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**GUINEA: SUPPORTING THE
DEMOCRATIC PROCESS**

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I. INTRODUCTION

From September to December 1998, NDI conducted a three-part program to support ongoing democratization efforts in Guinea. NDI's program sought to increase transparency and fairness in the December 1998 presidential election by training political party pollwatchers, developing voter education messages that were broadcast on radio stations across the country, and providing international support for pollwatchers on election day. NDI designed its program in response to needs expressed by Guinean political parties, the Guinean government and civic organizations. This program was implemented with the support and cooperation of these groups.

During its program, NDI produced three civic and voter education radio spots that were translated into seven local languages and broadcast throughout the country by Guinea's seven rural radio stations. NDI also trained 228 Guinean resource persons to serve as trainers of approximately 16,000 party pollwatchers from the major political parties that fielded candidates for the election. Shortly before the election NDI organized an international delegation of political party experts from Africa, Canada and the U.S. to demonstrate support for the parties during the election and to provide NDI with an independent perspective of the parties' performance in their pollwatching effort.

This report examines NDI's program, including the pollwatching effort, in the hopes that lessons learned from these activities may be useful to Guineans as they prepare for upcoming municipal and legislative elections. The report is based on NDI's four-month involvement in Guinea, its interaction with political leaders and activists across the political spectrum and the findings of its team of international political party experts who were present in Guinea from December 8 to 21, 1998.

NDI would like to extend its appreciation to the Guinean political parties, civic organizations and the government of Guinea, especially the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization, for their constructive suggestions, active support and participation in this program. NDI also thanks the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for its financial and organizational assistance.

II. BACKGROUND

NDI's program cannot be properly evaluated without a brief overview of the political and economic contexts in which the 1998 elections and NDI's program took place.

After Guinea obtained independence from France in 1958, Ahmed Sékou Touré became President and ruled the country as a repressive, one-party state for two and a half decades. Upon Touré's death in 1984, the armed forces seized power in a coup led by then-Colonel Lansana Conté. After eight years of one-party rule, Conté legalized multiparty activity in 1992 and a presidential election was scheduled for 1993. The period leading up to the December 1993 election was marred by the harassment of opposition party leaders and activists and growing civil unrest. Following a chaotic vote, Conté was declared winner with 52 percent of the vote. Opposition groups and international observers, including the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the African-

American Institute (AAI), widely decried the election as fraudulent. The country's first multiparty legislative elections in 1995 in which Conté's party, the *Parti pour l'Unité et le Progrès* (PUP), won 71 of the 114 parliamentary seats, were more peaceful but also suffered from reported irregularities and an estimated voter turn-out of less than 50 percent.

Subsequent political developments in Guinea have been marked by conflicting trends of political liberalization on the one hand and continued dominance by a centralized executive branch and dominant political party, the PUP, on the other. For example, in March 1997 the president issued a decree giving himself effective control over the central bank and several government ministries. However, he later relinquished his portfolio as defense minister and took steps to ensure a balanced ethnic representation in many ministries. Also, although a vibrant independent print media exists, the government has refused to allow private broadcast media or the rebroadcast of information from international radio stations. Some Guinea observers cite initiatives by the National Assembly, such as its attempt to form a multipartisan commission of inquiry after a the February 1996 mutiny (led by a group of officers to protest salary and living conditions) and its calls for the formation of an independent election commission, as harbingers of reform. Nevertheless, the legislature has faced challenges in asserting its prerogative. Most recently, National Assembly President Biro Diallo was suspended from the ruling party, the PUP, for publicly condemning alleged human rights violations by the government.

Along with political reforms, Guinea has also undertaken substantial economic reforms in the 1990s to overhaul several decades of economic policies that accompanied Marxist rule. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommended economic liberalization measures that Guinea embarked upon in the mid-1990s have resulted in growth but poor infrastructure continues to hamper the economy. Recent structural adjustment has focused on improving transportation and communication infrastructure to exploit the country's vast natural resources. Economic stability and continued growth remained key issues throughout the pre-election period.

