Frenemies with the Arab states

A study on differences in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses in the GCC-states before and after the joining of the Arab states in the international war against ISIL

Master Thesis
Program: Crisis and Security Management
Name: Ruben van der Roest
Student number: S1476033
Word count: 15965
Date: 02-02-2019
Supervisor: Dr. Aloyo, E.T.
Second reader: Dr. Vüllers, J.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate if there is a significant difference in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament about human rights abuses by GCC-states before those states joined an international coalition against ISIL on 15 December 2015 and after this date. This study is done through content analysis of different types of documents from the Dutch parliament where keywords of human rights abuses are combined with the mentions of those GCC-states. First, the study focusses on what the original status of agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses in GCC-states was. After that, the current state of this is outlined. In the last part a statistical comparison between both time periods will take place to investigate if a significant different exist.

Based on the balanced theory of international relations and the frenemy theory will state the hypothesis that there will be a decline in agenda setting of human rights abuses after these Arab states became 'friends' with the Netherlands. This happens because countries that are allies on a certain international field do not fight against each other on other international fields. However, the results show that there was no significant decline in agenda setting. Moreover, the agenda setting on human rights abuses grew for the majority of the GCC-states. The impact of the start of the Arab coalition was therefore not visible.

Table of contents

List of Abbreviations

AI	Amnesty International
CIRI	Cingranelli-Richards human rights data project
EC	European Commission
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IMCTC	Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights

List of Figures

4

Introduction

Problem outline

On 8 April 2013, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi released an audio statement in which he declared the founding of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). ISIL is an organization that declared a caliphate in 2014 in the Levant with the purpose of a Muslim community based on the Sharia without tolerating non-Muslims. ISIL is since the start also known as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) or just IS (Islamic State). To prevent confusion, only the ISIL term will be used as abbreviation of the terrorist group. As a result of the growing chaos during an ongoing civil war in Syria, some splinter groups in Syria and Iraq came together to join forces to establish the Islamic state (Weiss& Hassan, 2015, p.4). Those groups already existed since the invasion of the Coalition of the willing in 2003 in Iraq. They were formed to carry out attacks against enemy forces and civilians to gain control of the region. Almost from the start of ISIL did the international media start to spread news about gruesome events done by ISIL. ISIL committed crimes against humanity and other human rights abuses on a large and extreme scale that it drew the attention from the media and politicians outside of the Middle East. Therefore, ISIL became an issue on the international agenda as an organization that should be vanished from earth (Weiss& Hassan, 2015, p.5). In 2014, a coalition of Western states under supervision of the United States was established to fight against ISIL and to prevent them from carrying out more attacks that are terrible. Later in September 2015, a second coalition was made by Russia and allies of Russia to fight against ISIL as well.

On 15 December 2015, Mohammad bin Salman al Saud, the defense minister of Saudi Arabia, announced the start of another coalition. This time it was a coalition of Muslims states to defend the Muslim states against all kinds of terrorism, but the focus was on the fight against ISIL. The GCC-states (Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates) are all part of this alliance. This alliance did not join the first coalition against ISIL that already existed and led by the United States, but it cooperated with this coalition, as some countries already did. Some countries of the Muslim coalition, like Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates had already supported the Western coalition before 2015 with bombardments on ISIL or logistic support (NOS, 2014). The leaders of this new Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) promised that the IMCTC would be in line with the United Nations standards so it will follow international laws in the intervention in Syria and Iraq.

The alliance started with 34 countries, mainly Sunni countries. In November 2017, the alliance grew to 41 countries. It is a rare phenomenon in history that there is a formation of an alliance on this scale with this amount of countries between the Muslim world and the Western world (Allen& Smith, 1990, p.23).

The only three countries in the Arab world that were not included are Syria, Iraq and Iran. These three countries were not included, because they are dominated by Shia regimes (Karmon, 2007, p.275). The other 41 Sunni regimes did not want to cooperate with the Shia regimes. Sunni's and Shia's are rivals almost from the death of Muhammed in the 7th century and still results in rivalry today. Five of the six Arab states that are part of this research were part of the IMCTC from the beginning in 2015. These states are Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. Oman often had a neutral position in conflicts throughout the history of the Middle East, but the country joined the alliance on 28 December 2016. However, it is important to mention that this coalition is not as organized as it might look. First, this is the result of the size of the coalition where the 41 members do not participate equally. For example, Saudi Arabia has a much larger part in the coalition than Djibouti.

Besides this, the ties inside the coalition are not so tight which sometimes results in countries acting on their own. This already happened before the start of the coalition when Arab states already fought against ISIL. For example, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Saudi-Arabia already bombarded ISIL in 2014 and also supported the leading role of the United States in this fight against ISIL (NOS, 2014). Besides this, the Arab states follow their own interest more than the interest of the IMCTC in the end. This can be found in the geopolitical way the countries of the IMCTC attack ISIL individually. The last reason why the IMCTC is not as effective as it should is the issue preference of the countries. Some countries have other issues they find more important than fighting ISIL. For example, the Arab spring was more important to deal with for some countries in the IMCTC (Helfont, 2018).

15 December 2015 was the start of both the Western world and the Arab world having ISIL as common enemy. The alliance was not official, but was a confirmation of the collaboration that already was happening for a year between both sides against ISIL. Countries like the United States and Germany welcomed the new coalition and promised support. However, some leaders of these countries also were careful about the outcomes of the IMCTC. They

mentioned that the new coalition must follow the standards of the Vienna talks a few months earlier about the future of Syria.

Besides that, the Western states hoped that this coalition would not be used by Saudi Arabia for its own agenda to increase its power in the Middle East. The new alliance also seemed contradicting to some Western countries on the issue of state-sponsored terrorism. State-sponsored terrorism is a term used for states that sponsor terrorist groups in many possible ways. It is proven that ISIL has been funded already before the official start by some Arab states. ISIL was not only sponsored by states but also by individual donors from some Arab states. Donors from states like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait gave from 2012-2014 an accumulated amount of 40 million dollars to ISIL (Lewitt, 2014).

On the other hand did the GCC-states implement new policies that should decrease the influence of terrorist organizations like ISIL as well domestic as abroad. First, the countries adopted new laws that made more terrorist activities illegal and put more effort in arresting people that trespass these laws (Helfont, 2018). Second, the countries started to control financial transactions and tried to cut off suspicious transactions, to prevent the money from flowing to ISIL (in)directly. Third, the countries try to influence people's ideologies. This might look like a contradicting measurement, because the countries try to fight radical Islam with Islam as well. However, the countries themselves explain this measurement as fighting a wrong vision on Islam with misinterpretations with the true version of the Islam. This happens through the modernization of education as well as counter-messaging campaigns in the online world (Helfont, 2018). Although Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates made significant process in the fight against these funding's, this cannot be said with certainty about Qatar and Kuwait. Especially Qatar has a bad reputation on fighting terrorist funding's, because the Qatari government is accused of terrorist funding itself as well (Lewitt, 2014). Accusations of some Western States to some GCC-states like Saudi Arabia that these countries secretly support terrorist groups like ISIL with funds and weapons is therefore contradicting with the start of the cooperation between the Western coalition and the IMCTC. This is a logical conclusion because it would be totally opposite when these countries fund terrorist groups when they fight at the same time against these terrorist groups. Sponsoring of terrorism is not the only thing that is contradicting in this case. The spreading of an ideology is not appreciated by the Western world as well. Ideologies as Wahhabism are most of the time spread Saudi Arabia (Jenkins, 2016, p.12).

The spreading of ideology as well as funding terrorism itself is contradicting and leads to the question of what the incentives are of the Arab states to join a coalition against ISIL. Here we focus only on the countries around the Persian Gulf, because they have other interests in fighting ISIL then other countries of the IMCTC, who might even not have been accused of supporting terrorism. First, ISIL has carried out terrorist attacks in some Arab states like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In this way is the fight against ISIL a way of defending the country. The fight against ISIL was also a way for some Arab countries to show the United States their goodwill after they got a bad reputation since the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York in 2001. Other countries, like Qatar, seek to improve their international power by taking a leading role in international coalitions like the IMCTC (Helfont, 2018). A reason for the United Arab Emirates to participate in the coalition was to prevent the seven emirates to fall apart and to improve the power of the emirates combined. These are the incentives that the Arab states told themselves or the common known incentives. The real geopolitical or economic incentives that might be behind the superficial incentives are mentioned in the theoretical framework.

The problem that forms the basis of this research is not the contradicting spreading of ideology or funding of terrorist groups, but another phenomenon that might have caused the carefulness from the Western world about the fight of the IMCTC against ISIL. This is the problem of a bad reputation of human rights abuses these Arab states have. Human rights in the Middle East have been part of the agenda in the Western world since the start of the United Nations in 1946, but after the terrorist attacks on the world trade center in 2001 were human rights also used as excuse for intervention in the Middle East that went beyond humanitarian intervention (Wilson, 2005, p.10). This was also the case in the Netherlands, where the parliament tried to have an active role in condemning human rights abuses in the Middle East (Schaper, 2014, p.11). Based on Amnesty international annual reports of the Arab states is the conclusion that human rights abuses did not significantly change in the Arab states in the last decade and that the amount of human rights abuses is still larger than any other region in the world (Human rights in the Middle East and North Africa, 2019, p.5). This trend can also be found in human rights databases like CIRI (CIRI human rights data project) and HRW (Human Rights Watch world report).

8

However, it is interesting to do research about the influence the military cooperation between the Muslim world and the Western world can have on attitudes towards human rights abuses in the Arab states and more specifically the agenda setting of human rights abuses in the parliaments. This is based on the assumption that agenda setting in parliaments is the most powerful way for the representatives of the people (MP's) to denounce abuses of human rights and to influence the government's policy on these Arab states.

