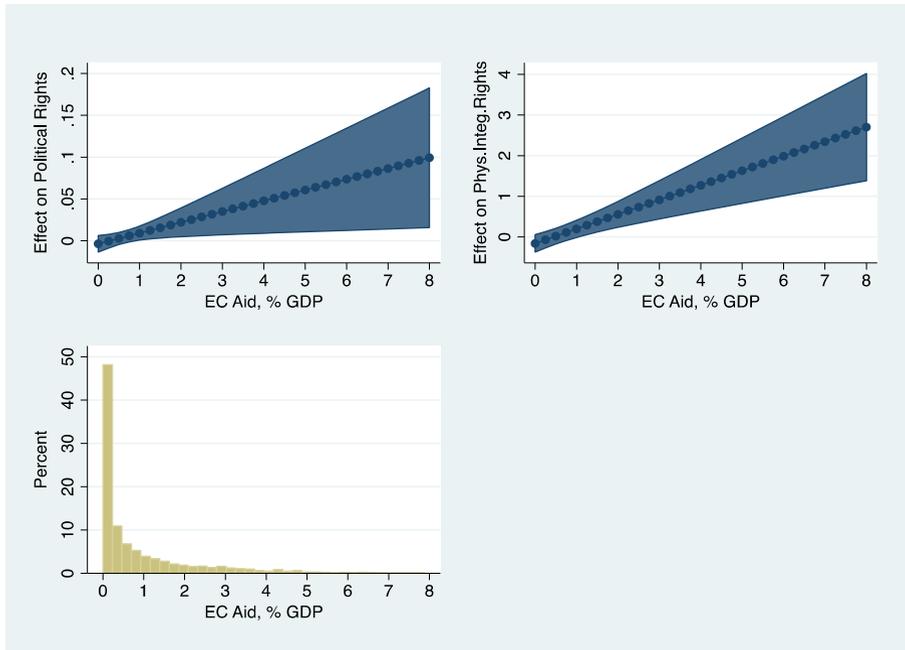
<sup>33</sup> Interacting the clause with both aid and trade in the same model yields the same finding: the effect of the clause is conditional on aid dependence but not trade dependence.

<sup>34</sup> Estimates from Stata's 'margins' command are based on models 2 and 5 (Table 2). We do not present marginal effects for the Fariss physical integrity rights measure because there is no accepted approach for deriving point estimates and confidence intervals from coefficients aggregated using Rubin's rule (Rubin 1987). See footnote 29. We also examine the marginal effect of aid dependence conditional on a human rights clause, and we confirm that aid dependence has a significant (positive) effect in the presence of a clause, but not in its absence.

**Table 2** Effect of the Human Rights Clause on Political and Physical Integrity Rights, Matched Dataset

	V-Dem political rights	CIRI phys. integ. rights	Fariss phys. integ. rights
Human Rights Clause	.003 (.004)	.043 (.093)	-.039 (.029)
EC Aid (% GDP)	.008 (.003)**	.046 (.065)	.018 (.019)
EU Trade (% GDP)	-.0003 (.0002)*	.003 (.005)	.0003 (.0016)
Clause * EC Aid	.013 (.006)**	.319 (.091)***	.052 (.025)**
Clause * EU Trade	-.0004 (.0005)	.013 (.011)	.005 (.004)
GDP per cap (log)	.013 (.004)***	.090 (.053)*	.040 (.017)**
Population (log)	-.0003 (.0018)	-.246 (.046)***	-.053 (.016)***
Civil Conflict	-.012 (.006)*	-.559 (.146)***	-.101 (.036)***
Democracy	yes	.317 (.090)***	.025 (.030)
Lagged DV (2)	yes	yes	yes
Region dummies	yes	yes	yes
Year	-.0017 (.0005)***	-.014 (.008)*	.003 (.002)
Constant	3.42 (1.05)***	32.75 (15.99)**	-4.02 (4.67)
R2	.95	.68	(4.73)
N	1411	1349	1327

\*  $p < 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$



**Fig. 1** Conditional Effect of the Human Rights Clause on (a) Political Rights and (b) Physical Integrity Rights\*. \* 95% confidence intervals are shown. Panel 3 presents a histogram of the EC aid dependence variable

associated with orchestrating and enforcing trade sanctions are also greater. The EU's decisions about aid allocation are made among a centralized group of officials in Brussels, whereas trade is undertaken by private economic actors scattered across the member states. In support of these points, our examination of EU enforcement in the next section reveals that trade suspension is very uncommon relative to aid suspension.