December 1998 elections

As the December 14 election approached, Guinean political parties, government and civil society initiated dialogue on the electoral process, including the formation of an elections advisory/administration body. After months of negotiations between the government and opposition parties, the composition and function of a 68-member advisory body (including 18 members each from the ruling party and opposition coalition, as well as representatives of the government and civil society) was agreed upon in late September. Officially "co-responsible"-- with the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization (MID) -- for supervising the elections, the High Council for Electoral Affairs (*Haut Conseil aux Affaires Electorales--HCE*) was given the authority to make non-binding recommendations to the MID. The HCE structure was replicated in each prefecture with seven-member multipartisan commissions, most of which were established in early December.

While some parties viewed the HCE as falling short of their aspirations for an independent election commission, all parties heralded its creation and the consultative process that led to its

formation. Others expressed concern that the HCE's role would be largely symbolic because its responsibilities to "supervise and control" the electoral process were not clearly defined and the MID retained operational authority for the conduct of the election.

The Guinean government responded positively to a number of concerns raised in the pre-election period including the presence of PUP and CODEM (*Coordination de l'Opposition Démocratique -- CODEM --* the coalition of the five major opposition parties) as party pollwatchers and party-appointed members of the polling staff (*assesseurs*). The government also agreed to provide state funding for candidates of political parties represented in the National Assembly. However, the government did not respond favorably to other opposition demands, which left open the possibility for continued partisan confrontations. Among these unmet demands were a revision and publication of the voters list, full and accurate distribution of voters' cards, the provision of identity cards to the population free of charge and the liberalization of the broadcast media.

The pre-election period in 1998 was significantly more peaceful than in Guinea's previous two elections. Still, there were numerous incidents of political violence in the pre-election period that occurred across political lines despite public appeals for calm from all presidential candidates. The killing of the sub-prefect in Banian and violent demonstrations in Conakry in the last days of the campaign were two of the more publicized incidents of violence.

As the election approached, many Guineans, worried by armed conflicts in the neighboring countries of Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone, continued to advocate for democratic reforms and a credible election process in their own country. Guineans and independent observers alike viewed credible elections -- with an outcome accepted by all political parties -- as a critical benchmark for the future of the country's democratization efforts. NDI's decision to conduct programming in Guinea was based on these realities as well as the fact that Guineans, both in and out of government, had already taken a number of steps to help ensure a more transparent and credible process in 1998.

III. ACTIVITIES

The process by which the three major components of NDI's program were designed and implemented underscore the challenges and, ultimately, the rewards of a multi-partisan, multi-sectoral effort. Notwithstanding that there occasionally arose differences in perspective and priorities, NDI and its partners (political parties, government and NGOs) successfully collaborated to achieve a common goal of a more participatory, transparent process and a better informed citizenry.

A. Political Consultations

From September 12 to 27, 1998, NDI conducted a program assessment mission to evaluate the Guinean political environment and determine the suitability and nature of election-related assistance. The NDI assessment was welcomed by the Guinean political parties, civil society representatives and the Guinean government (see Appendix A). The delegation included Tibor Vidos,

a founder and former leader of the Alliance of Free Democrats (Hungary); Tadjouline Ali Diabacté, professor at the University of Benin in Lomé and former vice-president of the Togolese election commission (Togo); NDI Senior Program Officer Timothy McCoy; and Program Officer Katie Prud'homme. NDI Program Assistant Kim Pease provided programmatic and logistical support for the delegation.

