



NDI Reports

W I N T E R 1 9 9 8

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Kenyans Seek Continued Democratic Reforms

Following a year marked by violent political unrest and a broad-based movement for constitutional and legal reforms, 20-year incumbent President Daniel arap Moi was inaugurated for a fifth term on January 5. Moi took office after a controversial week surrounding Kenya's second multiparty general elections. The December 29 and 30 polls were marred by disorganization, poor management and accusations of vote rigging. Officials extended balloting to a second day when irregularities and logistical problems significantly disrupted voting and caused approximately half the polling stations to open late.

Returns showed that Moi captured approximately 40 percent of the vote and fulfilled a geographic requirement

that the winner garner 25 percent or more of the vote in at least five of the country's eight provinces. Several of the 15 presidential candidates and some civic leaders refused to concede the results and called for new elections; others accepted the outcome, but urged further democratic reforms. In parliamentary contests, the opposition gained more National Assembly seats than expected, leaving the ruling KANU party with a slim four-seat majority.

Poor electoral administration and government manipulation tainted Kenya's 1992 polls. In 1997, a series of protests in support of electoral reform combined with international economic pressures to prompt parliamentary

Continued on page 11

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Polish Elections Showcase Reinvigorated Political Party System

The transfer of government from former communists to political parties that emerged from the Solidarity movement represents a watershed event in the consolidation of Poland's nascent democracy. But more significant than the results, the September 21 parliamentary elections helped redress a fractionalized political party system that had plagued Polish democratic development.

"Thanks to our cooperation with the National Democratic Institute our campaign became more professional, dynamic and efficient."

—Marian Krzaklewski,
Leader, Solidarity Election Action

For the first time, Poland's political parties successfully joined together within coalitions to offer voters a choice between ideological blocs. Unity and discipline replaced fragmented conditions that had dominated the political landscape.

On election day, an estimated 59 percent of the voters turned out for Poland's third set of democratic,

Continued on page 10



NDI's program in Kenya acquaints women who aspire to elective office with the skills needed to compete effectively. Pictured here are participants and international advisers at a seminar for women candidates.

NORTHERN IRELAND



President Nelson Mandela and South African leaders arrive at conference with Northern Ireland political parties. Pictured (l to r): Mandela, ministers M. Valli Moosa and Kader Asmal, and Roelof Meyer and Cyril Ramaphosa, former National Party and ANC chief negotiators, respectively.

Northern Ireland Leaders Consult South Africans on Negotiations

Decades of sectarian political violence have claimed thousands of lives in Northern Ireland. But the ongoing strife has also demoralized a generation of political leadership and eroded public confidence in the political system. With a fragile ceasefire in place, the governments of Great Britain and Ireland reconvened multiparty peace talks in September among Northern Ireland's unionist and nationalist forces to shape a new settlement for the province. These events have raised hopes for a peaceful resolution of Europe's most enduring civil conflict.

Earlier in the decade, another accord was forged between historic rivals in South Africa where a negotiated transition led the country from apartheid to multi-racial democracy and the inauguration of Nelson Mandela. This achievement became a model for other countries striving to resolve seemingly intractable conflicts.

In June, NDI and the John W.

"Not a day goes by in the talks that a reference is not made to the South Africa experience. It was a turning point in our lives."

—Northern Ireland political party leader

McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts brought together 27 leaders from nine Northern Irish political parties with more than two dozen South Africans who actually negotiated the historic transition to all-race elections and democratic rule. The program, which was conducted before the new Belfast talks, was held at a secluded military air base on the Western Cape where participants took part in intensive meetings, isolated from all political dis-

tractions. South Africa's Department of Constitutional Development sponsored the program, dubbed an *indaba*—Zulu for "gathering of the minds."

In attendance were the leaders of the nationalist and unionist parties, the two sides of Northern Ireland's political divide. They included John Thomas Lord Alderdice, leader of the Alliance Party; Mark Durkan, deputy leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party; Martin McGuinness, chief negotiator for Sien Fein; Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Ulster Democratic Party; and David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party. The South African hosts included Cyril Ramaphosa and Roelof Meyer, chief negotiators for the African National Congress and the National Party respectively. Ramaphosa and Meyer had previously visited Belfast to meet individually with the Northern Ireland parties.

The South Africans described the challenges they faced in order to reach a "workable" negotiating model; establish parallel and complementary negotiating processes; and create mutually acceptable procedures and principles to guide their deliberations. The program considered the relevance of these experiences to Northern Ireland. The South Africans examined "real life" situations where deliberations broke down, and actions taken to reconcile differences and resume the negotiation process. President Mandela spent several hours at the *indaba* detailing the challenges to leaders in reconciling differences and achieving consensus.

