



WORLD MOVEMENT *for* DEMOCRACY
Confronting the Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century

The Fifth Assembly

Kyiv, Ukraine, April 6–9, 2008

*Making Democracy Work:
From Principles to Performance*

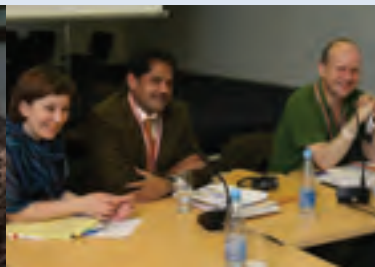
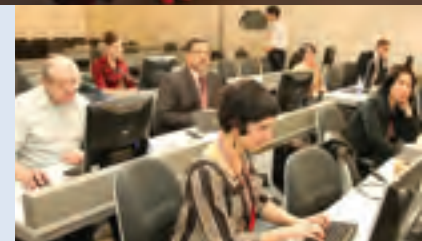


WORLD MOVEMENT
FOR DEMOCRACY
FIFTH ASSEMBLY



6–9 APRIL 2008

KYIV
UKRAINE



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* Term expired with the Fifth Assembly.

Secretariat:

National Endowment for Democracy

Art Kaufman

Director

The World Movement for Democracy is a global network of democrats, including activists, practitioners, scholars, policy makers, and funders, who have come together to cooperate in the promotion of democracy. It is dedicated to strengthening democracy where it is weak, to reforming and invigorating democracy even where it is longstanding, and to bolstering pro-democracy groups in countries that have not yet entered into a process of democratic transition. The Washington, D.C.-based National Endowment for Democracy (NED) serves as the Secretariat.

How We Help to Promote Democracy

The World Movement seeks to offer new ways to give practical help to democrats who are struggling to open closed societies, challenge dictatorships, democratize semi-authoritarian systems, consolidate emerging democracies, and strengthen established democracies. It has the potential to do so in several ways...

- as an **ally** of democrats in dangerous situations who need political solidarity and moral support;
- as a **lobby** for the cause of democracy in international bodies and in countries where democracy is under siege;
- as a **facilitator** that can help link democrats from different countries and regions to exchange information more efficiently, work together, and help one another;
- as an **innovator** that can encourage the development of new ideas and effective approaches for overcoming obstacles to democracy;
- as a **big tent** that can provide a meeting place for democrats who are active in different professional areas, such as human rights, media, law, political party development, workers' rights, economic reform, research, and education;
- as a **resource center** that can make basic materials on democracy available to groups around the world;
- as a **monitor** that can convey the views of democracy activists on the efficacy of different forms of democracy support; and
- as a **catalyst** to stimulate new initiatives and help shape the priorities of the broader community of institutions concerned with the promotion of democracy.

Connecting Democracy Activists Worldwide

- **Networks.** The World Movement Web site (www.wmd.org) provides links to various regional and functional networks focused on advancing democracy.
- **DemocracyNews.** As the monthly electronic newsletter of the World Movement, *DemocracyNews* enables participants to share information with their colleagues, announce events and publications, and request assistance or collaboration in their work. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to subscribe-democracynews@lyris.ned.org.
- **World Movement Assemblies.** Global assemblies offer World Movement participants the opportunity to take stock of the accomplishments they have achieved and the challenges they confront, and to build networks of mutual solidarity and support.

Project on Defending Civil Society. Launched in 2007, this project seeks to expose and address the increasingly restrictive environments for civil society work in a growing number of countries around the world. In partnership with the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), the World Movement has produced the *Defending Civil Society* report to identify and promulgate international principles, already rooted in international law, to inform proper government-civil society relations, and to protect NGOs and other civil society groups. The report is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish at www.wmd.org.

Project on State of Democracy Assistance. As a result of discussions at the Fifth Assembly, the World Movement is assessing through this project what has been accomplished in the field of democracy assistance over the past two decades and how that work can be made more effective.

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The material in this report was edited by the World Movement for Democracy Secretariat Staff: Art Kaufman, Director; Ryota Jonen, Project Manager; and Cecilia Andersen and Cate Urban, Assistant Project Managers. The report was assembled by Cecilia Andersen.

Message from the Steering Committee

A highly diverse group of activists, practitioners, scholars, donors, and others engaged in democracy promotion from more than 100 countries in all global regions met at the Fifth Assembly of the World Movement for Democracy in Kyiv, Ukraine, on 6-9 April, 2008. Despite their different backgrounds and cultures, they came together with shared democratic values to build relationships of mutual support for strengthening democratic movements, defending democracy and human rights activists, and consolidating democratic institutions.

The Steering Committee was very pleased to hold the Fifth Assembly in Ukraine, which has made important strides in building democracy for its citizens, but still faces many serious problems. We wish to express our deep appreciation to our local partner organization in Kyiv—the Europe XXI Foundation—as well as to the many institutions listed at the end of this report that provided generous funding to make this Assembly possible. We also offer a special word of thanks to our Steering Committee colleague from Ukraine, Inna Pidlaska, who offered profound leadership and guidance in the organization of the Fifth Assembly.

We greatly appreciate the insightful addresses by Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko and First Lady Kateryna Yushchenko, welcoming the Assembly participants and helping us to understand Ukraine's progress in building democracy and the challenges it still confronts. We are also grateful for three inspiring keynote addresses delivered by the Honorable Alejandro Toledo, former President of Peru; Maina Kiai, former chairperson of Kenya's National Commission on Human Rights; and Myroslava Gongadze, founder of the Gongadze Foundation in Ukraine.

At each assembly, we recognize the exceptional courage of democracy and human rights groups and movements. We would like to take this opportunity to salute, once again, this Assembly's Courage Tributes recipients: the Legal Community of Pakistan, the Independent Journalists of Somalia, and the Monks of Burma.

Under the theme of *"Making Democracy Work: From Principles to Performance,"* the Assembly sought to capture many issues arising from the need to deliver on the promises of democratic transitions. Whether it is the need to strengthen institutions, fight corruption, or reduce poverty and social inequality, democracy must be made sustainable through performance. In plenary sessions, panel discussions, and over 40 roundtable workshops, the Assembly participants discussed how to build on the progress that has been made to bring about

lasting democratic change. By introducing the World Movement's recently published *Defending Civil Society* report and featuring panel discussions and workshops to discuss it in depth, the Assembly also focused on developing effective responses to the increasingly restrictive environments in which democracy and human rights organizations carry out their work.

In addition, the Fifth Assembly helped solidify the achievements that the World Movement has made since its Inaugural Assembly in New Delhi, India, in 1999. As a result of the previous assemblies, World Movement participants have established various networks to increase exchanges of information and experience in specific regions or particular areas of democracy work. These networks include the African Democracy Forum, the Latin America and Caribbean Network for Democracy, the World Forum for Democratization in Asia, the International Women's Democracy Network, the Global Network on Local Governance, the Network of Democracy Research Institutes, and the World Youth Movement for Democracy. At the Fifth Assembly, these networks discussed their progress, developed ideas for future activities, and welcomed new members.

Finally, as a result of recommendations provided at this Assembly, the World Movement is launching a "State of Democracy Assistance" project to assess what has been accomplished in the field of democracy assistance over the past two decades and how that work can be made more effective.

We believe that this Assembly Report, consisting of reports from all the plenary sessions, panel discussions, and workshops, reflects the dynamic nature of the discussions that took place. We strongly encourage you to review the report, and we hope you will find the recommendations it contains useful for your work.

As the Tenth Anniversary of the World Movement nears, we celebrate the contributions the World Movement has made and re-affirm our commitment to advance democratic values and to address both old and new challenges to democracy promotion in every corner of the world.

Steering Committee
World Movement for Democracy

NOTE: With the Fifth Assembly, Ayo Obe fulfilled her term as a member (Nigeria) and chair of the Steering Committee. The World Movement takes this opportunity to express its deep appreciation for her service and that of the other members whose terms also expired with this Assembly (see Steering Committee list inside front cover).

Welcoming Remarks and Addresses

Welcoming Remarks



Ayo Obe

Steering Committee member (Nigeria) and Chair, Ms. **Ayo Obe**, opened the Assembly by welcoming participants and explaining that the Steering Committee chose Ukraine for this Assembly “to send a strong message that much of what has been accomplished in this country over the past several years can serve as an inspiration for those seeking to bring about transitions to democracy” in their own countries.



Inna Pidluska

Inna Pidluska, Steering Committee member from Ukraine and President of the Kyiv-based Europe XXI Foundation, which served as the local partner organization for the Assembly, welcomed participants to Ukraine. She remarked that democracy “can’t just be the work of politicians and

professional NGO workers; it must be the responsibility of every citizen, and they must be involved to make democracy deliver.”

Special Address



The Honorable Victor Yushchenko,
President of Ukraine

Victor Yushchenko is the President of Ukraine. Prior to his election in 2004, he was Chairman of the Our Ukraine political coalition and served as Ukraine’s Prime Minister from 1999 to 2001. President Yushchenko has also been a member of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities, and International Relations.

He has held several prominent positions during his career in banking, including Chief Acting Economist of the Ulyanovsk department of the Soviet State Bank and Chairman and Governor of the National Bank of Ukraine.

Excerpts: *I would like to express my great appreciation to the organizers of this Fifth Assembly, and to thank them on behalf of the Ukrainian nation for choosing Ukraine as the country in which to hold it.... I am convinced that every person who has entered this hall will, after the completion of the Assembly, walk out a different*

person because he or she will have had the opportunity to get to know, in my opinion, a very original, unique history in the battle for democracy on this land—the Ukrainian land. It is not a simple history. Behind this history lies tens of millions of Ukrainian lives. Democracy is a goal we have dreamed of for centuries....

I want to say right off, no matter the cost, it is an advantageous cause to have democracy and to have freedom, because only democracy brings new opportunities. These opportunities are formed through freedom—the fundamental mechanism that protects democracy—through justice, through the defense of rights, through freedom of press, and through the rule of law. Democracy makes clear the priorities of government that are applicable to all mankind....

During the last 90 years, we declared Ukraine’s state independence six times. Think about it: six times the Ukrainian nation declared political sovereignty. And, as you know, five times we lost it. In fact, at one point there was a sovereignty attempt that was declared for 22 hours, following which we lost our leader, his political power, and repression began—and thus, generation after generation, we have paid the price for a Ukrainian state.

If we speak about the last century, I do not know of a genocide that took so many human victims as the Ukrainian genocides did. We survived three holodomors [politically motivated famines] in the 20th century. This year, we are commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Great Starvation that occurred in 1932-1933. It is uncomfortable to even mention to the world that over the course of 18 months we lost 25,000 people daily. The majority of them, of course, were children, and children are the future of a nation. And this also has been part of the struggle for Ukrainian democracy. It’s no wonder that the first blow Stalin directed was against the Ukrainian peasantry in the 1920s.... Joseph Stalin was right when he declared that the fundamental issue of national-liberation movements at the time was the peasant question. Until the peasant has land, he is the most devoted fighter for freedom in his own nation. That’s why collectivization was necessary, to take away land, to take away the grain, so that in two years, 1932-1933, this country had the worst starvation in the world.

This was a tragedy with political implications. All that remained was the intelligentsia, but only for five years, until the Ukrainian intelligentsia was attacked.... [So we reflect on this] when we talk about how the Orange Revolution could happen, how people’s energy could be harnessed, how people could imagine their goals. What unites

people the most is a goal. And those people who were on the Maidan in 2004 imagined their own goal, which united them in those snowy days. We wanted to see our government as a democracy in which a fundamental freedom would exist—the freedom of political choice.... And the nation hoped together that new presidential elections would bring a change of authority, a change in our way of life. But this hope was being stolen from us. This forced people to unite because we saw the fundamental answer to the question of what was to be the future of Ukraine. These were complicated and terrible, but also wonderful, days. We received a great chance to make the country different, a country in which we would want to live....

I do not doubt that we will become a member of the European Union. This is our main priority, rooted in the democratic changes that we will make in our country, and evidence of the great international responsibilities that Ukraine is ready to assume as a European country. With this, we demonstrate our own contribution, not only to Ukraine's future, but to global stability, to European stability, which today demands the respect, support, and energetic efforts of countries around the world.

I bow my head to the great work your Assembly is undertaking. I would like to thank you for finding the time to come to Ukraine because I am convinced that when you leave you will take with you a great love of this country and a great respect for its politics.

Thank you for having a great heart and for showing such great love for my country and for my nation.

Opening Address



Kateryna Yushchenko,
First Lady of Ukraine

Kateryna Yushchenko, First Lady of Ukraine, is dedicated to representing Ukraine internationally and working in community service. Following a successful career as an economist and manager in both the United States and Ukraine, Ms. Yushchenko is now involved in numerous charitable projects with the Ukraine 3000 International Foundation that she chairs. The key priority of the Foundation is better health for Ukraine's children.

Excerpts: The Orange Revolution was an extraordinary explosion of hope, an uprising of the human spirit. In a brief moment, hundreds of thousands, millions of people, young and old, students and pensioners, workers and intellectuals, from many parts of the country, rose from their knees and came together to say 'enough' to injustice, to the repression of free speech and the flouting of the rule of law,

to biased state-controlled media, and to vote fraud....

What made the Orange Revolution remarkable was its positive spirit, its laughter and its humanity.... A nation that had for generations been subjugated, defeated, murdered, found the strength to sing songs of freedom, to spend nights in tents sharing experiences and talking about democracy, to donate their apartments, their money, food and clothes to the revolution.

When the so-called opposition to the protesters was transported in by the authorities, they were received with kindness, warm words and blankets, and hot tea. And many of those who were sent in to break up the demonstrations ended up joining them. As did the pop stars and poets, priests and athletes, police and soldiers.... We are truly grateful for the international solidarity we felt, for all the countries and NGOs and individuals throughout the world who supported us at that crucial moment in our history....

The Orange Revolution did not bring change; it brought the opportunity to make change.... It provided each citizen of our country with a voice in its future development, with the chance to become involved in solving the many difficult problems plaguing us, with the right to obtain information and give information, to read, write, and criticize, to form organizations, to start businesses, to travel and learn—to be true citizens.

Keynote Addresses

The Honorable Alejandro Toledo

is former President of Peru and founder of the Global Center for Development and Democracy. Born in a small Andean village, Mr. Toledo financed his undergraduate degree at the University of San Francisco with a soccer scholarship and by pumping petrol. He went on to earn three advanced degrees at Stanford University, including a Master's in Economics and a Ph.D. in Education. His professional career focused on economic development, with positions at the UN, the World Bank, and Harvard University's Institute for International Development. Mr. Toledo was elected President of Peru in 2001.



The Honorable Alejandro Toledo,
former President of Peru

Excerpts: There is nothing more beautiful than being free and expressing what you believe and having the level of tolerance necessary to entertain different points of view.... To be free involves the capacity to choose, and you can only choose once you have a nation rooted in its own culture with mutual respect in the face of internal diversity. To be free means constructing a nation that has its own

identity, with people who believe political democracy is not enough if it is not accompanied by economic and social democracy. The time has come to build political democracy that delivers concrete results for the poor and for the excluded....

[F]or democracy to be rooted in a nation we need to build strong democratic institutions, a judicial system that works, that transmits the message to the common citizen. Even the poorest citizens need to have the sense that justice can be ensured in a democracy. A judicial system should also provide legal stability to attract capital investment for economic growth because growth generates jobs and income and reduces poverty. Freedom of the press that does not distort is also necessary; a press that does not sell its soul to other people; a press that informs; a press that tells the truth. Strong democratic institutions include a parliament of equality in which the members do not serve only the interests of a corporation or people outside the country....

Democracy does not belong to a single country. Democracy does not belong to some country that has a monopoly. Democracy is like a tree that you plant in your own country; you fertilize it, you water it, you give it love, and you trim it to your own style. Democracy cannot be transplanted as some other country wishes. We need to enroot it; we need to feel that it belongs to us. And we need to be ready to fight for it.

I have had 118 death threats on my life: 117 as a fighter in the street, and one as President. And I'm still here for you, to tell you that I'm ready to continue the fight in my country and all around the world. I'm fighting for democracy in Burma. People will say, "Are you crazy? What does Peru have to do with Burma?" But there is a lady there who does not have the freedom of expression just to be a candidate. Democracy does not have a boundary, and that is why I assume that those who have organized this event have brought us all together from different corners of the world, independent of our color, sharing one value, one concept, and you trim that concept to your own style. We need to enroot it and we need the support and the solidarity of the rest of the world.



Maina Kiai, former Chair of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights

Maina Kiai is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya and former Chair of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. Mr. Kiai was also the founding Executive Director of the non-governmental Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) where he led the revitalization of the constitutional reform

process in Kenya. He has served as Africa Director at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International and Director of Africa Programs at the International Human Rights Law Group in Washington, DC (now called Global Rights). Mr. Kiai was named Jurist of the Year in 2005 by the International Commission of Jurists and is a member of the Management Committee of the African Democracy Forum (ADF), the World Movement's Africa regional network. He recently joined the World Movement's Steering Committee.

Excerpts: ... *For the first two months of this year, Kenya grabbed headlines across the world as the country descended into chaos and violence—with more than 1,000 dead in less than a month and 300,000 others displaced from their homes—following the announcement of presidential election results....*

[Kenya] was one of very few African countries that had managed to hold regular elections since independence, no matter that the outcome of many of these elections had been pre-determined. It had the trappings of democracy with a functioning Parliament.... It had a vibrant civil society that had muscled concessions from the state....

With all that, then, how could it have gone so wrong? How could the world fail to read and predict the inherent instability? How could a population, long used to pre-determined elections, now arise and reject them so violently?

Clearly, one of the most important lessons is that we need to look beyond the forms and façades of democracy to the substance of it. Democracy must mean more than having legislatures that sit and simply endorse the wishes of the Executive, or when they differ, to perpetuate their personal interests. It must mean more than having judges sitting all decked up on a raised bench but afraid to make decisions that upset the Executive. And it must mean more than holding periodic elections....

It is also important to note that Kenyan elections have been progressively better and fairer since 1992.... The effect of these last two plebiscites was that Kenyans finally believed in the power of the vote as a way of peacefully resolving differences, and as a legitimate way to change leaders.... When this sense of empowerment was subverted in the manipulated presidential elections—watched live on TV by voters—and peaceful legal spaces for protests were disallowed, it was not surprising that frustrations boiled over and violence ensued....

I would suggest that if we are to make democracy work anywhere in the world, a paradigm shift is necessary. We must move from the forms of democracy to the substance of it.... It is here that competent, non-partisan anti-cor-

ruption bodies—in structure and personnel—are vital. It is here that a functioning and effective parliament must be created. It is here that a proper justice system, from policing to prisons and including the judiciary, is critical. And it is here that legitimate spaces for independent media and civil society are necessary. All these structures depend on sustainable and sensible constitutional and legal frameworks that have the people they serve at their core, rather than leaders and political elites.... [W]e must never forget that democracy is about people. It is about shifting power from leaders to the people themselves, especially in the periods between elections.

This is the time to invest in people and in their empowerment. This is the time to invest in bottom-up strategies that give ordinary people the guts, ideas and power to hold their leaders accountable and to enable them to force their leaders to listen. This is the new challenge for the pro-democracy movement, and one that we must adopt urgently, and as creatively as possible.



Myroslava Gongadze,
Founder of the Gongadze Foundation

Myroslava Gongadze is a Ukrainian journalist, human rights activist, and founder of the Gongadze Foundation. She was trained as a lawyer at Lviv State University and has worked for several Ukrainian publications. Since the murder of her husband, journalist Georgiy Gongadze, in 2000, she has been a prominent advocate

for freedom of the press and protection of the safety of journalists in Ukraine, and has continued to work for justice in the case of her husband's murder. Ms. Gongadze has been a Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy and a Visiting Scholar at George Washington University, both in Washington, D.C. She has also worked as a correspondent for Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

Excerpts: ... Change [in Ukraine] required a truly collective effort from defiant citizens who reversed their country's slide into political isolation. Ukraine's example demonstrates how a broad network of civic groups, increasingly assertive media, and a growing democratic movement can change a nation's history....

Ukraine's Orange Revolution rested on the alliance between civil society actors and political forces willing to end autocracy. This alliance made all the guns and tanks powerless in the face of genuine human solidarity. In the end, it forced the authorities to recognize the public will

and accept their own defeat.

This alliance, however, also proved to have its limits. While successful in propelling the opposition to power, it fell short of producing the expected revolutionary change. The people's desire to hold their rulers accountable for past wrongs was undermined—as often happens in these situations—for the sake of political expediency, as the ruling and opposition elites negotiated behind closed doors. When civic activists on the Maidan stood up for higher ideals, some politicians were willing to sacrifice these ideals in pursuit of power or personal well being.

Over the past three years, we have witnessed the impact of these unfulfilled promises on the Ukrainian public. Bitterness and apathy have spread among the most energetic and idealistic, providing an opening for opportunistic political and business groups to sponsor imitations of civic action or to use activists for their narrow purposes. Civil society for hire has been a new and unsettling Ukrainian trend. It has also fostered public cynicism about the effectiveness of civic participation in achieving political or social change.

Ukraine's example, as so many of you know so well, is not unique; when civil society becomes involved in the political process there are always risks that can outweigh the potential advantages. On the one hand, the alliance between NGOs, media, and political parties has demonstrated its value as a vehicle of democratization....

On the other hand, once civic groups give up their independence to support the programs of political elites, they are likely to see many of their ideals cast aside for political interests. So the toppling of authoritarian government through social uprising is only the first step in building genuine democracy. The next step requires civic activists to keep their distance from political power and continue to pursue a democratic agenda. They should act both as a partner to the new political elite, and also as an important check on state power.

Despite its successes, Ukraine's path to consolidated democracy remains long and complicated. But it is even more challenging for its neighbors, like Russia and Belarus. Autocratic leaders in these countries have fearfully watched successful democratic protests and have brutally suppressed civic activism....

The emergence of a truly vibrant civil society requires that people share a fundamental belief that they are the makers of their own destiny, that they have sufficient power, when acting collectively, to improve the life of their community, rectify social injustice, or hold corrupt officials accountable.

Democracy Courage Tributes

Presented at the John B. Hurford Memorial Dinner

A highlight of each Assembly is the presentation, at the John B. Hurford Memorial Dinner, of the World Movement's Democracy Courage Tributes, which give special recognition to groups and movements working in particularly difficult circumstances, but outside the spotlight of world attention. At the Fifth Assembly, Tributes were presented to the Monks of Burma, the Legal Community of Pakistan, and the Independent Journalists of Somalia.

The Monks of Burma

Reacting to the suffering of the Burmese people after government-imposed price increases brought impoverished Burmese citizens to their breaking point, revered Buddhist monks led peaceful demonstrations in Burma in July and August 2007. The monks became a powerful symbol of the loss of legitimacy of the ruling junta when they began to refuse alms from members of the military and led protests calling for political reconciliation in the country. Although the demonstrations were met with a brutal crackdown by the Burmese junta, which included the deaths of a still unknown number of protestors and the detention of at least 2,000, the monks' peaceful protests captured the imagination of both the Burmese people and the international community and hopefully have begun a process of transition in Burma that will eventually lead to democratic rule.



Accepting for the Monks of Burma were the Venerable Sawyadawgyi U Pannya and the Venerable U Uttara. The Tribute was presented by Chito Gascon of the Lawyers League for Liberty, The Philippines. In their acceptance speeches, the monks urged the international community to stop selling arms to the Burmese junta, and to unite to end the suffering of the Burmese people. Concluding his remarks, Ven. U Pannya said, "Thank you World Movement for Democracy, thank you organizers, and thank you to the people of Ukraine. After all, saffron is just another shade of orange." (From left to right: Chito Gascon, Ven. U Uttara, and Ven. U Pannya)

The Legal Community of Pakistan

In March 2007, Pakistan's then President and Army Chief, Pervez Musharraf, triggered the most severe crisis of his tenure when he sacked the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry. The ensuing protests by dark-suited lawyers across the country were unprecedented and unexpected. The subsequent police crackdown on the lawyers and other protesters was broadcast live, giving ordinary Pakistanis direct evidence of both civil resistance and the government's heavy-handed suppression as it occurred. The lawyers' efforts to promote the rule of law and preserve the sanctity of the Constitution have provided the inspiration and momentum for a broader democratic movement in Pakistan.



Accepting on behalf of Pakistan's Legal Community was Syed Muhammad Shah, who was president of the Lahore Bar Association when the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was removed. As a representative of the legal community, Mr. Shah decided to organize a historic protest. The Tribute was presented by Carl Gershman of the National Endowment for Democracy. Accepting the Tribute, Mr. Shah expressed the hope of the legal community that with an independent judiciary in Pakistan, "there will be rule of law and a fight against corruption." (From left to right: Syed Muhammad Shah and Carl Gershman)

The Independent Journalists of Somalia

For more than a year, independent Somali journalists, who are accustomed to working in a difficult and dangerous environment, have been subject to severe and often deadly threats. The Somali government has carried out a widespread crackdown on journalists, repeatedly shuttering print and broadcast outlets, taking equipment and detaining journalists, often accusing independent stations of siding with anti-government insurgents. But the anger and violence directed against Somali journalists have come from all sides in the conflict, leaving them particularly vulnerable. At least seven Somali journalists have been killed in apparent targeted assassinations in the past year alone.



Omar Faruk Osman, Secretary-General of the Eastern Africa Journalists Association, accepted the Tribute on behalf of the Independent Journalists of Somalia. The Tribute was presented by Francesca Bomboko of the Office of International Studies, Research, and Consulting, Democratic Republic of Congo. "Continuous attacks on media professionals constitute a terrible assault on press freedom, free society, restoration of peace and democratic governance in our war ravaged country," Osman said. "Concerned about the increasing intolerance towards independent journalism and rising violence against journalists from all sides in the conflict, Somali journalists continue to perform their duties professionally and to inform the public, protect their freedoms and rights, and work together to build and maintain public respect for their work and for an independent pluralist media." (From left to right: Omar Faruk Osman and Francesca Bomboko)

The **John B. Hurford Memorial Dinner** was sponsored by the Hurford Foundation, whose president, Robert Miller, welcomed all the Assembly participants and recognized their extraordinary efforts: "Thank you for the work you do to make this world a better place; thanks for traveling here, and thanks for sharing your experiences and insights with us. We hope you will leave Kyiv with an arsenal of ideas and tools to pursue your cause more effectively."