However, the Muslim world and the Western world fighting a war on the same side can have serious implications for other terrains besides the military terrain (Blair, 2006, p.23). Working together on one part of international cooperation, in this case on the military part, can influence attitudes towards each other on other terrains and even start further cooperation. Some of the terrains where attitude might have changed are the trade of goods, border controls and human rights. The unofficial alliance in the fight against ISIL that was made on 15 December 2015 and the possibility of the improved relationship on other terrains as well between the GCC-states and the Western world (in specific the Netherlands) is interesting to investigate in combination with a possible decline of condemnations in the of human rights abuses by the Arab states. It might seem logical that allies do not condemn each other to prevent the relationship from being damaged. This might imply that since the start of the IMCTC as partner of the United States-led coalition in the fight against ISIL, the GCC-states and the Netherlands became friends and therefore condemnations or mentions of human rights abuses by those GCC-states have declined. This is also based on a theoretical framework, which will be explained later in this research.

Research question

In the introduction is the problem outlined that forms the basis of this research. This is the uncertainty about if another country becomes an ally the way the parliament thinks about human rights abuses changes in that particular country. To make sure this problem can be studied in a feasible way and with an academic and societal relevance, are only some parts of the problem included in the study. These decisions are explained later in this research as well. This research does not only focus on condemnations of the human rights abuses but also about the mentions of these human rights abuses. This is necessary, because condemnations are most of the times only done by people of the government and do not occur very often. Mentions of the human rights abuses happen more often than condemnations and can also be done by members of parliament (MP's). Besides that, mentions of MP's are not official and do not harm the interest of the Netherlands directly, but they are a representation of the opinion of the Dutch citizens. They use agenda setting as a way to mention human rights abuses and to put those abuses on the political agenda. This agenda setting gives a better view of trends of mentions of human rights abuses. The agenda setting in the parliament is a useful way for MP's to address problems and is a meaningful political instrument, which says a lot about the position of the country on certain items.

Based on these decisions, the main research question of this study is:

How did the agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses by the GCC-states change after the GCC-states became allies of the Netherlands in the war against ISIL in 2015?

To provide a consistent answer it is necessary to divide the main research question into different sub-questions.

First sub-question: *What was the original amount of agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights issues in the GCC-states?*

Second sub-question: *What is the amount of agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights issues in the GCC-states after 2015?*

Third sub-question: *To what extent do the two time periods differ in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament and human rights abuses in the GCC-states and how can this be explained?*

The first two sub-questions are more descriptive than the third sub-question. The first two sub-questions only focus on what is happening and therefore only give an overview without any analysis or conclusions. However, the third sub-question focuses on the analysis of the research by using the content analysis of both time periods for a statistical t-test in order to investigate if there is a significant difference in data from both periods. The research question in general is also not only descriptive, but explanatory as well. First, it describes if there is a significant difference in agenda setting about abuses by GCC-states in the Tweede Kamer after these states joined the coalition against ISIL. However, this research also tries to analyze the reasons of why this phenomenon is happening or not. Its main purpose is therefore to be explanatory about this certain phenomenon based on existing theories.

Academic relevance

A new study has a contribution to the academic field if it gives information that fills in an existing gap in the academic knowledge about a certain topic. This study gives an insight of how members of parliament are influenced by events on an international, geopolitical level. In this broad field of advocacy networks and international relations is already much written. The mechanisms of the processes mentioned in this research are already investigated and therefore useful for a theoretical framework. However, in the field of trends in agenda setting of human rights issues in the Dutch parliament is a gap, because research about these trends did not include the most recent years. Besides that, there is no academic research done on the effect of the newly formed alliance in 2015 on the attitude of Western states towards the GCC-states in general. All used documents for the content analysis are without restrictions available on the database of the Dutch parliament, so comparing the data is something that adds value and can also be replicated by others. The additional value of this research is that it does not only ask *what* is happening in the trends of agenda setting on human rights issues, but also *why* it is happening. Based on existing literature is an analysis given of these recent periods of agenda setting on human rights issues. However, the theory about frenemies is often used in economical academic literature instead of literature on international relations. Therefore does this theory remain broad (Pant& Yu, 2016, p.8). This research can help for understanding the frenemy theory and further exploration of the mechanism by applying it to a specific case in the field of international relations. That is why this research gives new knowledge about the current state of agenda setting of human rights issues so the academic field does not have to use outdated research anymore.

Societal relevance

Besides an academic relevance does a study with additional value also have a societal relevance. This means that the study must help to better understand society. First, it helps to understand the society of the GCC-states, because this study investigates trends in human rights abuses in those states. That means that a background of the states is given which explains how the governments of those countries act on human rights. However, this is not something that has not been investigated yet. There are many reports on human rights abuses in Arab states that are published by Amnesty International (AI) for example. The CIRI database and the Human Rights Watch database also give a complete overview of figures of human rights abuses. However, the study has an additional value by giving an overview of how Dutch MP's are influenced by the new alliance with the Muslim states. Therefore can this study serve as a reflection for members of parliament to see how a certain event changes their position towards human rights problems in certain countries, even though the event does not have an influence on the problems in those countries. Some critics say that the change of the attitude of the members of parliament about human rights issues towards the GCC-states is unfair, because there was no significant change in human rights abuses in those states. This is difficult to prove, but, as mentioned elsewhere, were there indeed no significant turning points in human rights policies of the Arab states.

This research gives at the same time the possibility to the Dutch electorate to see which MP's are being influenced by the event and which are not. This gives them the possibility to hold the parliament accountable for changing their attitudes for if the people find human rights abuses in the GCC-states in important issue. Besides the MP's and the electorate does this research also have a possible relevance for human rights advocacy networks. These networks or organizations can use the outcome of the research to pressure MP's to keep on putting human rights abuses on the political agenda if the outcome is indeed that there is a decline in agenda setting. If the decline does not exist, it means that this pressure is not needed and that MP's in the Netherlands are steadfast in their believes about norms and values and the fight against those who do not respect those norms and values.

This research does not only have a societal relevance inside the Netherlands. The external validity is high, because agenda setting of abuses and condemnations happen in almost the same way throughout the Western world, because the Western countries often use the same institutions and rules for this. This means that the results of the research can also be used to analyze the agenda setting of human rights abuses in the GCC-states in other Western parliaments. The fact that this research is also applicable in other countries means that the research can also explain how certain events that might not change anything in a certain political area can change opinions and therefore be misleading, but on a worldwide level. The fact that this happens on a worldwide level means that this can be seen as a general applicable theory.

Theoretical framework

Body of knowledge

The research question of this study tries to investigate if there is a difference in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament on human rights abuses in the GCC-states after they joined a coalition against ISIL in 2015. Therefore, it is important to elaborate on existing literature and theories that give information about how this process works. First, it is important to discuss the status of the human rights issues in the GCC-states, because it explains the underlying problem of this research. Human rights abuses are the principle that makes it possible for the hypothesis to exist. The existence of human rights in the Arab world has played an important role on the international, political agenda, especially since the start of the United Nations (Halliday, 1995, p.154). The source of this is the Islamic concept of human rights, which differs from the concept of human rights used in the Western world. The Islamic concept of human rights includes equality, respect and the right to remain innocent until proven guilty. However, the main problem is that these principles are only for fellow Muslims (Arzt, 1990, p.205; Halliday, 1995, p.155; Davidson, 2001, p.46). People from other religions or non-believers do not get the same rights. Another major difference in the concept of human rights between the Muslim world and the Western world is the idea of the individual will and the freedom to make decisions. In the Islamic world does God influence the will of humans. The consequence of this point of view is that humans are not entirely free to make decisions in life, but are subject to the will of God (Arzt, 1990, p.205). Therefore are people not obeying the Muslim God not having the right opinion about life and should therefore not have the same freedom.

This becomes a problem when religion and state are not separated, which is the case in many Arab states. This gives governments the power to commit acts according to Islamic law that are perceived as human rights abuses in the Western world. Unless this different background and concept of human rights, which can lead to different normative ways of looking at human rights, did the Arab states in the United Nations sign a human rights declaration based on a Western perception of human rights called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 (Arzt, 1990, p.216). There are also other covenants of international human rights signed by the Arab states during the last decades, like the ICCR and ICESCR in 1975 as well as the ICAT against torture in 1987. One of the covenants is the Arab Charter on Human Rights as part of the League of Arab States (LAS) in 1994. Unless the multiple treaties and covenants signed by the GCC-states, is there no effective human rights system in the Middle East that controls the acts of the GCC-states and condemns them when it is necessary (Sadri, 2019, p.10). This is because the GCC-states do not grant the regional institutions much power on human rights issues. Besides the lack of reform from inside the GCC-states, did the promotion of human rights standards from the Western world fail as well. Especially the United States tried to implement a civil society and a political reform for decades by giving economic aid and advice to governments. However, this failed because the institutions of the Arab states are flawed (Cook, 2005, p.96; Sadri, 2019, p.10; Rishmawi, 2005, p.368).

The different perspective on human rights results in human rights abuses from a Western world perspective nowadays. Different Amnesty International reports say that human rights abuses are happening in the Middle East more than in any other region in the world and it has not declined in amount during the last decade (Human rights in the Middle East and North Africa, 2019, p.5). This is based on the amount of unfair abuses in those countries. Some aspects of human rights decreased slightly in violence, such as armed hostilities or same-sex relation crimes, but other aspects increased slightly, such as targeting women's rights (Human rights in the Middle East and North Africa, 2019, p.5). Overall, there were no aspects in the last years that were changed significantly in the Arab countries that are part of this research (Human rights in the Middle East and North Africa, 2019, p.5). Also the Human Rights Watch organization reports no decline in different aspects of human rights abuses (Human Rights Watch world report). One of the factors that had a role in the development of human rights abuses in other countries in the Arab world was the rise of oppression during the Arab spring (Colombo, 2012, p.3). The Arab spring was not as big in the GCC-states as other states

like Syria or Tunisia. However, there were thousands of protesters in these countries (like Bahrain and Oman) in 2011 and 2012 to protest for a political change. The governments of the Arab states saw this as a threat to their stability and the internal status quo (Colombo, 2012, p.5). The countries of the GCC raised their level of repression. First, it deployed financial inducements to the key sectors in political reforms. Second, it used military intervention to put a hard repression on the revolts. Especially this last form of counteracting the Arab spring resulted in more human rights abuses, but did not result in a significant change (Colombo, 2012, p.6). The only exception of the GCC-states is Qatar, which always supported anti-regime changes and opposed themselves to its Arab neighbors.

