



# *A Defence Force for Democracies: The Guardians of Democracy*

## **A short historic overview**

The greatest advantage of democracies is the right to freely express oneself without having to fear imprisonment or sanctions. Then there are collective freedoms such as the freedom to assembly, the freedom to practice one's religion, and else.

Moreover, democracies allow us to form organizations, political parties and actively shape the discourse through protests and citizen initiatives (in Switzerland there are also direct-democratic elements which gives the people greater influence in the decision-making process).

While it may not be perfect and some things definitely need improvement (depending on the country there's more or less to do, in relative terms), it is the best form of government. After all, it allows change to happen and can therefore be molded by the people.

Those who have some understanding of history know that it hasn't always been like this – and in some countries young democracies even failed (e.g. Germany, the Weimar Republic 1918-1933). Going back further, there once existed absolute monarchies which concentrated the power in the hands of the king or queen and the nobility.

In some nations, the monarchies slowly evolved into constitutional monarchies and then into parliamentary democracies. How-

ever, the transition was neither automatic nor peaceful in most parts.

In France, the rule of the monarchy was overthrown by a violent revolution (1787- 1799). And while it has succeeded in its goal to abolish the monarchy, it failed in establishing a more equal form of government. At the end, Napoleon Bonaparte became emperor of France.

In Germany, there was an attempt as well, but it was crushed within a year (1848/1849).

In Russia, there were two revolutions: one in 1905, which failed; and one in 1917, which succeeded. The latter ended in a dictatorship which peaked with Stalin's takeover in 1924 after Vladimir Lenin's death.

There are cases in which revolutions were successful, though, and among them is the US-American revolution (1765 – 1783). Of course, the USA wasn't overnight a flawless democracy after it became independent, but it slowly evolved into the direction.

Switzerland, formed in 1291, adopted a new constitution in 1848 which formed the present nation. Since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century it has enjoyed relative domestic tranquility and is quite unique in that regard.

By far the oldest living participatory democracy is the [Iroquois Confederacy](#) - founded in 1142 by the Great Peacemaker. It was also the inspiration for the form of government of the US. *"The Iroquois Confederacy originally consisted of five separate nations – the Mohawks, who call themselves Kanienkehaka, or "people of the flint country," the Onondaga, "people of the hills," the Cayuga, "where they land the boats," the Oneida, "people of the standing stone," and the Seneca, "the people of the big hill" living in the northeast region of North America."*

As one can see the transition to democratic forms of government were different in each nation. In some countries it took longer, other countries developed over time – and in some cases, like Italy and Germany, far right-wing dictatorships destroyed a democracy. Both of which ended then in 1945, after the Second World War.

## **Defending modern democracies**

In modern times, we don't have to worry about a re-emergence of monarchies. However, there are other threats to the democracies we live in today. Among these threats are the political (far-right and far-left), religious (i.e. fundamentalism), and economic (lobbyism by large corporations and other attempts to influence the decisions of politicians and other parts of the government).

If nothing is done against the threats, then our democracy will deteriorate and it either turns into a Theocracy, an Oligarchy or a Dictatorship.

Civil rights must be protected, democratic institutions strengthened and democracy as whole expanded. Transparency is also an important part, which is why it should be pushed as well – from a more transparent decision-making process (how are decisions made?) to a clearer picture which private enterprises donated to which party.

Furthermore, a lot of people work hard every day and they do not have the time to do research about the rights and liberties they have. Consequently, there should be an educational force which provides the information in a comprehensible and compact way (in some countries, like Germany, there already exist institutions such as the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung = (German) Federal Agency for Civic Education, which make it easier to found an information network).

The information which is then provided can range from legal rights to political, economic, scientific and historic education.

The information network should also be easily accessible and the sources proof-read by a third party (which consists of experts for each field/topic). After all, the people deserve a reliable source of information.

The network alone is passive, and that's where the organization comes into play.

An information network which is not known to the majority of the population is not of much use, that's why it needs to be promoted and supported by a group dedicated to protect, preserve and expand democracy. In this case, I'm talking about the Guardians of Democracy – an organization which is a cross-party acting educational force.