Democracy Courage Tributes recipients pictured with Mahnaz Afkhami (center), World Movement Steering Committee member (Iran), who chaired the John B. Hurford Memorial Dinner.

Past Recipients of Democracy Courage Tributes

Fourth Assembly (Istanbul, Turkey, 2006)

- › Democracy Activists in Vietnam
- › Human Rights and Democracy Movement in Uzbekistan
- › Civil Society of Nepal
- › Crimean Tatars and their Mejlis (Parliament)

Third Assembly (Durban, South Africa, 2004)

- › Democracy Movement in Sudan
- › Democracy Movement in Belarus
- › Mano River Union Civil Society Movement
- › Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (Israel)/Panorama Center (Palestine)

Second Assembly (São Paulo, Brazil, 2000)

- › Colombian Democratic Mayors
- › Civil Society Movement of the Democratic Republic of Congo
- › Iran's Pro-Democracy Student Movement
- › LAM Civil Society Organization, Chechnya
- › Tiananmen Mothers Network

The Dinner is named for John Boyce Hurford (1938 – 2000), an internationalist and philanthropist who played an important role in helping to conceptualize and bring into being the World Movement for Democracy.



Robert Miller, President, Hurford Foundation

Democracy Fair

The Democracy fair included an exhibition throughout the Assembly. The environment fostered active engagement among participants, allowing them to share their organizations' materials and experiences. In addition, the Democracy Fair included an Internet Café, Video Screening Room, Technology Training Center, and Ukrainian craft presentations arranged by the Ivan Honchar Museum of Ukrainian folk culture.



Making Democracy Work

Plenary Session on Making Democracy Work

Organizer:

National Democratic Institute (NDI)
– U.S.

Moderator:

Kenneth Wollack – U.S.

Rapporteurs:

John Johnson – U.S.
Sef Ashiagbor – U.S.

Presenters:

The Honorable Alejandro Toledo
– Peru
Roland Rich – Australia
Ayo Obe – Nigeria

Kenneth Wollack, who moderated this plenary session on the overall theme of the Assembly, began with some observations on the challenges of “making democracy work.” He noted that many who were caught up in the euphoria of democracy’s Third Wave assumed that since many of the challenges facing the poor were rooted in non-democratic political systems, democratic rule would necessarily lead to policies and programs addressing those challenges. They assumed that democratic incentives and safeguards would allow citizens to reward public officials who acted in the public interest, and to hold accountable those who failed, and that democratic states would deliver public goods, taking into account the concerns of the poor and marginalized. That new democracies were not able to guarantee economic opportunity for all should not come as a surprise. Those who work to promote democracy now realize, therefore, that making democracy work is the principal challenge for the next generation of democracy-building programs.

According to Mr. Wollack, it remains difficult in many new democracies to combat the legacies of political exclusion. Reform-minded governments often inherit governing structures with few channels of popular access, and the poor suffer this dearth of access most sharply. For the poor, the years of political exclusion often harden into resignation, apathy, or fatalism. Overcoming this legacy requires training for collective action and advocacy, and assisting political institutions to function better to improve the quality of life for the country’s citizens.

With no way to express their concerns, the poor often take to the streets, a place poorly suited for effectively discussing issues or formulating policies. They may also vote for populist leaders who promise easy answers but eventually move against the founda-

tions of representative democracy.

Mr. Wollack concluded by stating that “making democracy work” means making existing political systems more democratic by:

- Increasing government responsiveness to citizens at all levels;
- Removing obstacles to effective political participation;
- Reducing distortions in a democratic system caused by corruption and “state capture”; and
- Developing an educated electorate that has access to information about policy choices and trade-offs.

It also means developing complementary partnerships between economic growth and democracy-promotion organizations.

In his presentation, former Peruvian president Alejandro Toledo noted how difficult it is to bring down a dictatorship that has a monopoly on political and military power and that controls the media. His political fight in Peru was not easy, he said, but the struggle was not his alone. A combination of civil society (especially indigenous people) and students effectively challenged those in power.

President Toledo suggested that political democracy is vital; people must be free to express what they believe. But for political democracy to be sustainable, for leaders to recapture faith in democracy, it must be responsive to the people’s needs. He cited a recent study by the UN showing that 54 percent of Latin Americans prefer an authoritarian government to a democratic one if it provides jobs and hope for the future. Such statistics emphasize the importance of democracy delivering. He also noted that under his presidency, Peru’s economy grew. He inherited an economy in recession, but it is now growing by 8 per-

cent a year. Inflation has fallen to 1.5 percent, and the fiscal deficit is below 0.2 percent. He was also able to gain access to markets in China. Nevertheless, trickle-down economic theory is insufficient for a country in transition where citizen expectations are great. Government is responsible for monitoring the economy and responding to the needs of the poor, women, etc. Good economic performance is important, but if wealth is not distributed fairly, people lose faith in their government. The institutions of democracy must also be strong and must be made to work for the poor.

Roland Rich, director of the UN Democracy Fund, asked what civil society can do to make democracy work. He argued that activism is not enough; that for civil society to be effective it must develop skills and expertise similar to those of the executive and legislative branches of government. Civil society must understand legislative agendas, how their system of government works, and how to work with it. Civil society also should know what legislation and regulations are being developed and promulgated and how to read national budgets. He concluded that civil society levels of expertise and knowledge must increase; that he senses that such expertise is, in fact, developing in civil society; and that we are witnessing an evolution of well-reasoned policy ideas.

World Movement Steering Committee chair Ayo Obe stated that when a dictatorship fails (as it did

in Nigeria), one resorts to democracy, but how can we ensure that democracy delivers? For example, Nigeria's new democracy finds itself having to establish and build the institutions of democracy while at the same time having to learn how to make democracy deliver in people's lives. She noted a recurring refrain in Nigeria: "I can't eat democracy." Democracy must deliver. Ms. Obe also spoke to what civil society can do to assist: It must make those in power accountable, even if they were elected through a flawed system, as was the case in Nigeria's most recent elections. Those in office must be held to democratic accountability standards. The recent effort in Nigeria to make government accountable for problems with the public power supply is a case in point. The country was suffering regular power outages when the nation transitioned to civilian rule, but these outages continue. The National Assembly is now making inquiries to determine how the funds for public power were spent, and the President says he intends to live up to the promises made in 1999. Civil society pressure on the executive and legislature has thus raised the levels of accountability. Through civic education and other behind-the-scenes activities, civil society has made it clear that it is entitled to question government performance and the actions of elected leaders, even those elected through flawed systems. Such actions help to ensure that democracy delivers.

Panel Discussion on Lessons from the "Fifth Wave": Challenges to Democratic Transitions in Post-Communist States

Organizer:

Europe XXI Foundation – *Ukraine*
Center for the Development of
Democracy and Human Rights
– *Russia*

Moderators:

Inna Pidluska – *Ukraine*
Yuri Dzhibladze – *Russia*

Rapporteur:

Igor Blažević – *Czech Republic*

Presenters:

Ivan Krastev – *Bulgaria*
David Darchiashvili – *Georgia*
Nikolay Petrov – *Russia*
Olexiy Haran – *Ukraine*
Michael McFaul – *U.S.*

This panel addressed the lessons learned (and not learned) from the "fifth wave" of democratization in post-Communist states. The recent wave of democratization in the region has created a certain paradigm: democratization means liberal values and a market economy generating prosperity, a pro-Western orientation, and a crucial role for civil society in bringing about democratic change and consolidation. However, this might be a part of our own propaganda,

and we need to see what has really happened. In a number of places we have experienced serious tensions between democracy and liberalism. What reality shows is that we also have illiberal democracies, some of them with very anti-Western attitudes. Moreover, it is not only liberal democracy that might be linked successfully with the free market; we can also have illiberal democracies and even authoritarian or semi-authoritarian governments linked with

well performing market economies with significant growth, which brings a better life for the people. That paradigm of liberal market-oriented, pro-Western democracy is now globally challenged by the Russian (as well as the Chinese) counter-paradigm of authoritarian capitalism, which derives its legitimacy from the promise of satisfying consumer needs and from nationalism.

In a recent global survey on democracy that covered 69 countries, 83 percent of the people said they believed democracy was the best model available. These results show that democracy as an ideology is not disputed. However, in many places there is a big sense of disillusionment. For example, in the same survey, people in Central and Eastern Europe, including Russia and Ukraine, were the most skeptical of all. When asked if they believed the voice of the people mattered, the majority of the people who responded said “no.” The accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the EU was seen as a major success, but after the accession there were a number of major political crises in the region, the emergence of populist politicians winning elections, and growing popular distrust of elected governments and institutions.

In Ukraine, the Orange Revolution was a great inspiration, but many of its promises remained unfulfilled. One of the reasons for this is that the political parties were not ripe and too centered on their leaders. The competition for access to power and to the leader undermined the consistency of the process of democratic change. The chain of elections created unfavorable conditions for much-needed but unpopular reforms.

The real drive behind the popular demand for change has been driven by the population’s wish for a more secure and better life. Therefore, when the leaders of change did not deliver on that expectation, much disillusionment set in.

Furthermore, non-democrats have learned democratic rhetoric well, and they use it in challenging democrats on a variety of issues. At the same time, some democratic politicians are also seduced into using populist, non-democratic, or fraudulent methods to achieve popular support. Another challenge in the region stems from “good” people (reformers) aligning themselves with “bad” people engaged in crime and corruption. The lessons not learned by many in the region include the issue of how to make sure that every state’s concern over its security does not run

against the principles for securing human and civil rights.

The focus on putting economic reforms first, and expecting democratization to follow, was probably a serious mistake in the approach to deliver international assistance. In many international assistance programs, democratization is wrongly approached as a technical problem. More effort was put into formal institution building than into developing democratic societies and democratic citizens. What has proved to be important is how to foster genuinely democratic society; how to develop and strengthen political parties; how to implement anticorruption policies; how to secure the rule of law; and how to enhance the role of a strong civil society in the period after a democratic breakthrough.

Elections also have proved to matter. Electoral breakthroughs can bring about a robust democratization drive. It is also a good sign that resolving political tensions and conflicts through elections has been accepted in many countries in the region. In addition, parties are held accountable to their election promises as parties that break their promises have failed to be re-elected.

But we now have the problem of responsiveness; voters feel that their votes do not matter, since they do not see progress beyond the pre-election status quo even where there is a change in government. On the other hand, there is the sense of the liberal elites that they should not allow people to “make mistakes” by choosing the “wrong” policies.

A fundamental question that remains is whether democratic systems are more efficient in providing jobs, better health care, education, and security. If not, alternatives challenging the democratic concept will look tempting to many.

Recommendations

- Investment in education matters, since this is the only way to develop new ranks of liberal democrats.
- Institutions by themselves do not matter very much unless there are new generations of democrats growing up to make those institutions work.
- Democratic reformers should be more inclusive and appeal to ordinary people, the media, and the opposition.
- Democratic reformers often prove not to be ready for compromise. The zero-sum game culture remains and shows that it cannot work. Therefore, they should

learn how to find compromise for the sake of pushing democratic reforms forward.

Although it is wrong to overestimate the role of NGOs, vibrant civil society proved to play an important role in bringing about and sustaining the democratization process. The lesson is that investment in developing civil society pays off. At the same time, NGOs should also have the courage to engage in hard and culturally unpopular topics, such as organized crime, religion, and homosexuality.

The promise of European and Euro-Atlantic integration was a strong driving force for democratization and reform in post-Communist transitions. That opportunity should be kept open for countries in the region as an additional incentive for their transformation process.

Finally, do not rely too much on democratization theories. They change every few years, and there is obviously no blueprint.

Panel Discussion on Press Freedom: Challenges and Strategies

Organizer:

IREX Azerbaijan

Moderator:

Shahin Abbasov – Azerbaijan

Rapporteur:

Iryna Wells – Ukraine

Presenters:

Supinya Klangnarong – Thailand

Madhu Acharya – Nepal

Emin Huseynov – Azerbaijan

Rahma Hugaira – Yemen

Shahida Tulaganova – Uzbekistan

Participants in this panel discussion, including media professionals, representatives of media support organizations, international and national NGOs, civil society groups, and activists, discussed the main issues and possible strategies to address challenges concerning press freedom. The discussion began with presentations by speakers from Nepal, Thailand, Azerbaijan, Yemen, and Uzbekistan, who shared their experiences with press suppression and rights violations in their regions. The participants outlined the following key challenges and possible strategies.

Challenges

- Populations in the Middle East and in some countries of Eurasia and Latin America do not have enough, or equal access to, information and media resources.
- Politicians often accuse the media of being biased if journalists cover the authorities in an unfavorable way. State leaders do not like to be criticized, so if there is negative coverage, media outlets are accused of being affiliated with the opposition or of publishing lies. In such cases, words against the government are used as justification for arrests and attacks.
- Outside monitoring has become ineffective because international organizations do not press charges or hold anyone accountable.
- Even with the vast number of TV and radio chan-

nels, ownership is concentrated in the hands of the few in power. Such cases can be seen in the Middle East, Thailand, Eurasia, and other places.

- Journalists' lives and safety are often in danger. In Yemen, journalists are prosecuted, attacked, entrapped, and injured on a regular basis. In some Eurasian countries—particularly in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan—reporters are arrested en masse and often set up. If in the past intervention by international organizations helped bail innocent reporters out of jail, currently, corrupt authorities simply ignore them. In Yemen, media professionals are under constant watch and in danger. They are being killed or hurt, and their families are being attacked.
- Gender is an unresolved issue in Muslim countries, where regardless of legislation women cannot freely practice their professional activities, including media activities.
- Limited access to resources negatively impacts all spheres of media and the civil development of societies. Political authorities block international resources, control Internet providers, intentionally narrow Internet channels and speed, and set very high fees to prevent the creation of content and accessibility to online media.
- There is an absence of good, detailed, and supportive legislation.

Recommended Strategies

- Media professionals should consolidate and unite in their fight for rights and freedoms. Consolidating forces will strengthen the voice to confront autocratic authorities, give individual journalists confidence, and impel local authorities to investigate cases of violations and murders. Uniting professionals from different countries can also help in the struggle against common problems, create and outsource media resources, provide more access to educational resources, and generate new ideas and projects.
- Colleagues in more developed countries should communicate their experiences. Using expertise in media business creation, development, promotion, as well as in freedom advocacy and legislative development, can save time and effort in achieving milestones.
- Cooperation with international organizations to gain support and protection is very important in many areas, including protecting journalists and bailing them out of jail, investigating crimes, promoting freedom of speech, and providing informational and financial resources.
- Training and education are crucial to media development. In many countries, reporters do not have specialized education or are vulnerable to corruption due to ignorance of media ethics.
- The media sector should ally with NGOs to strengthen their forces. Media professionals can use

the expertise of specialized civil society organizations, and NGOs can serve as a conduit that media organizations can work through to pursue freedoms and fight for their cause. Cooperation between media and civil society groups can increase awareness among the whole population and advocate democratic values.

- In countries where authorities control all media channels, alternative ways of reaching audiences, such as satellite, cellular networks, and the Internet, can be used. “Off-shore” news broadcasts on radio waves and satellite signals are another way to deliver unbiased and free information to populations.
- Monitoring from outside by international organizations has to be effective. They can do much more than just publish reports; they can use their power to influence country leaders to support media development and lobby for journalists’ freedom and safety.
- The creation of “watchdog organizations and campaigns” is another way to address issues of rights violations, corruption, ethical problems, etc. This could take the form of an alternative media information resource or a union made up of journalists themselves, civil citizens, experts, and international observers.
- Recognition and awards are very important in stimulating and crediting journalists’ achievements. They pay tribute to those who paid with their lives for freedom of speech, as well as serve to motivate others to fight for their beliefs.

Workshops

Addressing Corruption: Civil Society Strategies to Strengthen Legislation, Enforcement and the Role of the Judiciary

Organizers:

Transparencia por Colombia
Liberia National Law Enforcement
Association

Moderators:

Rosa Inés Ospina-Robledo
– Colombia
Cecil Griffiths – Liberia

Rapporteur:

Jeremy Zucker – U.S.

Presenters:

Igor Koliushko – Ukraine
Jose Luis Martin Gascon
– The Philippines

Acknowledging from the outset that corruption undermines democracy and democratic institutions, the presenters and workshop participants focused on challenges and opportunities in the fight against corruption.

Observations

- Corruption is a fatal combination of three factors: monopoly of power, latitude of discretion, and absence of accountability.
- Corruption takes many forms and involves many different actors.

- Corruption must be recognized as a public crime; even though everyone suffers, the failure to perceive such suffering on an individual level poses a challenge to mobilizing against corruption, requiring coordinated action among civil society organizations (CSOs).
- Governments will not change behavior without strong public demand for change.
- Government entities exist, and can be created, to fight corruption, but the support of civil society is essential for a long-term, systemic approach.
- The private sector is sometimes a reluctant participant in bribery, and would welcome an environment in which bribes are no longer required. CSOs should therefore view the private sector as a potential partner and not simply part of the problem.
- Some corruption is “legal,” reflecting state capture by small elites.
- Fighting against corruption is not a sprint, but a marathon.

Questions

- How should the international community respond when certain donor countries do not appear concerned about corrupt uses of the “development funds” they provide?
- When the government is corrupt, how can CSOs cooperate with it in the fight against corruption without consequently conferring legitimacy?



- How can international financial institutions (IFIs) play a more useful role in fighting corruption? The anti-bribery compliance programs of IFIs often ignore the reality on the ground, and future generations will thus be left holding “debts” for loans that were not put to public use.

Recommendations

- Focus on timely access to accurate information on the lifestyles of government officials, public procurement, and global best practices.
- Public advocacy must include more than general complaints; CSOs should thus focus on concrete solutions and bring success stories to the people.
- Not all government officials or entities are part of the problem. CSOs should work to identify and support those within government who are willing to fight corruption.
- Corruption is increasingly complex. CSOs should therefore develop technical expertise to effectively monitor flows of money (i.e., regarding the national budget, public works projects, etc.).
- Success stories encourage further success; focus on the prosecution of “big fish.”
- Systemic problems require systemic solutions, rather than ad hoc responses. CSOs should therefore focus on:
 - Greater public awareness of the problem;
 - Greater public awareness of possible solutions (and the belief that solutions are attainable);
 - Greater public access to information regarding national budgets, public procurement, electoral expenses, and the behavior of legislators;
 - Public interest litigation under local law and international conventions in national and international courts;
 - Guaranteeing the safety of those who publicly oppose corruption—including whistleblowers, CSOs, judges, and government auditors—especially, but not exclusively, in societies emerging from recent internal conflict; and
 - Incentives created by international donors and other governments—perhaps tied to the availability of donor funds—regarding concrete anti-corruption program progress.

Improving the Quality of Democracy: How can Women's Economic Empowerment be Advanced?

Organizers:

Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) (U.S.)
Regional Center for Organization Management (RCOM) (Romania)

Moderator:

Jean Rogers – U.S.

Rapporteur:

Sarah Siegel – U.S.

Speakers:

Camelia Bulat – Romania

Selima Ahmad – Bangladesh

Monica Hernandez – Ecuador

Countries cannot be truly democratic or prosperous if half of their populations are disenfranchised from the political and economic spheres. For this reason, women's participation in entrepreneurship, policy making, and civil society is essential for the development of a healthy, egalitarian democratic country. Approximately 35 World Movement participants from 20 countries came together to discuss this theme, focusing on cross-regional challenges facing women and sharing strategies for success.

Three presenters launched the workshop with examples of women's economic empowerment in their own countries. Camelia Bulat discussed the example of the Coalition of Women Business Associations in Romania (CAFA), which was founded in 2004 by a group of nine associations that wanted to build a stronger, united voice to advocate for their needs. Now, CAFA is regularly invited to policy debates on top issues including Romania's fiscal code, and its membership has increased to 19 associations across the country.

Selima Ahmad described her experiences as an entrepreneur and the founder of the Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BWCCI). Democracy facilitates women's empowerment and entrepreneurship, she noted, and this in turn helps to build a prosperous country and a better future. BWCCI recently experienced a huge policy success when the Central Bank of Bangladesh adopted recommendations to increase access to credit for women entrepreneurs.

Monica Hernandez discussed the ways that microfinance can empower women, as well as the importance of leadership, self-esteem, and values. If a woman does not believe in herself and her ability to succeed, it is unlikely that she will accomplish her goals. Rather, she should know that she is capable of solving her own problems instead of expecting a solution from someone else.

A recurring theme in the workshop was what participants called the "glass ceiling of the mind." The traditional concept of the glass ceiling is a large problem in many countries, but too frequently, women also

hold themselves back by believing that they deserve less than men. It is essential to overcome that mental barrier for women to achieve their full potential.

Other questions addressed the use of foreign resources, how to build family support for women involved in business outside the home, and how to handle the large risk and responsibility involved in opening a business (often when juggling other important family responsibilities).

Another key issue is that both men and women play roles in facilitating women's economic empowerment in an inclusive environment. In general, participants agreed that building such an inclusive environment requires systemic change at the policy level, so women do not have to overcome regulatory barriers (to owning property, opening a business, or gaining access to finance) to succeed economically.

Participants offered success stories from their own countries, such as women's essential role in the "economic rebirth" of Liberia after the war. In Romania, the Association of Business Women and Top Managers has held a very high-profile competition each year that recognizes women who have met with success in the economic, political, and social spheres.

Women's economic empowerment benefits the individual, the family, the community, and the country. Ultimately, women are a resource to their countries and should be recognized as such. Models of successful women are essential and serve as sources of inspiration for others who aspire to open a business or to get involved in policy making. For women who want change, it is important to have a goal and get involved. Developing a strategy, forming a coalition, or conducting advocacy are some of the ways that women can have a positive impact on the economic empowerment of other women in their country or around the world.

Finally, knowledge is key: women need to know their rights and have the opportunity to receive an education so they may reach their full potential as active citizens and economic actors.

How Can Relationships between Leaders and Constituents be Strengthened in New Democracies?

Organizers:

Democracy Development
Programme (South Africa)
Participa (Chile)

Moderator:

Rama Naidu – South Africa
Andrea Sanhueza – Chile

Rapporteur:

Harriet Turay – Sierra Leone

Presenters:

Ash Narain Roy – India
Mokhar Benabdallaoui – Morocco
Anahit Bayandur – Armenia
Ilona Bilan – Ukraine

The growing gap that exists in both advanced and new democracies between citizens and their governments remains a major concern. Traditional meanings of democracy reduce citizens' involvement in governance and politics to choosing between candidates for political offices through electoral politics, and, in turn, it is the job of the elected representatives to make policy and to hold the state accountable, assuming that a vote for a particular candidate implies acceptance of every policy position. Democracy defined in this way legitimates a situation in which experts and political elites ostensibly represent the people and are allowed to make essential political and policy decisions on behalf of their entire citizenries.

This paradigm has spawned growing disillusionment of citizens with their governments based on concerns about opaque policy processes, corruption, lack of responsiveness to the needs of the poor, and the absence of participation or connection to the poor.

Any attempt to respond effectively to these concerns requires work by both the state and the citizens. On the one hand, there is a need to focus on making state institutions more responsive and accountable. On the other hand, there is a need to pay greater attention to processes of participation, that is, on the ways in which poor people can exercise their voice through forms of deliberation and mobilization designed to inform and influence state institutions and public policies.

Participants highlighted the importance of recognizing that every country has its own democratization process and that there is thus no one model for all democracies.

Recommendations

➤ **The Role of Parliament.** There is a need for the citizenry and civil society organizations to learn more about the role and work of parliamentarians and their participatory mechanisms, such as its working com-

mittees. NGOs can bring expertise to parliaments because they are sometimes more in touch with what is happening on the ground. Constituency outreach offices that keep in touch with constituents on an ongoing basis should be established. Funding should be made available to Members of Parliament to carry out developmental projects in their constituencies. The "right to recall" in cases of non-performance of representatives can serve as a mechanism for increasing accountability.

➤ **Role of Diplomats.** Their functions are not limited to the Consulate, but also serve to bring together interest groups to learn about their demands and possibilities for engagement. The Community of Democracies has launched a Handbook for Diplomats on democracy promotion and the role of diplomats.

➤ **Role of Cooperation Agencies.** They can take the lead in bringing together civil society groups that were involved in conflict in transitions to democracy with those that are now in such conflict to share their experiences and lessons learned.

➤ **Political Reforms.** There is a need for political reforms to close the gap between constituencies and political leaders. There was a sense that a mixed electoral system would better serve this need rather than a straight forward proportional representation system.

➤ **Decentralization.** There is need for a decentralization process to bring government closer to the people and to promote the principle of subsidiarity. Decentralization of power can also mean that local solutions will be sought rather than national ones.

➤ **Political Parties.** Strengthening political parties is crucial because they are a fundamental mechanism of representation. In many developing countries, opposition parties are weak and unable to present a viable alternative to the government in power or to engage seriously with it on policy issues. The relationship between political parties and civil society should be

seen as complementary, not necessarily competitive.

➤ **Civic Education.** In most countries, citizens are not aware of their civic rights, duties, and responsibilities. Therefore, continuous civic education programs are necessary. Such programs should be anchored in the context of local realities. Public servants should be aware that their role is to serve citizens and that their policies and practices must be inclusive and transparent.

➤ **Accountability.** Accountability is fundamentally a relationship of power, and therefore promoting it is political. When accountability mechanisms work citizens are able to make demands on power holders and ensure that those demands are met. Accountability is not only a legal relationship between states and citizens, but also includes social relation-

ships. Strategies for building accountability should be informed by questions relating to “whom” and “what” accountability is for. In other words, who is demanding accountability and why?

The participants also agreed that we must become more critical about what actually happens when people participate in spaces provided for such participation. Do those spaces extend a voice to marginalized people and thus deepen democracy, or are they merely vehicles to bind organized voices to the policy choices of those in power? Are citizens better able to hold their governments to account by attending and participating in these forums? These questions raise serious challenges for realizing effective citizen participation and deeper forms of democracy.