Two additional points about the results deserve comment. That we find a strong (conditional) association between the clause and physical integrity rights may at first be surprising, given that enforcement tends to respond predominantly to violations of political rights. Of the 43 cases of Lomé/Cotonou consultations we examine in the next section, 18 were in response to coups or an unconstitutional transfer/extension of executive power; 5 in response to electoral misconduct; and most others in response to repression of political opposition. Portela and Mbang-Kiala (2007, 15) explain: "... the deterioration of the human rights situation alone has never triggered [Article 96] consultations. Also, the human rights breaches to which the EU reacts concern civil and political rights closely linked to democracy: freedom of speech, of association and of peaceful demonstration." The EU is more likely to punish countries for violations of political rights, because these are typically associated with public and highly scrutinized events, such as coups and flawed elections (Youngs 2004, 426). Violations of physical integrity rights tend to be harder to observe and, hence, more difficult to directly monitor and enforce (Lupu 2013a). That the clause is also associated with improvements in physical integrity rights therefore suggests that enforcement in response to dramatic ruptures in the status quo (such as coups) has positive spillover effects in other

areas. Indeed, political rights—free and fair elections, the right to form associations and choose one’s government—may be inherently linked to physical integrity rights in that rule of law tends to be better and repression more costly in more democratic contexts (Davenport 2007, 10–14).<sup>35</sup> In support of this point, Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2005) find a strong association between multiparty electoral competition and respect for physical integrity rights. Political and physical integrity rights also tend to be linked in the enforcement episodes themselves. A closer look at the EU’s enforcement in the ACP reveals that although the triggering event is nearly always a coup or flawed election, once consultations begin, a wide range of issues are raised for discussion. In consultations with Cote d’Ivoire (2001), Liberia (2001–2002) and Zimbabwe (ongoing),<sup>36</sup> for example, one of the EU’s primary demands was for an end to politically- or ethnically-motivated violence perpetrated by state security forces.

Another point of note is that absent a human rights clause, the association between aid dependence and human rights is either insignificant or negative (denoted by the constituent terms for EC aid dependence in the interactive models). Results for political rights, for example, reveal that the significant positive association between aid and rights holds only in observations governed by a human rights clause. Thus, it is not aid alone that is doing the work; by explicitly linking assistance to human rights performance, the clause performs an essential function.

## 6 Enforcement of the Lomé/Cotonou agreement

To dig deeper, we next examine the EU’s human rights enforcement in the ACP group from 1990 to 2011. This analysis allows us to explore a set of more nuanced questions about how (and when) the clause is enforced: to what types of rights violations does the EU respond? How is conditionality exercised and what sources of leverage are used? How do governments respond to invocation of the human rights clause? Are aid-dependent states more responsive to enforcement, as our theory predicts? Because there is no existing dataset on the EU’s enforcement of its human rights clause,<sup>37</sup> we culled from a variety of sources, including the EU’s own records,<sup>38</sup> to identify the 43 instances of enforcement. For each case, we identify the violations that triggered it, the nature of the punishment, and whether/when relations were later normalized.

There are several advantages to focusing on ACP countries in an exploration of human rights enforcement: as former European colonies, the EU maintains a special interest in their affairs; they also exhibit wide variation in aid and trade dependence, which are key factors for our theory; and from a methodological standpoint, all ACP states are party to the same agreement (Lomé/Cotonou) with the same human rights

<sup>35</sup> On the linkages between different types of human rights, see also Fariss and Schnakenberg (2014).

<sup>36</sup> Restrictions under the Cotonou Agreement were lifted on November 1, 2014. However, other restrictive measures, such as travel bans and asset freezes targeting individuals, remain (as of February 2015).

