

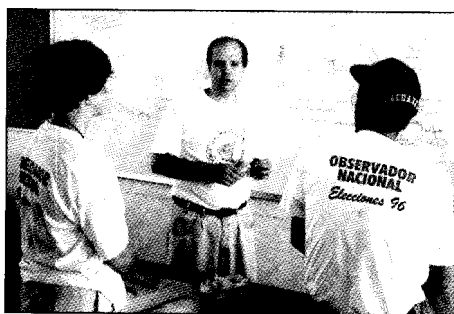
NDI REPORTS

WINTER 1997

Latin America and the Caribbean

Nicaraguans Embrace Domestic Election Observers

In a country where political adversaries settled disagreements through civil war less than a decade ago, recent elections in Nicaragua represent an important juncture in the country's history and an opportunity to consolidate the democratic advances made since historic transition polls in 1990. The elections also marked the birth of a new Nicaraguan organization that captured the attention of the international community and the confidence of the Nicaraguan electorate, 80 percent of which withstood lengthy lines and bureaucratic delays to cast their ballots on October 20. Final vote totals showed Liberal Alliance candidate Arnoldo Alemán winning the presidential race with 51 percent, followed by Sandinista candidate Daniel Ortega with just under 38 percent.



(L to r) NDI Nicaragua Field Representative Melissa Estok, Ethics and Transparency (ET) Board member Gabriel Solorzano and ET Director of Computer Operations Jorge Luis Ayestas review "quick count" plans for election day.

"The evident winner, by 10 points, in Nicaragua's presidential election is Arnoldo Alemán... But the real winner may turn out to be ET, or Ethics and Transparency, the name given to the big, nonpartisan election-monitoring organization that brought 4,200 Nicaraguans of all stripes together to make sure the proceedings were reasonably fair and to provide a rare Nicaraguan model of civil society at work."

WASHINGTON POST

Ethics and Transparency (Etica y Transparencia-ET), a nonpartisan domestic monitoring group boosted public confidence in the electoral process and set an important example of multi-partisan cooperation for the country's polarized civil society. Formed in April 1996 by citizens from across the political spectrum, ET is considered by some the most broad-based civic group in the country's history. With this base, ET managed to energize a national grassroots network of thousands of volunteers and to overcome pervasive mistrust and discord that has characterized the Nicaraguan political landscape for decades, becoming in the process a symbol of national pluralism and reconciliation.

NDI established a field office in Managua last April to provide ET with organizational assistance in advance of the fall elections. NDI worked closely with ET on its administrative structure, volunteer recruitment and training

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Southern Africa

Namibian Legislature Launches Parliamentary Research Service

Since Namibia gained independence from South Africa in 1990, its lawmakers have remained committed to the development of parliament as a co-equal branch of government. From its inception, however, the legislature suffered from inadequate resources to support its lawmaking responsibilities. In particular, the parliamentary library lacked the books, periodicals, computer data bases, equipment and trained personnel to research legislative and public policy issues. Early on, leaders from the two houses of parliament recognized the need for professional research and library services through which they could obtain the information needed to adequately consider legislation.

That need was fulfilled on November 14 when National Assembly Speaker Mosé Tjitendero and National Council Chairman Kandy Nehova officially opened the Parliamentary Research Service (PRS), which includes a customized computer network and research center with access to the Internet. At the opening ceremony, attended by parliamentarians, members of the diplomatic corps and media representatives, Tjitendero and Nehova stressed the importance of the systems in improving parliament's efficiency and opening up limitless resources to MPs. Information available through PRS is designed to assist

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Ghanaian Elections Consolidate Democracy

The west African country of Ghana conducted presidential and parliamentary elections on December 7 that marked the first time in the country's history that a transition from one civilian government to another was determined through the ballot box. The largely peaceful elections were viewed not only as an important expression of Ghana's commitment to democracy, but a model for similar electoral efforts in the region.

The presidential elections were closely contested by three candidates while more than 700 candidates vied for seats in Ghana's 200-member parliament. President Jerry Rawlings defeated opposition candidate John Kufuor by 57 to 40 percent. While Rawlings' National Democratic Congress won a majority of seats in parliament, opposition parties made significant gains.

Ghana's pride in being the first West African country to achieve independence in 1957 has been tempered by its tumultuous history of contentious elections and repeated military *coups d'état*. Opposition parties alleged fraud in multiparty presidential polls in 1992 and refused to participate in subsequent legislative elections, which left the former parliament bereft of any genuine opposition representation.

Following the disputed 1992 polls, Ghana's independent Electoral Commission and political parties agreed on measures to enhance public confidence in future elections. An inter-party advisory committee was established to improve communication between political parties and the Commission, permitting both sides to jointly address election-related problems at an early stage.

Even in the face of the country's more open political climate, however, the legacy of Ghana's controversial elections

continued to fuel public skepticism about the fairness and transparency of election administration.

At the request of the Electoral Commission, NDI designed a program to increase public confidence in the electoral process. Upon opening an office in Accra in October, NDI assisted Ghanaian NGOs with forming a coalition of civic groups and professional associations known as the Network of Domestic Election Observers (NEDEO). By monitoring and reporting on the electoral process, NEDEO sought to enhance the integrity of the elections and promote citizen participation in the process.