Months later, the South African program continues to affect negotiations in Northern Ireland. "An experience of a lifetime," said one participant. "This conference has helped us on our road to a solution in Northern Ireland." For the South Africans, the *indaba* was, according to Constitutional Development Minister M. Valli Moosa, "part of our pay-back to the rest of the world." He called it the "first occasion in the history of conflict where a country in the northern hemisphere had turned to a country in the southern hemisphere for help."

Mexican Elections Mark New Era of Multiparty Politics

The July 6 elections were the fairest and most competitive in Mexico's history, and hold the promise of genuine multiparty democracy in a country long plagued by electoral fraud and one-party rule.

In what analysts interpreted as an unparalleled call for change, Mexican voters gave the opposition Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) historic victories at the ballot box. The PRD won a majority of seats on the capital city's city council as well as the mayoral race in Mexico City, a post formerly handpicked by the president. For the first time in 70 years, the ruling Institutional Revolution Party (PRI) also lost its majority in Congress, a transformation that is likely to usher in new era of compromise and negotiation with opposition parties.

Beyond the dramatic results, the integrity of the election process itself was viewed as historic. Political reforms approved in 1996 provided unprecedented independence to the Federal Electoral Institute, which manages the election process. The Institute had formerly operated under the control of the government's interior ministry.

The elections fulfilled years of effort by the Civic Alliance (Alianza Civica), a coalition of more than 500 civic organizations, to increase voter confidence and participation in Mexican polls. Since 1994, 25,000 Alliance volunteers have worked to safeguard more than 25 municipal, state and federal elections in states ranging from industrialized Coahuila on the northern border to the southern jungles of Chiapas. These efforts contributed to the campaign for electoral reforms and helped deter fraud in the July polls, which were monitored by Alliance pollwatchers.

Media coverage of the 1997 election campaign was also more balanced than previous contests. A report on the 1994 elections by the Mexican Academy of Human Rights, a member organization of the Civic Alliance, asserted that television "unfairly" favored the ruling party "both in terms of news coverage and paid political advertising." Before the July elections, NDI organized a delegation to Mexico of experts from Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the U.S. to assess the impartiality of the press. The delegation concluded that reporting had grown more open, independent and balanced in recent years, particularly when contrasted with electoral coverage during national elections in 1988 and 1994.

Despite progress, the delegation found that Mexico is still plagued by traditions that undermine media independence, including efforts to pressure journalists; financial agreements (*convenios*) between political parties and media outlets to ensure positive reporting; and the use of flattering paid articles (*gacetillas*) in place of genuine news stories. In addition, many media outlets also depend heavily on revenues from government advertising, which, in some cases, influence reporting and editorial decisions.

The NDI delegation also examined the Academy's methodology for monitoring media coverage of the elections. Building on the role it played during the 1994 presidential poll, the Academy organized a program to analyze the fairness of media coverage provided to political parties. Using a sophisticated "content analysis" technique, the Academy worked with Civic Alliance volunteers to measure the quantity and tone of media coverage accorded to candidates throughout the country. Academy findings revealed that media coverage in Mexico City had improved but serious inequities persisted at the state level.



At a polling site in Iz Tapalapa, outside of Mexico City, election officials safeguard the secrecy of the voting table with a protective covering after Civic Alliance monitors indicated a lack of adequate privacy for the balloting process.

Before the July elections, NDI and the Academy conducted training on its monitoring techniques for Civic Alliance coordinators in the various Mexican states. Also attending the workshop were leaders of civic groups from Nicaragua, Guyana and Paraguay, who planned to conduct monitoring programs in their respective countries. After attending the workshop, members of the Guyanese Electoral Assistance Bureau decided to use the Academy's methods to examine media reporting for upcoming general elections there.

NDI is also conducting Latin America and Caribbean programs in Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Paraguay.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Mozambicans Link Citizens with New Political Institutions

The Rome Peace Accords and the 1994 elections ended the brutal civil war between the FRELIMO-led government and the RENAMO opposition. Subsequent research conducted by NDI revealed that Mozambican citizens generally know little about the role of the country's national legislature and believe that parliamentarians are isolated from the daily concerns of most people. Voters were also unsure of how to exercise their rights and to hold their elected representatives accountable.

Aware of these concerns, Members of parliament have expressed a desire to increase contact with their constituents and expand public participation in government. Faced with limited resources and an absence of democratic tradition, national lawmakers are struggling to build an effective legislature and to establish effective two-way communication between themselves and the public.

A series of NDI-sponsored forums across the country now afford citizens and elected officials with opportunities for increased dialogue. The forums, some

"Our contact with the electorate legitimizes our work. It makes us true representatives."

