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**Master in International Relations**

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**Note to the Scientific Committee:** This abstract is submitted as a proposal for the EEG Research Day 2026. The research presented is part of an ongoing Master's dissertation titled "*The European Parliament as a Democracy Promoter: The case of Mozambique*". The main goal of participating in this event is to disseminate preliminary findings regarding the impact of the European Parliament's diplomacy in Mozambique and to foster interdisciplinary dialogue within the EEG community.

**The European Parliament as a Democracy Promoter:  
The Case of Mozambique (2007–2024)**

This research investigates **the role of the European Parliament (EP) as a key actor in promoting democracy in Mozambique between 2007 and 2024**. It aims to understand how the EP uses parliamentary diplomacy to project normative values, such as human rights and the rule of law, in a context of persistent institutional fragility and democratic decline. The study evaluates the coherence and impact of EP instruments, specifically Election Observation Missions and diplomatic resolutions.

The theoretical framework is anchored in Ian Manners' Normative Power Europe framework, which suggests that the European Union's international influence is primarily exercised through the diffusion of universal standards, such as human rights, rule of law, and democratic governance, rather than traditional military or economic coercion. Within this paradigm, the EP serves as a "normative loudspeaker," utilizing parliamentary diplomacy to project these values onto the Mozambican political landscape, a country marked by historical institutional fragility and recent democratic backsliding.

The investigation follows a qualitative and interpretative methodology, employing an idiographic case study of Mozambique. Epistemologically, the research departs from an anti-foundationalist and interpretative stance, arguing that democracy promotion is not a neutral or static practice, but a political construction shaped by discourse and institutional interactions. The analysis focuses on four primary instruments of parliamentary diplomacy: diplomatic pressure through resolutions, support for



sanctions, Election Observation Missions (EOMs), and symbolic recognition via the Sakharov Prize. Data collection which is the empirical core of this dissertation involves a systematic review of primary documents, including the EP resolution of September 2020 on the humanitarian situation in Mozambique and the comprehensive final reports from the 2019 and 2024 EOMs, as well as the 2022 Electoral Follow-up Mission.

The research highlights that Mozambique holds a unique position in the EP's external agenda, being the African nation with the highest frequency of EU EOMs (nine in total). Despite this sustained engagement, a significant "implementation gap" persists between European normative expectations and Mozambican political reality. The 2019 EOM identified structural deficiencies in the electoral census and a lack of impartiality in the judicial and electoral administration. This trend worsened in 2024, where grave irregularities in the vote-counting process and a "unlevel playing field" favoring the ruling FRELIMO party compromised the transparency and credibility of the results. Furthermore, the 2022 Follow-up Mission confirmed that the majority of the EP's prior recommendations remained unaddressed due to strong domestic political resistance and a restrictive environment for civil society. While the EP has effectively utilized "naming and shaming" strategies in its 2020 resolution to condemn human rights violations and media restrictions, these actions are often limited by the non-binding nature of parliamentary instruments.

The dissertation Preliminary results indicate that the EP maintains a continuous and normatively consistent discourse in Mozambique. EP acts as a vital normative actor that provides international visibility to democratic setbacks in Mozambique. However, its effectiveness is structurally constrained by the recipient country's internal power dynamics and the resilience of local political elites. The persistent decline in Mozambique's Electoral Democracy Index, as shown by V-Dem data, suggests that while the EP's diplomatic efforts are consistent and coherent, they lack the coercive mechanisms necessary to overcome deep-seated institutional fragility. This study contributes to the academic debate on EU-Africa relations by emphasizing the need to analyze the EP as an autonomous actor in democracy promotion.

**Keywords:**

European Parliament, Mozambique, Democracy Promotion, Parliamentary Diplomacy, Normative Power Europe.