The Crucial Role of Migrant Worker Rights in a Vibrant Democracy

Organizer:
Solidarity Center (U.S.)

Moderator:
Neha Misra – U.S.

Rapporteur:
Mark Hankin – U.S.

Presenters:
Ellie Larson – U.S.
Sharia al Qataneh – Jordan
Elizabeth Tang – Hong Kong
Balasubramanian Alagu – Malaysia
Wahyu Susilo – Indonesia
Henry Sabile Rojas – The Philippines
Ahmed Bilal Mehboob – Pakistan

Migrant worker rights activists, trade union activists, and NGO activists from 17 countries gathered to discuss the implications of labor migration on the practice of democracy in both countries of origin and countries of destination, recognizing that ignoring migrant worker rights is a major threat to democracy. Moreover, respect for migrant worker rights and the participation of migrant workers in democratic processes in both countries of origin and destination expands democratic space and is a powerful force in economic development.

Observations

- Labor migration is a growing phenomenon that involves millions of workers moving within their own countries or abroad. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates the population of foreign migrant workers to be 120 million. China alone may have the same number of internal migrants.
- In some countries, such as the United Arab

Emirates, migrant workers outnumber the local population. Even in countries where migrant workers are the minority, their numbers are significant enough to affect social and economic structures on a national level.

- Governments around the world also explicitly use labor migration as a development policy, but they rarely view migration in the context of its impact on democracy. Remittances are not a substitute for development policy based on human and worker rights.
- Women workers are increasingly migrating abroad for work, and they are often the chief sources of income for families.
- There is an increasing trend in destination countries around the world to limit the stay of migrant workers by labeling them “temporary workers” who are authorized to work in countries for only a specified period of time, effectively denying them a path to citizenship or their ability to bring their families with them. Despite clear economic demand in countries of destination, migrant workers are often forced to

migrate through irregular channels.

In a growing number of instances, migrant workers have become focal points in the debate about democratic practices and the rule of law. Experience shows that in countries where the violation of migrant worker rights occurs, the rights of citizens are also constrained. It is important to recognize that the present condition of migrant workers has an impact on the future of democracy in individual countries. A vibrant democracy relies on the participation of all sectors of society. Being away from home for years at a time does not allow migrant workers to participate in the political, economic and social decisions of their home countries. At the same time, in their host countries, they are often denied any rights as members of society. A democratic government cannot ignore entire populations of people and still fulfill its role in making effective economic and social policy. However, this is precisely the situation in the majority of countries who send or host migrant workers (which is now a majority of countries in the world).

Many of the workshop participants noted the importance of voting rights for migrant workers. Internal migrants within countries are often denied the right to vote by being required to travel hundreds of miles to do so, thus favoring entrenched urban interests. The Filipino overseas absentee voting policy was cited as a good example of ensuring that migrant workers are not denied this most basic democratic right of participating in elections, even if they live abroad for years at a time.

Denying migrant workers basic democratic rights also creates instability and insecurity concerning relations between the local population and migrant workers, a permanent fixture in most countries. Conflict between local and foreign workers can destabilize nascent democracies or limit the space for democratic development. Migrant workers also play a role in expanding democratic space in countries where democratic rights are few by supporting the struggle of domestic unions and NGOs. In restrictive environments, migrant workers are often the first groups of civil society who are able to demonstrate publicly for rights. In countries where basic norms and standards cannot be implemented for migrant workers, the standards and rights of all workers are eroded.

Participants also raised the issue of “brain drain,” where trained professionals in sectors such as nursing and education are leaving their own countries to educate their children in developed countries and provide healthcare and education services to the “richer” nations. The question was raised about the obligation

of destination countries to support the provision of such services in home countries.

Recommendations

- Democracy activists must recognize the role of migrant worker rights in promoting democracy. Democracy cannot flourish when the rights, especially voting and labor rights, of entire populations are ignored. Efforts must be made to share best practices.
- Where appropriate, migrants should be given a path to citizenship. In all cases, migrant workers should enjoy the same labor rights and access to social services as indigenous workers.
- Trade unions and democracy NGOs should work together to promote the basic human and worker rights of migrants. Such efforts must occur within a country, regionally, and internationally. It is important that trade unions and NGOs within countries and across borders broaden current alliances and create new alliances supporting the democratic and worker rights of migrant workers. Best practices should be emulated.
- Restrictive immigration laws are a factor in increasing the vulnerability of migrant workers to exploitation and should be reformed. Unions and other civil society groups should cooperate with law enforcement to ensure that workplaces and labor employment agencies are monitored and inspected to protect workers and not to deport them.
- International labor standards apply equally to all workers (indigenous or migrant). Labor unions and democracy NGOs should highlight where gaps in law exist and lobby to incorporate standards into the laws and policies of their countries, as well as in international trade agreements and international financial institution policies.
- Civil society groups providing legal aid services, including unions, should expand those services to migrant workers, thus allowing them access to the rule of law.
- Migrant workers are much less likely to be exploited or trafficked if they are allowed freedom of association and the right to organize. Unions have an obligation to reach out to migrant workers and an obligation to educate their own members as to why this is important.
- To ensure safe migration, trade union and NGO partners should work with governments and even employ-

ment agencies to develop legal frameworks (laws and regulations) and policies aimed at ensuring that workers can migrate safely, thus rendering them less vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. They can also conduct pre-departure training for migrant workers so they know their rights before leaving for home.

➤ The Defending Civil Society principles collected by the World Movement for Democracy Secretariat and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) should include protection of migrant worker unions and associations, as well as trade unions and NGOs

that promote migrant worker rights.

➤ Unions often use their unique presence in economic sectors to combat the exploitation of migrant workers. For example, Jordanian garment and textile unions organize Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan migrant workers in Qualifying Industrial Zones to improve their working conditions. Trade unions must expand these initiatives.

➤ New forms of technology, such as text messaging, should be used in advocacy efforts and to reach vulnerable migrant workers.

Role of the Media in Democratic Consolidation: Working Together for Transparency and Access to Information

Organizer:

Global Forum for Media
Development-GFMD

Internews Ukraine

Moderator:

Marguerite Sullivan – U.S.

Rapporteur:

Drusilla Menaker – U.S.

Presenters:

Kostya Kvurt – *Ukraine*

Roby Alampay – *The Philippines*

Eduardo Bertoni – *Argentina*

Omar Faruk Osman – *Somalia*

The workshop presenters agreed that achieving freedom of expression and access to information requires media collaboration with civil society. Civil society groups and media owners share with the media the need for freedom of expression rights. If the media is suppressed, the issues raised and statements made by other groups—human rights advocates, for example—will be muted. Therefore, forging media-civil society alliances is important.

Civil society groups often approach the media to seek help in getting their messages across. Potential ways in which the media sector can support this, as suggested by participants, include professional training in journalism and targeting issues (for example, child labor); by joining in the pursuit of common goals (for example, making elections free and fair); by contributing to change (for example, the media's role in Ukraine's Orange Revolution and by introducing more democratic media practices); and by confronting the challenge that freedom poses to the media community to be socially responsible and protective of the interests of the people (for example, through the transition from state to public television and by exploring techniques such as citizen journalism).

In conflicted countries, the priority must be the safety and security of journalists. Somalia, for example, is the most dangerous country for journalists in Africa and the second most dangerous in the world

after Iraq. Lack of security for journalists imperils freedom of expression. Without security, journalists cannot express themselves and the media cannot play their role as watchdogs and conveyers of critical news and information.

Media laws are also important. Within the broad legal enabling environment for media, which varies greatly from country to country, access-to-information laws are needed, according to the workshop presenters, but such statutes, which only represent a starting point, must be well drafted. Some countries have specific access-to-information laws (Thailand and Mexico, for example), while others have constitutional provisions but no specific enabling law (for example, The Philippines). At the other extreme are countries that have prohibitions in the form of internal security laws, official secrets acts, and related provisions.

In all countries, however, challenges to accessing information go beyond the law; political realities may also make it difficult, even with good laws, to obtain information. But even without good laws, there are still ways to gain access to information. One determining factor, the presenters pointed out, is the degree to which there is space for civil society to come together with media to work on promoting freedom of expression and access to information. In some countries, penalties for giving out incorrect informa-

tion are more severe than those prohibiting giving out information at all.

Other factors that negatively affect access to information include:

- Incomplete laws and implementation—where there are no templates for requesting access to information, no established redress when access is denied, high prices for making information requests, etc.
- Slowing down the process—when information requests are not met in a timely manner or where Internet speed is deliberately reduced.
- Poor demand—when people do not know their rights to information or how to take advantage of them.
- Old habits—when journalists are accustomed to using their own networks of contacts and derive a degree of power from this personal access. Sometimes, journalists are the ones opposing access to information laws.

Workshop participants agreed that access to information is not a right limited to the media. It is also crucial for NGOs, entrepreneurs, academics, and individual citizens. Journalists can play an important role in pushing for access to information, not only for their own use but to enable the people to understand it as a broader right. For example, in Mexico, a newspaper published a set of questions on its front page, such as on the president's salary, and offered readers a reward for correct answers; this prompted people to realize that this is information they should have. Civil society can contribute as well by using information access mechanisms that may be available, supporting litigation to fight for access to information in strategic cases, and by promoting and disseminating work by journalists who use access-to-information laws.

Challenges

- There is a need for self-regulation by the media to ensure that information is used ethically and that journalists work professionally;
- There is a budgetary cost of implementing freedom of information provisions;
- There is a potential threat to privacy in certain cases; and
- There is a potential disincentive to keep records when officials know that what they write down might be accessed in the future.



Recommendations

- Access-to-information laws should be well drafted. Civil society and media can join in advocating for such laws and to ensure they are implemented effectively.
- Timeframes for meeting requests, and penalties for failing to provide information, should be clear.
- Support for rights to information should go beyond the media, with benefits to each sector (civil society organizations, human rights activists, businesses, individual citizens, etc.) understood specifically. It is particularly vital for ordinary citizens to understand and demand their rights to information.
- Journalists and media organizations should enhance their capacity to obtain information and use it effectively and professionally.
- The state's capacity to respond to requests for information must be established and supported, including emplacing mechanisms for doing so and developing the skills of information officers with special attention to local government.
- Special attention should be given to the ability of those whose access to information is particularly difficult in some settings (for example, women journalists).
- Making use of technology and networks that span borders can help support rights to information.

The workshop concluded with the recognition that access-to-information laws alone will not create democracy, reduce poverty, or create better journalism. However, transparency is important for democracy, and there are positive experiences that demonstrate that media and civil society can work together to achieve it.

Democracy from the Bottom Up: How to Think Locally about Democratic Performance

Organizer:

International Republican Institute-IRI
(U.S.)

Moderators:

Theary Seng – *Cambodia*
Patricia Lozada – *Peru*
Njoki Ndungu – *Kenya*

Rapporteur:

Alex Primostko – *Ukraine*

Presenters:

Rene Joaquino Cabrera – *Bolivia*
Agnieszka Pomaska – *Poland*

The workshop was structured around the following themes:

Equity and Inclusiveness

- › How this appears in the decision-making process; and
- › How this is represented in policies, practices, and procedures.

Citizen Participation

- › The objectives of citizen engagement and its importance;
- › The mechanisms for citizen participation; and
- › Citizen participation and decision-making processes.

Transparency and Accountability

- › The presence of these two factors in decision-making processes;
- › Transparency and accountability through the disclosure of information;
- › Using E-government to achieve transparency and accountability; and
- › Implementing anti-corruption initiatives.

Responsiveness

- › Responding to citizen needs (i.e., through public works, basic service delivery, short- and long-term planning); and
- › Developing a customer service mechanism (i.e., hotlines for requests or complaints).

In his opening presentation, Rene Joaquino Cabrera, mayor of Potosi in Bolivia, shared the secrets of how he managed to turn what was once one of the poorest cities in the country, described as “an imperialistic heritage of Spain” with high corruption and unemployment, into a prosperous city where the municipal government is now strongly supported and

trusted by the local community. According to Mr. Cabrera, the key issue was to get citizens involved in the decision-making process and local authorities to be responsible and accountable to citizens; their power should be modest and transparent. Local authorities are effective when they take into consideration the following issues:

- › Involving citizens and bringing them into decision-making processes;
- › Legal grounds for citizen activity;
- › View of national and regional problems; and
- › Adjusting the government to local conditions.

Fighting corruption was one of the key issues for local authorities in Potosi. It is now a city where there are no examples of corruption. All state servants submit their wealth declarations annually, indicating the sources of their income. A civic culture to control municipal activities has been developed. People are broadly engaged in meetings, sessions, and roundtable discussions. The municipality is trying to observe principles of inclusiveness and equity. Women are strongly represented in the municipality, and more young people are taking part in planning events, including the budgeting processes. Very broad layers of the population are also involved in the management process as the generators of new ideas. In this way, the local authorities can increase the effectiveness of management in the city. In Bolivia, the municipality gets 30 percent of the central government’s funds. Other sources include local funds, taxes, and fundraising. The City of Potosi has its own economic platform that was developed with broad public participation. Citizens have free access to power, and this helps to develop the city from the bottom up.

Agnieszka Pomaska, deputy chair of the Gdansk City Council in Poland and chair of the Civic Education Development Center, shared her experiences in working with different groups of people and learning their needs and problems. She became a city councilor at the age of 22. Involving more young

people dramatically enhances democratic performance, she said. Door-to-door campaigning taught her that people should be listened to and understood. Communication with people plays a key role in understanding them and getting helpful feedback. It is necessary to be in touch with people continuously and to respond to all e-mails, for instance. Communication via mobile phone is also very important. People feel more comfortable when they can directly call the person representing their interests. Meetings also play an important role because you can talk to many people at once interactively. It is very important to tell people the truth and to keep them informed, including about what you are doing, through the media. Educational programs help encourage citizens to get involved in the local self-government process. In Gdansk, there are public consultations on different issues before the Council makes a decision. A good, well-maintained, and regularly-updated Web site is also very important. Finally, Ms. Pomaska pointed out, Polish city mayors are now elected directly by citizens, not by city councils. In this way, the local regions have received more local powers.

The workshop participants discussed topics that

included prioritizing local budgets and ensuring public participation in the process; the need for power decentralization; local programs; and procurement procedures.

Participants also heard about the Colombian experience where local authorities and NGOs have increased citizen participation in local government. People there have become involved to improve their lives, and this will increase the transparency of the authorities. The lesson learned is that governments should consult the people on all the main issues, including the local budget, and the people should formulate their goals for solving local problems, such as health protection, eradicating poverty, etc. International assistance can also play a big role.

In Cambodia, numerous forums are organized on justice and reconciliation. One project carried out in cooperation with the International Republican Institute was focused on civic education via television, recognizing that TV and radio can play a very important role for entertaining and educating young people at the same time. Similar examples of educational programs in China and Canada were also discussed.

What Is the Role of the Emerging Private Sector in Post-Conflict, Democratic Reconstruction?

Organizer:

Center for International Private Enterprise-CIPE (U.S.)

Moderator:

Andrew Wilson – U.S.

Rapporteur:

Kim Bettcher – Australia

Presenters:

Muhamet Mustafa – Kosovo

Theodosia Clark Wah – Liberia

Democratic stability in post-conflict environments depends on the creation of sound governance frameworks and sustainable economies to provide for the needs of the people when humanitarian assistance declines. Post-conflict reconstruction is typically a balancing act of providing sufficient humanitarian relief while planning for long-term development objectives. Down the road, the local private sector must generate jobs, income, better living conditions, and sustainable peace. Yet too often, international and local policy makers fail to heed voices of the local business community, thus weakening economic policies and forestalling the development of civil society in areas of economic importance. Participants at this workshop discussed strategies for engaging the private sector in the reconstruction process and the role

that the business community has in generating hope and opportunity for future democratic prosperity.

Muhamet Mustafa provided his insight on how to sequence the transition from an emergency situation to a sustainable and promising future. One should have about a 12-year time horizon to plan the transition, recognizing that the first year would be devoted to humanitarian relief. Early on, it is vital to engage private-sector participation in the creation of market institutions and economic policies that would support a good business environment and the creation of a middle class.

Mr. Mustafa explained how international donors and consultants need to work together with local civil society, listening to their real needs while building their capacity to absorb assistance and assume

responsibility for their country's development. He recommended greater transparency and accountability in both recipient countries and donor countries, more checks and balances in reconstruction programs, and follow-up analysis of how programs lead to better living conditions. Finally, there must be an exit strategy for international agencies to transfer responsibility to local actors and institutions.

Theodosia Clark-Wah began her presentation with a description of the history of war in Liberia and the present post-conflict environment. During the war, the country experienced a total breakdown of the economy, human rights abuses, corruption, and disregard for rule of law. The democratic elections in 2005 brought an opportunity to build sustainable peace and a better democratic and economic future for the country. Ms. Clark-Wah's presentation focused on the role of the private sector in this process, and the ultimate goal of developing a middle class to ensure peace and prosperity.

Ms. Clark-Wah noted that business associations play a key role in preparing the private sector to contribute to the reconstruction of a country's economy and democratic institutions. The Liberian Business Association provides small business owners with the skills, access to finance, and legal support to enable them to succeed and grow their enterprises. Now, Liberian businesses are providing employment and improving living conditions, which will lead to peace

and stability. Finally, she noted that "conflicts bring poverty, so we have to work together to avoid conflicts and build peace."

Recommendations

- Start to build the capacity of the local private sector early in the post-conflict reconstruction process in order to smooth the transition when international aid declines.
- Work primarily with local actors, including business associations, think tanks, and other civil society organizations, rather than foreign consultants. Ultimately, citizens of post-conflict states must be the drivers of reform and reconstruction.
- Protect the rights of women to own and inherit property because their participation is essential to the development of the private sector, especially in the micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise sectors. Also provide women with business education and encouragement to join the business community.
- Monitor transparency and accountability in government and in the use of foreign aid.
- Provide humanitarian assistance in a way that helps people regain control of their economic future – not in a way that encourages aid dependency.
- Encourage private sector investment in post-conflict environments.

From Principles to Performance: How Can Europeans Enhance Their Support for Democracy Assistance Worldwide?

Organizers:

European Partnership for Democracy
– EPD

People in Need Foundation
(Czech Republic)

Netherlands Institute for Multiparty
Democracy-NIMD

Moderator:

Igor Blaževic – *Czech Republic*

Rapporteur:

Kristina Prunerová – *Czech Republic*

Presenters:

Edward McMillan-Scott – *U.K.*

Roel von Meijenfeldt – *The Netherlands*

João Espada – *Portugal*

Jana Hybášková – *Czech Republic*

Iryna Solonenko – *Ukraine*

Yuri Dzhibladze – *Russia*

Martin Schieder – *Austria*

This workshop covered two topics: the recently launched European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and the role of democracy in European Union policy. The point was made that democracy is a part of European identity and rhetoric, but not practical policies. The workshop thus sought to address this issue

of democracy promotion on both the political and technical levels.

The EPD is a new, independent organization that aims to contribute to the advancement and strengthening of democracy outside of the European Union and to complement existing democracy assistance

programs within the European Union. It was founded by some 15 European civil society organizations that are focused on democracy assistance to function as a platform for sharing lessons learned from this field of work; to exchange information; and to join efforts in promoting democracy to the policies of European Union institutions, EU member states, and nongovernmental actors.

The three instruments to be used by the EPD are the following:

- A knowledge platform through which European democracy assistance organizations can share experiences, conduct evaluation, and cooperate on joint projects; the platform will be accessible to governments of EU member states and official EU institutions, as well as to partners outside of the EU.
- An advocacy function will contribute to a stronger European profile in democracy assistance globally by advocating a more prominent place for democracy assistance in EU policy priorities.
- A flexible funding facility will add to existing financial instruments so funds will be available when windows of opportunity for democratic reform open or when democracy comes under threat. As appropriate, the funding facility will be financed from diverse sources, such as charity lotteries and foundations, EU member states, and the EU Commission.

In his opening presentation Edward McMillan-Scott, vice-president of the European Parliament from Great Britain, expressed his support for the idea of the EPD as a complementary, flexible tool that will function next to EU instruments on democracy.

The second topic of the discussion—democracy as part of European policy—was addressed both on the theoretical level and in relation to case studies on particular countries. According to several presenters democracy is a core value for Europe, and is included in all European documents and statements. Yet, when it comes to practical policies Europe still hesitates to put more emphasis on democratic dialogue. There are successful examples of European support for democratization, such as the enlargement process in Central and Eastern European countries from throughout the 1990s until now, or the project of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Europe should build on these good lessons and also use the instruments currently in place, such as the new European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), which has been reformed and should now be a more flexible tool.

Europe is now a gathering of 27 states, which

potentially means 27 different opinions on democracy. It is difficult to reach a consensus, and this is one of the reasons that it has been difficult to make democracy support part of EU policy. There's a consensus on development policy, and many European efforts and financial means are dedicated to it. The goal is to find consensus on democracy support as well.

New EU member states have recently overcome totalitarian regimes, and as a result of a successful process are not only becoming part of the EU, but successful democratic states as well. Driven by their experience, they are now key players in pushing for more European involvement in advancing democracy. Engagement from abroad was crucial to the fall of their previous communist regimes, which is why they feel the need to provide this help and thus "pay back their debt."

The case of Ukraine was presented by Martin Schieder, a representative of the European Commission in Ukraine, and Iryna Solonenko, of the International Renaissance Foundation, also based in Ukraine. Mr. Schieder presented several levels of EU engagement in Ukraine, ranging from political dialogue at all governmental levels, to technical assistance, to nongovernmental initiatives. All of these have been successful to some degree.

Ms. Solonenko stated that freedom and democracy in Ukraine are still fragile. Institutions are unstable, and rules and laws are still being shaped. There is a lack of political elites with the capability to shape democracy, and many politicians are closely linked to business.

European involvement in Ukraine focuses on two instruments: conditionality and socialization. Under conditionality, certain incentives are offered in exchange for reform, but in Ukraine these are perceived by some participants to be quite weak and inefficient. Socialization takes place through the sharing of norms and values in various projects undertaken with the cooperation of civil society, but these need to be made wider.

- Very similar concerns were mentioned by some participants with respect to other countries as well:
- European engagement is weak or not even present in some countries;
- There is a contradiction regarding EU-level and national-level assistance; and
- Available funding is very difficult to obtain and administer.

Making Democracy Work: How to Build Platforms for Inter-Party Cooperation?

Organizers:

Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy-NIMD

Institute for Economic Affairs-IEA
(Ghana)

Zambian Center for Inter-Party Dialogue-ZCID

FUBODEM (Bolivia)

Moderators:

Hans Breeveld – *Suriname*

Horrance Chilando – *Zambia*

Rapporteur:

Maarten van den Berg
– *The Netherlands*

Presenters:

Johnson Asiedu Nketiah – *Ghana*

Sylvia Chalikosa – *Zambia*

Sebastian Kopulande – *Zambia*

This workshop focused on the cases of Zambia and Ghana to help participants better understand the advantages of inter-party cooperation, the challenges to building platforms to facilitate it, and strategies for meeting those challenges.

Zambia

In Zambia, political parties and civil society organizations are engaged in a review of the Constitution. All stakeholders acknowledge that reforms are necessary, but they were not able to agree on the review process until June 2007 when the Zambian Centre for Interparty Dialogue (ZCID) managed to convince the leaders of all political parties to meet together to work out an agreement. Now there is a road map for the review and a deadline to complete the process by the end of 2008.

The Zambian experience illustrates how interparty dialogue helps politicians overcome impasses that they cannot resolve in parliament. According to the workshop presentation of Sylvia Chalikosa, “through ZCID the parties are learning that there are issues that you have to address collectively.” As a member of a small but growing opposition party, Ms. Chalikosa also pointed to the importance of ZCID as a venue to discuss urgent issues with members of the ruling party.

In his presentation, Sebastian Kopulande of Zambia’s ruling party, agreed: “Parties are more inclined to compete than to cooperate, especially in a young democracy where there is not yet a culture of interparty dialogue.” While Mr. Kopulande observed that conflict is an integral part of politics, he stressed that conflict needs to be kept to a certain level or it escalates into political hostility. That is why his party has supported the institutionalization of interparty dialogue in Zambia.

The ZCID is now a legal entity with a multiparty board and membership.

Ghana

While Zambian politicians consider the establishment of an institution like ZCID as a necessary step in the consolidation of interparty dialogue, in Ghana they do it differently. As Johnson Asiedu Nketiah explained in his presentation, interparty dialogue in Ghana was initiated in 1994 by the Electoral Commission as a multiparty roundtable to discuss common concerns, particularly election-law reforms, codes of conduct, and other election-related issues. The Accra-based Institute for Economic Affairs (IEA) has continued and expanded this roundtable, and there is now a caucus of party chairmen and a platform for the parties’ secretary generals. New issues have been taken on and there is a joint youth program. This year, the parties agreed on a joint strategy to deepen democracy in Ghana, which is set forth in a Democracy Consolidation Strategy Paper. They also drafted a new bill that includes proposals for public funding of political parties.

The Ghanaian case demonstrates that interparty dialogue and cooperation can achieve tangible results without the oversight of a designated institution. According to Mr. Asiedu Nketiah, the crucial factor for the success of interparty dialogue is the political will among political parties to address common concerns and interests. “We come together to address issues of importance for democracy generally, issues in which the electorate is also interested: greater transparency, transfer of power, ways to involve women and youth in politics.” Once the political will is there, the dialogue can become institutionalized—whether in the form of a permanent platform or a center—which can help keep it inclusive and sustainable.

Recommendations

Based on their experiences with interparty dialogue, workshop participants recommended that any such

initiative cannot replace—and should distinguish itself clearly from—parliamentary politics. As Mr. Asiedu Nketiah pointed out, in the Ghanaian interparty platform “we don’t discuss policy—that we do in parliament. We also draw a clear line between coming together to preserve or develop democracy, on the one hand, and coalition building for government, on the other. The latter is not what interparty cooperation is about.”