Following intensive discussions with Guinean political parties, the Guinean government, journalists, other opinion leaders and representatives of NGOs in Conakry and other regions of Guinea, the mission determined that NDI could most effectively support Guinea's electoral process by assisting political party efforts to observe the 1998 presidential elections and to conduct a civic education program. NDI's decision was based on several of the mission's findings, including the existence of well-organized political parties capable of deploying qualified pollwatchers; the parties' awareness of how their efforts could promote transparency and lead to the institutionalization of party pollwatching; and a consensus among the government, civil society and political parties that Guineans could benefit from a civic and voter education program. As the assessment mission concluded, NDI asked Professor Ali Diabacté and Kim Pease to remain in Guinea to begin program activities.

Following the initial assessment, NDI began a second set of detailed consultations with Guinean political parties on the Institute's proposed plans, including the training agenda, the number and profile of resource persons to serve as trainers and the geographic balance of participants and training locations. At the same time, NDI participated in a series of meetings with the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization (MID) to discuss measures that could be taken to facilitate the involvement and participation of political party pollwatchers on election day. Throughout the course of its program, NDI held regular working meetings with representatives of the MID and liaison persons designated by each major political parties.

NDI also held extensive working sessions with nationally-based Guinean civil society organizations. As a result of these discussions, four of these organizations -- *Coordination des Femmes Guinéens - COFEG*; *the Organisation Guinéen des Droits de l'homme - OGDH*; *Groupe d'Etude et de Recherche sur le Développement Economique et Social - GERDDES*; and *Syndicat Libre des Enseignants et Chercheurs Guinéens - SLECG* -- agreed to designate resource persons (trainers-of-trainers) from their membership to conduct pollwatcher training for political party representatives.

PUP and CODEM subsequently agreed to select an equal number of their top party activists as resource people who would train pollwatchers in multipartisan teams throughout the country. At the same time, these parties began designating 8,000 party members to receive pollwatcher training. The MID agreed to broadcast radio announcements advising participants of the date and location of the training sessions, and to send two trainers to accompany NDI experts on their regional training circuit in November. Contemporaneous with discussions on the pollwatcher training, NDI and its partners agreed to a three-stage process to produce civic education cassettes.

The step-by-step consultative process NDI undertook with its Guinean partners had several

positive results, including: the creation of a framework for training and civic education that all participants viewed as inclusive; substantive input from Guineans on the design and execution of NDI's program; and the provision of an additional forum for dialogue among the political parties, government and civil society during the sensitive pre-election period.

B. Party Pollwatcher Training

NDI trained 228 resource persons -- including approximately 76 representatives each from civil society, the PUP and CODEM -- who later were to instruct 16,000 (8,000 representatives designated each by PUP and CODEM) party pollwatchers designated by various political parties. This approach allowed NDI to train six resource persons for each of Guinea's 33 prefectures and five communes. While these numbers were limited by NDI's funding constraints, they reflected agreements between the Guinean political parties. After an early November opening training session in Conakry, NDI conducted regional training seminars in Kindia, Labé, Kankan and N'Zérékoré (for a balanced geographic representation) (see map Appendix B). Guinean trainers then divided into teams of three (one PUP, CODEM and NGO representative each) to hold two to four training sessions per prefecture in the first week of December.

NDI's two-day training seminars focused on Guinean electoral law, the electoral framework, the role of the HCE and the role that political parties play in the election process. The sessions included simulation, role-playing and intensive working sessions during which trainers discussed the methodology and organization for the training they would conduct (see Appendix C). NDI provided resource persons with a detailed agenda, logistical assistance and the educational materials -- including a comprehensive how-to guide for party pollwatchers that contained a form for recording election results -- necessary to conduct the training sessions in each prefecture (see Appendix D). NDI-sponsored trainers -- Resident Director Tadjoudine Ali Diabacté; Honoré Guie, a law professor at the University of Abidjan and the president of a coalition of Ivorian NGOs; and NDI Senior Program Officer Robert Benjamin -- were joined by communal elections manager Mariama Konaté and national elections manager Moustaffa Diallo, both of whom represented the MID.