It not only hosts events, writes articles or holds speeches to make the people aware of the network; it also uses its platform for a variety of other political events and establishes contacts to rural and urban areas alike. That's why the internet is a key instrument to organize and coordinate. No one should be left behind just because they live in a different geographical location or are wealthy enough to travel to a city whenever they want. Therefore, the organization is inherently egalitarian and the philosophy must be enforced by its members.

Obviously, I don't need to mention that in multi-party systems it only includes the democratic-minded political parties. Otherwise it would be undermined by the extremists.

On an economic level, it means that it doesn't act in favour of any corporation. Transparency and democracy (e.g. labour unions) are important in the market as well. There's no moral justification for a CEO of a large company to act like a tyrant. They employ people who have human rights and democratic rights. Naturally, a private entity should also be internally democratized as much as possible.

A democratic market means that smaller companies aren't being neglected or forcibly driving out by larger companies through unfair tactics (e.g. reducing the price drastically which results in bankruptcy of the smaller businesses which cannot afford to sell at very low prices).

**In short:** The democratic system as whole must be protected and should be expanded (from more transparency of decision-making processes to inclusion of all people, regardless of gender, skin colour, or else), neither should the market be left out in this process of democratization and education (e.g. worker rights). Each threat has to be assessed to be given an adequate response (i.e. corruption is not the same as political violence, and in some countries one political ideology is more violent and a greater threat than the other one).

### The Organization

Lastly, we shall focus on the structure of the organization (or at least what I already had in mind for it, the proposal here is not final and sub organizations and/or roles can be added later one).

The flag of organization, at this point in time, consists of a dark-red background, an owl, a wreath of laurel, a shield and the sun.

The meaning of the flag (i.e. its elements) and the flag itself are displayed on the next page.



Illustration 1 - Guardians of Democracy Flag

The dark red colour stands for the countless lives it took to establish our democracy. It serves as a reminder that our democratic system should not be taken for granted, and therefore the necessity emerges to protect and defend our values and democracy as a system itself. It ranges from individual liberties such as freedom of speech and freedom of self-development to collective freedoms like the freedom to assembly. A healthy public discourse is a requirement, as well as giving everyone the chance to get access to educational materials from trusted and serious sources.

The wreath of laurel represents confidence in victory (as history has shown) and shows the certitude in the democratic cause. Battles were lost in the past – in France, Germany, and other countries where revolutions once broke out to abolish monarchic rule. However, in the long run, the war of the systems ended with democracy emerging victorious over the monarchies and dictatorships.

The shield emphasizes on the role as defenders and protectors – the guards – of democracy – whether it is anti-democratic political extremism, theocratic religious radicals or oligarchic individuals with a lot of power and economic might. The guards are ready and willing to fight on all fronts.

The owl symbolizes knowledge (which is limitlessly accessible in democracies), foresight (always looking to the future and making decisions based on the consequences it has on those living several generations later) and patience (some procedures and plans may take longer, but no rush decisions are made to avoid mistakes). All three of these characteristics are important for sustainability.

The sun is a symbol of life and that it in itself is valuable. It is also a symbol of power; power which is needed to stop and destroy inhumane ideologies and the enemies of democracy.

### Sub-organizations

The exact make-up of the organization is, as previously mentioned, not entirely certain since I prefer the people to form it and shape it in a way they want to see it.

One of the few things that are set is the role of the Coordinator – basically the one who organizes it (there exists a local-coordinator of a city or county, then a state-coordinator, etc. etc.), but it isn't limited to one person.

Now to the sub-organizations.