Likewise, both Ms. Chalikosa and Mr. Kopulande

stressed that the ZCID is not a substitute for Zambia’s national parliament. “The purpose of the Center is to reduce the degree of tension as much as possible,” according to Ms. Chalikosa. As Mr. Kopulande put it, “Interparty dialogue helps to overcome polarization,” to which their Ghanaian colleague, Mr. Asiedu Nketiah, added, “so that we can continue to disagree in a constructive manner.”

In sum, interparty dialogue and cooperation are indispensable ingredients of democratic politics.

Community of Democracies: How can Civil Society Work with Governments and Diplomats?

Organizer:

Council for a Community of Democracies-CCD (U.S.)

Moderator:

Paul Graham – *South Africa*

Rapporteur:

Bob LaGamma – *U.S.*

Presenters:

Richard Rowson – *U.S.*

Bob LaGamma – *U.S.*

Oumar Makalou – *Mali*

Mohsen Marzouk – *Tunisia*

Andrea Sanhueza – *Chile*

Paul Graham opened the workshop by briefly reviewing the Community of Democracies (CD), defining it as an entity that seeks to deepen and strengthen democracy around the world; the CD Ministerial meeting held in Bamako, Mali, in November 2007; and the role Portugal will play as the current chair of the CD and host of the next Ministerial. He observed that the CD has a governing body, the Convening Group, which is chaired by the host country, and a Permanent Secretariat that is currently being established in Warsaw, Poland. He also noted that invitations for governments to participate in the CD Ministerial in Mali in November 2007 were based on recommendations of a nongovernmental eminent persons group making up the International Advisory Committee (IAC) and were decided upon by the Convening Group governments. He also described the International Steering Committee of the nongovernmental process of the CD as a 21-member body representing NGOs from all world regions. Finally, he noted that the CD had created working groups in which government representatives and civil society members had equal status.

In his presentation, Richard Rowson of the Council for the Community of Democracies (CCD) described an important CD initiative: the *Diplomat’s Handbook for Democracy Development Support*. He suggested that this approach within the diplomatic field reflected a

new paradigm in international relations—the need for diplomats to relate to civil society in support of human rights and democracy. He identified CCD as the secretariat of the *Handbook*, which he described as a guide for diplomats on using their status to work with civil society in their efforts to advance democracy. He pointed out that the *Handbook* contained a toolbox of resources and a number of case studies (for instance, Ukraine’s Orange Revolution), and that it will be used as the point of departure for a training process for diplomats. Participants in the workshop were asked to contribute examples of cooperation between diplomats and civil society through the *Handbook’s* Web site (www.diplomatshandbook.org). The *Handbook’s* list of resources—a compendium of over 100 Web sites of donors and other organizations—constitutes a rich repository of ideas on democracy initiatives.

Bob LaGamma, also of the CCD, discussed in his presentation a second CD civil society initiative endorsed by the Bamako Ministerial Declaration, the *Global Strategic Plan on Democracy Education*, which is intended to help countries develop a culture of democracy. He noted that since the launching of the CD in Warsaw in 2000, there has been wide agreement that promoting democracy education is fundamental to the international democracy movement both to advance and to consolidate democratic gains. He said a discussion on implementing the plan by bringing



together representatives of NGOs and governments would be held on September 22-23, 2008.

In his presentation, Oumar Makalou spoke of the NGO coalition that was formed in Bamako, Mali, to serve as the Executive Secretariat and host to civil society at the Ministerial, as well as to serve as the liaison with the host government of Mali. In preparation for that Ministerial, the Secretariat held meetings to assess and find ways of improving democracy in nine regions of Mali, and the coalition worked with the African Democracy Forum (ADF) and IDASA in South Africa to host conferences on women's issues and transparency. The coalition also participated in the six regional roundtables organized by the CCD.

Mohsen Marzouk addressed in his presentation the issue of the paucity of democracies in the Middle East/North Africa region. He described the importance of the new Arab Democracy Foundation established in Doha, and discussed the Arab citizenship movement and the citizenship declaration, which he called the "third alternative" for the Arab world. He described a number of the Foundation's initiatives, including study tours, a January 2009 meeting to discuss implementation of projects, and the establishment of a regional coordinating committee for the NGO process in the region.

Andrea Sanhueza provided details in her presentation on the work of the nongovernmental secretariat established by her organization, Participa, for the Santiago CD Ministerial in 2005. She noted that that Ministerial marked the first at which ministers and civil society representatives engaged in direct dialogue. Listing the main challenges to the CD, she highlighted the need to build NGO networks and to bring political parties and foundations into the process, and she said that it was necessary for foreign ministers of the Convening Group countries and permanent representatives to the UN to be more active participants. She also attached special importance

to the role of the CD Ministerial invitation process in determining the countries that should be a part of the CD, and called for implementation at the national level that would allow countries to become eligible for CD membership. She urged members of the CD United Nations Democracy Caucus to work together to have a greater impact at the UN Human Rights Council.

In his presentation, George Mathew noted a problem of the CD with respect to the declining diplomatic level of participation on the part of governments, and asked what might be done. He endorsed the idea of the *Diplomat's Handbook*, but called for an instructor's manual that focuses on problem solving. David McQuoid-Mason of South Africa suggested a variety of role-playing exercises and scenarios that might be developed. Mr. Mathew also raised the issue of how to deal with state sovereignty within the CD framework. He noted that dealing with human rights in the context of addressing terrorism is an especially thorny issue for CD governments. On the inclusion of political parties, he favored seeking the participation of the second most important, or opposition, parties in addition to the major parties in each democratic country and the inclusion of NGOs from countries with non-democratic governments.

The ensuing discussion focused on the *Diplomat's Handbook* and how diplomats from democracies can support civil society; the problems of the Human Rights Council; the need for the International Steering Committee of the CD nongovernmental process to support the African Democracy Forum's statement on the Zimbabwe elections; and the need to issue a statement on Tibet and the Olympics. The scope of the World Forum for Democratization in Asia, the need to support the adoption of the African Democracy Charter, and ways in which the CD can serve as a forum for NGOs to influence the policies of governments were also taken up.

Defending Civil Society

Presentation of World Movement for Democracy Report, Defending Civil Society

Organizer:

World Movement for Democracy
Secretariat – U.S.

Moderator:

Paul Graham – South Africa

Rapporteur:

Michael Allen – U.K.

Presenters:

Doug Rutzen – U.S.
Saad Eddin Ibrahim – Egypt
Yuri Dzhibladze – Russia
Chee Siok Chin – Singapore
Carlos Ponce – Venezuela

This plenary session featured the presentation of the recently published World Movement report, *Defending Civil Society*, which articulates well-defined international principles protecting civil society, including norms and conventions that regulate and protect civil society from government intrusion. These principles include: the right of NGOs to entry (that is, the right of individuals to form and join NGOs); the right to operate to fulfill their legal purposes without state interference; the rights to free expression and to communication with domestic and international partners; the right to seek and secure resources, including the cross-border transfer of funds; and the state's positive obligation to protect NGO rights.

In his introduction, Doug Rutzen, president of the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), which co-authored the report with the World Movement Secretariat, outlined how autocrats are stealthily reducing political space in their countries by imposing legal and administrative constraints, and justifying barriers to NGO registration and restrictions on foreign funding on the pretext of ensuring NGO "accountability," fighting terrorism, or combating political "extremism." Even more ominously, he described how regimes are collaborating with each other by sharing "worst practices" and copying each others' legislative provisions and ways of using political technologies.

Mr. Rutzen explained how the *Defending Civil Society* report was conducted under the auspices of an Eminent Persons Group, including leading global civil society figures such as former Czech president Vaclav Havel, former Malaysian deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim, former Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso, former Canadian premier Kim Campbell, Egyptian scholar-activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The report drew on expert ICNL analysis, as well as regional consultations with activists, practitioners, and scholars

in Lima, Johannesburg, Bangkok, Kyiv, and Casablanca arranged by the World Movement.

On a positive note, Mr. Rutzen outlined how the principles that legitimize the work of democracy and human rights organizations are already reflected in international law, including conventions signed by many authoritarian regimes. International law legitimizes NGO rights to communication and cooperation, to seek and secure resources (including cross-border funding), and that states have a positive duty to protect NGOs. He concluded with the inspiring affirmation from sociologist Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Saad Eddin Ibrahim illustrated the various dimensions of the backlash through his personal experience, including that of his own organization, the Cairo-based Ibn Khaldun Center. He had been charged by the Egyptian government with defaming Egypt, with receiving unauthorized foreign funds, and with being funded as an agent of a foreign power, while the Center has been accused of being an umbrella for unpatriotic and subversive activities, and thus threatened with closure. Dr. Ibrahim has been forced into exile, and the Mubarak regime has threatened to strip him of his Egyptian nationality. But, he concluded, civil society is itself becoming more innovative in adapting to new restrictions, as evidenced by recent labor movement actions, Bedouin protests, and the increasingly assertive Judges Club.

The backlash has been prompted in part by the success of non-violent "people power" movements, particularly by the powerful example of Ukraine's own Orange Revolution, according to Russian democracy and human rights activist Yuri Dzhibladze. The Kremlin, spooked by what has been called "Russia's 9/11," reacted by harassing Russian NGOs through a "choking bureaucracy," repeated and intrusive tax inspections, and burdensome reporting requirements.

Perhaps the most disturbing result of these developments, according to Mr. Dzhibladze, has been the degree of self-censorship that NGOs now impose on themselves when faced with such hostility and obstacles to working effectively. Many NGOs are losing valuable staff, are frustrated with the lack of professional advancement, and fearful of possible prosecution. On the positive side, the authorities' hostility has had the effect of increasing the sense of commitment and mission of Russia's beleaguered civil society, and its sense that it is perhaps the most valuable of Russia's last remaining democratic spaces.

Singapore may be only a "pencil dot" on the map, but it has a powerful global presence and influence, not least on would-be authoritarians, because it is an economically vibrant but politically authoritarian regime. Moreover, democracy activist Chee Siok Chin suggested, it is a country that has successfully marketed itself as a benign, if quirkily, strict state – no chewing gum allowed, and all that. Established in the 1960s under Lee Kuan Yew, and continued under his son (albeit with his father's guaranteed place in the Cabinet as "Minister Mentor"), the city-state's form of authoritarian governance is undermining the pursuit of democracy globally. China's Deng Zhiao Ping cited the state as an influence; communist Vietnam's premier called it a "good role model"; and Beijing's representatives have sought to "Singaporise" Hong Kong.

Affiliated with the Alliance for Reform and Democracy in Asia (ARDA), Chee Siok Chin has been arrested, prosecuted, arbitrarily detained, and bankrupted by Singapore's authorities, but she counts her-

self lucky compared to her brother, Chee Soon Juan, who has been jailed 6 times by the regime for his efforts to expose and rally opposition to the country's undemocratic practices.

According to Carlos Ponce, Venezuela's would-be caudillo, Hugo Chavez, has a peculiar notion of democracy; his "Bolivarian revolution" appears to be based on Chavistas monopolizing the country's political institutions, from an absence of parliamentary opposition to a hand-picked judiciary. In these circumstances, Mr. Ponce said, civil society provides the only countervailing power to the Chavista state and to Chavez's authoritarian aspirations.

The Venezuelan Supreme Court recently deemed illegal even the tiniest of foreign donations to Venezuelan NGOs, said Ponce, who heads the Asociacion Civil Consorcio Justicia. The country's civil society organizations have received only \$1.3 million at the same time that Chavez has used billions of petro-dollars to subsidize and sustain his movement inside Venezuela and its external cheerleaders. The state has an extensive list of pro-democracy activists and thousands of ordinary citizens known to be critics of the regime that it uses as a de facto "blacklist" to deny jobs and carry out harassment. State-run TV programs are also devoted to attacking, and publicizing the names and addresses, of democracy and human rights activists. Yet civil society has demonstrated its resilience and capacity to mobilize itself, in association with a revived student movement, to defeat Chavez's proposed constitutional amendments, which would, in effect, have given him power for life.

Panel Discussion on Promoting the "Defending Civil Society" Principles: Targets and Opportunities

Organizers:

Center for the Development of
Democracy and Human Rights
– Russia
SUARAM – Malaysia

Moderator:

Yuri Dzhibladze – *Russia*

Rapporteur:

Xiaorong Li – *China*

Presenters:

Salah Aziz – *Iraq*

Hassan Shire Sheik – *Somalia*

Swee Seng Yap – *Malaysia*

Nina Belyaeva – *Russia*

Rodolfo Alban – *Peru*

Yuri Dzhibladze of Russia opened the session by reminding participants of the presentation of the World Movement's Defending Civil Society report during an earlier plenary session. The report articulates well-defined international principles protecting civil society, including norms and conventions that regulate

and protect civil society from government intrusion. The purpose of this session was to move from the analysis in the report to a plan of action for the near future, particularly for civil society organizations, at various levels of engagement: international, regional, national, and local. Most importantly, he proposed

that we should not rely on international bodies, but should instead pay greater attention to actions at the national and local levels by working with public offices and other sectors to promote freedom and democracy.

In his presentation, Salah Aziz addressed the question of how to go from articulating democratic principles to practical work, using his own organization's experiences working in Kurdish Iraq: it is a process, he said, of starting with noble ideas, then moving to the design and implementation of programs, and then to an evaluation of performance. According to Mr. Aziz, the Kurds' experiences, with some stories of success, reveal that we need to learn to adapt to our circumstances in promoting such principles, which can be very difficult. In the Kurdish experience following independence, those working in the democracy-promotion community learned to promote these principles by disseminating them in textbooks for education, by reforming laws to conform to international standards, and by training activists to build a healthy civil society. In Iraq, NGOs have to deal with military occupations while working on democracy and freedom. The main concern is that NGOs do not receive much protection. The international community can help these NGOs by creating space for networking, and the World Movement for Democracy can serve as a platform for promoting this.

Hassan Shire Sheik of Somalia talked in his presentation about his network in the Eastern Horn of Africa. The activists in this region face some of the greatest challenges and run great risks. This year, more than nine activists have died pursuing their work. We must generate mutual support, Mr. Sheik argued, and try to provide activists with a "survival kit" on the regional and national levels. We must build coalitions, provide training, urge governments to comply with regional and international standards, and implement principles in local legislation. We have to do this work bearing in mind the conditions on the ground. We must also raise awareness among network participants, build partnerships, encourage sharing of experiences, provide advice on how to implement principles, cooperate with civil society groups internationally, and encourage activists to take on UN Human Rights Council functions. We should put pressure on countries, thereby encouraging them to sign on to, and live up to, international treaties.

In his presentation, Swee Seng Yap expressed the view that while the *Defending Civil Society* report is written from an international perspective, there should be a greater sense of ownership among those at the

national grassroots level. First, he said, this report should be implemented within local contexts; local activists should reframe the framework. Second, the report focuses on civil-political rights, but many issues regarding human rights violations have to do with trade or economic issues; it is essential that the national process include social groups working together to have an impact on local issues. In Asia, he said, there are closed, semi-closed, and open societies, requiring different strategies according to local contexts. At the international and national levels, it is helpful to have solidarity from NGOs and civil societies. There should be a mechanism to assemble and share resources and lobby contacts. There should be a mapping exercise to create synergy. The World Movement should help provide this mechanism.

Nina Belyaeva of Russia asserted in her presentation that to be successful it is important to go beyond immediate circles, to expand the networks—for instance, by going into universities and high schools. Academics are consulting to governments; it is thus important to influence them about global civil society agendas and to embolden political decision making. We do not need to create new institutions. We can also focus on government offices that address business issues to encourage attention to human rights concerns. We should push businesses to make human rights a priority on their agendas and in open public discussions, and to make them care about those issues. We can also hold governments responsible for fulfilling their international obligations, and we can pressure ministries of foreign affairs, which are supposed to report to the UN on compliance. We also should work on all levels and with all kinds of players and institutions. Ms. Belyaeva also endorsed the idea of effectively "localizing" the report by having local groups produce it in local languages.

In his presentation, Rodolfo Alban of Peru talked about how his organization moves from ideas to practice: by doing research and supporting democrats in the region, transforming democratic institutions, struggling for human rights, and promoting collective protection of democracy in the Latin American region. But activists run certain risks, he said. We should therefore develop a mechanism to exert pressure on governments, and the Latin America region has much experience with this. He emphasized the importance of developing a collective protection of democracy. For example, he said, we need to push for the protection of NGOs in Latin America by pressuring high-level institutions to address these issues.

During the ensuing discussion, participants raised the following points:

- The report covers mostly backsliding, semi-authoritarian governments. These governments pose a particular challenge: while they appear democratic, they have engaged in a gradual tightening of control. These “hybrid” countries (for example, Russia) have developed systems to tighten their control. We should not legitimize but should expose this backsliding.
- While it is a good idea to tailor the report to local contexts, it is important not to nationalize the universal norms. There is also a concern that NGOs are not the whole of civil society. Cooperation with other types of groups that are not NGOs (such as trade unions or community-based groups) should be encouraged.
- An emphasis has been put on NGO transparency and accountability. NGOs should avoid being used by the government for its political agenda, but NGOs should not exclude using the government’s political agenda for pushing forward their own.
- The report should be an open process. As new ways of violating civil society principles are being created, new material should be added to the document to describe such violations.
- Some participants also claimed that the private sector does not trust NGOs; it is therefore important to build greater trust to win its confidence.
- Taking action must not be limited to NGOs, but should be undertaken across civil society, and democrats should broaden their range of alliances.

Workshops

Securing Civil Society Space: How to Respond to Violations of Conventions, Treaties and Declarations?

Organizers:

International Center for Not-for-Profit Law – ICNL
CIVICUS: World Alliance for Civic Participation

Moderators:

Clare Doube – *Australia*
David Moore – *U.S.*

Rapporteur:

Sharon Hom – *China*

This workshop focused primarily on the various constraints on civil space, and addressed barriers to civil society work, justifications given for such barriers, and strategies for removing or overcoming them. Within limited time constraints, the moderators also introduced and led a role-play of a UN Human Rights Council debate on a draft resolution.

Barriers

The workshop participants first identified a number of barriers faced by civil society, including legal, funding and resources, institutional and systemic constraints, and the larger geo-political context.

Legal

- The lack of effective mechanisms for civil society input;
- The lack of effective integration or domestic implementation of international conventions and norms;
- Gaps between legislation and implementation (or between norms and practice); and

- Implementation of NGO registration laws, which often translates into the criminalization of non-registered groups and activities, corruption and nontransparent administrative discretion and lack of accountability in the registration process, and invasive and restrictive oversight and control.

Funding and Resources

- The role and impact of foreign donors through their funding policies, priorities placed on domestic groups (e.g., the impact of a funder’s in-country operation or office on its ability to support groups critical of the authorities), and the need to balance access with independence; and
- Restrictions and difficulties in transferring and/or receiving foreign funding (including laws or regulations requiring the reporting of foreign transactions, which contributes to a chilling effect on civil society work) and the authorities’ ability to track and crack down on such transfers.

Institutions

- A lack of independent media, which makes it difficult to report on or investigate issues; and
- A lack of independent judicial systems or the transparent and accountable rule of law.

Geopolitics

- The post-September 2001 U.S.-led war on terror and related counter-terrorism measures have been used by some governments as justification for more repressive measures on civil society groups or activities, thus raising the issue of balance between security and respect for rights (privacy, freedom of expression, right to association) that conform to international standards.

Justifications

The participants explored justifications often cited for imposing constraints on, or limiting the activities of, civil society:

- Participants engaged in a role-play exercise of a UN Human Rights Council debate on a pretend statement from Zimbabwe proposing the channeling of all funding to NGOs through the UN.
- Participants identified supposed concerns often cited by governments about NGOs as instruments of foreign governments (by virtue of their funding and supposed threat of destabilizing or interfering in the country's domestic affairs).
- Participants briefly discussed the role of foreign NGOs based in developed countries, their limited knowledge and expertise of local conditions, and some tensions regarding differences in approach, priorities, and perspectives of local groups.

Role-play exercise and discussion: The workshop participants were assigned roles as representatives of different governments on the Human Rights Council. The simulation revealed different and predictable positions reflecting the geopolitics of state alignments and positions (e.g., repressive/Communist governments, blocs, Western democratic governments), especially regarding the role of NGOs and different views regarding the relationship of domestic NGOs to their own governments, as well as to foreign governments and international bodies.

Strategies

A recurring theme of the workshop was the need for networking and coordination among different actors (those in the private sector, government, etc.) and in different fora:

Coordination within civil society

- Domestic, regional, and international networking and coordination should be encouraged (allocation of different roles for different groups from the bottom up);
- There should be comparative analysis; and
- There should be greater development of education and more expertise on international mechanisms, such as the new UN Human Rights Council, or on special human rights mechanisms and treaty review processes (this would enhance the capacity of civil society groups to use international human rights norms and processes).

Coordination between civil society and specific international fora or other actors

- There should be more communication and dialogue between different actors so that media messages, reports, and recommendations are articulated in concise, accessible, and usable ways for policy makers;
- Lobbying and campaign activities (sharing information, coordinating launches, and coordinating lobbying at the UN and in regional venues);
- Strengthening international mechanisms and processes (e.g., the Human Rights Council and the new Universal Periodic Review of all member states);
- Utilizing and strengthening regional fora, such as groups active in the World Movement for Democracy;
- Participation in and use of global mechanisms, such as petitions to the International Labor Organization (ILO); and
- More effective engagement of civil society and the private sector on business and human rights issues in light of the important role and impact that multinational companies and domestic private sectors, as well as foreign investment, have regarding labor rights, the environment, rights of indigenous people, and the development of local communities (see, for example, the development of UN norms on human rights obligations, voluntary codes, and regulatory approaches).

Association, Assembly, and Advocacy: What Are the Best Strategies and Tactics for NGOs in Restrictive Legal Environments?

Organizers:

Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace (WLP)

Alliance for Reform and Democracy in Asia (ARDA)

Moderator:

Asma Khader – *Jordan*

Rapporteur:

Christina Halstead – *U.S.*

Presenters:

Chee Siok Chin – *Singapore*

Tolekan Ismailova – *Kyrgyzstan*

Marfua Tokhtakhodjaeva
– *Uzbekistan*

Sakena Yacoobi – *Afghanistan*

Civic activism around the world is under threat by rising religious fundamentalism, war and conflict, and government restrictions, including legislation that limits activities of civic organizations. In Afghanistan, the breakdown in security and the volatile economic conditions have made daily life a constant struggle. In Egypt, new legislation has made it nearly impossible for NGOs to function independently, as it denies their right to freedom of association and stifles their work for the promotion of reform and human rights. In some societies, increased activism by civil society has created a backlash by fundamentalists who have used a variety of means to suppress progressive efforts. In Palestine, devastating economic conditions have left civic organizers struggling to survive. Despite these harsh realities and setbacks, civil society is overcoming obstacles by developing innovative strategies appropriate to their context in order to create spaces for moderate voices to be heard and to bring about social change.

Chee Siok Chin, of the Alliance for Reform and Democracy in Asia (ARDA), explained that legal restrictions are not only found in developing countries, but can also be found in rich countries. Singapore is a very rich country with a literacy rate of 95 percent and a life expectancy of 80 years. Yet everything is controlled by the government, even when and how to associate, assemble, and advocate. Currently, the law states that there can only be four people assembled at one time for a protest. However, even when Ms. Chee assembled only four people for a protest, they were told to disperse. It is supposed to be understood that the law is there only to serve the government. The only strategy, then, is to call on the courage of civil society to defy the laws peacefully, as the cost of not doing so is our liberty and our life. Freedom comes with a price. It is not free.

Tolekan Ismailova, of Human Rights Center "Citizens Against Corruption," said that in Kyrgyzstan, which is also a rich country (although the wealth is ill-gotten),

activists are frequently targeted by the police. In December 2007, for instance, there were elections in Kyrgyzstan, and a press conference was organized by civil society organizations to state that the elections were falsified and that the procedure was monopolized by the presidential party. As a result, 20 people were arrested on December 18 and placed in prison, where the conditions were awful, and some of the prisoners were tortured. It is thanks to the international networks of "Citizens Against Corruption," such as WLP, that the prisoners, including Ms. Ismailova, were released. The case of Kyrgyzstan teaches that electoral democracies must be supported by good constitutional processes. Ms. Ismailova also made clear that there must be a very good horizontal network of solidarity both inside and outside of a country.

Marfua Tokhtakhodjaeva, of the Women's Resource Centre of Tashkent, explained that freedom of the press has been severely restricted in Uzbekistan. Her own NGO was shut down in 2005 due to government repression, at which point the organization shifted its activities to the Internet, but that, too, was shut down because the state began to block Web sites. The organization is currently organizing activities through the UN and other agencies, as well as with their partners in the region and provinces. It is important, Ms. Tokhtakhodjaeva said, to have access to information and communication technology and the skills to use them effectively in advocacy work. There also must be citizen involvement in, and popular support for, reforms if they are to be implemented successfully, and there must be a strong commitment to the core values of a democratic constitution and human rights principles.

Sakena Yacoobi, of the Afghan Institute of Learning, emphasized that Afghanistan has been ravaged by war for 30 years. People have been closed off from national and international society, and there are many Afghan refugees both inside and outside the country. However, there is democracy in Afghanistan, and there is a democratic constitution that stipulates many basic

rights, but the challenge is the implementation of those rights. Ms. Yacoobi has spent 18 years working in refugee camps, establishing underground schools, and attempting to work with the government in Afghanistan. Her organization has educational programs geared to empower young girls because an educated civil society can lead the country to democracy.

Recommended Strategies for Working in Restrictive Legal Environments

- › Peacefully defy laws;
- › Enact constitutional support;
- › Build and employ horizontal networks for solidarity both inside and outside the country;
- › Use information and communication technologies (ICTs, such as Web sites, blogs, video, email, phone, etc.) to further advocacy work;
- › Include women, who are not only the majority of the people in the world, but are also at the heart of the movement for expanding participatory, interactive, and inclusive approaches to leadership;
- › Develop support at the local and international levels;
- › Take the message from closed environments into the public space;
- › Work in cooperation with a variety of social justice movements;
- › Share learning and best practices;
- › Call on the international community to develop strong instruments to protect human rights and civil society organizations and to implement them;
- › Pressure the state to allow external funding for

organizations;

- › Mobilize youth, especially students;
- › Acquire and share knowledge because knowledge is power;
- › Cooperate with the UN and other international entities;
- › Strengthen campaigns by referencing UN conventions and declarations, especially the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm); and
- › Build strong networks and plans of action to protect democracy defenders and activists.