On November 4th and 5th, NDI held its opening political party pollwatcher seminar/workshop in Conakry with 30 participants from Conakry's five communes. Among the special guests were the Prime Minister's representative; the Minister of the Interior and Decentralization (MID); the chief of staff of the MID; the Mayor of Matam commune; representatives of Conakry's four other mayors; and the US Ambassador to Guinea. Also attending were representatives from USAID, the Canadian Embassy, the United Nations Development Programme, the European Union, and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

The Conakry training -- and the other regional seminars that followed -- were well-attended and received high ratings from participants. In responding to a post-seminar evaluation questionnaire, Guinean participants rated the seminar content and methodology very highly. NDI attributes this success to the cooperative attitude of Guinea's political parties and the MID. When political parties submitted their lists of resource persons to NDI, they committed these representatives to participating

in and conducting multipartisan training. The MID provided trainers and authorized prefectural and regional administrative authorities to provide organizational assistance to the NDI-trained resource persons. Guinean civic organizations -- COFEG, GERDDES, OGDH and SLECG -- sent representatives as resource persons, thereby contributing to the non-partisan tone and content of the training.

NDI experienced a few problems in implementing its training. For example, in the Kindia regional training, very few PUP resource persons attended due to miscommunication within the party. There were more serious problems with three of the pollwatcher training seminars that took place at the prefectural level during the first week of December. In Dubreka, the home prefecture of the President of the Republic, the prefect refused to allow the training to take place, stating that there were no opposition parties in the prefecture. In Kankan, an administrative authority withheld a substantial portion of the per diem that was to be distributed to each of the nine prefectures of his region. Another administrative authority (in the prefecture of Mali) withheld half of the per diem allowances that were to be distributed to the party delegates.

In designing this program, NDI chose to devote the maximum amount of human and financial resources to training the greatest number of people. NDI made this choice based on the following reasons: 1) the parties expressed desire that training be available for each of the 16,000 delegates that they could deploy; and 2) delegating responsibility and control to NDI-trained trainers was one method of helping parties establish their own training capacity. As a result, NDI was unable to closely monitor the actual pollwatcher training and to determine the precise number of party representatives trained. While resource persons reported back to NDI that the training took place in each prefecture (with the exception of Dubreka), NDI is continuing to gather documentation on the total number of party representatives actually trained.

C. Civic and Voter Education

In collaboration with the PUP, CODEM and the MID, NDI designed three civic education "radio spots" on the meaning of elections and the mechanics and importance of voting that were translated into seven local languages and broadcast on the country's seven rural and communal radio stations.

In mid-October, NDI organized a three-day intensive working session with representatives from the MID, the Ministry of Communication, the PUP, CODEM and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation to develop three texts (see Appendix E). As a follow-up to the drafting session, NDI brought together linguists from PUP, CODEM and the Ministry of Communication to translate the three texts. To ensure the integrity and objectivity of the messages, translators from these groups worked together to translate the French texts into Sousou, Malinka, Pular, Kisie, Loma, Manon and Kpele.

The Guinean participants also agreed that the recording and translation of the French texts could be conducted at the Ministry's recording studio in Kindia, where disc jockeys from Guinea's

rural radio stations recorded the messages. This request was made in the hope that, by presenting a familiar voice, rural Guineans would have more confidence in the content and objectivity of the recordings. All participants -- PUP, CODEM, the Ministry of Communications and the MID -- reviewed and approved the recording in each language. Later, with the assistance of the Ministry of Communication, 360 audio cassettes were produced and distributed to the rural radio stations. These radio spots were played several times a week from late October until two days before the December 14 election.