—Mozambican parliamentarian at NDI workshop on constituent service

of which are broadcast by Radio Mozambique, also provide a unique opportunity for parliamentarians to explain the law-making process and respond directly to constituent questions and requests. Last February, at a public meeting in Maputo, more than 100 representatives from civic groups, religious organizations and labor unions questioned legislators about a range of issues from pending legislation on land rights to local environmental concerns and minimum wage questions. Working with Television Mozambique, NDI helped produce a short documentary on the session that was aired during a special segment of the nightly news.

At one NDI forum, a local peasant association was able to present its elected representatives with a petition requesting title to contested land. Following the meeting, the parliamentarians visited

the region to investigate the dispute and, after publication of the petition, the local governing authority granted the peasants title to the property.

To assist parliamentarians with learning more about their representative function, NDI also organized a program on constituent relations for deputies from the Assembly of the Republic, the country's unicameral national legislature. Legislators from Brazil, Canada, Namibia and the U.S. provided their Mozambican counterparts with comparative perspectives of how lawmakers from different countries approach their public "out-reach" activities. Members of the Assembly examined their relationships with the electorate and discussed methods to improve communication with citizens.

In addition to organizing public forums with elected officials, NDI continues to conduct a nationwide civic education campaign about the country's new political system. Already more than 250,000 Mozambicans have attended 8,500 sessions to discuss such topics as multiparty politics, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the structure of national government. To conduct the program, NDI reactivated its civic education network, comprising a corps of 100 Mozambican trainers organized previously for national elections nearly four years ago. These trainers, now part of a new civic group called the Mozambican Association for the Development of Democracy (AMODE), travel extensively in their provinces to raise citizen awareness of the new political system and promote popular political participation. With municipal elections scheduled for May 29, NDI has expanded its program to help AMODE prepare Mozambicans for participating in the first set of local elections under a multiparty constitution. Also in advance of the local polls, NDI plans to organize candidate forums throughout the country.

NDI is also conducting Southern Africa programs in Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.



Pictured are members of NDI's Mozambican civic education network who attended a conference for district trainers in Tete Province. They are holding waterproof, portable trainer "kits" that contain materials necessary to conduct seminars about the country's new political system and upcoming local elections. Trainers often use bicycles to reach remote areas.

Mali's Democracy Faces Challenges

Mali's first competitive elections to be organized by an incumbent, democratically elected government were seen as a critical turning point in the development of the country's nascent democracy. Since Mali began its democratic transition in 1992, the country has been regarded as a leader of political reform in West Africa. Despite significant achievements by President Alpha Oumar Konaré and his government, poorly run polls, opposition boycotts and low voter turnout frustrated Malian efforts to consolidate the country's new democratic system. The political situation has remained deadlocked since April as hardline opposition parties demand the organization of new elections and the resignation of the current government.

In October 1996, Mali adopted a new electoral code that included the creation of an independent election commission (known by its French acronym, CENI), which was viewed as the basis for fair election administration. The CENI was formally inaugurated in January 1997 and became one of the few independent commissions in francophone Africa.

Mali conducted its second set of elections since the democratic transition of 1992 according to a serial calendar, with legislative, presidential and municipal polls scheduled for April, May and June 1997 respectively. Thirty-four parties and 1,506 candidates competed for 147 parliamentary seats during the first round of the legislative contests held on April 13. Despite voter enthusiasm and a high turnout, the polls were marred by disorganization and poor technical administration.

On April 25, Mali's Constitutional Court, responding to legal challenges filed by the opposition parties, annulled the results of the legislative elections. In a clear demonstration of its commitment to democratic procedures, the government supported the Court decision.

For its part, the CENI moved to improve defective voter lists and issue new voter cards. Nevertheless, most opposition parties refused to participate in the May 11 presidential race. They demanded a new caretaker government and a reconstituted election commission. Attempts to broker an agreement failed, and the presidential election took place as scheduled without substantial competition; it was won by President Konaré.

Early in 1996, NDI had evaluated the existing election laws and issued recommendations, many of which appeared in the subsequently adopted electoral reform legislation. As elections neared, NDI opened an office in Bamako to work with Malian political parties and civic groups to enhance transparency in the electoral process and increase citizen understanding of the voting process. For the legislative elections, NDI worked with the Network to Support Electoral Processes in Mali (known by its French acronym APEM)—a coalition of 40 Malian NGOs—to train 1,000 domestic election monitors and distribute 10,000 pollwatcher training manuals throughout the country. APEM pollwatchers and NDI representatives monitored the April 13 legislative elections and confirmed reports of poor organization and administration.



Polling officials oversee balloting at a mobile voting station outside of Gao, Mali during the May 11 presidential election.