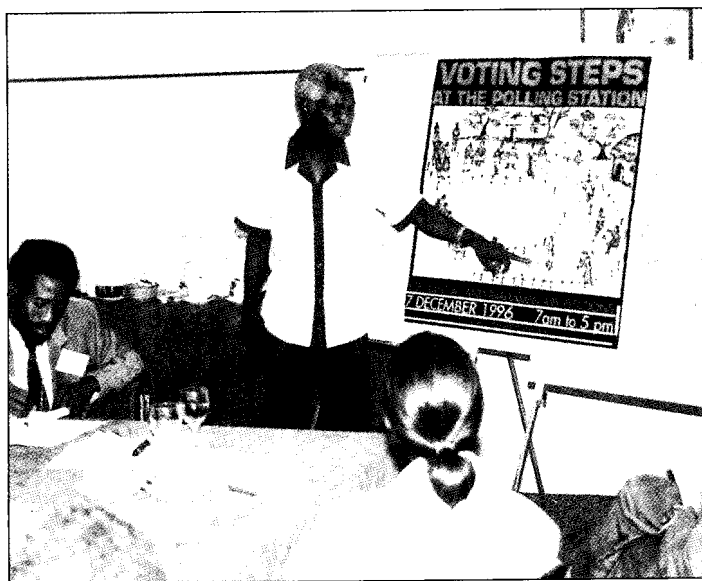
NDI's technical assistance to NEDEO included help with organizing a series of domestic monitor training seminars throughout the country, and with designing and implementing a deployment plan. More than 5,000 Ghanaians were trained during national, regional and local seminars. On election day NEDEO deployed approximately 4,100 volunteer observers.

In referring to NEDEO's involvement in the electoral process, Ghanaian political scientist E. Gyimah Boadi told the *Washington Post* that the domestic monitoring effort organized during the polls "[reflects] the continued emergence of a civil society... independent of the institutions of the state. This is the greatest indicator of our democratic development."

In November, then-U.S. Representative Harry Johnston led NDI's pre-election delegation to examine preparations for the polls and demonstrate international interest in the democratic process in Ghana. In the capital and in three outlying regions, the group met with representatives from the government, political parties, the Electoral Commission, the news media and nongovernmental organizations. In a statement released before departing Accra, the delegation detailed its findings and offered recommendations to improve the electoral lists and media coverage.

NDI's international delegation for the elections was led by Trevor Fowler, speaker of South Africa's Gauteng provincial legislature, and Audrey McLaughlin, a Canadian member of parliament and former leader of the New Democratic Party. The delegation comprised elected officials, political and civic organizers and election experts from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and North America. The delegates observed voting and ballot counting at more than 300 polling sites in the country's 10 regions.

On December 10, the delegation issued a statement that described the elections as "a positive step forward in the strengthening of Ghana's democracy and its electoral process" and congratulated Ghanaians for their "enthusiastic and largely peaceful participation in the election campaign and on election day." While underscoring the election's positive elements, the statement also included recommendations to enhance further confidence and participation in future elections, including more balanced news coverage, a political party code of conduct, and an expeditious and equitable resolution of election disputes.



Dr. K. Afari-Gyan, chairman of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, briefs NDI's international observer delegation on voting procedures for December 7 elections.

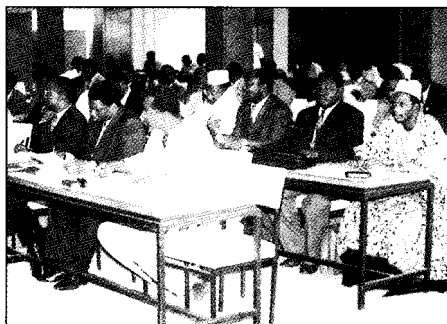
Mali

Mali's nascent democratic institutions were recently tested by disagreements between the ruling and opposition parties over amendments to the country's electoral code. Delays in approving the law, which eventually passed in January, postponed municipal elections until later this year. Legislative and presidential elections were already scheduled for March and May respectively. A 14-member commission divided evenly between pro-government and opposition parties was appointed to draft compromise amendments to the electoral law. The resulting agreement included recommendations made by Mali's Constitutional Court and by NDI. Upcoming elections will represent Mali's first competitive polls to be organized by an incumbent, democratically elected government. Previous elections in 1991 and 1992 witnessed minimal voter education initiatives and low voter participation. Since then, civic groups have worked to increase their organizational capacity and membership, and plan to undertake activities to enhance confidence and participation in the elec-

tions. In November, NDI opened an office in Bamako to assist voter education and domestic pollwatching efforts.

Togo

The National Assembly of Togo represents the primary guarantor of democratic gains made by the country during the past six years. While observers challenged the integrity of the presidential election in 1993, the closely contested legislative polling a year later led to multiparty representation. Despite this progress, most lawmakers are holding political office for the first time and are unfamiliar with their roles and responsibilities as elected officials. At the invitation of ruling and opposition parties, NDI conducted an assessment of issues confronting the legislature. NDI's international delegation met with parliamentarians, Assembly officials, political party leaders and civic activists to examine how future programs could strengthen the Assembly's capacity to function as an effective and accountable branch of government.



The National Assembly of Togo meets in a plenary session during visit of NDI's delegation in December.

Asia

Civic Group Prepares to Monitor Parliamentary Elections in Indonesia

Since 1965, President Suharto and his Golkar party have dominated government and politics in Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country. While economic growth has flourished under Suharto's leadership, political freedom remains tightly controlled. The country has conducted elections every five years but real political competition is largely absent. The only two opposition parties allowed to compete are those officially recognized by the government with leadership handpicked by President Suharto. Accusations of fraud, intimidation and violence have marred past elections held under the current regime.

