



**THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE (NDI) AND THE CARTER
CENTER CALL FOR AN ISSUE-ORIENTED CAMPAIGN**

May 16, 2001

The National Democratic Institute/Carter Center election observation mission in Peru has continued to monitor the electoral environment leading up to the run-off presidential election. In addition to maintaining a permanent presence in Lima, long-term observers are traveling to Arequipa, Cusco, Puno, Tarapoto, Piura, Chiclayo, Trujillo and Iquitos to monitor electoral developments in distinct geographic zones of the country.

There is a very little time remaining of a challenging election process that has been conducted under unusual circumstances resulting from the failed 2000 elections. Since former President Fujimori's unexpected call for new elections last September, extraordinary efforts have been made to ensure a peaceful, democratic transition of power on July 28, 2001.

In this final, critical stage of the election process, a negative, personalized presidential campaign has disappointed many Peruvians. To reengage the citizenry in the substance of the election campaign, NDI and The Carter Center urge the candidates and the news media to focus on issues that will help Peruvians make an informed decision at the polls. The two institutes commend the initiative taken by *Transparencia* to help facilitate a presidential debate and congratulate the two political groups for reaching agreement on its format. NDI and The Carter Center hope this debate will inform citizens and help them use this election to choose the candidate who they believe is more qualified to lead Peru.

NDI and The Carter Center also recognize and encourage the efforts of the ONPE to provide additional training for poll workers and extensive voter education before the second round of the elections. These initiatives will be instrumental to ensuring an efficient voting and tabulation process that accurately reflects the preferences of the electorate.

Whichever candidate is elected in this second round will face significant challenges as the new president of Peru. NDI and The Carter Center strongly support the call made by the transitional government for a national dialogue on issues fundamental to Peru's democratic development and hope that a mechanism will be established quickly to facilitate this dialogue.

NDI and The Carter Center will continue to observe the election process and the post-election period. The two institutes plan to organize a 30-person international delegation to observe the run-off election and a post-election delegation to support new initiatives to consolidate democracy in Peru.