<sup>37</sup> Kreutz’s (2015) coding of EU intervention does not include aid suspension, which is the tool most often used to enforce violations of the human rights clause. There is very little overlap between his cases of military/economic intervention and the cases of Article 96 consultations examined here.

<sup>38</sup> The European Council provides a comprehensive list of all consultations under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement since 2000 (European Council 2015). Other sources include Bartels (2005); Bradley (2005); Crawford (2001); Del Biondo (2011); Hazelzet (2005); Holland (2002); Portela (2010); Saltnes (2013); Zimelis (2011).

clause and enforcement procedures, providing uniformity in the “treatment” of interest. The Lomé Convention was replaced by the Cotonou Agreement in 2000. Both possess the ‘essential elements’ and suspension clauses. The procedures for suspending cooperation under Article 96 of the Cotonou agreement are largely identical to those in its predecessor (Cuyckens 2010; Hazelzet 2005).<sup>39</sup>

Enforcement of human rights under the suspension clause unfolds in several steps, the first of which is high-level consultations between EU and partner-country officials. The goal of these meetings—which can last up to four months—is to arrive at a mutually acceptable resolution. If the EU remains dissatisfied that the partner country has taken steps to comply with its commitments, it may adopt “appropriate measures”—typically a partial or full suspension of aid. The country’s progress is then reviewed by the Commission, which can propose a return to full cooperation once the situation improves.<sup>40</sup> Between 1990 and 2011, the EU invoked this procedure 43 times (see Appendix Table 4 for a complete list and description). In most cases (23 of 43), the consultation was triggered by a flagrant interruption of the democratic process such as a military coup or a flawed election (see also Fierro 2003; Mbangu 2005; Zimelis 2011); in several others—particularly in the early 1990s—in response to a failure to allow multiparty competition. The majority of consultations (at least 30 of 43 cases) did not lead to satisfactory compliance, and, as a consequence, aid was either partially or fully suspended.

Our evidence suggests that governments have been generally responsive to this pressure. In the large majority of enforcement cases, concessions and mutual agreement eventually led to a normalization of relations (Appendix Table 4). To provide a more systematic picture, Table 3 summarizes whether partner countries experience an improvement in human rights performance two years after invocation of Article 96 consultations. Here, we examine changes in the Freedom House political rights index and the CIRI physical integrity rights index.

Overall, an improvement in political rights occurred in 42% of cases and an improvement in physical integrity rights in 48%. If our hypothesis is correct, countries that are heavily dependent on EU aid should exhibit even higher rates of improvement following enforcement. Table 3 thus divides the cases based on whether EC aid (as a percent of GDP) was above or below the 75th percentile for the entire (global) sample,<sup>41</sup> in the year in question. Notably, in the highly aid-dependent group, consultations are associated with a greater likelihood of human rights improvement: 48% for political rights (compared to 33% in the low aid-dependent group), and 56% (compared to 38%) for physical integrity rights. The proportion of cases experiencing backsliding in the years following consultations is also lower in the aid-dependent group (results available by request).

To further illustrate the role of vulnerability to outside economic pressure, consider the different effect of the EU’s enforcement in Guinea-Bissau, Malawi and Madagascar. In September 2003, disgruntled military officers in Guinea-Bissau ousted president

<sup>39</sup> One of the few differences between the two agreements is Cotonou’s stronger emphasis on political dialogue with state and non-state actors.

<sup>40</sup> The decision to open and close consultations is made by the Council upon the recommendation of the Commission. Although qualified majority voting formally applies, in practice, decisions are made by consensus. For details, see Hazelzet (2005); Mackie and Zinke (2005).

<sup>41</sup> This is roughly the point at which our statistical model predicts aid dependence to have a significant effect.