D. International Support

Following its pre-election training program, NDI organized a visit to Guinea by a six-member international mission of political party leaders and activists, including Audrey McLaughlin, former president of the New Democratic Party (Canada); Marcel Bassene, Secretary-General of the Senegalese Liberal Party (Senegal); Théophile Koby, member of the political bureau of the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI); Antoine N'Guessan Depry, assistant to the Secretary General for Elections of the Ivorian Popular Front; Kelley Jones, former advisor to the Lieutenant Governor of Texas (United States); and Adamou Kombo, former president of the National Commission for the Control and Supervision of Elections (Niger) (see Appendix F). The delegation arrived in Guinea on December 8 with the following objectives: 1) to show the support of political parties around the world for the role that party pollwatchers play in helping ensure transparency in multiparty elections and; 2) to evaluate the ability of Guinean political parties to deploy observers in polling stations and at other stages in the vote counting process and to efficiently collect information obtained by these observers (see Appendix G). While the team of international experts demonstrated support for the Guinean political parties through its presence, the delegation was able to focus on evaluation as the political parties' level of organization and preparations did not require outside assistance.

After its arrival in Guinea, the delegation held meetings in Conakry with some of the presidential candidates, political party leaders, government officials and civil society representatives. The meetings helped provide the delegation with information on how parties were planning to deploy and collect observations from their pollwatchers. The working sessions with the parties were complemented by broader discussions with other Conakry based political actors.

Three days before the election, the delegation divided into five teams to hold similar meetings at the regional and prefectural levels -- in Boké/Kamsar, Labé/Pita, Kankan/Faranah and N'zérékoré -- while one team remained in Conakry. The teams remained in the interior of the country for a week to meet with administrative authorities, political party leaders, and resource persons and delegates trained by NDI. They also observed and evaluated the parties' efforts on election day and conducted follow-up meetings after the election. Because admittance to the polling stations where the party pollwatchers would be performing their role required official observation credentials, NDI requested that the MID provide observer accreditation for its delegates. However, NDI explained to the Guinean government and Conakry-based representatives of the international community that this request did not mean that the delegation planned to conduct a comprehensive observation of the

electoral process; rather the team intended to support and evaluate political party pollwatching efforts. In its December 8 arrival statement, the delegation underscored this point by clearly stating its focus on the role of political party pollwatchers (see Appendix H).

The delegation's election-day evaluation was based on the role that parties played in polling stations and in monitoring the official results collection process. After vote counting was completed at each polling station, the results were sent in a sealed envelope to the prefectural results centralization commission (*commission de centralisation*). These commissions totaled and then transmitted election results by fax or phone to the national centralization commission in the MID. The Guinean government, during earlier discussions with NDI, stated that political parties would be allowed at every stage in the process.

Delegation teams examined the parties' monitoring efforts in eight prefectures (as well as the five Conakry communes) and observed the pollwatching effort in 101 polling stations and five results centralization committees. NDI's multinational delegation confirmed that, generally, parties were able to observe the voting and vote counting procedures at the polling stations and in some centralization committees. The team also sought to evaluate the NDI training based on the presence and conduct of party pollwatchers, as well as the pollwatchers' responses to questions about the training program. Upon returning to Conakry, the teams met with party leaders at their national headquarters to follow the final stages of the parties' independent results collection mechanisms, including steps that were taken by the parties to document sources of potential complaints. Team members also solicited the parties' own evaluations of the pollwatching program. The delegation departed Guinea on December 21, although NDI staff members remained in-country through the end of 1998 to continue monitoring political developments and solicit recommendations from Guinean political parties and others about possible additional programming.

IV. RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NDI was privileged to establish the trust and confidence of the ruling party, opposition parties, civic organizations and the Guinean government in the capital and across most of the country. The following observations are based on NDI's four months of day-to-day interaction with its local partners, its familiarity with and work in Guinea's four geographical regions and the findings of its international delegation.

Successful Organization and Deployment of Party Pollwatchers

Party delegates from PUP and CODEM were present in approximately 90 percent of the 101 polling stations visited by NDI delegation teams. If this sample was representative of the entire country, the selection, training (in many cases), and deployment of up to 16,000 delegates, as well as 16,000 *assesseurs* for each polling station, required a massive coordination and marshaling of resources on the part of both major political groupings. The inter-party coordination required of CODEM members to ensure a presence in all polling stations was especially noteworthy.