Before this theoretical framework elaborates more on a possible relation between the human rights abuses and the war against ISIL, is it important to elaborate on what the theories are about the reasons the Arab states joined the fight against ISIL. A major theory in the field of wars is the 'diversionary theory of war' (Tarar, 2006, p.169). This theory is the basis of diversionary foreign policy, a tactic that is often used by governments. It means that governments start international wars to shift the attention of their own people from domestic problems to the problems of the international war. This is done to let the people focus on the other country or organization as a problem instead of the people focusing on their own problems inside the country (Tarar, 2006, p.171). This theory cannot only be used to mislead the civilians, but also other countries. This might be the case for the Arab states that joined the Muslim coalition to fight against ISIL.

For the international political world, it might seem as a helpful act, but it might be used as a way to move their focus away from the problems the GCC-countries have domestically as for instance human rights abuses. Especially in this case, where the GCC-states became more or less allies with the Western world against the same enemy (ISIL). Becoming allies could have been a tactic from the GCC-governments to move the attention of the Western countries away from their human rights abuses. The theory above is a possible explanation of why the Arab states tend to fight against ISIL. Another theory of why the Arab states try to fight ISIL is the expansion of the interests of the Sunni states. As said in the introduction, the Sunni states (the majority of the Arab world) are rivals of the Shia states (the minority of the Arab world). ISIL is not an organization with Shia roots, so fighting ISIL would not directly be in favor of the Sunni states. However, the fight against ISIL can be used to gain power in the unstable Levant region, which includes Syria and Iraq (Jenkins, 2016, p.5).

15

Both countries have a Shia regime, so more power of the Sunni coalition in these countries destabilize these regimes even more and expands the area where Sunni's are in power. This expansion of power is in the interest of the Sunni countries, and especially Saudi Arabia, to become stronger against rival country Iran. The Sunni countries do not want Iran to be the most powerful country in the Middle East. Instead, they want Saudi Arabia as the most powerful competitor to be the most powerful country in the region. Saudi Arabia itself is also putting much effort in being the most powerful country (Jenkins, 2016, p.8).

As said in the first part of the theoretical framework, there is international consensus about the situation of human rights in the GCC-states. There are multiple mechanisms that can lead to condemnations, which will be discussed in this chapter. These mechanisms are based on the UDHR by the United Nations. The diffusion of the norms mentioned in this declaration was one of the purposes of the United Nations but is nowadays for a large part done by a network of transnational and domestic actors that try to link with international regimes (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.5). These advocacy networks have three main purposes. First, they use moral consciousness-raising by liberal countries to put the abuses on the international agenda. Second, they empower domestic oppression groups against the abusing governments and try to protect them against those abuses. Third, they encourage liberal countries to establish transnational structures for putting pressure on the abusing countries (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.5).

There are also three types of socialization processes in the human rights area. The first process is the instrumental adaptation to pressures. The second is the argumentative discourse where communication and persuasion are more important. The third process is the process of institutionalization and habitualization. These three processes of socialization are necessary for a change of human rights in a certain country (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.11). These three processes are theoretical and need further explanation on a practical level. The most common used model for human rights networks is the spiral model, which can be found in Table 1. This is a model where transnational advocacy networks like NGO's and human rights regimes put pressure on a state. These global human rights networks advocate for a socialization of the state on human rights by putting pressure on the state as well as giving aid to domestic oppression. This model has a certain 'boomerang effect', because domestic oppression groups try to find international allies to pressure the state from outside. This makes the model a spiral model (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.19). The model is based on the principle of existing

international institutions, which regulate human rights norms, but the existence and strength of these international institutions and networks were not always as strong as they are the last decade (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.19). Since 1973, there was a rise in the amount of human rights treaties and advocacy networks expanded.
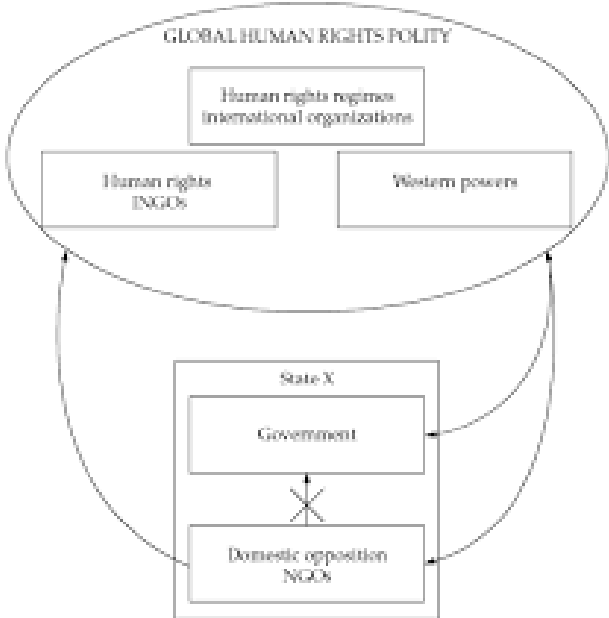

Table 1 (Risse& Sikkink 1999, p.19)

The first phase of the spiral model is the repression phase. Domestic oppression against a government that commits human rights abuses is undeveloped and does not have enough power to challenge the government (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.22). The intensity of the repression may vary over time and in different countries. However, this phase can last a relative long time. Besides that, some repressions do not get on the international agenda of transnational advocacy networks, because in some countries it is difficult to obtain information about these repressions. Only when the transnational advocacy networks get enough information, they can put the repression on the international agenda.

The second phase is the denial phase. This phase starts after the repressions of a country are placed on the international agenda. The lobbying of the advocacy networks worked and (Western) countries are putting pressure on the misbehaving country (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.22). Usually do the countries blamed for the repressions deny there misbehaving. The countries try to deny the accusations by presenting other information that confutes the accusations. Besides that, they often try to blame transnational advocacy networks for

17

interfering with internal affairs, which is illegal (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.23). The boomerang effect that is mentioned can even be undone, because this argument of illegal interfering's can increase domestic support for the nation-state.

The end of this denial phase can exist in different periods across the world. For example, a country can deny their human rights abuses a lot longer than countries that are under more pressure of the Western world and less needed by the Western world. This can be the case for oil-rich countries like the Arab states. Because the Western world needs those countries more than other countries, is it more difficult to end the denial phase.

The third phase is the phase of tactical concessions. This phase starts because most of the time the effect of the second phase does not take place (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.24). The change of behavior of the countries does not happen. Instead, only subtle concessions are done to mislead the international community and at the same time to keep control over domestic issues through repression. However, this phase is also characterized by a rise of domestic oppression. Local networks are strengthened with support of the transnational advocacy networks (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.25). This important process can lead to a fourth phase of two kinds. First, it can lead to an enduring change of human rights conditions inside the country. Second, it can lead to a backlash where the government increases the repression to counter the domestic oppression. This often happens by arresting the key leaders of the oppressive movement and the fear that follows decreases the intensity of the oppression (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.25).

However, if this backlash does not occur, domestic oppression gains strength. There will come a point where the domestic oppression gets more influence in the human rights area than the government itself. Whenever a government commits a serious human rights abuse again, this government is pressured by the domestic oppression in two ways. From above, because liberal countries are publicly giving structured and aid to the domestic oppression groups, as well as from below when people start losing their fears (Risse& Sikkink, 1999 ,p.26). The next phase is the prescriptive status. In this phase are the countries involved referring to the human rights norm to comment on their own behavior and the behavior of others. However, it will always be the question if these prescriptive adaptations are made sincerely or only for the benefit of the state (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.29). This phase is a different phase from the next phase: the phase of rule-consistent behavior. Because countries might accept the validity of human rights norms, they still can torture people or commit other human rights abuses. This

does not have to be necessarily the result of government policy. Sometimes do governments not have full control of their policy agents or soldiers. They can carry out these human rights abuses without permit of the government as well (Risse& Sikkink, 1999, p.31). This spiral model is important for this research, because it gives an overview of how oppression by Western countries against human rights abuses is formed and what the mechanics are that lead to this.

However, this spiral model can only exist under certain circumstances. Transnational advocacy networks are not always successful in pressuring governments or MP's. Two factors that influence the efficiency of the lobbying and pressuring is 'linkage' and 'leverage'. In the case of this research is western leverage important, which "refers to incumbent governments' vulnerability to external pressure for democratization" (Levitsky& Way, 2006, p.382). This leverage is the pressure Western states can put on other countries, like Arab countries. This pressure can be carried out in multiple ways, with for instance positive conditionality, diplomatic persuasion or military force. However, the leverage can be limited in two cases. First, the leverage is limited when there is a regional power in the region of the countries pressured that can provide the same services as the countries that pressure. This makes the pressuring countries less needed and interchangeable. Second, competing foreign policies can decrease the effectiveness of the leverage (Levitsky& Way, 2006, p.383). This happens often in the case of condemnations of human rights abuses in the Arab states by the Western world.

There are multiple reasons why the Arab states are important to the Western world. The most known reason is the existence of large oil reserves in some Arab states around the Persian Gulf, which they can sell for a high price to the Western states in need of oil. This dependence of the Western states to the Arab states makes the leverage less strong. On the other hand is linkage "the density of ties and cross-border flows between particular countries and the Western world." (Levitsky& Way, 2006, p.383). This is a broad concept of all ties between both sides, which influence the effectiveness of the pressure.
These ties can be geographical when both sides are geographically laying close to each other, but also cultural or religious. Both linkage as leverage are important factors in determining the effectiveness of pressuring human rights abusers.

It is also important, besides theories about transnational advocacy networks and their effectiveness, to explore how agenda setting of human rights abuses work specifically in the Western parliaments and especially inside the Dutch parliament. The first thing that becomes clear from investigating agenda setting is that MP's have a disadvantage in putting new items on the agenda compared to governments in Western countries (Brauninger& Debus, 2008, p.807). The reason for this is the control of the agenda by cabinets which will be discussed later too. Cabinets usually do more agenda setting, because the chance their proposal will pass through voting is higher due to their majority in parliament (Brauninger& Debus, 2008, p.815). However, this disadvantage is not as big as in non-Western countries. Thirty-nine percent of the proposed bills came from MP's instead of from inside the government.