Next Steps

The workshop participants committed to achieve something specific on the topic of the workshop by the time of the next World Movement for Democracy assembly in 2010. The following steps were therefore suggested:

- › Use the Women's Learning Partnership's horizontal and participatory leadership curriculum, including *Leading to Choices* and *Leading to Action*, to train grassroots activist women and thus empower them to take on leadership roles in their families, communities, and at the national level; and
- › Organize a rapid response committee of lawyers, journalists, and advocates to provide support for human rights activists who are working in restrictive legal environments. Participants asked the organizers of the workshop to help establish such a committee. The organizers agreed to keep the participants informed of the progress made.

Effective Coalitions: How can National, Regional, and International Cooperation for Advocacy Be Generated?

Organizer:

Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace-WLP

Moderator:

Mahnaz Afkhami – Iran

Rapporteur:

Bunmi Dipo-Salami – Nigeria

Presenters:

Jacqueline Pitanguy – Brazil

Wajeeha Albaharna – Bahrain

Amina Lemrini – Morocco

Zainah Anwar – Malaysia

This workshop focused on building coalitions and strengthening networks to promote democratic governance, peace building, and women's human rights in order to strengthen and amplify the voices of moder-

ate and marginalized people. Participants explored concepts and strategies to develop, organize, and implement effective campaigns at the local, national, regional, and international levels. There was agree-

ment that it is becoming increasingly important to come together to work towards achieving the kind of world that democracy activists and practitioners envision, especially in the face of rising challenges. This process usually begins with identifying the nature of the problem and developing strategies appropriate to the local context.

Contexts

The opening presenters highlighted how they have worked with others to promote their campaigns at the national, regional, and international levels, almost always widely using new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Other participants identified the steps and good practices of coalition building.

Wajeelha Albaharna shared her experiences of working on the Citizenship Campaign, a multi-regional effort to advance an amendment to nationality laws in Bahrain to enable women to pass on their nationality to their children and husbands. With the slogan, “nationality is my right and my children’s right,” the coalition received regional solidarity from CRTD-A in Lebanon and international support from the Women’s Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace (WLP) and its partners in 20 countries around the globe. The Bahrain Women’s Association then expanded the Campaign to include groups in other Gulf countries, including Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, to achieve its objectives. Although the law has not been amended, a recently released royal decree recognized 372 children of Bahraini women as citizens.

Jacqueline Pitanguy presented the work of a coalition in Brazil formed in the 1970s when the country was still under a dictatorship. The goal was to bring awareness to violence against women as a criminal offense and punish perpetrators who murder women, instead of regarding it as a “legitimate defense of honor” as lawyers then labeled it. The group used protest marches and worked with the media, among other strategies, to call attention to the phenomenon. The efforts of the coalition led to the establishment of special police stations to deal with cases of domestic violence. There are now over 400 such stations in Brazil. Moreover, in 1991, the Supreme Court refused to yield to the argument of “legitimate defense of honor” and began to punish perpetrators.

Amina Lemrini discussed the Equality without Reservations Campaign in 13 Arab countries to mobilize support and push for the removal of reservations

to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in the Middle East and North Africa region. She noted that such reservations have rendered the CEDAW meaningless in those countries. The Campaign was launched to raise public awareness of the rights of women as human rights. It is working to raise such awareness among government agencies, as well as among a variety of UN mechanisms in cooperation with a broad network of human rights and feminist organizations and regional and international networks.

Finally, Zainah Anwar shared the experiences of her organization, Sisters in Islam, that has been working with the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality in Malaysia for over 20 years. The group came together in 1985 as a loose and fluid coalition, which has now evolved into a permanent coalition of five feminist groups for the advancement of women’s participation in democratic processes. It was important, she said, to work together on the initial campaign on the Violence against Women Bill to show the government that it was not an isolated demand of a single organization and to put the expertise of different members to maximum use. The coalition succeeded in getting the government to pass and implement the bill after 11 years of struggle.

Best Practices

- Have clear, explicit, and shared goals. The clearer the vision, the higher the level of success of the coalition.
- Develop specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) objectives and strategies, and set clear terms of cooperation.
- Understand the different contexts and adapt strategies and partnerships accordingly.
- Work with people with similar values and principles to ensure success.
- Regularly review the coalition’s objectives, evaluate its strategies, and be flexible to meet changing circumstances.
- Foster the organic growth of coalitions and strengthen solidarity at the local, regional, and international levels.
- Communicate effectively and build alliances with a wide variety of stakeholders, including government, individuals, organizations, the private sector, donors, media, progressive religious leaders, and social justice networks, among others, some of which are public while others remain invisible, and some of which

are purpose-specific and time-bound.

- Build relationships of trust based on respect for each other and respect for diversity.
- Identify human resources needed in terms of expertise and skills, and build on their strengths, resources, and strategic influence.
- Ensure participatory leadership and decision making that reflect democratic values and encourage consensus around a shared vision.
- Nurture commitment, enthusiasm, and passion.
- Build on social networks, especially among youth, through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Next Steps

Workshop participants agreed to stay together as members of a coalition building core group and support each other in dealing with the challenges they face, sharing experiences and information on “best practices” in developing and implementing effective coalitions in their own contexts. They will continue to communicate their progress on campaigns and coalition building and report at the next assembly. The membership of this group is open to all interested participants in the World Movement. WLP and the International Women’s Democracy Network (IWDN) volunteered to moderate its activities and kick-start the group immediately after the Assembly.

Freeing Prisoners of Conscience: What are the Effective Strategies?

Organizer:
Freedom Now (U.S.)

Moderator:
Jeremy Zucker – U.S.

Rapporteur:
Sanem Guner – Turkey

Presenters:
Yang Jianli – China
Livingstone Sewanyana – Uganda
Abdulahdi Alkhawaja – Bahrain

This workshop focused on the following questions:

- What is a prisoner of conscience, and is this definition sufficient?
- What are the legal approaches to freeing prisoners of conscience?
- What other approaches and strategies exist or might be employed?
- What institutions should be targeted?

Defining a Prisoner of Conscience (POC)

Amnesty International and others define a prisoner of conscience (PoC) as “someone imprisoned solely for the peaceful expression of their beliefs.” PoC can also refer to anyone imprisoned because of their race, religion, color, language, sexual orientation, belief, or lifestyle, so long as they have not used or advocated violence.

This definition poses problems of practical application, however. For instance, some governments might claim that certain human rights defenders or political activists are *inciting* violence, and therefore cannot be classified as prisoners of conscience. While some are detained or imprisoned for taking peaceful actions that may qualify as exercising fundamental freedoms (e.g., speech, religion, or assembly), others may com-

mit acts of violence in the service of defending these same freedoms. Therefore, not all such “political prisoners” are considered “prisoners of conscience.” Moreover, some are held for common crimes, but are denied due process rights to which they are entitled under international conventions. In some countries, the government will call both PoCs and political prisoners “security prisoners” to highlight that they pose a security threat, whereas the general public usually calls PoCs “political prisoners.”

There is also the problem of status: “detainee” versus “inmate.” That is, for someone to be considered a PoC, she or he needs to be convicted and imprisoned, but there are cases in which people are detained indefinitely (sometimes for many years) without formal charges. What status should they be assigned? This problem must be resolved.

Representation of all such detainees/prisoners likely serves to promote democracy and respect for the rule of law, and definitions, perhaps, should not stand in the way.

Legal Approaches

Domestic legal reform. Trying to reform certain laws that states use to authorize or excuse arbitrary detention can be a useful approach. In the case of Uganda,

human rights activists and lawyers campaigned against the Public Order and Security Act of 1967 that authorized indefinite detention of people identified as potential security threats. They campaigned against this repressive legislation and presented their case to the Law Reform Commission that resulted in the repeal of the Act. Although in practice not much has changed, the legal pretense is no longer there, so human rights defenders can now make stronger legal cases.

In addition to efforts to repeal laws in Uganda, petitions are also brought before the Constitutional Court to draw attention to the unconstitutionality of laws, such as the Police Act, 1994. A Constitutional petition against the application of the death penalty in Uganda resulted in a ruling of the Constitutional Court that while the death penalty is constitutional, mandatory death sentences are unconstitutional. This ruling opened the door for revisions and appeals of more than 600 cases involving Prisoners of Conscience. On July 15, 2008, the Supreme Court of Uganda heard the appeals, and the ruling will be delivered on a date to be announced.

In Bahrain, the State Security Measures Act was abolished in 2001 thanks to Bahrainis working in exile. Challenging the legal system, therefore, often does work.

Regional and multinational fora. Cases may be brought before regional judicial bodies, as well as the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. These bodies can decide that a PoC has been detained or imprisoned in violation of commitments made by the offending governments under relevant treaties, or under binding principles of customary international law. Such decisions can carry both legal and moral weight and lend themselves to subsequent governmental and public relations advocacy.

Regional bodies are closer to the countries in question and thus might be more effective than global ones. Both governments that are members of such bodies and other multi-party institutions like the UN refer to their decisions and such decisions thus have an amplified effect. However, the question is how to enforce the rulings of these bodies.

Some examples:

- Inter-American, African, and European Courts/Commissions on Human Rights.
- Regional systems in Africa, which are evolving. The African Union's adoption of the Optional Protocol, establishing an African Commission on Human and



People's Rights, is an example.

- Arab League Charter on Human Rights. There are a number of problems with this charter. First, its standards fall below international standards; since members of the Arab League are also members of international conventions, why resort to lower standards? Second, as a regional system the Charter does not have a mechanism—no court, no commission. Third, there is very narrow NGO representation; there is one person in the Arab League secretariat who deals with NGOs, but there is no NGO participation.

Other Strategies and Approaches

There are cases where it is not possible to take the legal route because the system is resistant to change or because there is no article of law to be amended. In these cases, a number of strategies and tactics can be used to free PoCs.

Raising international NGO attention. It is very important that there be ownership of a case, and that NGOs take full responsibility at each level, from making the necessary political contacts, to alerting the media, to organizing letter-writing campaigns. NGOs, such as Amnesty International, have been very effective in drawing international attention to PoCs; other NGOs, such as Freedom Now, are effective at taking ownership of cases, with PoCs as clients receiving full-service representation from start to finish. The approaches of these and other organizations are complementary. Even the International Red Cross (IRC), which deals with governments but refuses to give feedback to the local NGOs working on a case, has proved very useful. In the experience of Freedom

Now, for example, the IRC's involvement and prison visits helped improve the conditions in Bahraini prisons.

International human rights NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty, are also instrumental in gathering and cross-checking necessary information. It is a common state tactic to blame NGOs for manipulating information when it is presented to international institutions, so the help of international NGOs is very useful, especially when local NGOs must work in exile.

Making the case in international and regional bodies, and third countries, to expose wrongdoing and “embarrass” the government in question. Mechanisms, such as the UN Human Rights Council and the Subcommittee on Human Rights, are also very important because everybody is watching, thus providing a platform for both legal and moral arguments. International NGOs can make presentations that will affect state parties' desire to avoid embarrassment.

Based on pre-existing alliances, states often look out for one another under the UN umbrella, but once a case has been made loudly by an NGO, it is difficult for countries with relatively good human rights records to ignore it.

People should be convinced that international pressure works; in fact, the theory that such pressure will worsen things is a myth. The nature of authoritarian states is such that (with a few notable exceptions) they generally will not want to darken their names on the international scene.

Existing mechanisms, such as the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, are not without problems either. For example, regional governments on the Review Committee may end up siding with the government under review. Members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference asked that the session regarding Bahrain not be filmed in order to restrict NGO access to that hearing.

Attention also might be drawn to PoC cases and practices under other international treaties, such as conventions on the rights of children and on prohibiting torture. In addition, Special Rapporteurs (e.g., on Torture and on Freedom of Religion and Belief) at the UN and regional levels, and others specially appointed in this area (e.g., UN Special Representative regarding human rights defenders), offer additional avenues to draw attention to PoC cases and issues.

Gaining media attention. Media attention is important for two reasons. First, there should be effective public relations to deal with the disinformation of the

state against the PoCs. Second, if the media (especially international media) pay attention to a case, governments will try to save themselves from international exposure and embarrassment. Some countries are more in the limelight than others, and also may have more to gain or lose in terms of reputation, so it is easier to achieve positive results by drawing attention to human rights abuses in those places.

Working with local politicians and administrators who can indirectly influence the governments in question. For instance, members of the U.S. Congress have influenced the U.S. government to act on certain cases in China. In other cases, not the administration of a government, but individual parliamentarians, or even army officials, are in a better position to exert pressure on their counterparts in the government in question. Such contacts can be particularly useful where countries enjoy alliance relationships and pressure can thus be applied effectively. But alliances are double-edged, since “friends” may be reluctant to criticize or pressure one another, especially publicly.

Working in exile. If conditions do not allow activists to continue their activity and campaigns effectively from inside their country, getting out may be an option. In the Bahraini case, some human rights activists even benefited from their international experiences because they received training in European countries, made contacts, and increased their professionalism.

Mobilizing family members. The involvement of PoC family members can make a big difference. People are usually intimidated by guards and state officials, and assume that if they raise their voices the situation will worsen for the PoC. But family members should be encouraged to cooperate with international actions and the actions of the prisoners themselves. Of course, it is always up to the family whether to be activists or not, and not all families are unified around this approach.

In conclusion, there are a number of strategies used by PoCs themselves, as well as by lawyers and activists struggling for their release and struggling against arbitrary actions of the state. The international human rights community is better organized than it was in the past, and opportunities and networks, such as the World Movement for Democracy, give further hope for drawing attention to PoCs.

Building Democracy Networks under Authoritarianism: What's Possible?

Organizer:

People in Need Foundation (Czech Republic)

Moderator:

Kristina Prunerová – Czech Republic

Rapporteur:

Jan Marian – Czech Republic

Presenters:

Emad Shahin – Egypt
Hseng Moon – Burma
Noel Kututwa – Zimbabwe
Anahit Bayandur – Armenia
Leyla Yunusova – Azerbaijan
Vo Van Ai – Vietnam
Liudmila Hraznova – Belarus

This workshop focused on four case studies of authoritarian regimes in different regions: Burma, Belarus, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. Some similarities can be identified among these countries regarding the interaction between those within the countries' internal democracy movements and the democracy communities in exile as being vital for spreading information about developments in the country, raising awareness in the international community, and gathering international support.

Challenges and Strategies

Burma

Strategies to restore the rule of law in Burma include:

- › Documenting state violence against women;
- › Exposing the system of impunity and advocating to restore the rule of law;
- › Maintaining the Shan Women's Action Network;
- › Exposing practices of the regime through publications; and
- › Educating with a view to raising awareness.

Belarus

Human rights organizations used to compete with each other, but they now understand that the only possibility for success is to coordinate their activities while maintaining a certain division of labor.

- › Scholarships abroad for persecuted students are very important for fighting fear.
- › Political parties use elections organized by the regime as an opportunity to reach citizens, and there is greater cooperation among opposition political forces during election campaigns.
- › The Internet is crucial for enabling access to objective information, and broadcasting from abroad on a new TV channel, which recently began, is also proving effective.

ing effective.

- › The authoritarian system is actually not fully closed at present, thus providing opportunities being used by the democratic forces.

Vietnam

Although officially a communist regime, there is a strange mix in the country of an open economy and political repression, but there is no civil society.

- › The international community too often sacrifices human rights for business.
- › There should be greater international solidarity.
- › It is vital to consolidate a democratic network inside the country and link it to the outside world.
- › There is an efficient system for alerting and informing the international community about political arrests in Vietnam.
- › Education on human rights and existing international agreements, including UN documents agreed to by the Vietnamese government, is being organized by the democratic forces, but such documents have to be distributed as "samizdat" (i.e., underground information).
- › Radio Free Asia broadcasting to Vietnam and other countries in the region is enormously important.
- › UNDP and other international organizations often support government projects that undermine human rights.
- › There must be increased international pressure on the regime.

Zimbabwe

The NGO Forum established 10 years ago is working to challenge the impunity of the government in the courts and to take human rights cases to international human rights bodies.

- › The NGO Forum has established an international

office in London to advance advocacy and awareness.

- The research unit of the NGO Forum prepares reports on political violence and maintains a database of human rights violations.
- The names of officials responsible for human rights violations are being collected, but this makes it difficult for the government to hand over power due to their fear of transitional justice.

➤ The NGO Forum has failed to place Zimbabwe on the agenda of the international community in past years, but the country is now on the “human rights map of the world.”

➤ Human rights NGOs are exploiting the opportunity the government is creating by its effort to project an impression of democracy in the small space that is available.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization: What are the Threats to Democrats and What can be Done about Them?

Organizers:

World Uyghur Congress

Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights

Moderator:

Vitali Silitski – *Belarus*

Rapporteur:

Louisa Greve – *U.S.*

Presenters:

Elena Ryabinina – *Russia*

Dolkun Isa – *Xinjiang/East Turkestan*

Yevgeniy Zhovtis – *Kazakhstan*

Background

The “Shanghai Five” countries of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and China, which first met in 1996, became the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) with the addition of Uzbekistan in mid-2001, just before the September 11 attacks. To the original purpose of settling border issues left over from the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the group added cooperation in economics and trade, environmental protection, and the security issues of separatism, terrorism, and extremism. The track record shows, however, that the only operational cooperation has been in combating separatism, terrorism, and extremism, as defined by the authoritarian governments involved.

Challenges

- The SCO is the only international organization in the world without any democratic members. It is, in fact, a club of authoritarians that is led by two of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.
- The only concrete cooperation among the SCO governments is in the security sphere. Close analysis of the record to date leads to the unmistakable conclusion that its main function is mutual cooperation in suppressing domestic dissent.
- Today, the SCO embodies not only the authoritarians’ response to the post-September 11 war on terrorism (the trend of applying the label of “terrorist collaborators” to peaceful opposition and human rights

NGOs), but their post-Orange Revolution “backlash” against the “color revolutions” as well.

- The SCO agreements obligate each government to accept unreservedly each of the other government’s definition of who is a “terrorist.”
- There is clear evidence that the security forces of these countries share databases with names of individuals and organizations that allegedly constitute security threats, and that they work together to conduct cross-border kidnappings and extraditions of internal critics, in violation of numerous international treaties and agreements to which they are parties.
- The SCO’s rhetoric and operations take advantage of the genuine issue of radicalization in Central Asian countries, as well as xenophobia among the various populations.
- Diplomats, academics, and journalists in the democratic world are generally unaware of the grave human rights violations stemming from SCO cooperation.

Workshop participants agreed that the SCO’s anti-democratic effects are momentous and grave, but have been met with utter silence from governments and governmental bodies, such as the OSCE.

Recommendations

- **Establish an SCO Democratic Forum.** The workshop presenters and moderator volunteered to serve as an *ad hoc* organizing committee to form a coalition of groups concerned about the threats to democrats

resulting from the SCO governmental cooperation to suppress internal dissent.

➤ **SCO Democracy Watch—Report and Monitoring.**

The SCO Democratic Forum will identify a competent operational group, most likely outside the member states of the SCO, to issue an analytical report analyzing the SCO's track record, including the recent promulgation of a common definition of "extremism" in national-level legislation, and the hundreds of documented cases of long prison sentences and extra-legal extraditions of peaceful dissenters and refugees. The SCO Democracy Watch report will be used to accomplish the following goals:

- Raise awareness of SCO threats among diplomats, academics, and journalists; and
- Urge democratic governments, the OSCE, and other international organizations to protest the SCO's blatant violations of member-countries'

treaty obligations on human rights.

- The SCO Democratic Forum should also undertake ongoing monitoring; assist member organizations with issuing joint statements calling attention to SCO human rights violations; and encourage assistance initiatives, such as that undertaken by the Russia-based Civic Assistance Committee, to help asylum-seekers and all those detained and in danger of secret deportation (*refoulement*).
- In advance of the SCO Democracy Watch report recommended above, a handful of concerned NGOs should prepare a short "FAQ" backgrounder on SCO threats to human rights, which can be used by groups trying to raise awareness of those threats.
- The SCO Democracy Watch should issue reports and statements in Russian, English, and Chinese.

How to Strengthen the UN Human Rights Council through Cross-Regional Collaboration?

Organizer:

Democracy Coalition Project (U.S.)

Moderator:

Ted Piccone – U.S.

Rapporteur:

Dokhi Fassihian – U.S.

Presenters:

Jeremie Smith – Egypt

Anselmo Lee – South Korea

Ted Piccone, of the Democracy Coalition Project at the time and moderator of the workshop, began by stating that the UN Human Rights Council (Council) had proven to be a disappointment and that the change in its size and geographical distribution of its membership presented a challenge to its effective protection and promotion of human rights. Mr. Piccone noted, however, that despite these challenges country scrutiny was still continuing both in the Council and in the UN General Assembly's Third Committee. He noted that the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the new annual elections process were unique features that offered continuing opportunities to strengthen the Council. He also briefed participants about the 2008 Council elections, which were scheduled to take place on May 21. He noted that due to de facto clean slates in Africa and Latin America, competition existed only in three regions during this cycle: Western Europe and Others, Eastern Europe, and Asia. He also noted that a global coalition of NGOs were working to ensure that the best candidates would be elected in Asia, where Sri Lanka, Bahrain, and Pakistan were vying for four

available seats, alongside Timor Leste, South Korea, and Japan.

In his opening presentation, Jeremie Smith of the Cairo Institute of Human Rights emphasized the importance of participation at the Council by human rights organizations from the global South. He noted that international cross-regional advocacy should be strengthened to supplement traditional Geneva-based advocacy by human rights groups. Mr. Smith discussed the various ways in which NGOs can participate in their countries' UPR and the importance of sharing best practices in this effort.

Anselmo Lee of the Asian Forum for Human Rights characterized the UPR mechanism as an important manifestation of the universality of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Despite its shortcomings, and the fact that the UPR is a "peer" review process, Mr. Lee noted that the new mechanism is comprehensive, inclusive, and offers opportunities for NGOs to participate as stakeholders. Mr. Lee also noted that the UPR is particularly important in the

Asian context given the absence of a regional human rights mechanism.

Dokhi Fassihian of the Democracy Coalition Project briefed participants on the outcome of the Seventh Session of the Council, which ended on March 31. She outlined key country-specific, institutional, and thematic decisions taken by the body, including the emergence of challenges to the mandate on freedom of opinion and expression and the controversial concept of defamation of religion championed by the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The mandates on Burma and North Korea were extended, but the mandate on the Democratic Republic of Congo was not due to pressure from the Africa group. In addition, Ms. Fassihian briefed participants about the efforts of a global cross-regional network of organizations working together on a wide range of issues at the Council.

Recommendations

As a result of their exchanges on the challenges related to the UN Human Rights Council, the workshop participants made the following recommendations:

- The persistence of bloc and cross-regional politics at the UN requires NGOs to develop cross-regional and regional advocacy strategies that are specific to the issue at hand.
- The UPR presents an important opportunity for increased national, regional, and international coop-

eration.

- Bilateral and multilateral strategies on Council issues must be developed and pursued simultaneously.
- A lack of capacity among small, poor states, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, is a serious problem and should be addressed so countries that wish to demonstrate leadership at the Council are capable of doing so.
- Donors should address the training and funding needs of southern-based human rights organizations to enable them to participate consistently and effectively at the Council.
- Better domestic and media strategies are needed to highlight serious human rights situations and shame governments into action.
- Latin American countries, which currently serve as a swing region at the Council, should be encouraged to play a more pro-active role on key country-specific issues, not only on thematic ones.
- A core group of organizations in each region should be established to monitor and advocate at the Council.
- Human rights organizations from the Middle East and Muslim countries should take the lead in advocating against the problematic concept of defamation of religion and the effort to equate it with racial or religious discrimination, or restrict the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Political Party Building and Elections

Workshops

Developing and Implementing Norms and Standards for Political Parties

Organizer:

National Democratic Institute-NDI (U.S.)

Moderator:

Roel von Meijenfeldt
– The Netherlands

Rapporteur:

Sef Ashiagbor – U.S.

Presenters:

Benjamin Reilly – Australia
Ivan Doherty – Ireland
Ann Linde – Sweden

While the need for party reform is receiving increased international attention, there have been few efforts to engage political parties in articulating global benchmarks for party conduct. During this workshop, participants discussed different approaches to developing and enforcing standards for political parties and formulated recommendations for building upon emerging efforts in this area.

In his opening presentation, Ivan Doherty introduced *Minimum Standards for the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties*, a document that outlines norms and principles for party behavior and internal organization. The guidelines, developed by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), are the result of a collaborative effort involving international party groupings and other institutions working in the area

of party development. The document is an attempt to articulate basic standards towards which political parties can strive. Since the behavior and operations of certain parties already far exceed the suggested norms and principles, the standards do not necessarily reflect best practice. Mr. Doherty emphasized the voluntary nature of the document and cautioned against its imposition on parties through legal or other similar formal means. The document is available in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish on NDI's Web site: <http://ndiaction.org/node/316>.

For centuries, political parties have been viewed from two contrasting perspectives. The somewhat idealist position holds that political parties should be internally democratic while performing a wide range of critical functions in democracies; a perhaps more realist approach would view parties as self-interested bodies whose primary goal is to win elections. Benjamin Reilly noted in his opening presentation that the longstanding tension between these two views, which forms the backdrop for much party development work, is reflected in the NDI document. He also commented on challenges party-strengthening efforts face: First, many party-strengthening programs use the mass party as a model when that model is becoming increasingly rare. Second, while international support for party development is increasing, there is also greater realization of the difficulties associated with defining and measuring the impact of party development work.

In her opening presentation, Ann Linde shared the experiences of the Socialist International (SI), the largest international grouping of like-minded parties, in applying its *Ethical Charter* to member parties. The Charter sets requirements for membership conduct in the areas of ideological beliefs, respect for pluralistic democracy, commitment to fundamental human rights, and support for peace and disarmament. Using a variety of examples, Ms. Linde described how SI's Ethics Committee (on which she sits) uses a combination of quiet diplomacy, investigative initiatives, and other means to ensure implementation of Charter provisions among its member parties. Ultimately, members may be suspended from SI for violating the document. She described the challenge of striking a balance between privately calling a member to order when a problem arises and using more public actions or sanctions that can either damage the affected party's reputation and electoral prospects or tarnish the broader image of SI.