Before the presidential election, NDI undertook extensive consultations with opposition and ruling party leaders aimed at encouraging a negotiated settlement. While the negotiations failed to resolve the impasse, NDI issued a statement that encouraged all Malian political parties to remain engaged in a dialogue "in the spirit of tolerance and compromise." While acknowledging grievances raised by opposition parties, the statement also urged them "to respect the rights of voters who wish[ed] to participate" in the election.

APEM deployed more than 460 pollwatchers for the presidential election and observed a significantly better organized process than the flawed legislative elections. However, voter participation hovered between 20 to 30 percent.

When legislative elections were rerun in July and August, hardline opposition parties again boycotted while more moderate groups agreed to participate. Nevertheless, the newly elected National Assembly is overwhelmingly dominated by the ruling party, ADEMA, and many of the opposition parties will remain outside of the political process for the remainder of the legislative term.

During August and September, tensions mounted as hardline opposition leaders were arrested in connection with the killing of a policeman during an anti-government demonstration. President Konaré has since pardoned the political leaders and there is renewed hope for a settlement. Konaré has called for negotiations among all the parties and has introduced a plan in the National Assembly for constitutional and electoral reform.

NDI is also conducting West Africa programs in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia and Togo.

Pakistanis Hold Another Election

Accountability Remains an Elusive Goal

While Pakistan held general elections only twice in its first 30 years of independence, voters went to the polls last February for the fifth time in a less decade. Since 1986, charges of corruption have plagued every government, each of which was dismissed by the president before completing its term.

In November 1996, in the face of growing civil unrest, allegations of widespread corruption and mismanagement, and inability to control sectarian violence, President Farooq Leghari dissolved the National Assembly, ending Benazir Bhutto's second term as prime minister. Leghari appointed a caretaker government until new elections could be held on February 3. The interim government immediately announced efforts to address

"NDI Provides Political Foes Mutual Platform"

—Headline in *The News*, a Pakistani English-language daily newspaper

Pakistan's endemic corruption, and established an accountability commission to investigate wrongdoing by elected officials and civil servants. Public confidence remained low throughout the pre-election period, however, as many doubted the impartiality of the caretaker government and the commission's ability to conduct meaningful investigations of alleged political misdeeds before election day.

The polls were held against a backdrop of election fatigue and disillusionment among voters. Previous elections had changed administrations but had not altered the perception of unresponsive political institutions and government corruption. On an election day marked by low voter turnout, the Pakistan Muslim League achieved a landslide victory



At a pre-election press conference in Islamabad, NDI President Kenneth Wollack (fifth from left) delivers statement of NDI delegation that examined preparations for Pakistan's national polls in February. Pictured (l to r): Paula Newberg and Peter Manikas from the U.S., Zlatko Lagumdžija from Bosnia-Herzegovina; Haydee Yorac from the Philippines; Wollack; Andrew Ellis from the U.K., and Dean Pittman and Eric Bjornlund from the U.S.

over Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, marking the first time in the country's history that one party had gained an absolute parliamentary majority. Newly elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, the leader of the government that was dismissed in 1993, pledged to curb corruption and announced plans to continue the mandate of the accountability commission.

Two weeks before election day, NDI sponsored a multinational delegation to observe arrangements for the polls. While making recommendations to improve the transparency and fairness of the process, the delegation addressed larger systemic issues such as periodic reviews of the electoral rolls, enhanced voter education efforts for women, a comprehensive electoral complaints process and more mechanisms to safeguard media impartiality.

The delegation also raised broader political issues that have not been addressed by elections and threaten to undermine democratic government. "There is a danger that if the parties do not come together in a spirit of tolerance and compromise to implement political reforms," the delegation wrote in its report, "prospects for further democratization and economic development will diminish and for a reassertion of anti-democratic forces may increase."

During NDI's election mission to Pakistan, Leghari, Bhutto and Sharif

welcomed NDI assistance in developing legislation to promote government ethics. Following the polls, NDI, along with the Pakistan Human Rights Commission and the United Nations Development Program, organized a roundtable forum at which parliamentarians, party leaders, government officials and civic activists addressed prospects for political reform. The forum produced a broad range of specific recommendations to promote government accountability and marked the first time in many years that political rivals had met to seriously address the country's need for reform.

Building on the roundtable, NDI sponsored the visit of a delegation of Pakistani parliamentarians to Johannesburg to study South Africa's experience in developing a parliamentary ethics code. The Pakistani legislators were able to discuss with their South African counterparts the political issues involved in approving the code, enforcement mechanisms, and efforts to expand the application of the code to ministers, civil servants and members of provincial assemblies.