Parliamentary elections approach in May amid expectations of a possible

political transition in the near future. As President Suharto completes his sixth five-year term in office, questions have arisen as to presidential succession, although the officially sanctioned political parties have publicly announced their commitment to reelecting President Suharto in 1998 when his current term expires.

At the same time, pro-democratic forces have emerged in the military as well as the ruling Golkar party, and demands for greater political openness have increased throughout Indonesian society.

Last year, in anticipation of some form of political transition, a group of civic activists, journalists, intellectuals, lawyers and former government officials created the Independent Election Monitoring Committee (Komite Independen Pemantau Pemilihan Umum—KIPP) to monitor upcoming parliamentary elections. KIPP plans to conduct a limited observation effort in the months leading up to the May polls and to continue

monitoring the democratic process beyond 1997. Even if the upcoming elections fail to meet minimum international standards, it is expected that KIPP will emerge as a viable democratic movement in Indonesia, advocating peaceful democratic reform.

One NGO leader involved in founding KIPP participated in a 1995 NDI conference in the Philippines that examined strategies of election monitoring organizations in Asia. Upon his return to Indonesia, he published several articles describing the work of election monitoring groups in other countries and approached leading civic leaders with a proposal to organize an Indonesian counterpart.

A government crackdown on pro-democracy groups, triggered by riots that erupted in Jakarta last July, has tempered the Committee's efforts in recent months. The disturbances were sparked by a military backed takeover of the headquarters of the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), after



Leaders of the Indonesia-based Independent Election Monitoring Committee (KIPP) at an NDI training program in Bangkok, Thailand. The photograph includes staff members from the National Endowment for Democracy and NDI.

Megawati Sukarnoputri—daughter of Indonesia's first president, Sukarno—was ousted from her position as PDI chair during a government-backed party congress. Claiming that her ouster was illegal, Megawati and her supporters refused to vacate party headquarters. The government interrogated, detained or arrested more than 200 pro-democracy activists. Although some government officials initially criticized KIPP's formation, the group was not targeted in the crackdown.

In response to KIPP's request for training and technical assistance, NDI conducted a program on domestic election monitoring in Bangkok, Thailand for KIPP members. Representatives from civic groups in Bangladesh, Egypt, the Philippines and Thailand shared their expertise and examined the challenges of conducting an election-monitoring effort under severe political constraints. The workshop provided KIPP with assistance in developing its organizational structure and management skills, increasing public outreach, and mobilizing volunteers.

Before and after the Bangkok workshop, NDI staff spent six weeks in Indonesia visiting KIPP branch offices and assessing the organizational needs of the group. Following the workshop, NDI returned to Jakarta to assist the KIPP leadership with developing detailed workplans and timelines for activities planned through the May elections.

Burma

As Burma's military regime steps up its repression against democratic activists inside the country, opposition groups in exile, including historically disparate ethnic factions, carry on efforts to promote democratic change. Based on the findings of an NDI delegation that assessed the Burmese exile movement in Thailand and India, the Institute has begun working with the newly formed National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB). The NCUB is a Thailand-based umbrella organization representing Burmese ethnic and political groups. NDI's program encourages greater dialogue and cooperation among



At a meeting with members of the National Council of the Union of Burma on the Burma-Thailand border, Mariano Quesada (right), a founding member of the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections in the Philippines, examines communication strategies for democratic advocacy.

Burmese democratic forces and assists their communication campaign, both in and outside of Burma.

Cambodia

With Cambodia soon to conduct its first self-managed elections, the country's fragile democratic institutions continue to face threats from rivalries within the governing coalition, controversy about Khmer Rouge defectors and concerns about human rights abuses. Local and national elections are expected later this year or in 1998. Despite many challenges, civic organizations are conducting programs to educate citizens about these new elections and their right to participate in the political process. NDI works with two coalitions, the Committee for Free and Fair Elections and the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections, on programs to monitor the elections and to help the general public understand their roles in the voting process.



In Kathmandu, Australian Parliamentarian Bob Brown (left) listens to Nepalese counterparts discuss the role of the Public Accounts Committee in Nepal's House of Representatives.

Nepal

While Nepal successfully conducted its second democratic parliamentary elections in 1994, the legislature's capacity to formulate and implement policy has been limited. The Public Accounts Committee is seen by many as one of parliament's most effective panels, having gained a popular following as the guardian of public finances. However, the committee faces serious obstacles. NDI brought international experts to

Kathmandu to help the committee develop strategies to overcome difficulties with government ministries that resist committee efforts to obtain information and implement its directives. NDI's office in Nepal also addresses a lack of participation by women in political affairs. NDI works with civic groups in the southern Terai region to assist women running in local elections later this year.

Regional Election Studies Program

As Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka prepare for elections in 1997 and 1998, political parties, civic groups and governments face the challenges of monitoring elections and educating citizens about the importance of participating in the political process. In order to broaden understanding of election monitoring

and civic education programs, NDI sent representatives from election monitoring organizations in those countries to observe and learn from the Philippines-based National Citizens Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) as it monitored regional elections in Mindanao. With a volunteer network exceeding 500,000, NAMFREL is a pioneer in citizen-based pollwatching.

Central and Eastern Europe

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Conducts First Local Elections

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), a mountainous, land-locked country with 2 million inhabitants, found itself unprepared for independence in 1991 as President Tito's Yugoslavia disintegrated. This poorest of the former Yugoslav republics immediately faced external challenges to its statehood and economic viability: ongoing warfare in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the resulting trade embargo against rump Yugoslavia, and Greece's trade sanctions over a dispute related to the country's historic name and flag emblem.

