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Conflict and Trust in Institutions in a Closed Autocracy: Evidence from Sudan



Lecture by

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ABSTRACT | *This paper investigates how exposure to different types of conflict affects public trust in autocratic institutions. Using a unique dataset from Sudan that spans a time period involving substantial unrest and fighting across the country, we present causal estimates of the impact conflict has on trust in a range of institutions. On average, battles that involve government forces fighting against rebels or militia increase trust in political institutions such as the government and parliament. On the other hand, remote violence, protests and riots, and violence against citizens weaken trust in institutions. We show that these effects differ by geographic region, political affiliation, and socio-economic status. An instrumental variables strategy based on temperature at the time of conflict reveals these results are robust to potential reverse causality. These findings have important implications for understanding regime vulnerability in non-democracies that rely on depleting or disappearing natural resource rents.*

BIO | **CAITLIN AND CRISTINA ARE BOTH ASSISTANT PROFESSORS AT SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY. CRISTINA IS THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR OF THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, PUBLIC POLICY, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (CEU), SHE HOLDS A PH.D. IN POLITICAL SCIENCE FROM DUKE UNIVERSITY. CRISTINA HAS WRITTEN ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, CLIENTELISM, BUREAUCRATIC REFORM, GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND THE POLITICS OF HEALTHCARE. CAIT HOLDS A PH.D. IN ECONOMICS FROM GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY. SHE IS A DEVELOPMENT ECONOMIST SPECIALIZING IN POVERTY, INEQUALITY, HEALTH AND EDUCATION. SHE IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON PROJECTS RELATED TO GENDER AND INTRA-HOUSEHOLD INEQUALITY IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.**

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