However, it is even more interesting to see what the incentives are for MP's to put certain items on the agenda. The biggest incentive for MP's in agenda setting is the policy outcome (Brauninger& Debus, 2008, p.808; Döring, 2001, p.148). However, MP's can also be concerned about their office position or their electoral gains. The most important theory on agenda setting in parliaments is the theory of issue competition. This theory is formed based on party competition. Party competition is an inevitable result of democracies with equal opportunities for all parties. In this system are parties trying to compete with each other to get the most votes. However, the way these parties compete can be done in different ways and was not always done through issue competition (Green-Pedersen, 2007, p.609). Voting on political parties used to be done through social-structural classes.

However, the last decades changed this voting trend to issue voting. Issue voting occurs when people look at issues they find important to decide on which party they will vote. For example, a person might find terrorism an important issue and therefore might vote on an anti-Islam party. The result of issue voting is that parties try to focus on issues as ways to distinct themselves from other parties. A method parties use to do this, is to use agenda setting of issues some groups in the electorate care about and to use it as a way of making themselves visible for the public. This means that a party tries to satisfy a certain part of the electorate by putting their issues on the agenda of the parliament and at the same time make it clearly visible that that certain party did put those items on the agenda to make sure this electorate will vote on that party in the next elections. However, this is an old model of political accountability where only MP's and the electorate exist.

The models of political accountability are expanded nowadays, because agenda setting by MP's is not only influenced by the will of the electorate, but also by pressure groups like the transnational advocacy networks mentioned earlier. These networks or organizations seek contact with the MP's and try to influence them for the benefit of human rights (Johns& Roskam, 2004, p.18). This process is often not transparent, which makes it difficult to investigate the effectiveness of lobbying by these human rights advocacy networks. The accountability of the MP's to these networks is also not as easy to investigate as the accountability to the electorate.

However, these theories are not theories that explain a possible decline in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses in the GCC-states. Therefore, it is also important to investigate the relationship between the Western world and in specific the Netherlands and the GCC-countries before the start of the IMCTC and what other parts of the relationship might have changed during the last decades. As said in the introduction, the opinions about human rights differ between the Arab world and the Western world. Nevertheless, there are also other factors that make both worlds different from each other and result in difficult relationships. The differences between the Middle East and the Western world are based on cultural differences, but the real reasons both sides had a lot of conflict and sometimes fight each other lies in (geo) political events over the last centuries. This started already in the 18th century, when Europeans influenced the Middle East through imperialism (Hollis, 1997, p.2). Great Britain and France dominated the region for centuries before the Second World War. The influence of Great Britain and France decreased after 1950, while another superpower took over their role as ruling power in the Middle East. The incentive for the United States to increase its influence in the Middle East was the superpower rivalry against the Soviet Union during the Cold war (Hollis, 1997, p.3). The difficult relation between the Western world and the Arab states continued to exist during the last decades due to ongoing interferences of Western States in the Middle Eastern region with for example the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the Coalition of the willing. Although the cultural and historical reasons have led to a difficult relationship between both worlds, is the economic relationship more stable. EU policy in the last two decades focused on a better economic relationship and more stability in the region close to Europe. Particularly the interest of the EU in a stable region resulted in much pressure on the governments of the Arab states (Hollis, 1997, p.5).

However, after the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 and the Arab role in Islamic fundamentalism as a threat to Western values resulted in a relationship where sanctions and condemnations were more important than the economic benefits.

An old saying applicable to this specific study is 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'. In this case is ISIL both the enemy of the Netherlands and the Arab states which makes the Netherlands and the GCC-states 'friends' even though they do not have shared values about human rights. Although this is a saying used in popular culture instead of academic research, this saying has certain value for understanding international politics and especially the international relations that are subject in this study. However, this 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' saying is a mathematical standard which is used by realists as well in international politics. This mathematical basis is called an enmity network (Maoz et al, 2007, p.104). An enmity network is a balanced relationship between three sides, which are often independent countries. This balance theory includes a triangle that includes the countries i, j and k. If i has a bad relationship with j and k has a bad relationship with j as well, then will i and k automatically be on the same side or even become friends, because they have the same interest in competing against j. This is based on the mathematical assumption that two times a negative '-' will result in a positive '+'. In realist perspective are states always looking for survival. This results in a paradox: states are suspicious of other countries when it comes to self-interest, but states cannot survive as well without having allies. This paradox leads to states having common enemies as a way to survive. Common enemies give the opportunity for states to have allies they can trust and therefore help them to survive and as well have enemies to fight against in order to gain power (Maoz et al, 2007, p.102). So, in this realist perspective, are states that have the same interest against the same enemy not likely to fight against each other on different terrains like condemnations of misbehaving (Maoz et al, 2007, p.102).

Another word derived from popular culture that is applicable in this case is 'frenemy'. Frenemies are countries that have a rivalry with each other but at the same time act friendly towards each other. The Oxford English Dictionary conceptualized the word frenemy as 'a person or group that is friendly towards another because the relationship brings benefits, but harbours feelings or resentment or rivalry.' (Oxford University Press). An example of this love-hate relationship is the relationship between the United States and China. Both countries need each other economically but at the same time fight each other with import embargoes.

The concept of frenemies is based on the principle that it is necessary to form alliances to live and to sign treaties to prevent being left out in the cold (Jain, 2013, p.64). However, countries that need each other, but dislike each other have to keep that to a secret. This frenemy theory is the main theory this study uses for induction to explain how it might be possible that agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses in the GCC-states decline. A case of frenemies applicable to this research in a broader aspect is the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States (Ollivant, 2017). Saudi Arabia is necessary for the United States oil income, but is also provocative to the United States when it comes to human rights abuses like abusing women rights or executions.

This frenemy theory is applicable to the case of GCC-states fighting on the same side as the Netherlands (Noonan, 2016, p.24). The GCC-states and the Netherlands have been enemies for decades, but they started to cooperate during the war against ISIL from 2015. This frenemy theory has a large influence on the agenda setting of human rights issues, because this theory also means that when country needs each other, they do not fight against each other on other terrains as well. Therefore, when the Netherlands and the GCC-states work together, it will be counterproductive if Dutch MP's keep on putting human rights abuses on the agenda. This will make the governments of the GCC-states unlikely to cooperate anymore if they are 'attacked' on another political and diplomatic field. Many sanctions have been imposed by the Western world, and especially the United States, on the GCC-states in the last decades (Cook, 2005, p.95). This is counterproductive if the Western states try to implement their human rights standards at the same time. Not only the sanctions, but also the interferences on the ground did not promote the rise of democracy in the Arab world. For instance, the bloody invasion in Iraq in 2003 by a democratic state to implement democracy did cause a less appealing vision of democracy by in the Arab world (Cook, 2005, p.96). This contradicting kind of policies can only stop when the pressure on the GCC-states is done from a more positive incentive than a negative incentive of punishment. The chance of changing Arab institutions is higher in this case, because the Western states take a more positive stand in the conflict which leads to higher chance of both sides approaching each other diplomatically (Cook, 2005, p.97). That means that the relationship between the Netherlands and the GCC-states could be at stake when the Dutch MP's put human rights abuses on the political agenda. They rather should 'look away' from the abuses. However, the consequences of this must be investigated in further research.

23

The balanced enmity relationship theory and the theory on frenemies will be the theoretical framework in which this research will take place. Based on this simple theory the hypothesis of this study will be that there will be a significant decline in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses by GCC-states after they became 'frenemies' with the Netherlands in December 2015. If there is no significant decline, the frenemies theory is not applicable in this case. However, the question may arise whether or not the start of the Arab coalition against ISIL is the only variable that has an influence on the trend of agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses in the GCC-states. When the results are that there is a significant change in agenda setting, it is important that the results of the research are pointing at the start of the coalition in 2015 as reason of this change.

Conceptualization

Conceptualization is an important part of research, because it helps the reader to understand what certain keywords mean and how the reader should interpret these words. Therefore are the definitions of some important concepts this research uses, explained below.

One of these important concepts is the *international military intervention against ISIL*. This concept is used to describe the war of certain states from around the globe against terrorist groups and ISIL in general. This war started in 2014 when the United States formed a coalition with mainly Western countries to bomb ISIL targets and support ground troops of local organizations fighting against ISIL. In September 2015, Russia together with Iran, Iraq and Syria, started a coalition, which also had the purpose of fighting and destroying ISIL. However, this coalition did not cooperate with the coalition of Western states, because it had different background interests. The third coalition as part of the broad international military intervention concept is the Muslim coalition, which is the central coalition in this study. These different coalitions mean that when the text talks about countries that are part of the international coalition against ISIL, they are not officially part of a broad and complete international intervention, but only officially part of one coalition.

The second important concept is the *Gulf Cooperation Council* (GCC). This is a coalition started in 1981 by six Arab states (Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain). All six monarchies established this coalition to promote economic ties. In the last two decades did the coalition also include the objectives of establishing a customs union, a common market and a common currency. The coalition is of high importance in the international political field, because it has some of the fastest-growing economies and large oil and gas reserves. The leadership of the coalition is divided in certain councils with specific fields of authority. The coalition is also part of the bigger Arab league. Despite the growth in economics and political importance did the coalition have internal problems since 2017. Certain states from the coalition cut ties with partner Qatar.

The third important concept is the concept of *human rights abuses.* This is a difficult concept to define, because it has certain sub-concepts that can have different conceptualizations as well (Goldstein, 1986, p.610). However, the United Nations, which includes almost every country, developed a concept of human rights already in 1948 in the UDHR. This declaration describes in 30 articles all basic rights every human has and which should be granted to civilians by governments. The keywords used in the content analysis are derived from the 30 articles of the UDHR. They will be discussed in the methodology section.