With the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords and new economic ties with its southern neighbor, FYROM appears to be on the road to economic and political recovery. The Republic now needs to confront key issues on the domestic front: decentralization and transparency in policymaking, and the question of self-autonomy accorded to minorities, particularly ethnic-Albanians who constitute approximately 25 percent of the population. Citizens continue to feel excluded from the political process, and political parties often fail to communicate with the citizenry due to underdeveloped organizational structures.

In this context, the November 17 municipal elections, the first since independence, represented an important milestone for the Republic. The elections and a newly adopted local self-government law will help decentralize the political decision-making process and allow some autonomy for the country's ethnic groups.

In October, an NDI pre-election delegation assessed the legal framework, the state of election preparations, the transparency of the electoral process and the political environment before the November polls. The delegation issued recommendations to increase the transparency of the elections and voter confidence in the process. The public learned about the election law deliberations through the Macedonian media, which

published and broadcast NDI's analysis and commentary.

One of the most encouraging aspects of the local elections was the broad support for the new local election law. For the first time in Macedonian history, all political parties and NGOs were provided an opportunity to participate in crafting a law. NDI underscored the importance of keeping the discussions inclusive rather than solely within the government, and as a result, Macedonians participated in their first "public hearing."

During the NDI-sponsored, nationally televised hearing on the election law reforms, Justice Minister Vlado Popovski announced that the government had accepted "80 percent" of the recommendations made by NDI's pre-election delegation, and he looked forward to hearing the remarks from the political parties during the hearing, which he characterized as "a bright moment in Macedonia's path to democracy."

Democratic Party President Petar Goshev said that NDI "raised the public interest in an issue that no one except politicians cared about." Zoran Sapuric, leader of the opposition Liberal Party, expressed hope that such discussions "become the precedent for all legislation that concerns people's rights to vote and determine how they are governed."

Community groups were also engaged actively in the electoral process. More than 100,000 voter education pamphlets, produced by the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation and NDI, informed voters in six languages about voter registration procedures and changes to the local election law. Public service announcements, based on the voter education material, were widely broadcast and published in several newspapers free-of-charge. Parties, government agencies and the media commented that this type of public education campaign "was a first for Macedonia" and highlighted the positive role citizen groups can play in the political process. Moreover, hundreds of citizens questioned mayoral candidates during public debates organized by NDI's civic partners in Gostivar, Stip, Prilep and Bitola.

Generally, the municipal elections were carried out smoothly. Multiparty representation on municipal election commissions helped build confidence in the neutrality of the

Central and Eastern Europe



For the first time in the country's history, citizens question mayoral candidates in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia during public debate arranged by NDI's civic partner in the city of Gostivar.

electoral process. In contrast to the 1994 parliamentary elections, no political party abstained from the process. However, unresolved problems such as incomplete voter lists still plagued the process on election day.

Albania

Albanians recently made their second trip to the polls in fewer than six months. As a result of serious irregularities reported during parliamentary contests last May, the international community viewed the October local elections as an important indicator of the state of the country's democratic evolution. In a post-election report, a 26-member observer delegation, sponsored by NDI, concluded that while the elections demonstrated a marked improvement from those in May, continuing irregularities suggest the need for renewed efforts to strengthen the country's electoral processes and increase voter education initiatives. The delegation was co-led by former U.S. Representative Chester Atkins and Tineke Ladders, vice chairman of the Christian Democratic Appeal from the Netherlands.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

By holding national elections in September, Bosnia-Herzegovina took a step toward institutionalizing provisions of the Dayton Accords and beginning the complex task of rebuilding a state with institutions that protect and balance the interests of three main ethnic groups. Most observers believe that safeguarding the new political system requires an informed and involved population. Before the elections, NDI helped strengthen the capabilities of opposition, multi-ethnic parties to participate effectively in the polls. These parties, which advocate a united, democratic country, competed against the three nationalist parties that have dominated the political environment. Last fall, NDI launched a program, called "Civic Forum," to raise the political awareness of Bosnians in the Tuzla-Podrinje canton and to encourage their participation in the country's democratic transition. Bosnian field coordinators, trained by NDI, are lead-

ing more than 80 discussion sessions a month for thousands of Bosnian citizens.

Bulgaria

Against the backdrop of a deteriorating economy, Bulgarians elected as their president, Petar Stoyanov of the opposition Union of Democratic Forces. Stoyanov defeated the candidate of the ruling and formerly communist Bulgarian Socialist Party. Observers believe that the results of the November 3 contest indicate discontent among voters who have grown increasingly skeptical about government promises of economic prosperity. Since 1990, NDI has worked closely with the Bulgarian Association for Fair Elections and Civil Rights (BAFECR) to educate citizens about their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society. In advance of the presidential polls, BAFECR conducted a comprehensive program of pre-election activities, including a get-out-the vote campaign, voter education initiatives and the country's first nationwide project to analyze the fairness of media coverage provided to political parties. On election day, BAFECR mobilized thousands of volunteers to observe polling stations throughout the country and conducted a parallel vote tabulation that confirmed the victory of Stoyanov.