**Table 3** Changes in Human Rights after Lomé IV/Cotonou Article 96 Consultations

EU Aid Dependence	Yes	No	Total
2-Year Improvement in Political Rights?			
High	10 (47.62%)	11 (52.38%)	21 (100%)
Low	5 (33.33%)	10 (66.67%)	15 (100%)
Total	15 (41.67%)	21 (58.33%)	36 (100%)
2-Year Improvement in Physical Integrity Rights?			
High	9 (56.25%)	7 (43.75%)	16 (100%)
Low	5 (38.46%)	8 (61.54%)	13 (100%)
Total	14 (48.28%)	15 (51.72%)	29 (100%)

Kumba Yalá in a bloodless coup. The EU responded by invoking Article 96 and scheduling consultations in Brussels in January 2004. Guinea-Bissau is heavily dependent on external support: on average, from 1990 to 2007 aid accounted for 56% of its GDP. In 2002 (prior to the coup), 14% of its GDP came from EU aid alone. The military junta quickly handed over authority to a transitional civilian government, and parliamentary elections were held in March 2004—by all accounts a quick restoration of electoral democracy. The junta appears to have never considered holding onto power or postponing elections, which would have been impossible in a country so reliant on outside support.

Malawi is similarly aid-dependent. As a percentage of central government expenditures, economic assistance rose from 32% in 1985 to a staggering 105% only five years later (Emmanuel 2013). From 1990 to 1999, foreign aid represented an average of more than a quarter of Malawi's GNP. In early 1992, the EU invoked the consultation procedure under Lomé IV, citing a “lack of progress towards democracy” (Arts 2000, 338). For years, the government had been stifling opposition movements in an effort to defend the single-party state model. Initially, authorities resisted the EU's demands; when the consultations did not lead to satisfactory results, the EU responded by partially suspending aid to Malawi in May 1992 (Crawford 2001). Between 1992 and 1993, total aid to Malawi declined by approximately 25%. This represented a shock to the country's economy, and by many accounts was an important factor in prodding the government to announce the holding of multi-party elections in early 1994 (Emmanuel 2013). The EU normalized relations with Malawi, and aid returned to its pre-sanctions level in 1994.

Madagascar's prolonged constitutional crisis provides a stark counterpoint. In March 2009, president Marc Ravalomanana was deposed by force, and power was transferred by the military to opposition leader (and former mayor of Antananarivo) Andry Rajoelina. International condemnation was swift. The EU, for its part, suspended all direct budgetary support to the government under Article 96 of Cotonou. But consultations proved fruitless. Rajoelina dissolved the legislature, announcing that elections would be held within two years—a length of time deemed unacceptable by the EU. Several tortured attempts at mediation and power-sharing followed, as well as multiple postponed elections. The inability of international efforts to swiftly restore constitutional order in this case can be explained at least in part by a lack of economic

and diplomatic leverage. Madagascar is politically insulated from mainland Africa. Its dependence on foreign aid from 1990 to 2007 was slightly below the average level for Sub-Saharan Africa, as was its dependence on EU aid in particular (at 1.9% of GDP). Presidential elections were finally held in late 2013, nearly five years after Rajoelina's power grab, bringing the incumbent-backed candidate to power.

## 7 Alternative explanations

We have uncovered that vulnerability to external economic pressure is an important factor conditioning the effect of human rights clauses in economic agreements. We now explore possible alternative explanations for the varying power of commitments, as suggested by research on human rights law. First, a substantial literature centers on the role of domestic institutions and regime type.<sup>42</sup> Simmons (2009) finds that human rights treaties have stronger effects in regimes “in the middle”—that is, in transitional or partially democratic regimes—where individuals have both the motive and the ability to pressure their governments for compliance. We thus code a variable for *anocracy*.<sup>43</sup> A second perspective holds that the effect of a human rights commitment depends on its degree of legalization (Hafner-Burton 2005). Although our analysis is already limited to “hard,” legally binding clauses, we now code for two additional aspects of legalization: the presence of an explicit human rights *suspension clause*,<sup>44</sup> and the presence of a *political dialogue clause* establishing a yearly meeting during which officials from the EU and the partner country discuss issues of concern. Third, scholars have noted that domestic civil society can mobilize and pressure governments to comply with international commitments (Dai 2005; Hathaway 2005; Simmons 2009). Following common practice, we employ a variable for the number of transnational NGOs in which a country's citizens are members (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005).