NDI is also conducting Asia programs in Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

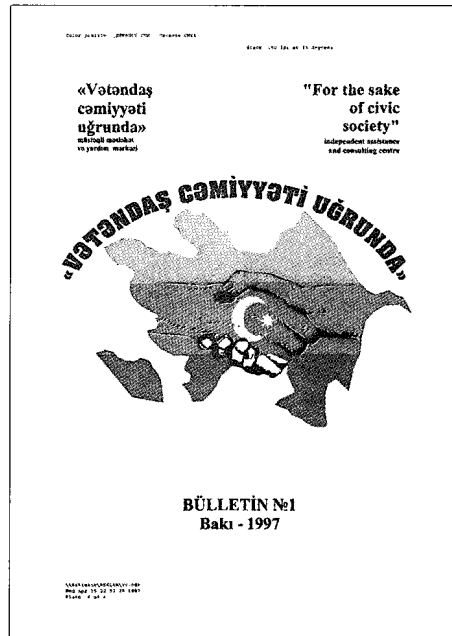
Azerbaijan: Hopes for Democratic Opening

Perched on the edge of the Caspian Sea, atop oil reserves that some analysts compare with those of Kuwait, Azerbaijan is endowed with many of the raw materials that should generate economic success. For all its promise, however, Azerbaijan displays many problems. A 10-year war with neighboring Armenia, official media censorship and political repression have left the country polarized and impoverished.

Azerbaijan was at the forefront of independence movements that swept the Soviet Union and precipitated its demise. By June 1993, however, a coup brought a Soviet-style regime back to power under the leadership of former communist party leader and Politburo member, Heydar Aliyev. In 1995, flawed parliamentary elections conferred an overwhelming majority on Aliyev's supporters, according the president control of the legislative branch. Public expectations of a meaningful electoral process were minimal to begin with and further eroded by overt violations of the election law during the campaign period and a weak showing by a dispirited opposition.

While the government imposed limitations on the ability of political parties to compete effectively in the elections, the process revealed serious inadequacies in the structure and behavior of the parties themselves. As a rule, the parties demonstrated centralized decisionmaking, little regard for their representative function and, as a result, only tenuous links to the electorate or a membership base.

The weaknesses of the political parties also affect adversely the political and civic activity of other institutions; their limited representation in parliament deprives civic groups of political allies or advocates. As a result, Azerbaijan's emerging nongovernmental organizations lack direct access to channels that might afford them opportunities to express a position on proposed legislation or submit information to parliament that might influence debate on public policy issues.



A publication of the Azerbaijan Civic Initiative (ACI) entitled "For the Sake of Civic Society" acquaints the public with democratic practices and procedures. Recent editions contained articles on local government systems in Great Britain, France and Germany. Several of ACI's recommendations for changes in the draft municipal election law, were incorporated into the National Assembly's final proposal.

Moreover, civic groups that seek a voice in public affairs invariably mirror the polarized political spectrum, and many have strong partisan affiliations that impede the development of independent, citizen-based activity. Censorship further thwarts efforts to promote a strong civic sector by denying voters and political groups the information they need to influence decisionmaking.

Throughout 1996 and 1997, NDI programs have assisted political parties and civic groups to strengthen their organizations, improve communication strategies and attract citizens to the political process. Many groups looked forward to local elections in 1997 as an opportunity to apply their new skills; by year's end, the government's failure to hold polls had dashed these hopes and turned the public's attention instead to presidential elections in 1998.

As a means to open the political process and prepare for future elections, NDI has helped organize the Azerbaijan Civic Initiative (ACI), a nongovernmen-

tal group that has begun educating voters about their rights and training political parties on their participation in elections. The group formed an advisory board comprising civic leaders and representatives of 10 major political parties. Having worked closely with NDI, ACI is now well on its way toward developing a national network of regional offices that enable it to provide assistance to citizens beyond the capital city of Baku.

ACI's training programs are designed to equip Azerbaijani citizens with the knowledge necessary to participate effectively in elections. Through articles published in the daily press, summaries and analyses printed in hand-outs and brochures, and discussions conducted in neighborhood forums, ACI is working to provide information that will promote popular participation in the process and compliance, from all sides, with the election law. To bring more accountability to the elections, ACI will also train party pollwatchers to protect their rights, and monitor the balloting and tabulation processes at voting precincts on election day.

Ukraine to Hold Elections Under New Constitution

With a population of more than 50 million, Ukraine has emerged from decades of Soviet domination as a pivotal country in Eurasia. Increasing attention will be focused on this important nation as it moves toward parliamentary and local elections on March 29, the first to be held under Ukraine's new post-Soviet constitution.

The March balloting will also provide historic opportunities for Ukraine's fledgling political parties and civic groups to assert their role in the country's developing democratic system. Democratic parties have a chance to increase their representation in a parliament that has been dominated by opponents of economic and political reform. And through

Continued on page 8

EURASIA

Continued from page 7

the efforts of the Committee of Voters of Ukraine (CVU), thousands of Ukrainian civic activists will be part of a voter education and election monitoring effort designed to enhance public confidence and participation in the electoral process.