Croatia

In 1991, Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia, but regional conflict and the dominance of President Franjo Tudjman and his Croatian Democratic Union over political and civic institutions have impeded the democratization process. However, recent events, including unconfirmed reports of Tudjman's illness, the government's attempts to close Zagreb's only remaining independent radio station, and a dispute about the election of Zagreb's mayor, suggest that Croatia may be headed for significant political change. During the next nine months, Croatians head to the polls to elect the House of Counties (upper chamber of parliament), local government offices and the president. In preparation for all three elections, NDI is continuing its program to strengthen the internal organization of political parties and enhance their participation in the electoral process. Recent consultations have focused on coalition-building.

Eastern Slavonia

In November 1995, Croatia and Serbia signed an agreement outlining steps for the reintegration into Croatia of Serb-held territory in eastern Slavonia. The United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES), created to administer the region during the transition, instituted a reintegration plan to include local elections at least 30 days before the U.N. mandate expires. Slavonian observers express concern that the local population does not understand the evolution of this process. NDI's program supports the development of Slavonia's nascent civil society by informing and involving the citizenry in the political process. NDI-sponsored focus groups will

survey public attitudes toward the reintegration process; the findings will help the Institute design its civic organizing program. NDI plans to work with NGOs in eastern Slavonia to educate voters about the technical and political issues surrounding upcoming local elections and to help these groups form community based coalitions that can strengthen citizen participation in the post-election period.

Czech Republic

While the Czech Republic has enacted relatively rapid economic reforms since the Velvet Revolution, the country continues to confront public apathy and distrust toward government and politics. Growing separation between citizens and the political process hampers the efforts of many nongovernmental organizations, especially those at the local level that actively promote public involvement and the development of a broad-based civil society. NDI's program helps civic groups build coalitions in their communities and encourages grassroots participation in the political process. With the Institute's assistance, the NGO coalition in Ceske Budejovice organized candidate forums in advance of the country's first Senate elections in November. NDI is also helping NGO coalitions in Plzen and Jihlava with their efforts to involve citizens in the municipal budget decisionmaking process.

Poland

NDI has begun working with Polish parties on building strong local branches supported by effective communication with national headquarters. Local party operations have been overshadowed by centralized structures that act apart from their rank and file members; this arrangement has influenced how the electorate views political parties and led to public estrangement from the political process. While NDI maintains relations with parties across the democratic political spectrum, the program focuses on center-right parties, many of which lack experience in modern political party organization. Moreover, during the last elections, many of these parties did not meet the threshold necessary to win seats in the parliament. As a result, their supporters, comprising nearly 40 percent of the electorate, feel removed from the country's democratic political process. Political parties have begun preparations for parliamentary elections later this year, and have requested NDI's assistance with helping to create and implement plans to organize their local branches into more representative organizations.

Romania

Seven years after the violent overthrow of Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, Romania marked its first peaceful transition of government by electing a non-Communist leadership. In November elections, Romanians chose Emil Constantinescu as their new president. He led the opposition coalition Democratic Convention, which also won a majority of parliamentary

seats. The historic elections represented more than the alternation of power, however. They also demonstrated a transformation in the political environment from one where uninformed voters were conditioned to unquestioningly accept authority to one where a more assertive electorate was confident enough to vote for change. As it has since 1990, NDI worked with the Pro Democracy Association (PDA) to help create an election environment of informed voters. A "civic caravan" traveled to more than 40 cities where the Association distributed information on the election process and sponsored public forums for parliamentary candidates. PDA also trained and deployed more than 4,000 pollwatchers who monitored the voting and counting processes.

Slovakia

The political climate worsened in Slovakia during 1996 as the government tightened its control over political opposition, and independent voices in nongovernmental organizations, media, academia and the arts. Faced with the specter of authoritarian politics, many citizens of Slovakia realize that they must reaffirm the gains made during the Velvet Revolution if they are to effectively promote a genuine democratic political system. NDI works with nongovernmental groups to promote organized citizen participation in political affairs. In six Slovak cities, NDI is helping NGOs and neighborhood groups foster two-way communication between citizens and government leaders on a range of public policy issues. By creating such dialogue, Slovaks are demonstrating to their political leaders that every citizen has the right and responsibility to participate in the political process.



NDI Field Representative Andrew Young (left) and Program Coordinator Marcin Walecki meet with former President Lech Walesa to discuss NDI's political party program.

Georgian Parliament Assumes Role as Co-equal Branch of Government

Fewer than five years after civil and separatist conflicts made the country virtually ungovernable, the Republic of Georgia today offers one of the most promising examples of democratic development in the former Soviet Union. However, the challenges to sustained political and economic reform are formidable. Georgia must rebuild an infrastructure either destroyed by war or dilapidated by decades of Soviet neglect and mismanagement in order to provide basic levels of heat, electricity and running water. A return of law and order has helped to reduce substantially the paramilitary support for organized crime, but corruption remains an endemic problem. And in trying to resolve disputes with the separatist territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Georgia continues to contend with a powerful Russia reluctant to concede its small neighbor's territorial integrity.

At the same time, Georgia has made significant strides. A viable currency has been established in the wake of near-total economic collapse. The state-owned media is reasonably free, and an independent press proliferates as much as economic conditions permit. A constitution is in place that promotes national reconciliation by providing unprecedented authority to the elected legislative bodies nearly equal to the presidency. And in 1995, a new parliament was peacefully elected and has since demonstrated substantial political will to continue the process of reform.

One of the parliament's first targets for reform has been the conduct of its own operations. NDI has contributed to efforts to change the parliament's archaic structures and operations in cooperation with its chairman, senior members of the legislature's staff and the leadership of the assembly's major political parties. NDI has also provided assistance as the parliament confronts key

legislative issues that provide the foundation for continued reform, most recently in the area of decentralization and territorial restructuring in preparation for local elections.