Another important concept is *agenda setting.* Agenda setting is in this study only used in the context of the Dutch parliament and shall therefore only be conceptualized in this context. Agenda setting is the politics of selecting issues for active consideration (Dery, 2000, p.37). This means that when agenda setting happens in the context of parliaments, it means that the selected issues that members of parliament place on the agenda are issues for the benefit of the country. After active consideration of these issues are often policies made to implement the vision of the parliament on these issues. In the Dutch parliament, the Tweede Kamer, is agenda setting done in a relatively open setting compared to other countries where agenda setting tends to occur behind closed doors (Otjes, 2019, p.728). The formal way of agenda setting in the Dutch parliament is the 'regeling van werkzaamheden'. These are short, plenary meetings of the whole parliament where individual members of parliament can put certain issues on the agenda of the parliament, which are discussed in the next plenary meeting (Otjes, 2019, p.729). However, not all agenda setting occurs in the plenary meeting. The Dutch parliament also has multiple commissions that consists of MP's from different parties and that focus on specific political cases. These commissions are also allowed to put certain

issues on the political agenda. It is also important to note that the Netherlands has a bicameral system, which means that proposals have to pass through two voting's in both chambers. Most of the times the second vote (in the upper chamber) does not give problems. However, some proposals get denied in the upper chamber, especially when the proposal is highly controversial.

The spiral model of Risse and Sikkink (1999) explains how certain human rights issues can get the attention of parliaments and governments in other countries. The way parties and MP's base their behavior and preferences is also explained in the theory of issue voting. However, it is also important for this research to investigate how agenda setting inside the parliament works and if it is efficient. The basis of agenda setting in (Western) parliaments is that it gives the majority the right to govern and the minority the right to be heard (Döring, 2001, p.147; Brauninger& Debus, 2009, p.833). Most Western parliaments give advantages for governments in agenda setting (Zucchini, 2011, p.3). The government can have a large influence in controlling the time. In this case does the government in some countries have the right to decide the agenda on its own when time for debating is scarce. Besides that does the autonomy of committees result in committees making their own agendas. This phenomenon can also be seen as a competition between opposition parties and government parties(Green-Pedersen& Mortensen, 2001, p.262). It does not always have to be that government parties have more influence on the parliamentary agenda. It can also occur that opposition parties have more control, because government parties are expected to also carry out policies and are therefore expected to be responsibly for agenda setting which leads to constraints. Besides that are governments expected to have an answer to all items on the agenda which makes it more difficult for them to focus on their own issues for the agenda (Green-Pedersen& Mortensen, 2011, p.262). It could also be that legislators have lost their power in the last decades (Döring, 1995, p.57). This is due to the increase in delegation from the legislative power to the executive power. However, the legislators are also theoretically already constrained. First by informal constraints like norms of behavior and secondly by formal constraints as political rules (Döring, 1995, p.58). Therefore it can be concluded that agenda setting by MP's is constrained but still has importance. This is important for this research, because it suggests that there could be less agenda setting than some MP's want too on the topic of human rights abuses. The actual number could be higher if they were not constrained.

The types of agenda setting used in this study are discussed in the methodology section. However, this concept of agenda setting is only used in the context of the Dutch parliament, which in theory can cause problems for the external validity of the research. Other parliaments use other rules and manners for agenda setting, which makes it more difficult to generalize the results of this research. This external validity issue is not valid, as shown later in this research.

Research design

Methodological justification

The central analysis of this study is a comparison between two time periods to investigate if there is a significant difference between both time periods. Therefore is the time period after the expected change in agenda setting compared with a time period that is equal in time. Both time periods are analyzed with the same method, which is also a condition necessary for a comparative research (Bryman, 2016, p.72). The method used in this research to compare both time periods is a content analysis. The content analysis is carried out by combining keywords of states with keywords of human rights abuses. Because this study focuses on time periods instead of countries or cultures, this specific research method is not only a comparative research, but also an historical research. However, this study does also have elements of a case study, because it only focuses on the Dutch parliament instead of other parliaments from Western countries. The results of this research on the Dutch parliament may be applicable for other parliaments in the Western world as well.

This research will be operated with a content analysis. Content analysis is a clear way to investigate the amount of certain keywords existing in a large amount of documents. Because the Tweede Kamer used many documents during the last five years, this method of research is the most logical way of investigating agenda setting in the Tweede Kamer.

Agenda setting by MP's is used in this research, because it is a representative way of the opinion of the Netherlands in two ways. First, agenda setting by MP's is representative for the opinion of the civilians. Civilians elect the MP's and based on the issue voting theory, as explained in the theoretical framework, are parties of MP's competing for votes.

Therefore are parties used to act according to what the electorate wants to gain more voters (Green-Pedersen, 2007). This is the same for agenda setting. Agenda setting is a way for the parties and MP's to carry out the will of the electorate in a political way to benefit from that at the next election. Second, agenda setting by MP's is also representative for the government of the Netherlands. If certain opinions on issues that are placed on the agenda by a certain party or MP is supported with a majority of votes in the Tweede Kamer, will this issue result in government policy.

This means that some issues about human rights abuses in the GCC-countries are supported enough by the majority of MP's (which it is very often), this actually becomes the policy of the whole country and therefore is representative for the opinion on this issue of the whole country as well. Critics might say that there is another variable from inside the Dutch parliament that could influence the outcome of this research, which is the difference in political spectrum over the years. However, all parties and individual MP's are against human rights abuses, which is given by the fact that agenda setting on human rights abuses is done by MP's from all parties. Besides that did the anti-Islam movement in the Dutch parliament not change significantly. The PVV had 15 seats in the parliament in 2012 and 20 seats in 2017. Twenty seats on a total of 150 seats is not a significant part and the other parties were not issue parties focused on the Islam or the Arab states. It is also not given that issue-parties on the Islam also focus on human rights abuses in the Middle East.

Case selection

This research focusses not on all 41 countries that are part of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, but only on some of the GCC-states. The Arab states used in this research are part of the Arab League but are not to be confused, because they are not the same. The Arab league consists of 22 states with a shared interest in considering the interest of the Arab world. Countries and populations in the Middle East and Northern Africa with linguistic and cultural similarities based on an Arab history make the Arab world. However, the real Arab states used in this research are from the historic Arab region and are only the states around the Persian gulf (except for Iran). The six countries on the Arab peninsula are the original Arab states, because this peninsula forms the area where Muhammed lived in the 6th and 7th century. Other countries from the Arab world outside the Arab peninsula were conquered or influenced by the Muslims after the death of Muhammed.

These countries are part of the Arab world, because the influence of the Muslims are still present in every part of the lives of the inhabitants of those countries. However, they are not the original Arab countries.

In this research, the Gulf States are the subject of investigation. The Gulf States are represented in the union called Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The difference that emerged on 15 December 2015 in international politics resulted in a different notion of the Arab states for Western countries. Therefore, on this date a difference is made in the notion of the Arab states from non-ally to ally. Because Oman joined the coalition a year later, due to its neutrality, the notion of Oman as an ally instead of a non-ally starts on 28 December 2016. Now the question rises about why only these six countries are taken into account in this research instead of all countries of the Arab world or a random selection of those countries. The first reason is that all six countries have been accused of human rights abuses on a large scale by international organizations as well as governments (Human rights in the Middle East and North Africa: review of 2018, p.8).

The Arab world as a whole is difficult to compare, due to cultural and political differences. A random selection does not mean it measures what it should measure. This is because the differences in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of some states is too high in comparison with other states. Some states from the Arab world might not even have enough mentions in the Dutch parliament in combination with human rights abuses to get an outcome with a sufficient external validity. Besides this is there the possibility that the human rights abuses have a different nature in different countries. These six countries are also chosen, because it is a feasible number of countries to investigate instead of all 22 countries of the Arab league. The selection has countries with a small population as well as countries with a high population (Saudi Arabia and Bahrain). There are also countries included that have a dominant role in the IMCTC as well as countries that have a less dominant role in the IMCTC (Saudi Arabia and Oman). The fact that all chosen countries are laying in the same region next to each other makes cultural differences or different interests of the countries less possible and less big. The Islamic laws are also the most important laws in the chosen countries, which is representative for the Arab world in general. The general form of government in the Arab world of a strong leader with centralized power is also present in all six countries. Human rights abuses by the GCC-states in Iraq or Syria are not taken into account, because ISIL is present within these unstable countries.

29

This can lead to false information during the content analysis if ISIL and human rights abuses are combined when searching for comparisons with Iraq and Syria. Yemen is another exception of countries that are taken into account. There is an ongoing civil war in Yemen for a few years. This gives the risk that not only human rights abuses by Yemen itself are part of the content analysis, but also human rights abuses that are part of the civil war. That means that Yemen has the same problem as Iraq and Syria for a content analysis and therefore is not used in this research. Human rights abuses by Saudi Arabia in Yemen are also not taken into account, because they can also significantly influence the outcome of the research.

The purpose of this article is to do research about the influence the development in the Middle East has on agenda setting in the Dutch parliament. There are of course other parliaments in Western countries where agenda setting might have changed after the GCC-states joined the coalition against ISIL. However, there are multiple reasons why this study does not focus on these states but only on the Dutch parliament. First, it is important to note that this study focusses on a parliament instead of another organizations or institutions for doing research about agenda setting, because parliaments have the largest power on the national level in putting human rights issues on the political agenda.
Second, the Dutch parliament is the only parliament where agenda setting happens only in the public sphere instead of 'behind doors' (Otjes, 2019, p.729). Other Western parliaments are not as open to the public in agenda setting as the Dutch parliament, which makes it more difficult to obtain documents for content analysis. The Dutch parliament however, is a sufficient case for assessing agenda setting as a whole.

The two time periods that are compared in this study have to be comparable for research. Therefore, it is necessary to make sure that both time periods do not differ much in length and amount of agenda setting items. If the differences are too large on these aspects, it is going to be more difficult to compare both time periods. The second time period starts on the date that five Arab states joined the Muslim coalition against ISIL on 15 December 2015. This period ends at the date this study starts, which is 15 March 2019.
The first time period has to be more or less similar to the second time period to conduct a good comparison between both periods. Therefore the same length of the period is taken, which is 3 years and 4 months. This means that the first time period starts on 15 August 2012.

This is a logical date, because it is also in the same time period as ISIL started to form and accusations of the GCC-states funding terrorism were at a high level (Brisard &Martinez, 2014, p.9).

