

**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE**

Working to  
strengthen  
and  
expand  
democracy  
worldwide



“Democracy is never  
a final achievement.  
It is a call to an  
untiring effort.”

—JOHN F. KENNEDY

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Calling on a global network of volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to political and civic leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

In many countries, advocates of democracy lack both the institutions and experience with democratic practices. They have turned to NDI for assistance in addressing the difficult tasks of building their democratic structures. These include: national legislatures and local governments that function with openness and



*The past half-century provides ample proof that democracy is more than just another form of government; it is also a powerful generator of international security, prosperity and peace.*

*Madeleine K. Albright, NDI Chairman*

*The work of the National Democratic Institute has... made a difference in so many nations that are seeking to build democratic societies.*

*President Bill Clinton*

competence; broad-based political parties that are vehicles for public policy debates; and nonpartisan civic organizations that monitor elections,

and promote democratic values and citizen participation.

While NDI puts much effort into the consolidation of new democracies, autocratic political regimes persist in many places. And, in other countries, democratic gains have been reversed. In these situations, NDI works with advocates of democracy who courageously struggle against tremendous odds to promote peaceful, political change.

NDI's efforts have both reflected the moral values and served the strategic interests of the United States. Geostrategic "hot spots" most likely to erupt into violence are found, for the most part, in areas of the world that are nondemocratic or where governments are anti-democratic. Democracies remain viable at home by resolving conflicts within society nonviolently and through compromise. Thus, they are predisposed to seek solutions peacefully with their neighbors.

Democracies also promote economic growth more consistently and equitably than nondemocratic political systems. It is no coincidence that the world's most prosperous and peaceful nations are also the most democratic. With unchecked power, governments squander resources, resulting ultimately in economic decline. Democracy building programs are, above all, an investment in peace and stability.

## ***NDI's Role as a Political Party Institute***

NDI is proud to draw on the traditions of the U.S. Democratic Party. While the Institute's identification with the Democratic Party enhances its standing throughout the world, NDI programs are nonpartisan—fostering universal values and supporting democratic processes rather than a particular party or ideology.

## ***Volunteer Network and Multinational Approach***

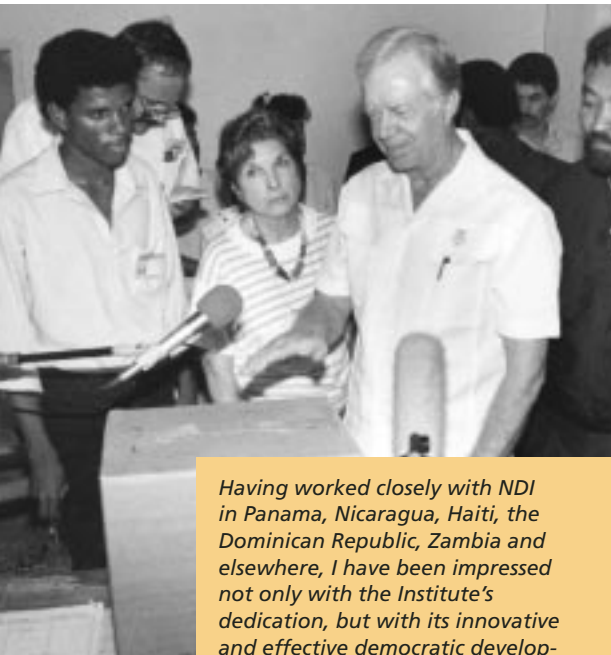
Democracy building programs are most successful when they involve experts both from the U.S. and from other countries. As a practical matter, people attempting to make the transition to democracy require diverse experiences and skills. This multinational approach reinforces the message that there is no single democratic model, although certain core principles are shared by all democracies.



**In South Africa, NDI and the South African-based "Project Vote," conducted a three-year voter education project that helped educate millions of South Africa's first-time voters about democratic elections. Following the polls, NDI's work focused on enhancing the capabilities of the national legislature and nine newly elected provincial parliaments.**

NDI's principal resource is people—hundreds of individuals with proven experience in the practice of building democratic institutions. At critical moments of transition, NDI's method is to introduce these experts—political party leaders, civic organizers, election officials and legislators—to fellow democrats in need of information, guidance and encouragement. NDI calls on its international network of more than 500 practitioners from more than 70 countries to donate their time, to share experiences and to impart skills.

NDI does not presume to impose solutions nor does it believe that one democratic system can be replicated elsewhere. Rather, NDI shares experiences and offers a range of options so that leaders can adapt those practices and institutions that may work best in their own political environment.



*Having worked closely with NDI in Panama, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Zambia and elsewhere, I have been impressed not only with the Institute's dedication, but with its innovative and effective democratic development programs.*

*President Jimmy Carter*

## **Functional Approach**

NDI programs provide citizens and their elected representatives with resource materials, consultations and training on the practical tools of participatory democracy.

Functional issues cut across all NDI programming: political and civic organization; election processes; democratic governance; and civil-military relations. These concerns are not theoretical matters to those facing the difficult task of establishing democratic institutions and engaging citizens in the political life of their countries. Instead, each issue must be managed with practical skills and expertise that can be applied to tangible problems: legislators who request information on how to professionalize parliamentary operations; grassroots civic organizations that need help monitoring elections or promoting accountability by elected officials; city councils

*The National Democratic Institute has been one of the first supporting actors in the democratic revolution in our country.*

*President Vaclav Havel  
Czech Republic*



**In Morocco and elsewhere, NDI equips women who aspire to elective office with the skills needed to compete effectively in the political process.**



QUENTIN LIDE

**In Latin America, NDI's long-term regional initiative—the Leadership Program—fosters relations among parties in the hemisphere, and promotes political party reform and modernization.**

that seek advice on ways to solicit public input into decisionmaking, and political parties that request guidance on mechanisms that ensure internal democratic practices and enhance communication with potential supporters.