The level of party organization that made such a deployment possible is a positive sign for the future of Guinea's democratization process. Throughout its program, NDI was encouraged by indications of political party organization. This level of organization is noteworthy given the parties' relative youth and the difficulties posed by Guinea's logistical and communications infrastructure. Despite geographical variations in party representation, the regional and local branches of each party were well-informed of decisions made at the national level. Rallies, meeting agendas and other activities were generally coordinated throughout the country. For example, NDI noted that the PRP and UNR, which merged only in September, began to hold joint meetings in the regions almost immediately after the decision regarding the merger had been announced in Conakry. The PUP, in particular, appeared to have an active and well-coordinated women's group that participated in executive bureau discussions and was visible during the campaign. Several parties made available to the public their campaign calendars, organizational plans, party platforms and voters guides.

Effective Results Collection Mechanisms

The NDI delegation that visited Guinea around the December 14 election was heartened to observe parties implement well-conceived and effective results collection mechanisms that were integral to a successful pollwatching effort. The delegation was also pleased that the Guinean government did not restrict the parties' legal right to have observers present at all stages of the voting and vote counting procedures. There were, however, unconfirmed reports in some areas that authorities allegedly failed to respect this right.

When discussions stalled between the MID and HCE about providing party pollwatchers with official copies of a tally sheet (*fiche de resultat*), the competing parties decided to provide their pollwatchers with party-produced copies of the tally sheet. In the areas visited by NDI delegates on election day a great majority of party pollwatchers utilized this document during the vote count. These forms, once retrieved from pollwatchers, were used to carry out independent parallel vote counts (totals were usually compiled in the parties' prefectural level offices and then sent to Conakry) that generally kept pace with the official vote count in the centralization committees of each prefecture. For example, two days after the election, CODEM members in the prefecture of Kindia had collected results from their delegates in 315 out of 340 polling stations. A week after the election, CODEM headquarters in Conakry had received all of the independent counts from each region. While the prefectural headquarters of the PUP appeared to be equally successful in retrieving results from their pollwatchers, in a few instances local PUP representatives told NDI that they were not conducting independent counts as their party was well-represented by the administration.

Reduction of Tensions Since the 1993 and 1995 Elections

Guineans of all political persuasions, including party leaders, government authorities and civic organizations, agreed that there was a distinct reduction of tensions and partisan animosities since the last two elections. They attributed this to a number of factors, including the role that opinion leaders -- including traditional authorities and religious leaders -- have played in advocating peace and tolerance; the impact that Guinean civic organizations have had in educating the population about the

norms of a democratic culture; the efforts of all parties to encourage peaceful political activism on the part of their members; and the work of NDI in bringing the political parties together. The fruits of this more tolerant climate manifested themselves in a variety of ways. Opposing political parties co-existed and held rallies and demonstrations that many Guineans stated would have led to violence or governmental repression in the past. For example, the RPG and PUP reported to NDI in Kankan that their members had passed each other in street parades in December with salutes rather than skirmishes. Political party members in Faranah reported that they were able to display publicly their party loyalties this year without fear of retribution.

NDI's multipartisan pollwatcher training was both facilitated by and contributed to the more relaxed political climate. The willingness of PUP and CODEM members to participate in joint training sessions and to partner with members of other parties to conduct nonpartisan training at the grassroots level demonstrated a tolerance not seen in Guinea's past electoral environments. Almost all pollwatchers who spoke to NDI's evaluation team cited the reduction in political tension as one of the main accomplishments of the training. Several resource persons described the effort by which distrust among the participants at the beginning of a training session was gradually supplanted by respect for the role assigned to each party in safeguarding the democratic process. These sentiments were summed up by the government appointed Governor of Boké, who told NDI that the training in his region "resulted in an environment of nonpartisan cooperation."