During the past nine months, NDI has conducted a series of programs to assist parliament develop and debate legislation on local self-government. Given Georgia's convulsive, and still unresolved, experience with territorial secession, members of parliament from all parties have approached these issues with some apprehension but with growing consensus that local governing structures must have democratic legitimacy and genuine authority to address problems. NDI programs have enabled Georgian legislators to examine several models of local government in European, American and post-Soviet societies to determine which services should be delivered at the local level and how local authorities can develop and manage resources. This process was broadened when NDI cosponsored a series of regional public hearings at which members of the parliamentary committee overseeing local government reform met with citizens and local officials in six cities to describe the measures under consideration, take questions and explain the implications of different policy alternatives for Georgia's localities.

NDI's Tbilisi office has also worked with the legislature to develop procedures that quite literally bring the public into the legislative process. NDI has helped the parliament design and implement a regular program of public visits and tours that has hosted more than 1,000 students since its inception in November. Plans are also underway to develop an internship program. The program is designed to help attract students to public service.

Armenia

In September, one year after flawed parliamentary elections severely diminished popular confidence in the integrity of the electoral process, Armenia conducted presidential polls. To help create a more credible electoral environment, NDI worked with political parties to train pollwatchers and helped establish It's Your Choice, a coalition of 16 civic organizations that produced voter education materials and fielded 1,400 pollwatchers. Optimism that the election would advance Armenian democracy was dashed in the wake of post-election demonstrations sparked by documented irregularities in the counting process and incumbent President Levon Ter-Petrossian's early claims of victory. When citizens took to the streets, protests turned violent and a crackdown ensued, closing opposition headquarters and prompting the arrest of several leading opposition figures. Official results showed Ter-Petrossian with less than 52 percent of the vote, thereby avoiding a runoff election. Opposition challenges to the Constitutional Court failed to overturn the election results. While suspending temporarily programs with the parliament and political parties, NDI will continue working with It's Your Choice to publish and distribute the findings of its election observers and recommendations for electoral reform.



Members of the Georgian parliamentary committee overseeing local government reform and NDI representatives conduct press conference to discuss the committee's regional public hearings on municipal reform legislation.



At a role-playing workshop in Azerbaijan, opposition and ruling party participants temporarily switch allegiances to examine the types of laws that should govern political parties.

Azerbaijan

Flawed national elections took place a year ago in Azerbaijan, where NDI has worked to help strengthen the country's emerging political parties and civic groups. Operating within a society lacking any traditions of free expression and political competition, NDI's pre-election program exposed a growing community of political and civic activists to the concepts and practices of political participation and government accountability. Momentum is building for local elections this year, which democratic parties view as a new opportunity to gain strength despite constraints on political freedoms. NDI is responding to requests from several parties to help them prepare for local elections and to assist a coalition of parties, civic leaders and journalists with conducting voter education and election monitoring activities to build public confidence in the electoral process.

Baltics

Nongovernmental organizations played a key role in the independence movements of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. However, these groups today are lacking in skills to build sustainable organiza-

tions, establish coalitions and initiate advocacy campaigns to increase civic participation in local and national affairs. In partnership with the U.S. Baltic Foundation and the Christian Children's Fund, NDI is providing training to public-policy oriented NGOs in the Baltics. A series of seminars in October and November focused on organizational development and grassroots fundraising.

Kyrgyzstan

Since its election in early 1995, Kyrgyzstan's first democratically elected parliament has been struggling to establish itself as a functioning and representative institution. A recent constitutional referendum greatly curtailed the legislature's powers. While the changes were intended to clarify the responsibilities of the two chambers of parliament, some of the provisions are vague or unclear. With each chamber following its own interpretation of the constitution, and with no mechanisms (outside the Constitutional Court) to settle disputes, the legislative process has proceeded fitfully. NDI organized a program last October to begin identifying formal and informal procedures, such as conference committees, that will help the two houses over-

come disagreements regarding legislative issues.

Lithuania

Lithuania's first multiparty local governments have ushered in a new generation of municipal leaders committed to rebuilding their communities after 50 years of communism. Many of these local leaders, who were elected in 1995, are actively seeking to strengthen their relations with constituents and involve them in municipal decisionmaking. NDI is working with officials in four cities to introduce procedures that provide citizens with opportunities to participate in local affairs. Since September, NDI has helped officials in Kaunas establish a citizen advisory committee. The panel comprises appointed volunteers who represent the mayor in different neighborhoods, providing residents with information about the city's programs and soliciting public comment about community concerns. Similar initiatives are planned for the cities of Alytus, Utena and Ukmerge.

Russia

Following elections last summer that gave President Boris Yeltsin another four-year term, Russian political activists shifted their focus to gubernatorial, regional and local contests in late 1996 and into 1997. Regional elections held throughout 1996 revealed that Yeltsin's victory has not translated into reliable wins for Yeltsin-backed gubernatorial candidates. Regional elections also accelerated the shift of power out of Moscow with newly elected governors exercising considerable independence. The president and most incumbent governors have chosen not to join or form political parties, deciding instead to assemble *ad hoc* teams of election experts. As a result, many elected officials are less accountable to their constituencies between balloting than is the case with party based officeholders.

NDI efforts have focused on assisting political parties that have coalesced

Former Soviet Union and the Baltic States

in support of gubernatorial and legislative candidates, and has begun the process of helping parties concentrate on party building between elections, including developing a coherent policy platform, expanding support, and strengthening ties between national headquarters and regional branches. As a part of this program, NDI is also working with parliamentary factions, city councils and civic groups to increase government responsiveness and public participation in politics.

