

**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE
TO OBSERVE MEXICAN ELECTIONS**

Former Texas Governor Ann Richards and former Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio will co-lead 45-member multinational delegation.

WASHINGTON, D.C., JUNE 23, 2000: The National Democratic Institute (NDI) today announced its international delegation that will observe the July 2 elections in Mexico. The delegation has been welcomed by the Mexican electoral authorities and the three major political parties.

"The NDI delegation represents the support of the international community for the democratic process in Mexico," said NDI President Kenneth Wollack. "This is an important moment in Mexican political history," he said. For the first time in 70 years, voters will cast ballots in elections whose outcome for the presidency is uncertain."

The 45-member delegation includes parliamentarians, political leaders, regional specialists, election officials and civic leaders from 11 countries in Europe and the Americas. Its leaders include former Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio, former Texas Governor Ann Richards, and US Congressmen Bob Filner of California and Ed Pastor of Arizona. The delegation follows NDI missions to Mexico in May and June this year, which assessed the pre-election environment and preparations for the upcoming polls.

From June 28th to July 2nd, the delegation will meet in Mexico City with candidates, representatives from major political parties, the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), journalists and civic groups involved in the elections, including the Civic Alliance, a nationwide coalition of civic organizations that has monitored national and state elections. NDI has supported the work of the Alliance since 1994.

Teams of delegates will then deploy to 15 states. The day before the elections, each team will meet with local political leaders, election officials and community leaders to discuss the election environment and pre-election developments in these regions. On election day, the teams will visit polling sites and counting centers. After voting and tabulation of results, the teams will reassemble in Mexico City for debriefing and to prepare a preliminary delegation statement, which will be released on Tuesday July 4.

This delegation will draw upon the Institute's work in Mexico since 1991 and NDI's experience in organizing more than 50 international election observation missions and election-related programs in more than 70 countries. It will augment its observations with information from Mexican political parties, domestic monitors and other international visitors, and will conduct its activities in accordance with international standards and Mexican law.

NDI is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. It provides practical assistance to democrats in

every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

Contact Jean Freedberg
(202) 797-4785 (Washington DC) or
C/O Westin Galleria Plaza Mexico City (011) 525-230-1717 x 1191

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