Local Initiatives to Expand Training

NDI's evaluation team learned of several initiatives by participants in its programs to expand training to reach a larger audience. In Faranah, the *Rassemblement Populaire Guinéen* (RPG) used a cassette recording of the pollwatcher training as the basis for weekly civic education instruction for their members in different villages in the prefecture. The head of the rural radio in Kissidougou distributed copies of the cassettes in Manika and Kpele for all of the sub-prefects within that broadcasting range. And in Kamsar, a SLECG representative who served as an NDI resource person recounted how a number of the women affiliated with the PUP asked her to provide additional training sessions in the market. Many of the resource persons trained by NDI also reported that they had conducted smaller, informal pollwatcher training sessions in their prefectures for citizens who could not attend the official training.

Commitment to Democratic Process

The Guineans who participated in NDI's programs merit recognition for their willingness to dedicate their time and resources to furthering democratic development with very little material recompense. Representatives from political parties and civic organizations who drafted and/or translated civic education cassettes did so with only minimal compensation for food. The limited, sometimes insufficient, transport allowance provided by NDI to each party delegate attending the training session did not deter participation and provides a measure of the Guinean commitment to enhancing the democratic character of the country's elections. In the entire region of Kankan and the prefecture of Mali, party pollwatchers attended the training despite having received only half of

their allotted NDI per diem from administrative authorities. As of early January, NDI staff in Guinea were still attempting to retrieve these funds (approximately \$9000) through its contacts in the regions and administrative authorities in Conakry (see cable sent by the MID in Appendix I).

NDI also heard many reports of political party delegates and assessors who had not received per diems from their parties (as NDI could not provide per diems for the pollwatchers on election day, many of the parties attempted to do this themselves) or the prefecture but who nevertheless walked long distances to their polling stations and provided their own food on election day.

VI. EVALUATION AND CONCLUSIONS

NDI hopes that the following evaluative comments and conclusions will contribute to the ongoing dialogue in Guinea about the strengths and weaknesses of the 1998 electoral process and, as such, help promote Guinea's democratic political development. NDI calls upon the government and the ruling and opposition parties to make good faith efforts to resolve outstanding election-related issues, including the detention of opposition leader Alpha Condé. A quick resolution of these issues can only bolster the progress that Guinea has made thus far in establishing democratic norms and principles for all its citizens.

Uneven Democratization

Guinea's democratization process, as evidenced by the successes and shortcomings of NDI's program to train party pollwatchers, can be described neither as a complete success, nor as a complete failure. The degree to which democratic values have penetrated Guinean society, including but not limited to its governing institutions, is uneven. Areas remain where party leaders and/or administrative authorities appear to be unresponsive to reforms occurring in the capital. NDI's inability to conduct training in Dubreka and the difficulties it experienced in the region of Kankan and the prefecture of Mali are symptomatic of the work that still needs to be done in Guinea to consolidate the democratization process. During the election, NDI teams heard reports that pollwatcher lists submitted by parties were rejected by authorities without legal basis and that some party delegates were refused entry into their designated polling stations. While these complaints were few and were difficult for NDI to verify, they clearly affected the confidence of the parties in the electoral process and its outcome. Aside from the fact that these incidents diminished the rights of individual voters and parties in these areas, the re-telling of these stories around the country can undermine larger public confidence in the process -- even in those areas where it went well. A thorough investigation of these complaints by administrative authorities could enhance confidence in future elections.