Operationalization

As mentioned, this study uses a content analysis to research the difference in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses by GCC-states from before and after they joined the international alliance against ISIL. The database for this research is available on the website of the Dutch parliament with open access. All documents of the parliament are available, but not all documents are based on forms of agenda setting. Only the so-called 'kamervragen', 'moties' and 'wetsvoorstellen' available on the website are forms of agenda setting. These are the questions of the MP's to the cabinet, the resolutions and the law proposals. Together they form a large amount of documents in both time periods.

The online database offers the possibility of searching for certain keywords or combination of keywords. This content analysis focuses on the combination of keywords of GCC-states and keywords of human rights abuses. When these keywords combine in the documents, a possible event of agenda setting can be found. After this combination is detected, a notion will be made to address the combination as a text of agenda setting or a text with another purpose. This depends on the context of the text, which will be investigated after the combination of keywords is found.

The keywords used in this study are part of a codebook, which makes the content analysis easy and clear to conduct. The next table is used as codebook.

KEYWORDS	CODES
ARAB STATES	101
BAHRAIN	102
KUWAIT	103
OMAN	104
QATAR	105
SAUDI ARABIA	106
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	107
GULF STATES	108
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES	201
SLAVERY	202
TORTURE	203
INHUMAN	204
PUNISHMENT	205
(UN)EQUAL	206
DISCRIMINATION	207
VIOLATION	208
ARREST	209
DETENTION	210
EXILE	211
CRIMINAL	212
(UN)GUILTY	213
ATTACKS	214
(UN)FREEDOM	215
PERSECUTION	216
DEPRIVED	217
SUFFRAGE	218
(UN)SECURE	219
(UN)PROTECTION	220

Table 3

The first coding rule in this content analysis is that keywords from both categories only are a combination if they are found in the same paragraph and have the same context that differs agenda setting text from other texts.

The second coding rule is that combination of keywords can exist multiple times inside one document, but only if it does not apply to the same agenda setting event.

The third coding rule is that only 'kamervragen', 'moties' en 'wetsvoorstellen', because only these three kind of documents are part of the agenda setting procedures.

These keywords are based on the UDHR, which means that human rights abuses that do not exist in the UDHR are not taken into account in this research. However, these keywords give a complimentary view to use human rights abuses as variable as a whole. First, because the UDHR is an universally accepted document about human rights standards. The fact that these standards are accepted everywhere make them easier to use when multiple countries are part of research. Other documents that include human rights that are not universally accepted are more difficult to use for a comparison between multiple countries. This also means that an abuse of these human rights is an abuse against the UDHR and all GCC-countries can be held accountable, because they officially support the UDHR. International human rights law is also based on the UDHR. Other treaties like the ICCPR are not recognized by all countries in this research, which make the human rights abuses in the ICCPR not suitable for this research. Second, the human rights abuses used in this research are not subject to progressive realization (Green, 2001, p.1071). That means that these rights should be immediately protected instead of being part of a process which a state can use to reach a certain provision of a human right. All human rights abuses used in this research can be condemned immediately and don't need time to evolve.

Not all the words used in the codebook to address human rights abuses are always human rights abuses. For example, the keyword 'arrest' is not necessarily a human rights abuse, because an arrest might be legal or a normal result of a crime. However, the use of these words is justified in the fact that these words are derived from the UDHR. For example, the UDHR mentions that governments may not arrest civilians without a good reason to do it. This is also the reason these words are included in the content analysis. If these words are not included is the chance that human rights abuses of unfair arrests are not accounted for much higher. These keywords are necessary for a complete overview of possible human rights abuses in the GCC-states. As said in the first coding rule, the content analysis of these dubious keywords have to be done by not only counting the amount of usage of the keywords but also looking at the context of the keywords to decide whether or not the keywords have the intention to mention a human rights abuse or not. Whether or not the context suggests the keyword indicates a human rights abuse is the judgement of the researcher. However, the researcher tries to be as objective as possible in dividing keywords in keywords of human rights abuses and normal words.

The total amount of combinations, which are noted as texts of agenda setting, will be counted in the two different time periods. After that, an independent t-test will be carried out as a statistical test to test if the difference in amount of agenda setting text in both time periods is significant. The analysis will further elaborate on the meanings of the outcomes of the statistical test and the implications of the theories on the outcomes.

This study focuses only on the joining of the GCC-states in the fight against ISIL as independent variable that influences the agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses by the GCC-states as dependent variable. Other independent variables that might have influenced the dependent variable do not have to be taken into account for multiple reasons. First, human rights abuses seemed to have no significant change in amount or form in the GCC-states during both time periods. This is important, because it means that agenda setting in the Dutch parliament is not influenced by the amount of human rights abuses in the GCC-states. Second, besides the joining of the alliance on 15 December 2015, there is no other event or process where a significant different relationship between the Netherlands and the GCC-states is formed, because the human rights abuses in Yemen are not taken into account in the content analysis. More information about this is elaborated in the literature review. The start of the alliance is the only event that made the Netherlands and the GCC-states unofficial allies instead of enemies. All other kind of relationships, such as economic relationships, did not change significantly during both time periods.

That means that these relationships cannot have a significant influence on the agenda setting on human rights issues. This is based on economic figures of trade and BNP's as well as figures of official meetings between the countries (Shafik, 2016, p.160).

In addition, inside the Dutch parliament itself is no significant change of amount of proposals and agenda setting in general and the political spectrum did not change significantly as well during both two time periods. This is based on information written in the literature review above.

Analysis

Tables and results

The analysis of this research will be done through the digital program called SPSS. This program is the most common used program for statistical research. SPSS gives the availability to investigate whether or not a significant difference exists between both periods of agenda setting. First are two tables given that show the results of the combinations of the keywords in both periods. After a short analysis, are the results of the statistical t-test given to see if the hypothesis is correct or not.

Keywords	Arab States	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates	Gulf States
Human rights abuses	3	4	2	0	6	26	3	0
Slavery	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Torture	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Inhuman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Punishment	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	1
(Un)equal	1	0	2	0	1	5	1	2
Discrimination	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Violation	3	1	2	0	2	6	1	1
Arrest	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
Detention	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
Exile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Un)guilty	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Attacks	2	2	0	0	0	3	0	0
(Un)freedom	4	2	3	0	2	8	0	1
Persecution	3	1	3	0	2	12	1	1
Deprived	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suffrage	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
(Un)secure	10	1	4	0	3	10	7	0
(Un)protected	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**31**	**11**	**17**	**0**	**23**	**83**	**13**	**6**

Table 3

Table 3 shows the amount of combination of keywords from 15 August 2012 until 15 December 2015. The first thing that the table makes clear is that Saudi Arabia has a much higher amount of mentions than other states. One of the reasons for this can be the fact that Saudi Arabia is a larger country and therefore are their acts more important than acts from other countries.

This trend is supported by the fact that the other states are ranked on amount of mentions on largeness as well. Especially human rights abuses in general are mentioned, which means that MP's used to mention these states as human rights abusers in general instead of on only one specific issue. Another surprising fact shown in the table is the fact that Oman is mentioned zero times during this period, which is possibly due to its neutrality (Katz, 2004, p.1).

Keywords	Arab States	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates	Gulf States
Human rights abuses	2	0	2	0	5	15	1	2
Slavery	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Torture	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Inhuman	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Punishment	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0
(Un)equal	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
Discrimination	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
Violation	2	1	0	1	0	2	1	0
Arrest	1	5	0	0	0	8	0	0
Detention	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Exile	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Criminal	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
(Un)guilty	0	1	2	1	1	4	2	0
Attacks	0	0	1	0	0	4	2	0
(Un)freedom	1	3	3	0	5	7	1	1
Persecution	1	3	3	0	3	6	2	1
Deprived	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suffrage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(Un)secure	9	7	5	0	3	1	5	0
(Un)protected	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	1
Total	**19**	**20**	**19**	**2**	**29**	**53**	**17**	**7**

Table 4

Table 4 shows the amount of combination of keywords from 15 December 2015 until 15 March 2019. After reading both table 3 and table 4 is it visible that in both periods the kind of human rights abuses have more or less the same amount of mentions. For example, suffrage is mentioned only one time while (un)secure is mentioned 60 times more or less equally spread in both periods. This is also the same for mentions of the countries, where the amounts are more or less distributed the same way as in the first period.

Keywords	Arab States	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates	Gulf States
Human rights abuses	-1	-4	-	-	-1	-11	-2	+2
Slavery	-	-	-	-	-1	-	-	-
Torture	-1	+1	-	-	-	-1	-	+2
Inhuman	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Punishment	-	-	-	-	+2	-5	-	-1
(Un)equal	-	-	-	-	-1	-4	-1	-2
Discrimination	-1	-	-	-	+1	+1	-	-
Violation	-1	-	-2	+1	-2	-4	-	-1
Arrest	+1	+5	-	-	-1	+6	-	-
Detention	-	-	-	-	-	-1	-	-
Exile	-	-	-	-	-	-	+1	-
Criminal	+1	-	-	-	-	-	+2	-
(Un)guilty	-1	+1	+2	+1	-	+3	+2	-
Attacks	-2	-2	+1	-	-	+1	+2	-
(Un)freedom	-3	+1	-	-	+3	-1	+1	-
Persecution	-2	+2	-	-	+1	-1	+1	-
Deprived	-	-	-	-	-	-6	-	-
Suffrage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Un)secure	-1	+6	+1	-	-	-9	-2	-
(Un)protected	-1	-	-	-	+5	+1	-	+1
Total	**-12**	**+9**	**+2**	**+2**	**+6**	**-30**	**+4**	**+1**