Finally, we consider variation in the likelihood of enforcement. Human rights commitments may have less impact in large or geographically distant countries where the external power has competing interests or, overall, fewer incentives to enforce (Crawford 1997; Donno 2013; Girod 2012; Prorok and Appel 2014). In such countries, governments may rationally anticipate a lower probability of punishment in response to repression. To proxy for a country's economic size/power, we use *GDP* (logged), and for geographic proximity to the EU, we use a measure of *distance from Brussels* (in logged miles).

To test these alternative hypotheses, we re-estimate our base (Table 2) models on our matched dataset, including (one by one) the variables for *anocracy*, *legalization*, *INGOs*, *GDP*, and *distance from Brussels*. To test for conditional effects, we interact these variable with *human rights clause*. The results,

<sup>42</sup> See for example Conrad and Ritter (2013), Conrad (2014), Dai (2005), Hathaway (2003), Lupu (2015), Neumayer (2005), Powell and Staton (2009), von Stein (2015).

<sup>43</sup> It is coded as “1” if the observation in question falls between  $-6$  and  $6$  on the Polity2 index. Results are robust if we employ Simmons (2009) measure of partial/transitional regimes.

<sup>44</sup> Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement is one example. While the EU has at times withheld aid without a suspension clause (Smith 1998, 264), the clause provides a formal mechanism. 70% of country-years that were party to a human rights clause were also party to a suspension clause.

**Table 4** Alternative explanations

	Political rights	CIRI Phys. integ. rights	Fariss phys. integ. rights
Partial Democracy	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Interacted with Clause	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Suspension Clause	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Political Dialogue Clause	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
INGO Membership	+	n.s.	+
Interacted with Clause	–	n.s.	n.s.
GDP (log)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Interacted with Clause	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Distance from Brussels	n.s.	–	n.s.
Interacted with Clause	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.

n.s. = not sig; +/- = sig at  $p < 0.05$ ; (+) or (–) = sig at  $p < .10$

summarized in Table 4, furnish little evidence to support these alternative hypotheses in the context of the EU's economic partnerships.<sup>45</sup> The EU's human rights clause evidently does not have a greater effect in anocratic regimes “in the middle.”<sup>46</sup> INGO activity is associated with improving political and physical integrity rights, but this effect is not stronger in the presence of a human rights clause; if anything, our results indicate that INGOs are of less importance in countries that are party to a clause. Results lend only marginal support to the idea that varying expectations of enforcement matter. Distance from Brussels—a factor which plausibly affects the EU's strategic incentives to enforce—is negatively associated with the CIRI physical integrity rights, but there is no significant difference between the clause and no-clause groups. A more thorough exploration of the EU's incentives for enforcement might examine a wider set of factors, including ties between former colonies and colonizers in a dyadic framework (Girod 2012). But at this stage, we conclude that there is stronger support for the importance of economic leverage (specifically, aid dependence) than for other indicators of size or geopolitical importance in conditioning the effect of the EU's human rights commitments.

## 8 Robustness

We have argued that the causal mechanism linking the EU's human rights clause to outcomes runs through the threat that economic relations *with the EU* will be jeopardized if human rights do not improve. To bolster our

<sup>45</sup> See Appendix 5 for the full results.

<sup>46</sup> Although prior research finds that global human rights treaties have their strongest effect in transitional/partial regimes, it may be that these treaties, unlike the smaller and more narrow economic agreements under study here, are particularly well-suited to triggering domestic mobilization (see Simmons 2009, Ch. 4).

confidence in this claim, we undertake an additional set of tests to ensure that it is EU aid in particular, rather than aid from other donors, that conditions the effectiveness of the EU's human rights commitments. We re-ran our Table 2 analyses adding analogous measures for aid and trade dependence with the United States.<sup>47</sup> Results (Appendix 6) confirm that the effectiveness of the EU's human rights clause remains conditional on aid from the EU, but is not conditioned by aid or trade from an influential outside partner (the U.S.).