Ukraine

The ratification of a new constitution last June paved the way for new legislation that will influence the shape of other democratic institutions and processes in Ukraine. Discussion of new laws for political parties, parliamentary elections and local government are all underway, prompting many of the parties with which NDI works to assess their plans for long-term development and participation in the 1998 parliamentary

and municipal elections. During the fall, NDI conducted training programs for political activists in four cities to help them develop the skills necessary to build their parties at the grassroots level. NDI also brought nine Ukrainian political organizers to observe the U.S. elections last November. Finally, NDI continues its support for the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, which has conducted a series of civic education programs on the new constitution through its burgeoning network of 22 regional clubs.

East and Central Africa

Zaire Stands at a Crossroads

Fierce ethnic warfare, refugee flight, hunger, disease and decades of corrupt, one-party rule plague the continent's third largest country. Ethnic Tutsis and other disadvantaged groups rebelled in September and easily overran the Zairean army in the Kivu region. Since that time, the eastern portion of the country has become a battleground pitting an alliance of rebel armies backed by Rwanda against Zaire's ill-prepared, outmatched military. Hundreds of thousands of refugees who fled hostilities in Rwanda and Burundi since 1994 are caught in the middle.

President Mobutu Sese Seko, whose regime has dominated Zairian politics since he seized power more than three decades ago, returned to Kinshasa last December after recuperating in Europe from cancer treatment.

While Mobutu's return received extensive press coverage, less well-known are the preparations underway to move Zaire toward a democratically elected government through national elections in 1997. International attention is focused understandably on the recent insurgencies that disrupt the country. At the same time, many Zairians believe that credible elections can create the governing institutions necessary to help overcome the country's severe political and economic problems.

Zaire conducted *pro forma* presidential elections in 1970, 1977 and 1985; Mobutu was the sole candidate. However, given the effects of the Cold War and the wave of democratization that swept the African continent in the late 1980s, as well as continued pressure for political reform inside the country, Zaire could not remain isolated from political change. In 1990, Mobutu announced that Zaire would adopt a multiparty political system. In addition to the legalization of political parties, reforms led to a national conference and the establishment of a transitional government originally created for one year, but currently extended to July 1997.

Zaire's protracted transition toward elections and the establishment of a new political system has been characterized by serious political in-fighting. The illness of Mobutu, who has held onto some of the presidency's most important powers during the transition, has undermined his aura of invincibility and has dramatically altered the political landscape.

The transitional parliament's recent adoption of a draft compromise constitution suggests that elections could take place, but a final and realistic schedule for the polls is an open question. Many outstanding issues remain to be resolved before credible elections can be organized.

Recently, NDI joined with the International Foundation for Election Systems and the International Republican Institute to analyze preparations for elections and to make recommendations to the international community and the U.S. government regarding ways in which the transparency and legitimacy of the electoral process could be enhanced. In September, the joint delegation visited nine of the country's 11 regions to gather information regarding the country's democratic transition and steps taken by the government to organize legitimate national elections.

The delegation found that considerable obstacles block Zaire's path to conducting meaningful elections. Despite the creation of the National Election Commission (CNE) in late 1995 to oversee the election process, the government's reluctance to fully fund the CNE has impeded its work. The creation of an electoral code, the development of a voter registration plan and the preparation of official election materials are a few of the outstanding logistical and administration tasks. How the election administrators interact with political parties and civil society remains unresolved. The delegation's election-related recommendations include: reforms that will ensure a nonpartisan role by the military; greater involvement of civic organizations in the electoral process; and the creation of a commission to establish guidelines for equal access to the media for political parties.

East and Central Africa

Kenya

When the five-year term of President Daniel arap Moi ends this year, Kenya is expected to conduct its second national elections since the restoration of multiparty politics in 1992. These polls will be important bellwether of the willingness of the ruling Kenyan African National Union party to permit the development of a credible democratic system. In 1992, intimidation of opposition parties, voting irregularities and the partisanship of election authorities undermined the legitimacy of the process. One key measurement of change will be the degree that previously disadvantaged sectors of society are able to participate in politics.

NDI's program is designed to encourage Kenyan women, who have been largely excluded from political party leadership posts and elective office, to become more actively involved in politics. Since August, NDI organized a series of training seminars for women political and civic leaders in various regions throughout the country. Forty three women have already announced their intention to run in the parliamentary elections.



U.S. Ambassador to Kenya, Prudence Bushnell (center), attends ceremonial opening of NDI's office in Nairobi. Also pictured (left of Bushnell), NDI Field Representative Wanda Williams.

Middle East

Political Parties Prepare for Legislative Elections in Yemen

Preparations are underway for parliamentary elections in Yemen, an impoverished but strategically located country on the Arabian Peninsula. Yemen's second national poll since the 1990 unification of the country will be conducted in April to elect a 301-seat parliament. While the triumphal tone of President Ali Abdullah Salah's administration since his government prevailed in a brief civil war in 1994 has complicated efforts at national reconciliation, Yemen's government has made important accommodations to civil society, multiparty politics—and the inclusion of women in politics. That this liberalization has taken place in a traditional Islamic setting makes it all the more remarkable and hopeful. Unlike the prevailing situation in most countries in the region, Yemen is making important democratic gains.