Table 5

Table 5 shows the absolute differences in agenda setting between both periods. The table must be read from the point of view of the second period. This means that the shown figures show how many more or less the amount of keywords is in comparison with the first period. In this table is already visible that most countries appear to have an increasement of human rights abuses in comparison with the first period. Only Saudi Arabia and the keyword Arab states in general show a large decline in mentions. However, the amount of decreasement of the mentions of Saudi Arabia and the Arab states is so high, that the total amount of mentions declines with an amount of 18.
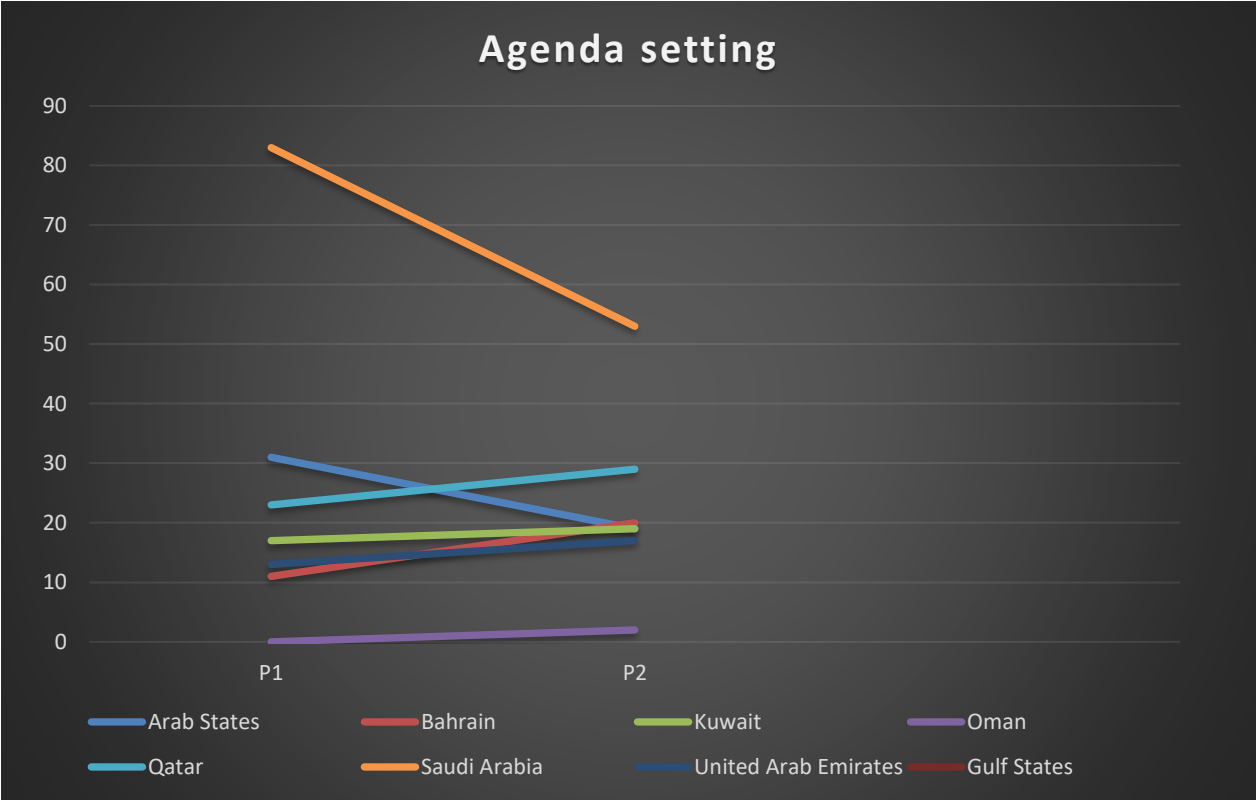

Table 6

Table 6 is a representation of the figures from table 5 in a graphical way to support the understanding of these figures. This figure makes it easier to visualize the trends of agenda setting. The table emphasizes the large amount of mentions of Saudi Arabia, but also the large decline in this amount. However, the other lines show clearly an increase in agenda setting.

Group Statistics

	VAR00001	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
VAR00002	before	8	23,00	26,082	9,221
	after	8	20,75	15,443	5,460

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		FS	*Sig.*	*t*	*df*
VAR00002	**Equal variances assumed**	,802	,386	,210	14
	Equal variances not assumed			,210	11,371

Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	*Mean Difference*	*Std. Error Difference*
VAR00002	**Equal variances assumed**	,837	2,250	10,717
	Equal variances not assumed	,837	2,250	10,717

Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means	
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	*Upper*
VAR00002	**Equal variances assumed**	-20,735	25,235
	Equal variances not assumed	-21,244	25,744

Table 7

Table 7 shows the results of the independent t-test on both periods and shows certain figures that show whether there is a significant difference between both periods. An independent t-test is a statistical test used when a researcher tries to compare to groups and see what the differences between those two groups are. The two means of both groups are taken into consideration to determine whether a significant difference exists. The mean of P1 is 23 and the mean of P2 is 20,75. This decline in average amount of agenda setting does not necessarily mean that it is caused by the start of the IMCTC that separates the two periods.

Interpretation

It is possible to give an answer to the research question of this research based on the figures of table 7. To do that is an independent t-test done on both means of the two periods. This significance test is done under the circumstance of a certainty of 95 percent that the outcome is valid. This 95 percent certainty is called the confidence interval. The significance is easily visible in the second part of table 7 under *'Sig.'*. The number 0,386 that can be found there is the p-value or probability value. The probability in this is the probability that the hypothesis is significantly not true. However, a distinction has to be made in the hypothesis. The H0 hypothesis is that there will not be a significant change in agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses in the GCC-states and the H1 hypothesis states that there is indeed a significant change. Therefore is the probability in the table the probability that the H0 hypothesis is rejected and the H1 hypothesis is correct.

The confidence interval is 95 percent, which means that the p-value should be under or the same as 0.05 if there is indeed a significant difference between both means. If the p-value is above 0.05 is the difference not significant. This independent t-test showed a p-value of 0,386 which means that the p-value is above the confidence interval. This means that the difference between both time periods is not significant. The H0 hypothesis is correct and the H1 hypothesis of the significant change is rejected. This result can have various reasons as well as various consequences.

The fact that MP's did not let the start of the IMCTC change their incentive to mention human rights abuses in the GCC-states, and even increased their amount of mentions for some countries, can have different reasons. The first reason is the stability of the attitude of Dutch MP's towards human rights abuses even when relationships between both sides are improved. The MP's do not see the IMCTC as an important factor for the interest of the Netherlands.

This can occur because the IMCTC is in fact not a very strong organization, as said earlier, and therefore lacks power to influence Dutch policies. The impact of the IMCTC in the stability of the region and specific the fight against ISIL was not so high that the Netherlands could not carry out their interests in the Middle East without being dependent on the IMCTC. Another possible reason of the rise in agenda setting on some Arab states can be the recent decline in focus on Syria and ISIL. ISIL has almost been defeated in 2019 according to multiple agencies and because of this is the importance of the cooperation between the Western world and the IMCTC less important. This decreasing importance is in addition of the lack of importance the IMCTC already had. The focus of the MP's in agenda setting might change when ISIL is becoming less powerful. Transnational Advocacy networks might play a role in this, as explained in the theoretical framework. These networks on human rights abuses in the Middle East have now more influence on the MP's on human rights abuses, because there is more space and access for them when ISIL is decreasing. ISIL has been one of the most important Middle Eastern issues in European parliaments for years, but now an empty space emerged. This gives more room for pressure groups to make MP's aware of human rights abuses by Arab states and to put them on the agenda. This is the same for media pressure as well as pressure from the electorate.

However, the large decline in agenda setting on human rights abuses by Saudi Arabia is interesting to investigate, but also difficult to explain. This is difficult in the light of the interference of Saudi Arabia in Yemen after 2015, which gave Saudi Arabia an even worse reputation in the Western world on human rights. In this research are human rights abuses in Yemen not taken into account. However, it is interesting to investigate the role of human rights abuses by Saudi Arabia in Yemen to see what the impact of another event like this can have on the frenemy relationship and therefore assess its relative importance. Further research should elaborate on the large decline in human rights abuses by Saudi Arabia, but a possible reason could be an increasing demand for oil by the Netherlands or a modernization, which is happening on some aspects in Saudi Arabia over the last few years (Righton, 2018).

The outcome of this research can also have various consequences. The balanced theory and frenemy theory are not applicable to this research, because the difference in agenda setting was not significant. Rejecting the balanced theory and the frenemy theory in general is not necessary, but both theories do not have impact in this case. 'The enemy of my enemy is my friend' is not the case.

One of the consequences of the outcome of the research is the fact that the diversionary theory of war, which is explained in the theoretical framework as well, is not effective for the GCC-states, in case they joined the IMCTC for that reason. The diversionary theory of war is a theory that explains why certain states get involved in war in some cases. They might do that on purpose, to change the focus of civilians or other countries from domestic problems to the war.

Further research should investigate if this theory is applicable to the case of the GCC-states fighting against ISIL, but in that case it was not efficient. The Dutch MP's were not influenced by this diversion of focus, because agenda setting of human rights abuses by those Arab states did not decrease significantly.

Reliability

Reliability gives information about the consistency of a measure. The reliability of this study is high, because the measure used is very consistent over time. In both time periods used are the documents equally available. The different documents of the Dutch parliament are also based on the same processes in the parliament, which have the same meanings during the two different periods. For example, a law proposal in 2013 is still a law proposal in 2018 and equally available in the database of the parliament. The consistency in these factors result in a high reliability. However, the data per year might vary, because the combination of keywords might not be used in the same amount per year. This means that for example the combination of 'detention' and 'Bahrain' may be found five times in 2015 but no time in 2016.

Validity

The internal validity of a research is the extent to which the outcomes of a measure represent the variable they are intended to represent. The outcomes of the measure are the mentions of human rights abuses in combination with the Arab states in documents of the Tweede Kamer. These are easily accessible online in the database of the Dutch parliament where divisions in documents based on keywords are easy to make without analyzing unimportant documents. This means that content analysis with the keywords can be done without mistakes. However, this does not mean that this measure really measures what it is supposed to do.

This content analysis is still a sufficient measure to analyze content analysis. Agenda setting in the Dutch parliament can only be done through official, public ways. All official ways of agenda setting are public, because they are all documented and available online without restrictions. This means that all agenda setting ways are available for this content analysis,

which means that the measure used in this study is a complete representation of the variable it investigates. However, content analysis uses combination of keywords without looking in-depth to the meaning of the text where the combination of keywords exists. This means that the combination of keywords does not have to be about agenda setting of human rights abuses even though they are marked as such in content analysis. Therefore all combinations of keywords are coded, to divide agenda setting of human rights abuses from other, unimportant information.