## ***Political Party Building***

Stable democracy requires the development of strong, broadly based and well-organized political parties. Parties must expand their organizational capacity to combat apathy and to inspire participation. If democratic party organizations fail to fulfill their special role in society, citizens may lose faith in the governing process itself. Political parties that effectively debate public policy issues and that are representative and accountable will contribute to democratic society. NDI brings to parties from across the democratic political spectrum the nuts and bolts of politics—from communication within the party, and democratic selection of candidates and party leaders to issues research, polling, message development and public outreach.

## ***Citizen Participation***

In many countries undergoing democratic transitions, large sections of the population are unfamiliar with their rights and responsibilities in an open political environment.

Intermediary organizations—the voice of an informed citizenry—are integral components of a pluralistic society and a strong civic culture. NDI often supports civic organizations involved in the electoral phase of their country's transition. NDI may help these groups establish voter education programs that inform citizens about election procedures. It may also assist election monitoring programs that build public confidence in the electoral process. The work of these groups provides an educational value far beyond the impact on election day—often

*NDI has been at the center of every major political reform issue in our country. From the development of a new constitution to government transparency, NDI has been a valued partner in our efforts to sustain democratic development.*

*Zurab Zhvania  
Chairman  
Parliament of Georgia*



**In Russia, NDI works to strengthen the capabilities of democratic political parties, and helps civic groups acquire outreach, training and advocacy skills to influence public policy.**

*[NDI] has correctly settled in for the long haul, realizing that where transitions to democracy are concerned, elections are the first step.*

*President Thabo Mbeki  
South Africa*

enhancing political discourse and citizen involvement. In addition to building the organizational capabilities of civic organizations, NDI works

with civic groups as a means to provide citizens greater access to the political process, and to fight corruption and, promote transparency and accountability in government.

## **Election Processes**

Elections must be open and democratic if people are to have confidence in the political system. An election is a dynamic process in which members of political parties, civic organizations and other institutions must systematically acquire the skills necessary to participate in the political life of a country. Political parties and governments have asked NDI to study the electoral codes of their countries and to recommend improvements.



**NDI assists democratic party leaders and activists in Serbia with developing the organizational skills needed to provide an alternative to extreme nationalism and compete for public support.**



**In Sierra Leone and other countries involved in post-conflict reconciliation, NDI works to promote dialogue and confidence among civic, political and military leaders, and to enhance understanding about the role of the armed forces in a democratic society.**

The Institute has provided technical assistance for political parties and civic groups to conduct voter and civic education campaigns, and to organize election monitoring programs, such as pollwatching and independent vote counts. The Institute has also organized more than 50 international observer delegations that have attested to the honesty of electoral procedures, helped deter electoral misconduct or exposed fraud.

## **Strengthening Legislatures**

Effective democratic governance depends on a professional, accountable and responsive legislature. NDI's programs support the professional development of legislatures, encourage greater public participation in the legislative process, address corruption, and promote the principles of transparency and accountability in national policymaking. Lawmakers examine practical information on parliamentary organization, including legislative oversight, internal rules of procedure, public access to information, effective utilization of parliamentary staff, and the role of political party caucuses. NDI programs also promote greater citizen participation in



YURIAH TANZIL

**NDI helped Indonesian civic groups build the country's first nationwide pollwatching network to protect the integrity of the historic 1999 elections.**

legislative decisionmaking by encouraging public hearings, town hall meetings, and increased communication between elected officials and their constituents.

## ***Women's Political Participation***

NDI programs support the participation of women in politics and government. Comprising more than 50 percent of the world's population, women continue to be under-represented as voters, political leaders and as elected officials. Support for increased participation of women in political and civic leadership is central to NDI's mandate to strengthen the inclusive nature and representative character of democratic institutions worldwide. The participation of women is an essential element in the design and implementation of all NDI initiatives. Institute programs with political parties, civic groups and parliaments help create an environment in which women can advocate on matters of public policy, run for political office, be elected and govern effectively.

## ***Security Sector Reform***

A security sector committed to protecting its citizens is critical to the success of democracy. The military must accept a professional rather than a political role and be accountable to elected officials. Likewise, civilian authorities must acquire the expertise necessary to effectively oversee military and security services.

Institute programs help democratic reformers strengthen civilian expertise in defense and security affairs, promote dialogue among civic, political and armed force leaders, and enhance understanding about the role of various armed forces in a democratic society. NDI's programs respond to the needs of government officials, legislators, and representatives of political parties, civil society, academia and the media.

NDI has worked with a coalition of international organizations to increase the availability of practical information about civil-military relations to elected officials and defense professionals. An NDI-led effort, called the Partnership for Democratic Governance and Security, produced a comprehensive resource center on civil-military issues, which is available on NDI's website at [www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org).



**In Nigeria, NDI works closely with members of the House and Senate to build effective and accountable institutions that promote public confidence in the country's new political system.**

**H**eadquartered in Washington, D.C. with field offices on four continents, NDI has conducted democratic development programs in the following places:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, East Timor, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, West Bank and Gaza Strip, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

*The programs of the National Democratic Institute are supported by the National Endowment for Democracy, the U.S. Agency for International Development and other international development agencies, and private donations. NDI is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. Contributions to the Institute are tax deductible.*



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