We undertake three additional robustness checks to ensure that the findings are not sensitive to alternative specifications.<sup>48</sup> First, we confirmed that the results for trade dependence are substantively identical if trade is measured as total trade (both imports and exports) with the EU. We next explored whether results are in any way driven by aggregate changes in human rights practices over time, and we confirmed that the inclusion of year dummy variables has no substantive impact on the findings. Finally, we explored whether the effect of the human rights clause is limited to countries in the ACP group. This is an important point, since ACP countries are, on average, more dependent on EU aid and trade than the rest of the world. We find that the human rights clause does have a stronger association with improvements in physical integrity rights in the ACP (compared to the rest of the world), but that its effect on political rights is not significantly different in the ACP. Moreover, the inclusion of an ACP dummy variable in Table 2 does not alter our core finding of an interactive effect between the human rights clause and aid dependence.

## 9 Conclusion

Can linking economic benefits to a human rights commitment reduce repression? We explore this question in a unique setting in which concerns about selection bias are mitigated. Our analysis of the European Union's external relations indicates that its strategy of legalized conditionality does work, though only in countries over which it holds substantial material leverage. In some ways, this points to the limits of a law-based approach as a means to alter the incentives of rights-violating regimes. Yet, the fact that the human rights clause is associated with improvements—even if only in some cases—is nevertheless noteworthy, and provides some new support for the idea of the EU as a “normative power.” While the EU is not the only actor to tie foreign aid to human rights performance,<sup>49</sup> it is distinguished by its early adoption of a legally-binding clause, its standing as one of the largest aid donors, and its relatively strong track record of enforcement. Nevertheless, our general point that economic leverage conditions the impact of human rights commitments—provided that the threat of enforcement has some credibility—is applicable more broadly. Other actors have more recently sought to emulate the EU's legalized approach, providing grounds for further empirical testing. The UK, for example, introduced an overhaul to its development

<sup>47</sup> Variables for total aid and trade dependence (with all countries) would be inappropriate because EU aid and trade would constitute a sizeable proportion.

<sup>48</sup> Results available by request.

<sup>49</sup> These include Canada (Clement 2012), Germany (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2011), Japan (Furuoka 2005), Scandinavian countries (Piron 2005), and the UK (De Felice 2015).

assistance in 2005 which led to a more systematic inclusion of human rights clauses in its aid agreements (De Felice 2015, 29–30).

Beyond the EU, this study speaks to broader questions about the factors shaping compliance with human rights commitments. A number of studies now tout the primacy of domestic mechanisms—such as societal mobilization, domestic monitoring, or domestic courts—for the enforcement of international human rights law.<sup>50</sup> This turn toward the domestic, however, has led international enforcement mechanisms to be too easily dismissed. Here, we refocus attention on external relations—specifically on power disparities, leverage, and dependency—as mechanisms for promoting compliance with international law. Although the international enforcement of human rights commitments is often criticized as weak, we show that it can still matter in externally vulnerable states.

Our findings suggest, moreover, that material leverage is equally, if not more, important than “pure” legalization for promoting respect for human rights, at least within the scope of the EU’s economic partnerships. Certainly, the fact that the EU’s essential elements clause is expressed in legally binding language matters; but this is not sufficient for effectiveness. A narrow focus on legal nuance misses the political reality that even binding, highly legalized commitments have a variable impact across countries. For practitioners, this suggests the need to focus on issues of implementation—for example, how the enforcement of human rights might be tailored to each country’s political context and particular set of vulnerabilities—rather than on the further proliferation or deepening of “paper” commitments. Legal instruments for promoting human rights abound; what is needed is greater attention to how these can be leveraged to produce meaningful change on the ground.

Another perhaps more disheartening implication suggested by our study is that the power of international norms may be most potent in a small group of externally-dependent states. On one hand, this can be interpreted positively as evidence of a pathway through which foreign aid can improve democracy and human rights. However, aid dependence is an otherwise undesirable state of affairs; that it may indirectly enhance the power of human rights conditionality hardly outweighs the many other entrenched problems that aid-dependent countries face. Moreover, our analysis demonstrates an association between human rights clauses and improved respect for human rights as measured by short-term changes in quantitative human rights indexes. Further qualitative work is needed to ascertain whether the EU’s conditionality is helping to produce true, long-term internalization of human rights norms, or whether the observed changes reflect more strategic and potentially shallow concessions on the part of ruling elites.

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<sup>50</sup> See footnote 41.

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