While large numbers of international monitors are expected to observe upcoming elections, the most significant development relating to election observation will be the presence of Ukrainian citizens who will monitor the electoral process throughout the country. The Committee of Voters of Ukraine plans to recruit 15,000 volunteers to monitor

polling stations in every province (*oblast*) to ensure that the elections are conducted lawfully. CVU volunteers are also mounting a nationwide voter education campaign, including candidate debates, issue forums and informational meetings on new balloting procedures. NDI has provided technical and financial support to CVU programs for the past four years. Drawing on its experience with domestic monitoring in more than 30 countries, NDI is advising CVU leaders and activists in all aspects of the monitoring and voter education effort.

NDI has also had a long-running program with political parties to provide training on basic organization-building

skills such as volunteer recruitment, message development, communication and voter contact. Working with party leaders in Kiev and six cities across the country, NDI programs emphasize internal organization and coalition-building to support the development of democratic political parties.

NDI is also conducting Eurasia programs in Armenia, Estonia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Turkey.

MIDDLE EAST

Parliamentary Elections Advance Democracy in Yemen

Yemen's April 27 parliamentary elections capped a remarkable period of development for the country's nascent democracy. The second set of elections since the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990, and the first since a 1994 civil war, the polls were viewed by many as a crucial test of Yemen's commitment to a more pluralistic political environment. Still organized along tribal lines, with traditional lifestyles largely unchanged for hundreds of years, Yemen is an unlikely candidate to become a vanguard for democratic reform in the region. However, despite pressure from its conservative northern neighbors, Yemen has moved steadily toward a genuine multiparty system.

Broadly praised as a genuine, if somewhat flawed democratic exercise, the 1997 elections distanced Yemen further from its Arabian Peninsula neighbors by featuring hard-fought political competition, an active women's electorate and a climate of free speech. Twelve parties and more than 2,300 candidates vied for seats in the 301-member parliament, with the ruling General Peo-



Arab Democratic Institute regional coordinator briefs volunteer domestic elections monitors before polling begins in Hawdrommaut province, Yemen.

ple's Congress (GPC) party and its principal opposition, Islah, contesting seats in almost every constituency.

While Yemen's fledgling democracy has taken tremendous strides, challenges confront efforts to advance the country's democratic system. Despite vigorous campaigning, tensions in areas of former South Yemen prompted election-day boycotts by four southern-based parties,

including the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), the country's third largest party. In the months preceding the polls, allegations of fraud fueled public skepticism about electoral administration. Political parties, still in their organizational infancy, struggled to transmit their message and to build a membership base. Women's political participation, while remarkably high compared to regional

"[The Arabic Democratic Institute] is at the center of [get-out-the-vote activities that] dispatched women field coordinators to the 83 voting districts with the lowest turnout by women in the 1993 elections."

—Washington Post

standards, is still low and further participation is impeded by traditional values and widespread illiteracy. And in a country where the memories of a civil war are still vivid, many Yemen observers feared that the 1997 elections would exacerbate existing tensions.

Against this backdrop, concerted efforts carried out by civic organizations helped establish important foundations for the development of a politically active civil society. NDI advised the Arab Democratic Institute (ADI), a civic organization that conducted nationally televised voter education activities and advocated successfully the adoption of reforms to the election law, including the use of ballot symbols to assist illiterate voters. As a result of ADI's efforts to boost women's participation in the elections, registration of female voters tripled from the previous polls in 1993. In addition, ADI trained more than 10,000 nonpartisan election observers. NDI also trained hundreds of Yemeni party organizers who in turn instructed hundreds more grassroots party activists to serve as pollwatchers.

An NDI pre-election delegation organized to assess the electoral environment issued a report that underscored the need for parties to actively communicate among themselves and continue to play a constructive role in the political process. As a result of this appeal, the ruling GPC subsequently returned the YSP's headquarters in Sanaa, which the gov-



Election officials, attired in traditional *hijab* garb, secure ballot box with sealing wax at a female polling station in Maukalla, Yemen.

ernment had confiscated during the 1994 civil war.

For the elections themselves, NDI organized a 34-member international observer delegation. The delegation, led by former Representative Chester Atkins and the former chief election officer of Trinidad and Tobago, Joycelyn Lucas, monitored 160 polling sites in 11 regions. Praising the "widespread desire to support the electoral process," and a strong attempt to "adhere to international electoral standards," the delegation also underscored "significant shortcomings" in the process including a heavy security presence, poorly planned counting procedures, and last-minute confusion with voters lists and ballot symbols.