There was general consensus among participants that while voluntary, the NDI *Minimum Standards for*

the Democratic Functioning of Political Parties can prove very helpful in increasing understanding of how parties should behave and organize themselves internally. Attendees called for widespread dissemination of the document and additional efforts to secure its endorsement by groups not initially involved in its development.

However, several participants noted that various aspects of the document should be fleshed out further in follow-up initiatives. These might include efforts to develop additional tools and resources to achieve the following:

- Strengthen evaluation of the impact of party-development programs;
- Help parties improve their operations;
- Inform academic and analytical work on political parties; and
- Inform criteria for interacting with political parties around the world.

International peer pressure among political parties, especially through the party internationals, provides opportunities for improving party behavior and organization. Such pressure can be applied both within each party family, as well as through cooperation across the various ideologically-based associations. While civil society can also play an important role in raising concerns about parties that fall short of expected standards, overly aggressive civic actions run the risk of putting party groupings on the defensive and leading them to suspect ulterior motives.

Interparty dialogue at the domestic level, used, for instance, to draft party law and develop electoral codes of conduct, can also be used to promote consensus on standards to which all political parties in a particular country can subscribe.

Participants also recognized that regulation and oversight of political parties, while distinct from voluntary documents such as the *Minimum Standards*, is important. However, there was consensus that the extent and areas of regulation vary from one country to another based on domestic contexts. For instance, while certain countries, in Africa and Asia for example, seek to ban ethnic or regionally-based parties to protect national integrity, elsewhere for example, in parts of Europe, such parties are often perceived as a legitimate way for minority groups to participate more effectively in political processes. Furthermore, while in certain contexts more extensive regulation might be justified to encourage the development of open, demo-

cratic political parties, elsewhere, public access to information helps create systems that are more or less self-regulating through the voters' ability to reward or punish non-performing parties freely. Participants also noted that authoritarian regimes can use extensive party regulation to stymie competition.

Finally, participants called for increased interaction between civic activists and political practitioners at the international level and using forums such as the World Movement for Democracy. While political parties may be part of the problem in many democracies, they must also be part of the solution.

Civil Society Strategies for Free and Fair Elections

Organizers:

Democratic Initiatives Foundation
(Ukraine)

Human Rights Monitor (Nigeria)

Moderators:

Ilko Kucheriv – Ukraine

Festus Okoye – Nigeria

Rapporteur:

Festus Okoye – Nigeria

Presenters:

Maina Kiai – Kenya

Michael McFaul – U.S.

Kingsley Rodrigo – Sri Lanka

Rindai Chipfunde-Vava – Zimbabwe

Yevhen Bystrytsky – Ukraine

Grigorij Meseznikov – Slovakia

Participants and presenters in this workshop shared their experiences and knowledge implementing different strategies aimed at ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections in their various countries.

Challenges

- › Attempts by the government to create divisions within civil society groups and organizations and/or to form civil society groups and organizations subservient to its policies and programs;
- › Attempts at reducing political space by use of political forces that gained their legitimacy through free and fair elections;
- › The sponsorship of domestic and international election monitors and observers by the government;
- › The sponsorship of exit and parallel polls by the government as a counterforce to those of civil society groups and organizations;
- › The restrictions imposed by some governments to frustrate foreign observers attempting to monitor elections; and
- › Jamming of radio stations by the government.

Strategies

- › Conduct exit polls and parallel counts by independent consortia of civil society groups and organizations;
- › Network with pressure groups and other civil society stakeholders to promote free and fair elections;
- › Form domestic election monitoring and observation groups;

- › Use civic and voter education and other outreach activities;
- › Conduct research and advocacy on electoral reforms;
- › Use alternative media to reach the electorate;
- › Use community workshops, billboards, and flyers urging voters to exercise their franchise;
- › Mobilize ordinary people for massive demonstrations and resistance activities;
- › Monitor media coverage of elections, campaigns, and political party platforms;
- › Disseminate targeted information using the Internet and alternative media;
- › Extend invitations to international nongovernmental organizations and observers to monitor particular elections;
- › Coordinate and broaden democratic alliances involving broad sections of the populace;
- › Monitor the use of state resources to influence the vote;
- › Form a movement for political accountability; and
- › Conduct coordinated training of electoral management agencies and civil society groups and organizations.

Lessons Learned

- › Civil society organizations must not wait until the last minute to prepare for elections.
- › Civil society organizations must start the processes of building broad coalitions and networks of domestic

election observers early enough to achieve meaningful results.

- Special attention must be paid to the neutrality of domestic election observers.
- Civil society groups must avoid intense power struggles related to the issue of donor funding and leadership of domestic election monitoring groups.
- International nongovernmental organizations should not delay the release of the results of their exit polls on political grounds.
- The institutional capacity of election management bodies should be enhanced to enable them to deliver credible elections.

Recommendations

- Civil society groups should standardize the processes of vote tabulation, the quick count, and the exit poll.
- Clearly define the legal framework of domestic election observation.

- Clearly define norms for international election observation.
- Strengthen and define the level of coordination between domestic monitors and international observers.
- Standardize data quality for the conduct and release of exit polls, vote tabulation, and the parallel vote.
- Reflect on the role and actions of civil society groups after electoral fraud and irregularities have been established.

Suggested Rules of Engagement

- International monitors should coordinate more with domestic observers.
- International monitors and observers must conform to their code of ethics and standards of international election observation.
- It is important to strengthen the electoral management agency and free media as necessary instruments for free and fair elections.

Democracy Research and Education

Workshops

What Can Democracies Do to Reduce Poverty and Inequality?

Organizers:

Network of Democracy Research
Institutes-NDRI
Institute for Democracy in South
Africa-IDASA

Moderators:

Marc Plattner – *U.S.*
Paul Graham – *South Africa*

Rapporteur:

Melissa Aten – *U.S.*

Presenters:

Diego Abente – *Paraguay*
Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi – *Ghana*

The era of democratic transitions may now be in the past and many of the Third Wave democracies have enjoyed several decades of democracy. However, there is growing popular dissatisfaction with democracy in many parts of the world. Democracies must therefore do more to address the everyday concerns of people, including the high levels of inequality and poverty in many societies. While there is no question that democracy delivers certain political goods, there is an expectation on the part of the population that government will deliver social and economic goods as well. A democratic regime that fails to provide people with a basic standard of living may not survive very long, and the threat of a return to non-democratic government is real. Over 40 participants gathered in this workshop to discuss these issues and to offer

recommendations about how democracies can reduce inequality and poverty.

Two opening presenters, Diego Abente and Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi, provided an overview of the situation in Latin America and Africa, respectively. Dr. Abente pointed out that the levels of inequality in Latin America are higher than in many other parts of the world and that the poverty rate in 2006 was approximately the same as it was in 1980. He stressed, however, that these high levels of inequality and poverty in the region are not a result of the market. Indeed, before taxes and redistribution programs, the Gini coefficient (a statistical measure of a country's income or wealth inequality on a scale of 0 to 1) for Latin America (.52) is only slightly higher than it is for



Europe (.46). The difference between the two regions becomes sharp only after state distribution programs and taxation are considered (.50 for Latin America versus .31 in Europe). The weakness of the state in Latin America is thus the major impediment to reducing levels of poverty and inequality.

Therefore, according to Dr. Abente, a major effort along three fronts is needed: first, the tax burden on the wealthy should be increased in developing countries to muster the resources to finance anti-poverty programs. Second, spending should be carefully targeted to benefit people who are really in need. Finally, a long-term strategic plan for economic development should be put in place to gradually phase out existing programs and replace them with a vigorous economy capable of providing decent jobs to all.

Dr. Gyimah-Boadi pointed out that in Africa the focus is on poverty more than inequality, and he discussed how national governments in Africa have begun to address poverty reduction over the last 10 years. Their anti-poverty programs, however, are predicated on the assumption that these countries are governed well, when, in fact, voice – that is the ability of the people to speak freely, demonstrate, organize, and influence governmental affairs – and accountability are severely constrained in most of them. Without voice and accountability, there is little incentive for the design and implementation of effective social policy programs. Dr. Gyimah-Boadi discussed three major impediments to voice and accountability (and therefore effective poverty reduction campaigns):

› **Strong presidents:** there are not enough checks on presidential power in Africa, allowing presidents to maintain complete control of natural resources and treasuries, which in turn enables them to distribute money however they desire, usually to their friends and cronies, rather than to social programs.

› **Elections:** African elections are weak vehicles for promoting accountability. Campaigns are based on personalities, not issues, so there is rarely discussion of social policy programs during campaigns.

› **Capacity:** most states do not have the institutional and financial capacity to carry out poverty reduction programs.

Recommendations

- › Reduce levels of corruption: if all the state's resources are being diverted through corruption, there are no resources left to be used for basic infrastructure, let alone social programs;
- › Introduce education campaigns that inform citizens of their rights and teach them job skills so they do not have to rely on the state (where possible);
- › Strengthen institutions such as parliaments so they can exercise their oversight roles more effectively;
- › Encourage the media and civil society to expose corruption and educate the public and policy makers about the socioeconomic conditions of citizens;
- › Strengthen labor unions to ensure worker rights and fair wages;
- › Develop targeted poverty reduction programs, including conditional cash-transfer programs to low-income families of the kind being used in some Latin American states;
- › Improve taxation policies to redistribute wealth more effectively and to generate revenue for social policy programs;
- › Strengthen the rule of law to increase accountability and reduce corruption; and
- › Enforce rules that discourage foreign investment in undemocratic countries and reward businesses that follow fair employment practices.

Teaching Democracy in Difficult Political and Cultural Environments: What Works?

Organizers:

Education Society of Malopolska
(Poland)
Centre for Civic Education (Pakistan)

Moderator:

Alicja Derkowska – Poland

Rapporteur:

Julie Boudreaux – Poland

Presenters:

David McQuoid-Mason – South Africa

Zafarullah Khan – Pakistan

Paul Smyth – U.K.

Aleksandra Kujawska – Poland

Five opening presenters in this workshop illustrated some of their strategies for teaching democracy. This was followed by a round of questions and smaller group discussions to allow participants to share their expertise and experiences in various situations with each other.

The Foundation for Education for Democracy (FED) was created in Poland to teach democratic values in difficult situations. Its work in Tajikistan, for example, initially targeted teachers and NGOs, 95 percent of whom are women. Although the participants enjoyed the workshops in Tajikistan, they responded that the seminars were not very useful because they couldn't just listen; they wanted to be active. When asked what they needed, they responded that they needed cows. The FED therefore raised money in Poland to buy cows for the participants and distributed them on the provision that half the milk produced by each cow must be given to a neighbor. Thus far, 33 cows have been purchased and small scale entrepreneurial endeavors have begun. Seminars continue to be organized, but on topics of the women's choosing.

In South Africa during apartheid, the Center for Socio-Legal Studies in Durban used the Street Law Program to teach the ways in which law affects all people. It came up with six strategies that enabled the Center to work effectively from 1985-1993 in a hostile environment:

- Be creative! Don't mention human rights or democracy!
- Present your work as a neutral program.
- Look for strategic allies in the field of law and education.
- Establish your work as an academic program. Find the gaps that enable you to link your work to a university; this protected the partner NGOs during apartheid.
- Project your program as teaching good citizenship, getting citizens to obey the laws of the regime, which then gives you an opportunity to address deeper issues.

- Organize protest meetings disguised as academic lectures or "teach-ins."

In Pakistan, the Islamabad-based Centre for Civic Education faces many challenges. In a country of 160 million, half the nation is illiterate and lives in poverty. Textbooks censure democracy. There is a weak civil society with numerous social deficits and domination of the public sphere by the authoritarian regime. Democracy has been called a "Western" import. Within this context, the Centre strives to overcome cultural and religious barriers by showing that "good ideas travel without passports." The Centre uses many hands-on activities to reach all strata of society, tailoring civic education games, forums, and networks to those in small villages who are unable to read. More than 30,000 students have participated in the "Project Citizen Pakistan" in 10 districts during the last three years.

Northern Ireland often serves as a model for successful conflict resolution. The Public Achievement (PA) Program has had great success in working with youth in contested spaces. This success has led to the internationalization of the PA Program and increased efforts to bring together youth workers from conflicted regions to figure out what makes them active. PA will also be a model for work with youth in the Basque country. WIMPS (Where Is My Public Servant?) is designed to change youth perceptions of politics, politicians' perception of youth, and youth perceptions of themselves.

The Educational Society for Malopolska's VILLAGE program is designed to teach democracy to the youngest citizens with a very hands-on approach that enables them to actually "live" in a democracy of their creation, regardless of whether their country or state is a democracy. Using a multitude of practical skills (creative writing, math, language arts, building and technical skills), these 8-13 year-olds build a real village on a scale of 1:25. The "hidden agenda" is a complex situation; all the decisions are made by the children as resi-

dents of this village. They thus learn basic democratic skills of decision making, respect for others, tolerance, and social responsibility at a very early age.

Recommendations

- Organize study visits and trainings to share experiences, including work with foreign partners.
- Start democracy education as early as possible, but include parallel work with youth to reach as many age levels as possible.
- Work within positive elements of your society, no matter how oppressive it is to find gaps or spaces where you can operate.
- Do not present democracy as a threat when working with religious or cultural communities, but rather as something that will enhance those communities.
- Link democracy to local conditions so it is not seen as something foreign that is being imposed. Draw on people's own experiences.
- Neutrality and impartiality are crucial, whether working in conflict or post-conflict situations. In both instances, you must reach out not only to communities, but to authorities as well.
- Mass education, if possible, is efficient, but training trainers is often more effective, especially when done at all levels (community, district, and national).
- Make sure that programs are tailored to particular constituencies that you are working with by using appropriate examples.
- In oppressive societies that have a bill of rights, parliamentary representatives can act as useful resource persons to promote the values of the Constitution in various educational institutions.
- Space should be provided to young people to express their views.
- Show sensitivity to the origin of trainers and find neutral venues that enable all participants to feel comfortable and safe to express themselves.
- Do a "needs assessment" at the beginning of a workshop and suggest other partners as appropriate.
- Value intellectual ammunition. For example, use foreign language courses to teach concepts that are otherwise taboo.
- Support entrepreneurs in poor countries; their basic needs must be met so higher needs can be addressed.
- Design democracy education projects so they are tailored to the needs of illiterate young people, not only of the educated.
- Use creative approaches, such as art, video, and role-playing.
- Use NGOs to assist and train educators to promote democratic programs at schools.

Experiential Learning: Democracy and Human Rights Education for Youth

Organizer:

World Youth Movement for Democracy

Moderator:

Anastasia Nikitina – *Russia*

Rapporteur:

Oleksandra Matviychuk – *Ukraine*

Presenters:

Andrey Yurov – *Russia*

Dyan Aimee Mabunga Rodrigues – *The Philippines*

The workshop participants shared their experiences in teaching human rights and democracy and defined the basic conceptual situations for teaching youth. According to Andrey Yurov in his opening presentation, teaching human rights and democracy is a contradictory thing. First, despite the fact that a goal of teaching is to introduce certain values, knowledge, and skills to young people, they should be encouraged to draw their own conclusions in an independent way, and the role of the teacher is to stimulate this independence of thought.

Second, there is a contradiction related to the

approaches to teaching human rights. There is the basic emphasis on interactive methods (games, simulations, practice cases, etc.) and then there is the approach based on actual people's proposals, not just games, and this involves variants of real participation and action. A basic principle is therefore the following: You must give a person the opportunity to do real work (for instance, a minimal exercise would be to collect signatures for a petition); this does not change the situation, but it does influence it, and behind these actions are the real fates of real people. The resulting feeling of cooperation changes young people's per-

ception of the world.

Third, the very combination of human rights and democracy is in tension because even in an advanced democracy there is the power of the majority, even though there may be limitations on it, while human rights reflect the rights of individuals and minorities to confront the majority. To teach both human rights and democracy, we must be aware of this tension. On the one hand, human rights cannot exist without democratic power structures; on the other hand, democracy (majority rule) can be a threat to certain human rights. Human rights is thus about the limitations on democracy.

With this opening presentation, workshop participants then shared successful experiences in teaching human rights and democracy. Two important considerations were emphasized. The first concerns the relationship of the teacher to the material. The individual values and point of view of the teacher can strongly affect his or her students. After all, teaching democracy and human rights is, in part, about what is occurring in the world now, which cannot be found in books. The teacher is the main instrument, and it is impossible for the teacher to simply be neutral about the threats to human rights; it is necessary to have an active position in support of human rights and constantly demonstrate it. The main criterion for assessing material for a young audience is frequently not determining what is correct or incorrect, but what is honest and dishonest, and the teacher must be clear on where he or she stands.

The second consideration concerns the use of success stories about young people in other countries, that is, the use of examples from actual people with whom it is possible to interact, request advice, and exchange views.

Another key issue discussed at the workshop is the problem of young people's indifference to human rights. In the view of a majority of the workshop participants, many youth are uninterested in human rights because they have grown tired of misinformation and lies. The only effective way to teach in light of this is to demonstrate honesty and readiness to act on behalf of human rights. In her presentation, Dyan Aimee Mabunga shared her experience in teaching human rights and democracy in such situations, where there is general disappointment among the youth. There is one thing that should be emphasized, she said: It is important to understand that to obtain the change we want in this world, we must begin by changing ourselves.

In the remainder of the discussion participants concluded that there are no means for teaching human rights and democracy other than to present doubts and tensions honestly. This requires the highest skills. What is most important is the readiness of teachers to learn in their own classrooms, to be open to listening to others, and to transfer not just values, knowledge, and practices, but an understanding of relationships in this world. "You learn so you can be" is one of the main principles.

Regional Networking

Africa

Organizer:

African Democracy Forum-ADF

Moderators:

Hannah Forster – *The Gambia*

Ayo Obe – *Nigeria*

Rapporteur:

Tapera Kapuya – *Zimbabwe*

Presenters:

Paul Graham – *South Africa*

Hassan Shire Sheik – *Somalia*

Penda Mbow – *Senegal*

Hannah Foster, chairperson of the African Democracy Forum (ADF), a network of democrats in Africa, noted that despite the Africa Union (AU)'s adoption of many charters and protocols safeguarding freedom on the continent, most have not served as advocacy tools for African civil society. Most of them have not been ratified by African governments, so civil society and democracy activists must push their governments to ratify and implement them in their countries. Drawing

on AU instruments in advocating for democracy legitimates democratic demands, which are often dismissed by detractors as being of Western origin.

The Charter on the Rights of Women, for example, could be a useful tool for those working on advancing equality and freedom for women in societies experiencing patriarchal oppression. The AU Constitutive Act is more expansive concerning aspirations to establish democracies that guarantee civil and politi-

cal rights, and should thus be a key reference tool for those engaged in democracy advocacy in Africa.

Paul Graham, executive director of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), discussed the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance that was adopted in January 2007. The text of the Charter was developed during the “romantic” era of the 1990s, when much of Africa was experiencing a renewed wave of democratization, as a way to encourage democratic competition in the political process. The objectives of the Charter are:

- The promotion of universal democratic values and principles;
- The promotion of, and adherence to, the rule of law and the supremacy of the constitutional order; and
- The promotion of free and fair elections to institutionalize the legitimate authority of representative government.

The Charter places sanctions on the unconstitutional overthrow of governments and on the refusal of an incumbent to hand power over to a legitimately elected successor. The Charter offers the clearest statement of the AU’s commitment to democratic governance, rule of law, and free and fair elections, and had it been ratified and functioning earlier, democracy movements in countries such as Zimbabwe could have appealed to the AU for redress.

The Charter has thus far been signed by 17 countries, but none have ratified it. To take effect, it must be ratified by 15 countries, following which the challenge is incorporating it into national law. It is worth noting that constitutions in some countries (including Namibia, Ghana, and South Africa) include provisions for the automatic incorporation into national law. Unfortunately, to this day critical countries, such as South Africa and Nigeria, have not yet signed the Charter. The African Democracy Forum (ADF) and its member organizations have agreed to campaign for the signing and ratification of the Charter; for this purpose, they can learn from the experience of the Solidarity for African Women’s Rights Campaign for the ratification of the AU Charter on Women’s Rights. It was proposed that the ADF write to all African foreign ministries to determine their respective countries’ positions on the Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

An overview of the World Movement’s report on *Defending Civil Society* was presented by Hassan Shire Sheikh, executive director of the East and Horn of Africa Regional Human Rights Defenders Network (EHAHRD-Net). The report highlights threats to democracy activ-

ists, identifying journalists as being among the most affected, and conveys the long-established principles for protecting civil society, such as the rights to free expression, assembly, advocacy, and to obtain resources.

Penda Mbaw of the University of Cheick Anta Diop in Senegal remarked that the report’s definition of civil society was limited too much to NGOs and does not sufficiently appreciate the diverse forms of civic space, especially informal groups. Broadening the definition of civil society would thus prevent misinterpretation. On the critical challenges, Mbaw suggested greater international support for democracy activists and groups operating in closed and repressive societies while defending the gains made in countries that are currently enjoying relative peace and democracy.

African civil society is not only facing threats from governments, but also from civil society itself. Civil society’s failure to be creative in response to newer challenges, and its disconnectedness from the masses, renders it less effective and liable to be regarded as either a tool of foreign influence or elitist. Competition among civil society groups undermines the ability to benefit from potentially helpful synergies. Funding should not undermine the independence and autonomy of NGOs and civic groups, and there is a need to promote local material support for democracy work. The private sector in Africa should therefore invest in democracy-building work.

Zimbabwean activists in the workshop presented a report on the situation in Zimbabwe, and identified the role the ADF and other activists can play. Despite the elections on March 29, 2008, the Zimbabwean government had yet to announce the results of the presidential elections (as of the time of the Assembly when this report was produced). A clampdown had begun, targeting opposition supporters and activists, civic activists, and journalists. Rural areas were being cordoned off by paramilitary groups sympathetic to the incumbent government. The ADF and workshop participants agreed to issue an urgent statement encouraging the Zimbabwean authorities to release the election results and halt the repression.

It was strongly suggested that the ADF be more active in supporting democracy in troubled countries, such as Sudan and Zimbabwe. Participants also recommended that the ADF lead and coordinate the advocacy for regional and AU instruments on democracy, the rule of law, and good governance. Effective information sharing should be a priority to ensure that the ADF and World Movement participants can be well informed about each other’s events and activities.

Asia – Encouraging Religious Engagement for Democracy

Organizer:

World Forum for Democratization in Asia-WFDA

Moderator:

Wen-cheng Lin – *Taiwan*

Rapporteur:

Bo Tedards – *U.S. (Taiwan-based)*

Presenters:

Vo Van Ai – *Vietnam (France-based)*

The Venerable U Pannya Vamsa –
Burma (Malaysia-based)

Mufti Makarim Al-Akhlaq – *Indonesia*

Yang Jianli – *China (U.S.-based)*

The Venerable U Pannya Vamsa of Burma described religion as being like fire: it can be a powerful force for good, but it can also be extremely dangerous. Either way, it is a major factor in all Asian societies. The Asia regional workshop thus raised the question of how to channel religion towards democratic outcomes? The workshop aimed to explore various positive experiences with religion in Asia and develop mutual learning and cooperation opportunities. It also sought to address the ways in which religious groups and practitioners can make contributions to democratization, especially in countries with anti-democratic regimes. The role of religious groups in democratization is highly pertinent in light of recent events in the region, including the leading role of monks in the “Saffron Revolution” in Burma last year and the recent Tibetan uprising.

Many other historically relevant cases were mentioned during the workshop. For example, in Taiwan, the Presbyterian Church played a key role in supporting the democracy movement during the depths of the martial law era. Similar contributions were made by churches in South Korea, the Catholic Church in The Philippines, and some of the main Muslim organizations in Indonesia, notably the Nahdlatul Ulama under the leadership of former President Abdurrahman Wahid. In addition to the religious groups active in Tibet and Burma, other groups currently acting to increase democratization in their countries include the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and the Falun Gong and underground Christian churches in China.

All major religious traditions have had positive contributions at various times and places. At the same time, participants recognized that some religious organizations of various traditions have also held progress back, or even contributed to human rights abuses, in extreme cases committing abuses themselves. Several workshop participants warned of anti-democratic or anti-human rights positions taken by some fundamentalist or extremist groups in many Asian countries, especially when such groups take absolutist positions or try to control state institutions. It was

also noted that religious groups have often inflamed tensions in conflict areas.

From the experience of the participants, the importance of religious groups to democratization is greater in countries controlled by authoritarian regimes. In such situations religious groups are usually one of the major elements of civil society—sometimes even the only organized element, as in Vietnam today. Religious groups have frequently been able to maintain some independence from the regime, and can thus provide a supportive context for democratization movements.

However, participants also noted that religious clergy usually avoid direct participation in politics after a democratic transition. The experience of Muslim clerics in Indonesia demonstrated that such participation can be counterproductive. Religious leaders should not forget that their primary role as teachers and providers for the spiritual needs of the people is often unsuited to day-to-day policy making, for example, in the legislative process.

Recommendations

- Minimum requirements should be established for engagement with any kind of group, including religious groups; such requirements should include respect for, and commitment to, basic human rights. Groups that do not uphold these principles should not be considered for engagement.
- Religious groups must be tolerant of other religions, as well as secularists. They should not claim absolute authority or violate the basic principle of separation of church and state.
- Religious groups should proactively engage in effective dialogue, both with other religious groups and secular civil society, especially human rights and democracy advocacy groups. This is important to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings, which a participant from China mentioned have already arisen in his country, and to generate effective coalitions to promote democratization.

One strategy for secular democracy and human rights groups is to engage with religious groups and leaders and educate them about democratic principles so they can transmit them to their followers on the grassroots level. A successful example of this

has been carried out in Indonesia. This strategy can be an effective way to bring civic education to the grassroots and can serve as a valuable instrument in preventing religious extremism.

Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia

Organizers:

Youth Human Rights Movement
(Russia)
Europe XXI Foundation (Ukraine)
Center for the Development of
Democracy and Human Rights
(Russia)

Moderator:

Andrey Yurov – Russia

Rapporteur:

Anna Dobrovolskaya – Russia

Presenters:

Yuri Dzhibladze – Russia
Maksym Latsyba – Ukraine
Hikmet Hadji-Zada – Azerbaijan
Anahit Bayandur – Armenia
Anastasia Nikitina – Russia
Dmitri Makarov – Russia

This workshop brought together more than 80 participants from Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia. The opening presentations addressed the following issues:

- Challenges and threats to the development of civil society within the region;
- What NGOs and civil society activists from different countries can do together in the region; and
- Successful experiences of international cooperation within and outside the region.

The workshop participants mentioned different collaborative trends among civil society activists, human rights defenders, and democracy leaders in countries throughout the region. While recognizing some commonalities, participants argued that countries in the region have each gone through transitions in their own ways. Because of the differences in these experiences and in light of current situations, it is difficult to address the development of solidarity or collaboration throughout the region. However, recent mutual support among Ukraine and other countries, particularly neighboring countries facing issues similar to those Ukraine faced several years ago, shows that cooperation is possible and should be encouraged.

Challenges

The opening presenters highlighted the following challenges and threats to civil society and democracy promotion within the region:

- There is a need for civil society organizations to claim their places and roles in the development of public policies;
- There is a negative image of human rights defend-

ers and public advocates as enemies posing threats to state stability;

- There is a lack of collaboration among NGOs and civic associations within the region, which makes the entire civil societies vulnerable to negative influences from abroad and within their countries;
- There is a weakness in international and inter-governmental structures and organizations (such as the OSCE, Council of Europe, regional bodies, and commissions), which is that these institutions have become dependent on the political manipulation of governments, which in turn leads to further pressure on civil societies in countries with authoritarian regimes;
- There is an absence of support for NGOs from the grassroots and a poor opinion of them among the people; and
- There is a renaissance of new authoritarian regimes and growing popularity of “strong government.”

Recommendations

- Using World Movement mechanisms, develop a network for solidarity actions (for example, an international “SOS-Human Rights Group” was proposed as one instrument for drawing international help and support for NGOs);
- Exchange information and share experiences and methodologies of public advocacy and human rights work;
- Build a common educational platform for democracy, human rights, and civic education for activists of all generations;

- Initiate joint public campaigns to address human rights violations, and undertake elections monitoring (for example, NGOs can help form a new image of the region than the one presently being formed by governmental manipulation); and
- Make better use of existing international documents, along with better collaboration with the strongest international NGOs and intergovernmental structures, on behalf of NGOs in the region to foster a community with a unified position and public agenda.

The workshop also featured presentations about the World Youth Movement for Democracy, which has its secretariat in the region and can thus be used as a resource for generating collaboration across generations, and the World Movement's Defending Civil Society project, which applies in significant ways to

countries in the region. Participants responded positively to the potential of both the Youth Movement and the Defending Civil Society project to contribute to intra-regional cooperation, along with proposals in the spheres of conflict resolution, advocacy action, civic education, analytical work, and human rights defense and democracy promotion.

Participants also divided into several working groups to continue more practical discussions on human rights, policy centers and think tanks, media centers, youth, elections and democracy processes, civic education, and issues specific to Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova. The reports on these discussions reinforced the belief that regional collaboration is possible.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Organizers:

Congreso Visible (Colombia)
Asociación Civil Consorcio Justicia
(Venezuela)

Moderator:

Elisabeth Ungar – Colombia

Rapporteurs:

Yader Loza Jarquin – Nicaragua

Presenters:

Marcela Donadio – Argentina
Hans Tippenhauer – Haití
Rubén Fernández – Colombia
Andrea Sanhueza – Chile
Carlos Ponce – Venezuela

After introduction of the participants, the moderator summarized the latest version of the framework document on the state of democracy in Latin America entitled, "Recuperating Politics and Reassessing the Public." The document contained contributions from the meeting in Panama on February 29 - March 1, 2008, at which the Latin America and Caribbean Network for Democracy (LAC Network) was launched. This document is intended to be a working document, which incorporates updates from various LAC Network members on the state of Democracy in their respective countries.

The document states, among other things, that for the more than 30 years of the "Third Wave of Democracy," democracy began to weaken due to remaining problems, such as poverty, inequality, exclusion, and insecurity. Paired with this situation, the crisis of legitimacy and representation underlying political parties, along with citizen dissatisfaction, has consequently had negative repercussions on representative bodies, such as legislatures, and democratic systems and institutions. This is the result of citizens not believing in the capacity of governmental systems

and institutions to respond to their biggest problems and needs, which has led to citizen mobilization and organization.

This situation thus demands that the quality of democracy in the Latin America and Caribbean region be reconsidered with a focus on key actors, such as youth, women, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, and others who are generally marginalized. In addition, the role of the private sector should be well thought out, because that role has been significant and coincides with the issue of the rise of corruption. The moderator also discussed the need to reconsider the relationship between civil society and government. She spoke of guaranteeing greater security for citizens and ensuring a discussion to create policies and programs focused on economic and social development. The moderator also explained that one of the workshop objectives was to create a proposal for action and to pose thematic ideas to strengthen the quality of democracy in the region.

In her presentation, Marcela Donadio discussed the challenges and perspectives of women in Latin

America. The objective of her presentation, she said, was to share her work related to promoting gender issues during meetings of the World Movement for Democracy. She mentioned that the idea came from a project that studied women's participation in the Argentine Armed Forces, and she emphasized that discussing women's participation means discussing equal opportunities for a segment of the population that historically has been marginalized and whose participation in national political life is part of the millennium objectives.

Ms. Donadio added that the focus on the participation of women should deal more with the aspects of their security and liberty in the context of exercising their rights. She said that there have been approximately 10 meetings in the region to promote state actions to include women, but everything has remained only in the form of statements. Today, the challenges she has analyzed are poverty, inequality, unemployment, lack of reproductive health, discrimination, and violence. Despite these challenges, she confirmed that there has been progress on women's access to education in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly as reflected in the quantity of girls enrolled to attend schools. Ms. Donadio mentioned that there have also been advances regarding obtaining quotas for political positions for women despite doubts about the effectiveness of laws promoting such quotas. She concluded by saying that the discussion must focus on women's leadership participation on economic and social issues; the need to reconsider women's participation within civil society; the need to overcome the issue of stereotypes of women; and the need to promote the inclusion of women in discussions of political matters without excluding men from the debate.

The second presentation, by Ruben Fernandez, focused on governance, democracy, and development in the region. He began by saying that there are five threats to governance and democracy that he considers the most critical:

- Unfulfilled democracy promises.
- The authoritative culture within civil society and the State.
- The process of "re-centralization," which is reflected by having executive powers without oppositional powers, with the results that:
 - presidents have broad powers and there is no one to either confront or challenge them;
 - there are weak transfers of national power to

local governments; and

- there is enormous weakness in legislative and judicial powers.
- The weakness of and threats to political opposition.
- The existence of corruption, such as groups in power that use state institutions in their personal interests or those in the legislature that favor the elite.

To confront these challenges, Mr. Fernandez concluded with the recommendation to construct a series of roving workshops on the quality of democracy in the region to facilitate dialogue within civil society and political parties. The results could then be reported at future meetings of the Latin America and Caribbean Network for Democracy.

In her presentation, Andrea Sanhuesa spoke about civil society's role in democratization based on her own past analysis. She said she observed a weakness regarding private-sector participation. She also found high levels of inequality in countries in the region. She also stated that not all citizens exercise their rights to the fullest because the political elites do not work for the citizens, but for their own particular interests, while also not being transparent as nongovernmental organizations demand. Ms. Sanhuesa indicated that in her view this is why the political elites lose confidence among civil society organizations.

In light of this situation, she suggested the need to develop the capacity of civil society to exercise their rights to provide input into the formulation of public policies. Similarly, she suggested the need to develop the capacity of the public and private sectors to do the same, coupled with the need to promote access to public information and accountability of public officials. She underscored the existence of prejudices against citizen participation, one of them being that it creates anarchy. She said this school of thought is false because including civil society demonstrates the government's good intention to be inclusive.

Ms. Sanhuesa concluded her presentation by emphasizing the importance of building a common regional agenda for the Latin America and Caribbean Network for Democracy that would be focused on the quality of democracy and would seek to improve contact with donors and financial institutions, and to improve relationships among members of the LAC Network.

Hans Tippetshauer spoke in his presentation about the challenges and opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean. He said that there is significant pover-

ty and inequality today, which are products of an individualist society. Nevertheless, there is acceptance of democracy as the best form of government even though the beneficial changes do not reach everyone. Stressing that it is of utmost importance to improve the basic conditions for the welfare of the population, Mr. Tuppenhauer stipulated those conditions as an organized civil society, on the one hand, and a strong, fair and efficient state, on the other. While the first is the product of proactive individuals, the second condition is mostly sought by more passive and reactive individuals, also known as the silent majority. These differences could create a clashing environment between them. However, the most important thing is to create a convergence of the two.

Mr. Tuppenhauer also emphasized the need to create new leadership, such as:

- Conscious social leadership that fosters wider, better, and more responsible citizen participation to resolve problems;
- Conscious economic leadership aimed at, for example, the creation of technical training programs for workers; and
- Conscious political leadership that can provide training for political parties in conducting internal primary elections for their choices of candidates for public office.

He also attached great importance to securing the representation of minority groups and the need to address problems of extreme poverty, ignorance, and

corruption, among others, and he proposed the creation of an institute to combat corruption.

Carlos Ponce provided in his presentation some background on the creation of the Latin America and Caribbean Democracy Network. He said the LAC Network was created as a place for civil society organizations in the region to exchange ideas for promoting democracy. He said it is essentially a network for information, and highlighted Elisabeth Ungar's efforts, since the Fourth Assembly, to create the LAC Network. Mr. Ponce also provided background on the meeting in Panama, noted above, where the LAC Network was launched. Funds were raised for representatives from some 80 civil society organizations from the region to participate. He indicated that as a result of the meeting, activities are being undertaken by people in sub-networks, which were created at the Panama meeting.

Following the presentations, the workshop participants engaged in discussion during which they expressed their perspectives on the issues raised in the presentations and on the future direction and work of the Latin America and Caribbean Democracy Network. The discussion on the latter was rich with opinions, analyses, and considerations. While no consensus emerged on the LAC Network's existence and function, there was the expectation that further discussion and debate following the Assembly would clarify its objectives.

Finally, several participants stressed the need to improve relations between civil society and political parties through better dialogue.

Middle East and North Africa

Organizer:
Network of Democrats in the Arab World

Moderator:
Radwan Masmoudi – *Tunisia*

Rapporteur:
Obaida Fares – *Syria*

Presenters:
Haytham Manna – *Syria*
Emad Shahin – *Egypt*
Mohammad Nassib – *Afghanistan*
Slaheddine Jouchi – *Tunisia*
Mokhtar Benabdallaoui – *Morocco*

This regional workshop was attended by democracy and human rights activists from across the region and the international community. There was a consensus that the past two years were full of frustrating and serious setbacks in the region, but that demands for genuine change and reform are increasing.

Among the positive trends, NGOs in the Arab World are becoming more efficient and well organized, and

Islamic-oriented movements have expanded their platforms and political agendas to accommodate fundamental democratic values and to take part willingly in the legal frameworks of their nation-states, such as electoral processes and civil society activities. Furthermore, there are many new local and regional initiatives to support democracy in the Arab world and to support democracy movements in Arab and other

regional countries. The presenters noted that despite the overwhelming power of governments in the region, they are still dysfunctional and ineffective at addressing the political or economic problems facing their people.

There are, however, many new challenges and difficulties that should be recognized and addressed. Most parliaments in the region are weak, ineffective, and dominated by the ruling political party. The majority of the people in the region know what they want (democracy, freedom of expression, freedom of organization, freedom of assembly, etc.), but they have no clear idea about the mechanisms to achieve these goals. Unfortunately, this applies to the political and intellectual elites as well. In the past few years, current governments have gained new skills in dealing with democratic movements and have begun using more sophisticated techniques to weaken and constrain NGOs. Controversies surrounding the war on terror, such as treatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay, have been used by regimes in the region to justify their own violations of human rights and rule of law. In general, the war in Iraq has had a negative effect on democratic movements in the region, because Arab governments have used the devastation of the war to make people lose faith in democracy. Across the region, youth are losing faith in political life, elections, and peaceful participation as a way to achieve meaningful reform or sustainable development. There is growing concern about the proliferation of government-supported NGOs, or GONGOs. Unfortunately,

many international donors often choose to deal with those GONGOs, and this has further weakened civil society in the region.

Recommendations

- Priority should be given to strengthening the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, and protection of human rights defenders.
- The participation of women should be encouraged, and women's rights should be integrated into civil society programs.
- Democracy programs should be sensitive to the cultural environment and respect cultural and religious norms.
- Regardless of electoral outcomes, current electoral processes should be maintained and consolidated, and domestic and international monitoring of upcoming elections in the region should be supported.
- There is a need to engage moderate Islamists in networks with democrats to advocate civic and pluralist agendas and to strengthen democratic processes.
- Cross-border networks of civil society activists working on human rights should be encouraged.
- Participants in the workshop call upon the international community to reaffirm and increase its support for human rights and civil society movements in the region and to investigate state security violations against civil society and democracy networks.

Luso-Forum for Democracy

Organizer:

Luso-Forum for Democracy

Moderator:

Elizabete Azevedo – Portugal

Rapporteur:

Henrique Burnay – Portugal

Presenters:

Daviz Simango – Mozambique

Fátima Monteiro – Portugal

João Colaço – Mozambique

Jacqueline Pitanguy – Brazil

The Luso-Forum for Democracy is a network of people committed to democracy in eight Lusophone countries: Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé e Príncipe, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Brasil, Timor Leste, and Portugal. The Luso-Forum has promoted the inclusion of participants from several of these countries in the previous three World Movement assemblies, and has organized workshops at the assemblies that have sought to enhance democracy within this community of Portuguese-speaking people.

Prior to this workshop, participants agreed that

even if not all the goals of this network have been attained to date, the main objective is being achieved: networking, sharing of information, developing cooperative activities, and launching new projects.

Three issues were raised during the workshop:

- How to address the need for education and professional development in the fields of politics, democracy, and good governance;
- The importance of a market where fair competition is a reality for enhancing the middle class and entre-

preneurship in order to help consolidate democratization; and

➤ The fact that of the eight Lusophone countries in the network, only three have shown consistent achievements regarding political and civil liberties.

In light of these issues, participants agreed that the increased development of a network like the Luso-Forum is very much needed. In fact, the Luso-Forum has invited the Institute of Political Studies at the Portuguese Catholic University, which serves as the Luso-Forum secretariat, to reach cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education in Mozambique and Cape Verde.

Based on the workshop discussion and a desire for stronger cooperation, participants decided to promote an advanced studies program in democracy and good governance that would bring together institutions of higher education, civic organizations, and local governments. The program would target young professionals and academics, as well as democracy practitioners. It was also suggested that the program address the concerns of the participants about the need to enhance political and civil liberties and the importance of free and fair competition in the economy. At the conclusion of the workshop, the Luso-Forum agreed on efforts to increase the number of new participants.

Functional Networking

Network of Democracy Research Institutes: Improving Democratic Governance

Organizers:

Network of Democracy Research Institutes – NDRI
Democratic Initiatives Foundation of Ukraine

Moderators:

Ilko Kucheriv – *Ukraine*
Larry Diamond – *U.S.*

Rapporteur:

Diego Abente – *Paraguay*

Presenters:

Ahmed Bilal Mehboob – *Pakistan*
Grigorij Mezesnikov – *Slovakia*
Elisabeth Ungar – *Colombia*

In his opening presentation at this workshop, Ahmed Bilal Mehboob of the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) explained that PILDAT emerged in response to the Pakistani Parliament's failure to appropriately perform its three main functions: representation, legislation, and oversight. This parliamentary weakness had as a counterpart an excessive concentration of power in the Executive. For example, in the last five years the Parliament passed 50 acts, while the Executive, resorting to decree powers, has put 71 pieces of legislation in place. Similarly, the budget, brokered outside the Parliament, was discussed and approved in 15-17 days, without Parliament having the power of considering any substantial modifications. Within the general budget, the military budget is approved as a one-line sum of money, which further deprives the Parliament of exercising any meaningful control. This lack of an appropriate equilibrium between the branches of government is compounded by the inexperience of the legislators. For example, in the 2002 elections, 90 percent of the office holders were new, because a law had gone into effect that requires MPs to hold university degrees.

According to Mr. Mehboob, PILDAT conducts a wide array of activities aimed at building the capacity of the Parliament to fulfill its democratic role, including substantive briefings, training sessions, and trips to countries with consolidated legislative bodies, such as India, Great Britain, Germany, and the United States.

In his presentation, Grigorij Mezesnikov of the Institute for Public Affairs remarked that Slovakia experienced a similar situation, not so much due to institutional arrangements, but due to an informal but effective "tyranny of the majority." This tendency of becoming an illiberal democracy was, ironically, broadened by the space provided by the EU and utilized by populist and neo-authoritarian parties. As a result, he said, Slovakia is experiencing a worsening situation in terms of corruption, lack of transparency, state intervention, the rise of narrow ethnic agendas, and the danger of important reforms achieved over the last decade being reversed.

In her presentation, Elisabeth Ungar of Congreso Visible addressed the case of Colombia, where a similar process of concentrating power in the Executive and weakening the Legislature has taken place. The problem in Colombia is compounded by two fac-

tors: On the one hand, there is a strong link between congressional sectors and paramilitary forces and/or different drug-trafficking cartels. Twenty percent of the current members of Congress have been formally charged with such links, and half of them have their cases pending before the Supreme Court. Only two parties, the left-wing Polo Democrático and the Christian MIRA, have no members involved in this scandal. On the other hand, the growing erosion of the legitimacy of the Congress has led to considerable

popular support for illiberal democracy. Roughly one-third of Colombians polled see Congress as a nuisance and prefer that the President ignore or bypass it.

A lively discussion following the presentations addressed the issues raised above, but also emphasized the so-called “liberal dimensions,” such as human rights, integrity, transparency, horizontal accountability, checks and balances, the rule of law, and the independence of the Judiciary.

Democracy Assistance Foundations: Developing an Agenda for Cooperation—What are the Current Priorities?

Organizer:

National Endowment for Democracy – NED

Moderator:

David Lowe – U.S.

Rapporteur:

Michael Allen – U.K.

Presenters:

Mohsen Marzouk – Tunisia

Kristina Prunerová – Czech Republic

Roland Rich – Australia

Kenneth Wollack – U.S.

Democracy assistance foundations are proliferating even while a backlash against democracy is underway. The UN Democracy Fund’s Roland Rich described this as a “parallel process,” which has seen the emergence of foundations like his own and new European, Arab, and Canadian initiatives, while at the same time democracy assistance is under attack. It is being assailed by the usual suspects, of course—authoritarian and dictatorial regimes—but also from within the democratic world by academics and journalists who claim democracy promotion is merely a cover for the pursuit of national interests.

The problem, Mr. Rich argued, is that they are partly right. Most foundations use public funds (taxpayer money), and the politicians who make such funds available must demonstrate that the expenditures are cost effective. They must demonstrate that such work is ultimately for the benefit of their citizens at home, so this work can never be entirely altruistic or disinterested.

A related problem is the fact that growing competition and lobbying for funds has led some politicians and NGOs to claim credit for democratic transitions and other achievements that rightly belongs to local activists. Academic analysts of transitions also tend to overstate the role of external agencies.

Democracy assistance foundations could learn from the experience of the development community by emphasizing local ownership (as the World Bank

does), by being appropriately modest in their claims, and by improving decision-making processes by enhancing transparency and devolving decisions and initiatives to grantees and local activists. According to Mr. Rich, they should also learn to accept legitimate criticism gracefully or “cop it sweet” as they say in his native Australia.

Mohsen Marzouk called himself a “new kid on the block” as director of the recently formed Arab Democracy Foundation. Recently appointed to lead the Foundation, an initiative launched at a meeting of over 500 Arab democracy activists in Doha last May, he is new to the job, but his experience as an activist and grantee led him to identify some key challenges for the democracy assistance community:

- There is wasteful “negative competition” for resources. Donors often fund the same groups and do not even exchange information at the local level. In short, unscrupulous grantees often claim different grants and get paid twice (or more) for the same activity. A lack of information-sharing among grantees means they lack knowledge of funding sources.
- In the Arab world in particular, too many NGOs are predatory rather than strategic; in other words, they shift their focus from, say, women’s rights to “good governance,” depending on the availability of funds, not on real needs or public demand. There is a growing contrast between elitist, well-funded urban NGOs that too often have little real impact and more sponta-

neous, but under-funded, popular or social movements that have genuine support and reflect real needs.

➤ There is a need to “institutionalize good practice” through an “e-network” of democracy foundations. The network could also establish a code of conduct, identifying best practices on relations with grantees, transparency, evaluation methodologies, etc., and foster greater information exchanges and local or regional partnerships.

Due to their experience with authoritarian rule, post-communist states are showing greater enthusiasm for providing democracy assistance than many long-established democracies, said Kristina Prunerova, program manager of the European Partnership for Democracy. The foundation—launched in Brussels in April 2008 at a meeting hosted by former Czech dissident and President Vaclav Havel and José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission—is an initiative of 15 European democracy groups that believe it can improve cooperation, allow for the exchange of lessons and best practices, serve as a funding mechanism, and provide a common front in lobbying or other relationships with EU institutions and national governments.

Democracy is a “core European value,” Ms. Prunerova said, but the EU and most member states are too hesitant to promote democracy energetically in policy and in practice. Ms. Prunerova hopes the new foundation will provide a more flexible and targeted funding facility than current EU instruments, which are exceedingly bureaucratic and do not allow for funding unregistered groups (for instance, groups that are denied registration by authoritarian rulers are not eligible for funding through EU programs like the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights).

Democracy has become a pejorative word in some quarters, according to Kenneth Wollack of the National Democratic Institute, and polite society seems to prefer good governance or rule of law as euphemisms for the “D-word.” This is because the mistaken conflation of democracy promotion with the Iraq war and regime change has not only aided the autocrats’ propaganda, but has led some “realist” analysts in the West, citing the aftermath of recent elections in Egypt, Palestinian territories, Iraq, and Lebanon, to suggest it is dangerously idealistic.

Mr. Wollack therefore suggested that the democracy assistance community should “press the reset button” and outline the case for what we do—for which there is a compelling rationale—just as it was

made 25 years ago. “Making democracy work” is a key priority: democracies must be able to deliver and meet people’s real material needs, and in this respect improved partnerships with the development community would help.

Democracies have also been weakened by the poor performance of those intermediary agencies between state and civil society—parties, parliaments, and politicians—that democracy assistance too often overlooks or fails to support adequately. While supportive of improved information-sharing and cooperation among democracy assistance foundations, Mr. Wollack said he is against coordination that, he believes, means groups can only move at the pace of the slowest member.

In a rich and nuanced discussion, workshop participants focused on the shortcomings and merits of evaluation (great in theory, methodologically limited in practice); the issue of “national interest” (problematic for governments, less so for civil society and smaller, post-authoritarian states); the need for transparency (limited to ensure it does not endanger vulnerable activists); donor-grantee relations (rather than rely on donors, grantees should form their own consortia for evaluating projects); and information-sharing and communications (don’t reinvent the wheel, but use, for example, the Democracy Digest, an information resource of the World Movement for Democracy).

The session concluded with a call to the World Movement for Democracy to conduct research for and publish a report addressing some of the substantive challenges facing democracy assistance foundations. At a time when the field is the subject of critique and reassessment, such a report can survey the field, assess which approaches to assistance have proven most effective and which ones less so, and make the case for democracy assistance that is serious enough to influence key external stakeholders, including policy makers and opinion shapers. The Czech government will assume the EU presidency in 2009, and will likely convene a conference to review the field of democracy assistance to which the report can make a valuable contribution.

Global Network on Local Governance

Organizer:

Institute of Social Sciences (*India*)
– GNLG Secretariat

Moderator:

George Mathew – *India*

Rapporteur:

Jae-chun Won – *South Korea*

Presenters:

Ash Narain Roy – *India*

Rama Naidu – *South Africa*

Carlos Ponce – *Venezuela*

This workshop included 60 participants from more than 20 different countries, and the moderator, George Mathew of the Institute of Social Sciences in India, which serves as the secretariat of the Global Network on Local Governance (GNLG), began by providing the background of the network and its basic framework. The GNLG, he said, seeks to strengthen local democracy by offering a forum at the regional and global levels to politically empower disadvantaged groups and to promote accountable, participative, and transparent local government. The GNLG includes practitioners of local government, democracy activists, experts, research institutions, party members, locally-oriented NGOs, and concerned citizens.

Objectives

- › To develop an understanding of local governance;
- › To provide participants with an interface to network and share information;
- › To promote a culture of good governance; and
- › To build alliances, partnerships, and networks with cities, municipalities, academic centers, research institutions, and civil society organizations engaged in practices, study, research, and advocacy in the field of local democracy.

Strategies

- › To disseminate information and good practices;
- › To provide support for local governance advocacy;
- › To document success stories;
- › To provide capacity-building training and programs; and
- › To encourage active participation of underprivileged sections of society, particularly women and other marginalized groups.

Activities

- › Acting as a clearinghouse for information on local governance;

- › Creating and managing a database of organizations working in the field;
- › Publishing a newsletter;
- › Organizing study tours; and
- › Linking with existing local governance networks.

Ash Narain Roy, also of the Institute of Social Sciences, presented a progress report on the GNLG since its last gathering at the Fourth Assembly in Istanbul in 2006. Since that time, the GNLG has launched its Web site (www.gnl.org) and created a GNLG Newsletter that catalogues not only success stories from various parts of the world, but also provides a platform for practitioners to share their experiences.