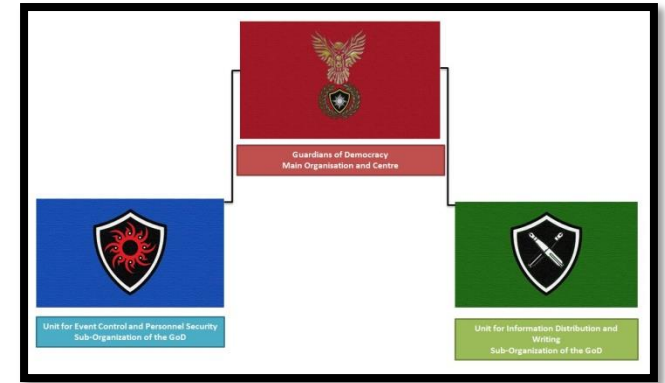


Illustration 2 - The current Structure

As one can see, it is simply organized at this point in time, but this shouldn't stop anyone from expanding the sub-organizations if deemed necessary. Since I'm unaware when you are reading this, it could be possible that it is more than just an idea for an organization at this point. The current date is the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021, it is 12:14 pm CEST.

Moving on, I explain now the two sub-organizations.

Both are explained on the next page of the document, these are also going to be the last pages.

Note: The sun symbol and the crossed pencils can be changed, of course. I'm just awful at drawing which is why I used icons on the internet.



Illustration 3 - Unit for Event Control and Personnel Security

The *Unit for Event Control and Personnel Security (UEC-PS)* ensures that the political events and other festivals related to the organizations – or asked by organizers to help out – remain peaceful, especially when it comes to protests. Additionally, they also make sure that the speakers – for instance – on the event are not harmed. The sun is once again the symbol of power and life, life in this case means that violence is only used in self-defense. If necessary, new tasks can be administered by it.

Members of the UEC-PS are ideally trained in self-defense or dispute settlement.

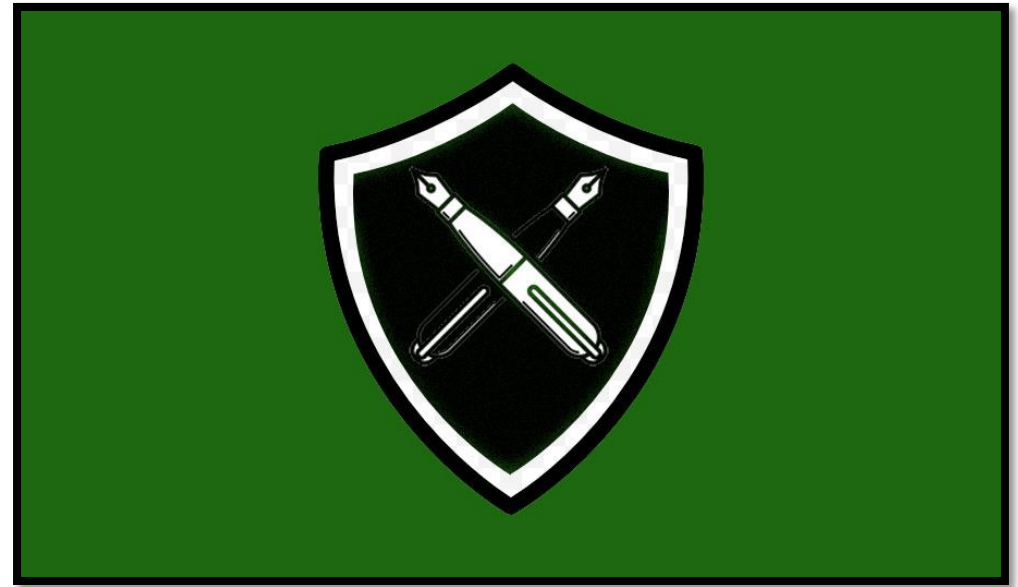


Illustration 4 - Unit for Information Distribution and Writing

The *Unit for Information Distribution and Writing (UID-W)* is the organization which writes articles about upcoming events, the information network and comments on political, economic and scientific news in general. It operates on a local, state and federal level (depending on the country also a regional level, if it is a more centralized government, but here it again is up to the people how they want to shape it). Since it is a cross-party organization, loaded words and attention-grabbing articles should be avoided. Opinion articles which are polemic, as an example, must be pointed out as such to prevent confusion.

#### Final Note

International communication (i.e. international exchange) is also encouraged. The organization from each nation can establish an extra communication network or use social media of any kind. All act independently in their own nation.