In order to promote dialogue and defuse tensions after opposition parties filed post-election grievances, NDI organized a post-election roundtable that provided a neutral forum in which the

party leaders were able to assess the electoral process and present proposals for future reform.

Foreign Minister Abdulkarim Al-Eryani commented that NDI "played an outstanding role in political party development, raising the level of political awareness and promoting women's participation in Yemen's political life. It has created a relationship based on mutual trust and understanding between NDI and the different political forces in the country." The opposition YSP praised NDI's efforts for "normalizing political conditions in the country."

NDI is also conducting Middle East programs in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Continued from page 1



Two Polish political activists meet with then-Labour Party Leader Tony Blair in London before the British elections.

parliamentary elections since the collapse of communism in 1989. The right-of-center Solidarity Election Action coalition ousted the Democratic Left Alliance, Poland's governing coalition of former communists, garnering 33 percent of the vote to the Alliance's 27 percent. The centrist Freedom Union, which captured 16 percent of the vote and is seen as a bridge between the two political blocs, subsequently joined Solidarity Election Action forces to form a majority coalition government.

The first parliament in post-communist Poland featured numerous, largely inexperienced parties that were fractious and inherently unstable. From 1991 to 1993, 26 political parties gained seats in the national legislature. The 1993 parliamentary elections resulted in most post-Solidarity parties failing to pass a new 5 percent threshold for representation in the parliament. As a result, supporters of parties that never made it to parliament, comprising 35 percent of the electorate, were alienated from the country's political system. This disaffection stymied democratic institution building, such as the development of a new constitution.

*"I...also know that
without my experience,
which I gained during
my NDI trip to Great
Britain, I never would
have won so many votes."*

—Sylwia Pusz,
winning parliamentary candidate,
Social Democracy for Poland

Moreover, center and center-right parties in particular lacked experience in political party organization. The public was estranged from political parties that acted apart from their rank and file members, and rarely initiated contact at the grassroots level.

Recognizing the need for long-term political party building, NDI began working with Polish parties to build strong local branches supported by effective communication with their national headquarters. Beginning in January 1996,

NDI programs emphasized strong local networks that can effectively represent citizen interests. While the program included ruling and opposition parties alike, NDI concentrated on the new parties in the post-Solidarity bloc, in order to aid the unification of the Polish democratic center and right, thereby strengthening more broadly the country's multi-party system.

With assistance from experienced political party organizers from Belgium, Canada, Hungary, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the U.S., NDI worked with Polish party activists in 70 branch offices of eight parties. The program concentrated on branch organization, strategic planning, volunteer recruitment, voter contact methods, fundraising and communication. NDI also conducted multi-partisan training to promote the political skills of women and young candidates and activists.

As part of this training, NDI brought to Great Britain a multipartisan group of 12 Polish candidates and campaign managers for a four-week internship before general elections there in April. These emerging political leaders worked intensively in local party branches in London and elsewhere, familiarized themselves with grassroots organization and returned home to campaign diligently in a manner previously unknown in Poland.

Citing NDI's efforts, the *Washington Post* reported that Polish parties before the elections, "did what they had never, in any orchestrated or systematic way, done before: They knocked on doors. They passed out campaign literature. They went hoarse chatting up voters. They carried questionnaires from Krakow to Poznan to Torun to Lodz to ask Poles what they wanted from their public servants."

NDI is also conducting Central and Eastern Europe programs in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia-Montenegro and Slovakia.

Continued from page 1

negotiations and the passage of constitutional and legal reforms in November. Among the reforms were the repeal of laws restricting political rights, such as freedom of assembly; the inclusion of opposition parties on the electoral commission; and measures aimed at achieving more balance in media coverage of Kenyan politics.

Much of the catalyst for these reforms was sparked by the efforts of civic and religious organizations, which next turned their focus on the elections themselves. In Nairobi and in provinces throughout the country, NDI worked daily with groups that mounted an unprecedented election monitoring campaign including a coalition comprising the Kenyan Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, the National Council of Churches of Kenya and the Institute of Education in Democracy, as well as the Kenyan Human Rights Commission. The coalition trained and deployed 800 observers to monitor the pre-election campaign and 28,000 election-day poll-watchers. Only 5,000 monitors carried out similar activities in 1992.

NDI formed an international committee of senior political leaders to highlight the activities of and lend international support to Kenyan election monitoring organizations. After visiting Kenya in December to assess the election environment, members of this International Advisory Committee (IAC) issued a statement calling on the government to enact additional safeguards to ensure a more open and transparent system. "There is virtual consensus ..." noted the statement, "that much needs to be done to implement the letter and spirit of the reforms before the elections."