Rama Naidu of the Democracy Development Program in South Africa reviewed the activities of the GNLG and shared a strategy to take it forward. He called for convening biennial working conferences across continents, and strengthening regional and local chapters.

Carlos Ponce of Asociacion Civil Consorcio Justicia in Venezuela shared experiences from Latin America, and pointed out that the backbone of democracy is decentralization and local self-governance.

Discussion Themes

- › The need to develop youth leadership;
- › Demands for capacity building of local citizen leadership;
- › The need for funding and support from the global community;
- › The need for a white paper on local governance;
- › The need for creating a standard and an index for local governance;
- › The question of who provides functional needs (law enforcement, garbage collection, etc.) when government fails;
- › Difficulties caused by having different parties in local governments, on the one hand, and in the

national government, on the other;

- The importance of training political candidates for their participation in the political process; and
- Creating connections between donor organizations and projects in the field.

Conclusion

We are moving into a world where we need more global governance, not a global government. Kofi

Annan, former UN Secretary General, stated that no nation is born a democracy, that democracy is a universal right that does not belong to any country or region, and that participatory governance, based on the will of the people, is the best path to freedom, growth and development. Bottom-up participation and downward accountability will bring back confidence and trust in democracy. We must press on. As Rabindranath Tagore said, sometimes the few are more than the many.

World Youth Movement for Democracy

Moderator:

Anastasia Nikitina, World Youth Movement for Democracy – *Russia*

Rapporteur:

Konstantin Baranov – *Russia*

Presenters:

Anna Dobrovolskaya – *Russia*

Tapera Kapuya – *Zimbabwe*

Andrey Yurov – *Russia*

This workshop brought together about 30 participants from democracy groups working with youth from around the world. Anna Dobrovolskaya, World Youth Movement for Democracy (WYMD) executive secretary, began by reviewing the history and current status of the WYMD. She noted that at the World Movement's Third Assembly in Durban in 2004 the WYMD was established as the youth "wing" of the World Movement. Until 2007, its secretariat was based at the Global Youth Action Network (GYAN) Latin American headquarters in São Paulo, Brazil, but it was transferred to the International Youth Human Rights Movement office in Kyiv, Ukraine. This development was thus seen as an opportunity to develop the youth network in Central/Eastern Europe-Eurasia where it is not yet very strong; the WYMD has about 5,000 participants from all over the world, but mainly in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia.

The secretariat previously played the role of facilitating communications and exchanges of information among WYMD participants and bringing new young people into the democracy movement. According to recent decisions of the Working Group (the WYMD's steering body), however, the new secretariat staff sees its mission as developing the WYMD as a "network of networks," both topical and regional, that will help create concrete activities. Therefore, a list of project ideas that might be developed either globally or regionally was presented to the workshop participants.

The participants were also asked to contribute

their own proposals for making the work of the WYMD more effective and to develop it further as a strong community of activists worldwide.

Tapera Kapuya, a Working Group member from Zimbabwe, focused on the role that the Youth Movement can play in the African region. He reminded participants that young people make up nearly two-thirds of the continent's population and that they encounter many problems ranging from poverty to armed conflict. There is thus an urgent need for wider spaces for youth dialogue focused on solving such problems, as well as for a solidarity network to respond to existing challenges facing democracy activists. He stressed that the WYMD does not belong to the secretariat or the Working Group, but to the participants who should decide the issues on which the WYMD should focus in the coming years.

Andrey Yurov, a Working Group member from Russia, outlined what he sees as the key question facing the WYMD: whether it should merely be an appendage to the "adult" World Movement for Democracy (similar to political parties' youth chapters) or should create a new generation of activists with its own agenda that can be proposed to the World Movement. He also stressed the need for defining the key topics on which activities on the global and regional levels should focus, as well as for young volunteers to build the WYMD rather than waiting for the moment when they can join something already well-structured and strong. If the latter, at the next World Movement assembly in two years, only the addition of

an extra thousand people subscribed to the WYMD newsletter will be evident, with little more to show.

The discussion that followed lent support to the idea that the WYMD should have its own agenda, and that as a youth movement it can be more innovative compared to the “adult” one. It should address young people in their own language through appropriate verbal and visual means.

Participants also urged that the WYMD make use of existing mechanisms on the regional level to advance its work (for example, WYMD participants in Africa might tie their work to the African Democracy Forum, the World Movement’s network in Africa). Moreover, the need to focus on regional-specific topics and activities, in addition to global ones, was emphasized, since generating the commitment of young people to the values of democracy may be more realistic on the regional level than on the global one.

Another issue raised by participants is the difficulty of confronting authoritarian youth movements, which are based on very simple messages that appeal to youth and attract thousands of young people. It was noted that if the WYMD really wants to oppose all types of fundamentalism (generally understood as attempts to propose simple answers to very complicated challenges in the modern world), then it cannot do so by employing its own fundamentalist appeals and methods. Rather, it must employ a “humanist” response by seeking thoughtful responses to new challenges and avoiding simple answers.

Recommendations

Following the introductory discussion, the workshop participants divided into working groups to discuss the specific issues related to the strategy of developing the WYMD. The following proposals were offered by the respective groups:

What should be the focus of the WYMD?

- › Strategic nonviolent civic resistance (with a special role for women);
- › Identifying pro-democracy activists using all technological means available;
- › Transferring knowledge using all technological means available;
- › Bringing younger people into the WYMD management; and
- › Strengthening democracy.



How can the WYMD help bring young people into the global democracy movement?

There are three levels of a “pyramid of involvement” that should result in more active participation of youth in public life:

- › Awareness-raising (informational campaigns using social networks, both existing and specially created, organizing special events around meaningful dates, etc.);
- › Democracy education (creating a database of methods, providing a virtual library, organizing internships, establishing regional schools on human rights and democracy and distance-learning courses, etc.); and
- › Practical activities (participating in and organizing public actions, etc.).

How can support be provided to the WYMD?

- › Provide grants to youth initiatives;
- › Help improve the WYMD Web site;
- › Expand the number of those participating in the WYMD’s essay contests; and
- › Deepen individual participation in the Youth Movement.

It was proposed in conclusion that the WYMD launch a campaign for freedom of association in support of young activists in different countries who face persecution for membership or participation in unregistered organizations, and a “Youth for Defending Civil Society” initiative, based on the World Movement’s Defending Civil Society project. In addition, the need for genuine democracy education was emphasized to promote the idea that democracy is not a matter just for politicians, but a lifestyle for every person to follow.

International Women's Democracy Network

Organizer:

Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace – IWDN Secretariat

Moderator:

Jacqueline Pitanguy – *Brazil*

Rapporteurs:

Christina Halstead – *U.S.*
Bunmi Dipo-Salami – *Nigeria*

The International Women's Democracy Network (IWDN) convened its Third General Assembly at the World Movement's Fifth Assembly. The workshop was attended by women and men from 28 countries who were tasked with arriving at a consensus on concrete strategies for the network to move forward. The session began with a short history of the IWDN and an overview of past achievements. Participants then contributed to a discussion on women's agency in the promotion of democracy. They offered assessments on why women must have a role in democracy and what the participation of women in democracy means in the context of each participant's country.

Key Points

- There is no democracy without the participation of women;
- Women's issues are central to the issues of democracy and citizenship;
- Increasing women's participation in government is beneficial not only to increase numbers, but, more importantly, because they can impact the pedagogical issues in society;
- Biology is not the determining factor—that is, being a woman does not necessarily guarantee advocacy for women's issues;
- Developing the leadership capacity of women is essential to improve the quality of leadership and to ensure that the practice of leadership embodies democratic ideals and values;
- Democracy is inclusive of many different facets, such as economic empowerment, post-conflict reconstruction, poverty alleviation, and violence against women, among others;
- Laws and constitutional guarantees of gender equality must be implemented where they exist, and where they do not, gender parity measures may be necessary (instead of advocating for 33 percent quotas, it was recommended that women demand 50 percent);
- The portrayal of women in the media, particularly of

women political leaders, is often biased and must be transformed;

- Alliances should be forged with women and men who are in positions to influence the cause of women to ensure gender justice;
- Gender equality must be made a key indicator and a case for it must be made when engaging with other stakeholders;
- The capacity of women to monitor international UN instruments must be developed so they are aware of mechanisms for their well being and equal citizenship (this will enable women to hold their governments accountable); and
- Young people must be involved through mentoring, exposure to issues, skills building in public speaking, and a variety of other strategies.

The IWDN Secretariat at the Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace (WLP) has created an Online Resource Center at the request of network members, and it was officially launched at this workshop.

Ideas for Online Resource Center

- Strategize ways to include those populations who do not have access to the Internet;
- Add information in different languages;
- Link to UN covenants and resolutions, such as Resolution 1325 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- Add a section, "Unsung Sheras," to highlight women's achievements in democracy activism; and
- Support network members' campaigns on women and democracy, and, in particular, send letters of support to women campaigning for political positions.

Recommendations for Future Plans

- Produce a manual on best practices of women's political participation, especially in transitional countries;
- Send a message to our World Movement for

Democracy colleagues that outlines the need for full inclusion of women in every workshop at future assemblies;

- Encourage network members to build solidarity by working together around a common project, such as by implementing skills-building workshops for women using WLP's *Leading to Choices* manual, available in 17 languages, for empowering women to take on leadership roles in their families, communities, and at political levels; and
- Make regional focal points responsible for disseminating materials from the network to those organizations that do not have access to the Internet.

IWDN activities are coordinated at the national and regional levels by the six regional focal point organizations. The role of a regional focal point organization is to act as a liaison to the secretariat and regional organizations. The regional focal points from the Caucasus and Central Asia (Women's Network "Working Together"), the Middle East (Sisterhood Is Global Institute/Jordan), Africa (BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights), and Eastern Europe (Kharkiv Center for Women's Studies) shared their best practices and achievements over the last two years. Monica Hernandez de Phillips volunteered to represent the Latin America region, as there was previously no regional focal point for that region.

International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics)

Organizer:

National Democratic Institute-NDI
(U.S.)

Moderator:

Kristin Haffert – U.S.

Rapporteur:

Meredith Katz – U.S.

Presenters:

The Honorable Nursanita Nasution
– Indonesia

The Honorable Cvetanka Ivanova
– Macedonia

The Honorable Awut Deng Acuil
– Southern Sudan

This workshop, focused on the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics), opened with a brief demonstration of the iKNOW Politics Web site (www.iKNOWPolitics.org) by moderator Kristin Haffert, director of Women's Programs at NDI. The iKNOW Politics initiative is a technology-enabled forum designed to serve the needs of elected officials, candidates, political party leaders and members, researchers, students, and other practitioners interested in increasing the participation and effectiveness of women in political life. The Web site was created in 2007 by NDI, UNDP, UNIFEM, International IDEA, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and is available in French, Spanish, and English; it will be available in Arabic in early 2009. The presentation on iKNOW Politics featured the Web site's resources, such as training materials and reports, ongoing news feeds, forums for mediated discussion, and the sharing of experiences via an extensive expert network.

Following this introduction, three prominent women parliamentarians presented the experiences and strategies they have used as legislators and activists fighting on behalf of women's political, social, and

economic rights. They discussed ways in which their involvement in politics has allowed them to impact the development of their countries. In her presentation, Minister Awut Deng Acuil of Southern Sudan (where a civil war has been fought for over two decades, resulting in the death of over two million people and the displacement of twice as many), explained how she has lobbied for the inclusion of women's voices in the transitional government. For example, she lobbied her party (SPLM) leader to include women ministers in his cabinet (in fact, three women ministers—of Health, Energy, and Agriculture—were chosen when the transitional government was formed). Minister Acuil and her colleagues have also been able to mainstream gender policy in the 2003 drafting of the new Constitution. She described not only her accomplishment of helping to establish a constitutional gender quota of 25 percent in Parliament, but talked about holding the government accountable to this commitment. Today, over 150 of Sudan's MPs are women. At the state level, 17 of the ministries are headed by women.

The Honorable Nursanita Nasution of Indonesia noted in her presentation the significant cultural

and structural problems that constrain women from achieving greater political representation. She highlighted the Indonesian Women's Caucus (KPPI), a multi-party organization of which she was a founder, which has been able to improve gender parity by utilizing rule of law to advocate for women's roles in politics. She also stated the importance of networking among women to build key partnerships and to ensure there are always women supporting women's issues who can be present in parliamentary meetings. Ms. Nasution emphasized the importance of networking with the media to promote women's issues and talked about addressing gender roles within the home to combat the traditional and religious stereotypes of women that impede their full participation in public life.

A lawyer by training, the Honorable Cvetanka Ivanova of Macedonia discussed how she has used legislation to bring women's rights to the forefront of society and to fight for women's positive discrimination. One of her major efforts has been to ensure that election law includes a quota for positive discrimination of 30 percent for women in Parliament. Although the laws she fought for, such as the quota law, were not always abided, Ms. Ivanova and the women of Macedonia pushed on, guaranteeing that women were included on the ballot and ultimately ensuring that seats were granted to women by law. Today, women comprise 37 percent of the Macedonian Parliament. Ms. Ivanova also mentioned how the formation of a women's caucus in the Macedonian Parliament assisted women in their efforts to pass legislation on women's issues in her country. In addition to the quota, the caucus has worked to pass an equal opportunity law for men and women and successfully advocated for diverting 1 percent of the gambling tax revenue to fund a women's shelter and related programs.

Observations and Recommendations

- Every policy issued by law-making bodies of the government should be gender sensitive, and legal documents should include gender-sensitive language; such laws must be monitored to ensure their implementation.
- Positive discrimination for women (i.e., quotas) is an important tool for achieving gender parity in governance.
- Including men, such as Members of Parliament, in gender programs is important so they, too, can learn

about gender issues and respect the laws and programs dedicated to women.

- Including men in the drafting of gender-sensitive policy helps to increase their "buy-in" to the process.
- The media has a responsibility to advocate for women's rights and to promote women candidates; involving the media in outreach activities by women politicians can help achieve this.
- It is good for women to create alliances across different sectors of the population: the media, political parties, the citizenry, etc. It is also helpful for women to reach out to women from other regions of the world to share their experiences and to provide inspiration and advice to one another. It is important for women to advocate for each other.
- Gender sensitization can take place in various settings. For example, it can be practiced by challenging traditional gender roles in the family, in schools, and in adult training programs.
- Gender laws must be tailored to each country, depending on the culture, religion, and history, to ensure that these factors are not used to excuse discrimination against women.
- It is important to have female members of government with diverse portfolios so they are present across the policy-making spectrum.
- Religion is not unfriendly to women; it is just often politicized and used as a tool for discrimination. In places where Shari' a law has been used to contradict empowerment of women, it is important to have a constitution that maintains the equality of women. The rule of law and vibrant constitutions can be used to ensure the rights of women and to promote their equality throughout all areas of public policy.
- It is important that women understand their right to initiate policy from the grassroots, such as in local or regional referenda.
- Women Members of Parliament should ensure that they are transparent, in regular communication with their communities, and responsive to the needs of their constituents.
- International organizations should run training programs for women to help build their capacity. It is possible for women Members of Parliament to help facilitate these efforts.
- Women's networks should be built to approach and network informally with community leaders. Ms. Nasution provided the example from Indonesia of

the religious-based groups, called *majelis ta'lim*, and family- and neighborhood-based communities, called *arisan*, which influence the opinions of the general population. In reaching out to the leaders of these groups, women can present and build support for the issues they care about.

➤ Women should hold elected and appointed officials accountable to women's issues. For instance, when a country's president gives a policy address, women should ensure that every policy addresses women's concerns. When the president makes appointments, women should demand gender equality in the appointments.

➤ Institutions, such as the police force, the army, etc., should have at least 25 percent women in their workforces and should be held accountable for upholding this percentage.

In general, there was recognition that iKNOW Politics can be a useful tool for building a network in situations where individuals are unable to travel to see one another or where contact between people is dangerous, difficult, and costly. Many women in the workshop expressed interest in joining the Web site and network as consultants or members to enable them to further address many of the issues listed above.

Technologies for Democracy

Workshop

Using New Technologies for Advancing Democracy

Organizers:

Malaysiakini (Malaysia)

Foundation for Education for Democracy (Poland)

Moderator:

Premesh Chandran – *Malaysia*

Rapporteur:

Grzegorz Zajackowski – *Poland*

Presenters:

Rakhee Goyal – *India*

Adam Tolnay – *U.S.*

Manuel Desdin – *Cuba*

This workshop focused on the potential of Internet-related projects to advance democracy and on a new Web-based portal in Poland for international cooperation: www.civicportal.org. The workshop participants expressed strong interest in understanding the potential of new means of electronic communications to enhance their activities through the Web.

The workshop's opening presentations focused on new methods that are available to organizations to target various groups. Two ways to reach out to people around the world were highlighted. One is to use pre-existing instruments, but to maximize their potential to respond to the needs of target groups. These include:

- Using multimedia instruments (for example, YouTube and Flickr) to highlight the activities of various social groups, especially those that are invisible through other types of media;
- Building online communities through the use of social networking tools that enable users to find and comment on resources (for example, Wordpress and Facebook);
- Other means to enable cooperation, such as Taking IT Global, Change.org, Witness.org's Hub, Idealist.org, etc.).

The second methodology is to use high-tech approaches to target particular audiences, including:

- Specialized technical applications to promote cooperation among various target groups (for example, UK school youth, wimps.org.uk, and the Polish portal www.civicportal.org). These Web portals use advanced Internet technologies, such as multimedia announcement boards, language translation, or a combination of the community portal and project management software.
- Technologically advanced portal applications that use informatics along with sociology, psychology, and political science, as demonstrated by the projects conducted by the Persuasive Technology Lab at Stanford University. The method of "Mobile Persuasion" was also discussed, since it uses the power of TV messages, radio, and a combination of traditional media and the Internet, as well as methods of persuasion in social networks. Advanced solutions can also be used to support peaceful cooperation and understanding between nations by identifying and linking local partners from different countries. For example, technologies of persuasion, such as SMS messaging, are used to increase individual and global

health and safety in cooperation with a range of partners, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

➤ Other types of solutions are related to data transmission and electronically secure areas. Participants learned about several high-tech ways of transferring data through government blocking. These include transferring the data by copying the Web portal onto a CD-ROM or DVD, or by distributing the data by establishing centers with printing equipment and providing the Web content on paper.

It was pointed out that many organizations around

the world do not use the Internet, but use other varying means to transfer information that are less expensive than satellite transmissions. Participants mentioned that if Internet access was less expensive, many countries would rapidly transition to using available Web technologies. Participants also recognized the importance of e-training and e-learning, noting the need for additional Web-based activities.

Finally, the workshop participants agreed to continue the discussion by exchanging contacts on the Facebook Web site.

Technology Training Sessions

Civic Spaces in Cyberspace—Amplifying Our Voices with Blogs and YouTube Videos

Organizer:

Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace
– WLP

Facilitators:

Usha Venkatachallam of
Appropriate IT
Ginger Richards of the Democracy
Resource Center at the National
Endowment for Democracy

This session focused on how democracy activists can use the latest participatory Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs and YouTube, to share their messages beyond their constituent bases and on a global scale. The facilitators, Usha Venkatachallam of Appropriate IT and Ginger Richards of the Democracy Resource Center at NED, shared with participants some examples of how organizations use these free tools to promote human rights (<http://polismalaysia.blogspot.com/>); to advocate for accountability and transparency (<http://orangeukraine.squarespace.com/journal/>); to create video resource platforms (<http://youtube.com/user/learningpartnership>); and to engage and mobilize supporters (<http://youtube.com/user/friend-softheearth>).

Based on exercises from the Women's Learning Partnership (WLP)'s curriculum, *Making IT Our Own: Information and Communication Technology Training of Trainers Manual*, each participant walked through the mechanisms for creating a blog and met the facilitators' challenge to develop their own blog in under 30 minutes. They located copyright-free images on Flickr and added them to blog postings, and gained skills to embed YouTube videos in their blogs to enhance the

impact of their message.

Participants created 10 new blogs to highlight the work of their organizations, promote their efforts related to democracy work, and to share their knowledge through their social networks. The blogs that were created include <http://studyofdemocracy.blogspot.com> and <http://lukaspachta.blogspot.com>, among others.

By creating these blogs participants recognized that a variety of technological tools are available that can be easily configured to publish and broadcast their messages to the world without requiring advanced technical skills. Participants will continue to further develop their blogs.



Virtual Assemblies and Campaigns: Social Networks and ICT Tools for Grassroots and Youth Outreach

Organizer:

Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace
– WLP

Facilitators:

Usha Venkatachallam of
Appropriate IT
Ginger Richards of the Democracy
Resource Center at the National
Endowment for Democracy

Participants in this technology skills-building session mixed real-world case studies and hands-on activities to explore the ways in which free social networking tools can be utilized to create and foster online communities that advocate for democratic change.

Facilitators Usha Venkatachallam of Appropriate IT and Ginger Richards of the Democracy Resource Center at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) used sessions from the Women's Learning Partnership (WLP)'s new training curriculum, *Making IT Our Own: Information and Communication Technology Training of Trainers Manual*, to review two online social networks – Facebook and Flickr.

Session participants reviewed Facebook groups created by organizations, such as:

- Burma Watch—to support the monks' protest in Burma (www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=24957770200)
- WLP Lebanon/CRTD.A—to advocate for equality in citizenship laws of Lebanon (www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2351659559)
- Flickr photo pools by Oxfam—to petition Starbucks to pay fair prices to Ethiopian coffee farmers (<http://flickr.com/groups/starbucksphotopetition/pool>)

- Nature Conservancy—to create awareness about conservation (www.flickr.com/groups/thenatureconservancy)

The group discussed such issues as the amount of information that can or should be shared online and how best to maintain privacy and security of online data.

Following the discussion and review of tools, participants created their own individual Facebook profiles and Flickr accounts to enable them to join other organizations' groups and to create groups for their own causes. The discussion made clear that online social networks are an excellent medium for virtual assemblies and campaigns. They make it possible to meet new constituencies, connect and strengthen relationships with other activists, recruit those interested in our issues, coordinate advocacy activities, and fundraise for campaigns. The possibilities these tools present for democracy activists are therefore immense. As one participant put it, she arrived at the training unconvinced that her organization should use social networking tools, but came away a believer in their potential.



Openings in Closed Spaces: Effective Email and Web Communication in Restrictive and Non-Restrictive Environments

Organizer:

Women's Learning Partnership for
Rights, Development, and Peace
– WLP

Facilitators:

Usha Venkatachallam of
Appropriate IT
Ginger Richards of the Democracy
Resource Center at the National
Endowment for Democracy

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) present a host of possibilities for democracy activism. At the same time, authoritarian governments recognize their potential and are therefore increasingly restricting access and activities in cyberspace. The challenges posed by these limitations and ways to overcome them were the subject of this technology training session.

Three lessons from the Women's Learning Partnership (WLP)'s training curriculum, *Making IT Our Own: Information and Communication Technology Training of Trainers Manual*, provided the core of activities during the session, which was facilitated by Usha Venkatachallam of Appropriate IT and Ginger Richards of Democracy Resource Center at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED):

- Digital Footprints Everywhere;
- Cleaning Up Your Digital Footprints; and
- Hiding Your Digital Footprints.

The session provided a combination of knowledge- and skills-building exercises for participants, including an overview of how restrictions (such as blocking, filtering, and censoring) work; the use of anonymizing services to access restricted information; practical tips on how to remove traces of usage at public Internet centers; and ways to encrypt emails to pro-

tect sensitive communications.

Participants used Skype's VoIP and conferencing capabilities to communicate and collaborate, while also gaining awareness of how peer-to-peer technologies provide greater privacy and security than other Internet chat programs. The session reviewed email encryption tools (HushMail - <http://www.hushmail.com/>); proxy servers that anonymize Web traffic (Anonymouse - <http://anonymouse.org/>); relay networks for hiding Web site access history (Tor - <http://www.torproject.org/>); and best practices, such as using Internet browsing centers away from one's location or creating one-time use Web emails to send sensitive email messages.

Participants were provided with additional learning resources to explore, and from which they can select, the methods best suited to their situations and contexts. These resources included:

- Digital Security and Privacy for Human Rights Defenders
<http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/manual/en/esec-man/>
- Anonymous Blogging with Wordpress and Tor
<http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/tools/guide>
- Practical Privacy Tools
<http://epic.org/privacy/tools.html>



Participants

Democracy activists, practitioners, and scholars from every region of the world gathered to discuss practical solutions to a wide range of challenges to democracy.

In the following pages, participants are listed according to region, country, and then alphabetically by last name. Those who attended are but a small fraction of the thousands of activists around the world, so many of whom could not be included in this Assembly. However, they are as much participants in the World Movement as those who attended. Many of the participants took great personal risks to attend the Assembly and some cannot be listed here for that reason. We wish to thank both those who attended and those who were not able to attend for their support, dedication, and commitment.

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IFJ Welcomes Courage Award for Somali Journalists' Union

IFJ Welcomes Courage Award for Somali Journalists' Union

World Movement for Democracy

President Takes part in World Movement for Democracy assembly

President Takes part in World Movement for Democracy assembly

The Week

World democracy activists urge Ukrainians to struggle on

World democracy activists urge Ukrainians to struggle on

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У нових демократії

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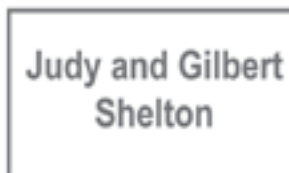
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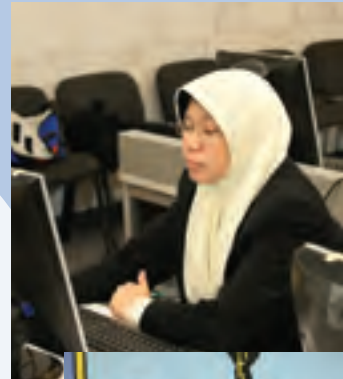
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Confronting the Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century

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“... the time has come for democrats throughout the world to develop new forms of cooperation to promote the development of democracy. Such cooperation is needed to strengthen democracy where it is weak, to reform and invigorate democracy even where it is longstanding, and to bolster pro-democracy groups in countries that have not yet entered into a process of democratic transition.”

— from the Founding Statement of the
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