However, a research also needs to have an external validity. The external validity of a research represents to what extent the outcome of the research can be applied to other settings. It is necessary that, in the case of this research, findings of agenda setting trends in the Dutch parliament about human rights are also applicable to other parliaments in Western countries. The first reason that this research is also applicable to other Western countries is that all NATO-members are part of the coalition against ISIL led by the United States since 2014. Besides that, the theoretical framework on agenda setting points out that the agenda setting in Western parliaments of human rights abuses happens more or less in the same way throughout the Western world. The institutional framework of parliaments and governments vary in the Western world, which makes comparing countries difficult (Brauninger& Debus, 2009, p.814). Nonetheless are the incentives of agenda setting of human rights abuses more or less the same throughout the Western world. Agenda setting is regulated across the Western world and happens on a regularly basis in every national parliament.

In other research are multiple Western parliaments investigated where it seemed that, while agenda setting is mainly an instrument of the government, MP's have indeed a significant role in agenda setting and are usually not hindered in this. Besides, in this case are the incentives of the MP's more important than the institutional differences, because the change in agenda setting trends on human rights issues is set in motion by a different perspective on the GCC-states by the MP's. Therefore, the change lies in the incentives. This change can differ across countries when institutional differences are noticed. However, agenda setting happens regularly across the Western parliaments which means that the institutional difference do not matter anymore. Not only the agenda setting, but also the punishment of the GCC-states happens most of the times in the same way throughout the Western world. This does not happen on a national level in the case of European countries. In Europe are these condemning's processed through institutions of the European Union to bundle powers and influence.

44

For example, international sanctions by countries in Europe are most of the time opposed by the European Commission (EC) (Moravcsik, 1995, p.161). Another method used by European countries of condemning other states about human rights abuses is shaming. Shaming is often used by European countries through the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). European committees often report about human rights abuses to the ECHR.

Recommendations

There are multiple recommendations that can be done for further research in this academic field based on this research. The external validity of this research is high, but because this research focused only on the Dutch parliament, does other research on other Western parliaments has to be done to get a more significant meaning in the academic field. Another recommendation is to pick another representation of the Arab states, because this research only used six states. Besides this, the research can be done with another type of research as well. Interviewing MP's about their attitude towards human rights issues in the Arab states would give additional information, because it goes further than only agenda setting and therefore gives a more complete view of attitudes from the Dutch representatives. This research can also be done from a government perspective instead of a parliament perspective. It is interesting to see if the same results are found when official government policies are investigated instead of agenda setting from MP's. It is also interesting to see if agenda setting of human rights abuses influences relationships in a negative way as Cook, 2005 also suggests. That means that instead of certain events influencing the agenda setting the agenda setting can also have an influence as well with its own consequences. The last recommendation is a general recommendation to do research about the balance theory and the frenemy theory in general and to see whether these theories are not only theories but also applicable to modern international relations.

Conclusion

This research tried to examine to what extent the agenda setting in the Dutch parliament on human rights abuses in GCC-states changed after those Arab states joined an international coalition against ISIL in 2015. This event changed the international relations of the Netherlands and the GCC-states, however not in an official way. At that moment did the GCC-states and the Western states like the Netherlands have the same enemy, which was ISIL.

The balanced theory explained by Maoz et al. proposes a realist mechanism where two sides with the same enemy actually become allies. This mechanism is also found in the frenemy theory. This assumption is the basis of the research question. The period from August 2012 until the start of the IMCTC in 2015 and the period from that start until March 2019 were compared in an independent t-test to see if there is a significant difference in agenda setting on human rights abuses.

The conclusion of this research is that the agenda setting in the Dutch parliament of human rights abuses in the GCC-states did not significantly differ after the states joined a coalition against ISIL. A possible reason for this is the unimportance of the IMCTC to the MP's. The decline of the power of ISIL is another possible reason in addition to this.

Literature

Allan, D. & Smith, M. (1990). Western Europe's presence in the contemporary international arena, *Cambridge university press 16*(1), pp.19-37.

Arzt, D. (1990). The application of human rights law in Islamic states, *Human rights quarterly,* pp.202-230.

Blair, T. (2006). A global alliance for global values, *The foreign policy center*, pp.7-35.

Brauninger, T. & Debus, M. (2009). Legislative agenda setting in parliamentary democracies, *European journal of political research 48*, pp.804-839.

Brisard, J-C., Martinez, D. (2014). Islamic state: the economy-based terrorist funding. *Thomson Reuters acculus,* pp.2-11.

Bryman, A. (2016). Social research methods. *Fourth Canadian edition.*

CIRI human rights data project. Found on: https://guides.library.harvard.edu/c.php?g=310764&p=2072829

Colombo, S. (2012). The GCC countries and the Arab spring. Between outreach, patronage and repression, *Instituto affair internazionali,* pp.2-16.

Cook, S. (2005). The right way to promote Arab reform, *Foreign affairs,* pp.91-103.

Davidson, J.S. (2001). East versus West: human rights and cultural difference., *Canterbury law review 8*(1), pp.37-53.

Dery, D. (2000). Agenda setting and problem definition. *Policy studies, 21*(1), pp.37-47.

Döring, H. (1995). Parliaments and majority rule in Western Europe, *Mannheim centre for European social research,* pp.7-700.

Döring, H. (2001). Parliamentary agenda control and legislative outcomes in Western Europe, *Legislative studies quarterly 26*(1), pp.145-165.

Goldstein, R. (1986). The limitations of using quantitative data in studying human rights abuses. *Human rights quarterly 8*, pp.607-627.

Human rights in the Middle East and North Africa: review of 2018. No author. Found on: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde01/9433/2019/en/

Human rights watch world report 2018. Found on: https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/world_report_download/201801world_report_web.pdf

Jain, D. (2013). Frenemy: A conceptual description on whether they are competitors or comforters, *International journal of management and behavioral sciences*

Jenkins, B. (2016). A Saudi-led military alliance to fight terrorism, *Rand Corporation,* pp.1-22.

Johns, G., Roskam, J. (2004). The protocal: managing relations with NGO's, *The institute of public affairs,* pp.2-46.

Green, M. (2001). What we talk about when we talk about indicators: current approaches to human rights measurement, *Human rights quarterly 23*, pp. 1062-1098.

Green-Pedersen, C. (2007). The growing importance of issue competition: The changing nature of party competition in Western Europe, *Political studies 55,* pp. 607-628.

Green-Pedersen, C. & Mortensen, P. (2010). Who sets the agenda and who responds to it in the Danish parliament? A new model of issue competition and agenda setting, *European journal of political research 49*, pp.257-281.

Halliday, F. (1995). Relativism and universalism in human rights: the case of the Islamic Middle East, *Political studies*, pp.152-167.

Helfont, T. (2018). A more forward role for the Gulf States? Combatting terrorism at home and abroad, *Orbis 62*(3), pp. 454-472.

Hollis, R. (1997). Europe and the Middle east: power by stealth, *International affairs,* pp.1-32.

Karmon, E. (2007). Iran's role in the Sunni-Shia divide, *Shia power: next target Iran,* pp.273-293.

Katz, M. (2004). Assessing the political stability of Oman, pp.1-10.

Levitsky, S., Way, L. (2006). Linkage versus leverage. Rethinking the international dimension of regime change, *comparative politics 38* (4), pp. 379-400).

Lewitt, M. (2014). Terrorist financing and the Islamic state, *The Washington institute for Near East policy*

Maoz, Z., Terris, L., Kuperman, R., Talmud, L. (2007). What is the enemy of my enemy? Causes and consequences of imbalanced international relations, 1816-2001. *The journal of politics 69*(1), pp.100-115.

Moravcsik, A. (1995). Explaining international human rights regimes: liberal theory and Western Europe, *European journal of international relations 1*(2), pp.157-189.

Nonneman, G. (2006). EU-GCC relations: dynamics, patterns and perspectives, *the international spectator,* pp.60-74.

Noonan, N. (2016). The end of the Western age? The twenty-first-century challenges for the west. *Challenge and change.*

NOS (2014). IS-coalitie: wie doet wat? Found on: https://nos.nl/artikel/705770-is-coalitie-wie-doet-wat.html

Ollivant, D. (2017). Our frenemies in the Middle East. *Pacific standard.*

Otjes, S. (2019). 'No politics in the agenda-setting meeting': plenary agenda setting in the Netherlands. *West European politics 42*(4), pp.728-754.

Oxford university press. *Definition of frenemy noun.* Found on: https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/frenemy

Pant, V. & Yu, E. (2016). Coopetition with frenemies: towards modeling of simultaneous cooperation and competition among enterprises. *IFIP working conference on the practice of enterprise*

Righton, N. (2018). Nederland blaft naar Saoedi-Arabië, maar kan bijten zich niet veroorloven. Found on: https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/nederland-blaft-naar-saoedi-arabie-maar-bijten-kan-het-zich-niet-veroorloven~b3ed67d4/?referer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.nl%2F

Rishmawi, M. (2005). The revised Arab charter on human rights: a step forward? *Human rights law review*, pp.361-376.

Risse, T. & Sikkink, K. (1999). The socialization of human rights norms into domestic practices. *Cambridge university press*: pp.1-38.

Sadri, A. (2019). The Arab human rights system: achievements and challenges. *The international journal of human rights*

Schaper, H. (2014). Ben ik mijn broeders hoeder? De rol van de internationale gemeenschap bij massale wreedheden. *Universiteit Leiden*, pp. 3-14.

Shafik, N. (2016). Prospects for Middle Eastern and North African economics, *Economic research forum for the Arab countries, Iran and Turkey*

Tarar, A. (2006). Diversionary incentives and the bargaining approach to war. *International studies quarterly 50*(1), pp. 169-188.

Weiss, M. & Hassan, H. (2016). Isis: Inside the army of terror, *public affairs.*

Wilson, R. (2005). Human rights in the war on terror. *Cambridge university press*, pp. 7-337.

Zucchini, F. (2011). Government alternation and legislative agenda setting, *European journal of political research*, pp.1-37.