The success of NDI's training was limited in areas where the population had received little education about the electoral process. This was especially true in rural areas, where many prospective pollwatchers seemed ill-equipped to understand their role on election day. Such education is essential if citizens are to understand the role of Guinea's nascent democratic institutions. The Guinean government, political parties and civil society are ultimately responsible for ensuring that efforts

continue to educate Guinean citizens about elections and the other fundamental practices and institutions of a democratic society. At the same time, international organizations, including NDI, can continue to improve upon their role in supporting such efforts. For example, one international observer deployed to Forécariah reported that the party delegates they met had not been trained by NDI nor had they received any other training. This finding may indicate that NDI should have cultivated stronger ties with the parties in the region, reinforced its training with follow-up sessions and/or consulted further with administrative officials and polling staff about the importance of the training.

Weak Civil Society

The limited number of Guinean civil society organizations involved in political development exacerbates the above-mentioned inconsistencies. In many emerging democracies around the world, nonpartisan monitoring efforts by civic organizations have provided a valuable complement to political party efforts. As in many of its programs elsewhere, NDI had hoped to partner with Guinean NGOs, but found few of these organizations actively involved in Guinea's political process, and even fewer with a nationwide network. Others were too closely affiliated with the government and/or opposition parties to be credible, nonpartisan partners. In some cases, NGOs simply failed to respond to NDI's invitation to send representatives to be trained as resource persons or did not uphold their commitments to participate. For example, only four of COFEG's 23 designated resource people actually participated in the regional training sessions. Many of the GERDDES' participants in NDI's Conakry training session seemed to attend under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education.

Timing of Decisions

The Guinean government made several commendable final-hour decisions whose impact, while still significant, would have been greater if made earlier. For example, a December 8 order issued by the MID that allowed both PUP and CODEM parties to nominate representatives as assessors was well-received by all parties. However, the short advance notice did not give all of the parties sufficient time to take advantage of the opportunity in all polling stations across the country. Consequently, NDI noted cases in which the party-nominated *assesseurs* and the pollwatchers did not understand the distinction between their respective roles. In a number of cases, *assesseurs* nominated by political parties had actually been trained to serve as party pollwatchers.

Limited Financial Means

One handicap for the parties' pollwatching efforts was a lack of financial resources that would have allowed them to provide transportation for their members to accompany the ballot boxes from the polling stations to the centralization committees. Even by election day, many party delegates were still waiting for further instructions as to whether they would be involved in the transport of results. After the election, many parties told NDI that they had not been able to follow the

transmission of results from the polling stations to the centralization commissions. This interruption in the parties' monitoring efforts diminished confidence in their ability to safeguard the process at every stage.

NDI Training Follow-on/Evaluation Mechanism and Timing

In future programs with similar budgetary constraints, NDI may reevaluate the trade-off between a training that reaches the largest number of people possible, and one that enables NDI to monitor follow-on training more closely. NDI staff witnessed training in 10 prefectures, but had to rely on reports from the resource persons on the exact number of party delegates actually trained, the control for the distribution of funds and how problems encountered were tackled by the political parties and Guinean resource persons. NDI had requested that the resource persons turn their lists of participants trained to the governors of the four interior regions in which NDI conducted training as this offered the most reliable means of communication to Conakry. As of mid-January NDI had received lists from 13 of the 18 prefectures in Kindia and Labé but not received any participant lists from N'zérékore or Kankan, although NDI delegation members did hear from the political parties that training took place and delegation members did observe NDI trained party pollwatchers in the polling stations on election day in both of these regions. As communication infrastructure prevented NDI from making contact with the resource people, and inquiries to the governors of these two regions went unanswered the Institute was not able to ascertain where the reporting system failed.

With enough lead time -- nine to 12 months before the election-- NDI may have been able to conduct an extensive civic education program that included other media besides radio, such as theater groups. An earlier starting date would also have allowed NDI enough time to organize follow-up pollwatcher training sessions before the election at the grassroots level, thereby reaching a larger audience and having a higher skills-transferred rate among rural participants. Increased time in-country before the election might have also permitted NDI to find solutions to Dubreka-type problems. Given more time, Guinean political parties and civic organizations may also have generated a greater multiplier effect on the training they received from NDI.