IAC members on the December delegation were: Walter Kamba, former member of South Africa's Independent Election Commission; Maria Leissner, former M.P. and leader of Sweden's Liberal Party; and former U.S. Representative Alan Wheat. Other members of the IAC were former Irish Prime Minister John Bruton, former Canadian Prime



Kenyan election monitors compare notes at a polling station in Naivasha, outside of Nairobi.

Minister Joe Clark and former U.S. Senator Paul Simon.

As election day approached, concerns grew regarding the capacity of political parties to protect their rights during the polls. In response, NDI developed a program that provided training to parties to help them carry out their poll-watching responsibilities. Hundreds of party members attended workshops conducted throughout the country to review issues such as the rights of party agents, election law procedures, methods for filing complaints and the secure transport of ballot boxes to counting centers.

The elections also marked the culmination of a long-term NDI program that encouraged Kenyan women, who have been largely excluded from elected office, to become more actively involved in the political life of the country. Since 1993, NDI seminars and workshops held throughout the country familiarized hundreds of Kenyan female political activists with their rights in a democratic society and acquainted them with the skills and

techniques needed to compete effectively to win elective office.

The 57 women who attained their party's nomination to stand for parliament in 1997 represent a three-fold increase from the 1992 polls; more than half of the successful nominees participated in NDI programming. In running for president, Charity Ngilu, the first Kenyan woman to stand as a major party's presidential candidate, became a beacon of hope for democratic reformers. "I am a product of NDI programs," she said at

one election-related event.

Along with the enactment of constitutional reforms, the growth of Kenya's "civil society," as evidenced by the successful election monitoring network, and increasing women's political participation, were viewed as positive, enduring developments arising from the 1997 polls. The legal changes also led opposition parties to participate in elections that many had threatened to boycott. The new composition of the National Assembly and more constitutional reform efforts expected this year present opportunities for further change. If political reform continues, the 1997 elections will be viewed as a positive step in a longer-term democratic transition. However, if reform efforts are suspended, as was the case in 1992, the elections will be regarded as an attempt by the government to derail this transition.

NDI is also conducting East Africa programs in Ethiopia.

NDI Launches the Democratic Century Fund

The 21st century is poised to become the Democratic Century, in which the seeds of democracy will take root and thrive on every continent. But the advance of democracy requires constant nurturing and support. Absent accountable institutions, nations will repress their citizens and squander resources, resulting in economic decline and instability.

NDI has launched the Democratic Century Fund, a source of private funding designed to provide long-term investments in the following areas:

Breaking the Grip of Corruption

Strengthening New Democracies

Opening Closed Societies

Preventing Crisis

The Democratic Century Fund is a vote of confidence in the Democratic Century and an investment in the effort to secure peace, prosperity and human dignity.

Donors to the Fund include corporations, individuals, foundations and labor unions. NDI is a 501(c)(3) organization. For more information, please contact Mary Hill at (202) 328-3136 or by email at dcf@ndi.org.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul G. Kirk, Jr.
Chairman

Rachelle Horowitz
Vice Chair

Kenneth F. Melley
Secretary

Hartina Flournoy
Treasurer

Eugene Eidenberg
Finance Chair

Morton I. Abramowitz
William V. Alexander
Bernard W. Aronson
Joan Baggett

Calambokidis
Emanuel Cleaver II
Barbara J. Easterling
Edward F. Feighan
Geraldine A. Ferraro
Patrick J. Griffin
Joan Anderson Growe
Maxine Isaacs
Peter G. Kelly
Peter Kovler
Elliott F. Kulick
Lewis Manilow

Azie Taylor Morton
Mark A. Siegel
Marva A. Smalls
Theodore C. Sorensen
Michael R. Steed
Maurice Tempelsman
Arturo Valenzuela
Mark R. Warner
Marvin F. Weissberg
Raul Yzaguirre

Walter F. Mondale
Charles T. Manatt
Chairmen Emeriti

SENIOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE BOARD

Michael D. Barnes
John Brademas
Bill Bradley
Mario M. Cuomo
Patricia M. Derian
Christopher J. Dodd
Michael S. Dukakis
Thomas F. Eagleton
Dante B. Fascell
Martin Frost
Richard A. Gephardt
John T. Joyce
John Lewis
Mike J. Mansfield
Donald F. McHenry
Abner J. Mikva
Daniel Patrick Moynihan
Charles S. Robb
Stephen J. Solarz
Esteban E. Torres
Cyrus R. Vance
Anne Wexler
Andrew J. Young

Kenneth D. Wollack
President

Jean B. Dunn
Vice President



1717 Massachusetts Avenue NW,
Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 328-3136
Fax: (202) 939-3166
email: demos@ndi.org
<http://www.ndi.org>

NON-PROFIT ORG.

US POSTAGE
PAID

SO. MARYLAND
PERMIT NO. 554