In 1990, the two single-party states of North and South Yemen merged to



Former U.S. Representative Tom Andrews (center) discusses the importance of developing a message with Yemeni political party leaders at a workshop in Sanaa.

form the Republic of Yemen. Political parties were legalized and some 40 parties proliferated. During the next three years, tensions mounted between the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) and the People's General Congress (PGC), the former ruling parties of South and North, that agreed to share power equally until elections could be held. Despite these strains, the Republic held its first multiparty, parliamentary elections in 1993. The PGC won the most seats and the Islamist Islah Party made a

surprise second-place showing; the YSP placed a distant third.

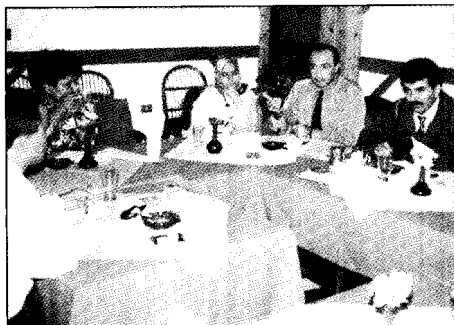
YSP refused to accept its status as junior coalition partner in the government. A civil war ensued when the YSP announced the South's secession. Within two months, however, northern forces captured the southern capital and ended the war. Despite certain restrictions on civil liberties and on opposition parties, the April elections are seen as an important step toward the promotion and preservation of national unity.

Last June, NDI opened an office in Sanaa to help Yemen's political parties develop into organizations that can participate effectively in the political process and contribute to stability in the country.

Egypt

Controversial parliamentary elections in 1995, which were characterized by low voter turnout, witnessed the emergence of independent election monitors to promote public confidence in the electoral process. Egyptian observers noted that, in addition to widespread public

Middle East

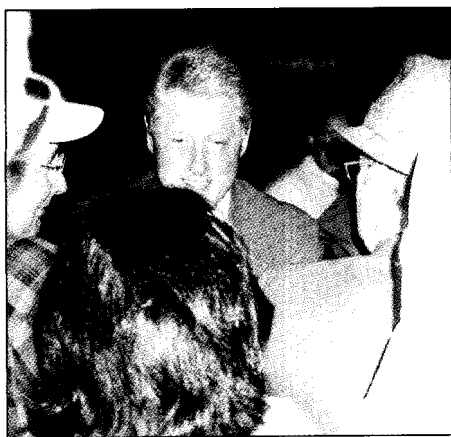


Palestinian "Civic Forum" moderators train their counterparts from the Group for Democratic Development in Egypt.

cynicism about election administration, a lack of understanding of the electoral process and constitutional rights also contributes to low voter participation. Energized by their experiences in monitoring the legislative contests, Egyptian activists established two new organizations dedicated to raising civic awareness and voter participation in advance of local elections in April. NDI helps support the activities of the Group for Democratic Development and the Association for Egyptian Women Voters to educate citizens on their electoral rights and encourage them to register to vote.

Jordan

As attitudes toward women's involvement in political affairs gradually liberalize in Jordan, new efforts are underway



At a political rally in Maine, President Bill Clinton greets Raida Hamarneh (back to camera) who was participating a program to familiarize prospective Jordanian women candidates with U.S. political campaigns.

to encourage female political participation. While increased media attention accompanied the election of the country's first woman parliamentarian in 1994, most women have had little exposure to the skills needed to seek elective office. In anticipation of parliamentary elections this year and in response to requests from Jordanian women's groups, NDI cosponsored a program in Amman to provide women with practical information on organizing a successful political campaign. Later, NDI invited six Jordanian women who are likely to run in 1997 to observe the campaigns of female candidates in the U.S. The women studied press briefings, public rallies, fundraising events and get-out-the-vote efforts in Maine, Pennsylvania and Minnesota.

Lebanon

Lebanon conducted parliamentary elections August 18 through September 15. Despite Syrian domination of Lebanese politics and a weak civil society, 713 candidates and roughly 48 percent of registered voters participated, and there appears to have been genuine competition for some seats. The election process was also marked by serious irregularities. The Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE), a nonpartisan, independent domestic monitoring organization, observed the elections in 20 percent of the constituencies. LADE reported the intervention of security forces inside and outside the polling places, a shortage of private voting booths and the distribution of pre-marked ballots. The Lebanese government resisted LADE's attempts to monitor the elections but the group was assisted by letters of support from U.S. members of Congress. NDI advised LADE on its

organizational efforts and provided the Association with modest financial support.

West Bank and Gaza Strip

Since its inception last year, the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) has made progress toward establishing itself as an independent, functioning legislative institution. However, the PLC continues to struggle with the challenges of asserting its lawmaking authority. Council members have shown an interest in learning about the practices of other




At a "Civic Forum" workshop, participants question local government officials in Gaza City.


democratic parliaments, in particular the role of committees in the oversight process. In December, NDI organized a program at which international parliamentary experts shared their expertise about the functions of committees with PLC committee chairs and helped them consider alternative ways to structure their meetings to fulfill effective decisionmaking and oversight functions.

In August, NDI's civic education program, dubbed "Civic Forum," nearly doubled in size as moderators continued to lead discussions on democracy related topics for more than 8,000 Palestinians each month. In December, while the PLC considered a draft local government law, the Civic Forum program organized discussions in 12 districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip at which municipal experts explored the role and function of local governing authorities.

Southern Africa (cont'd)



LAUNCH OF THE
PARLIAMENT RESEARCH SERVICE
CONNECTED TO THE WORLD AT:
"Parliament@parliament.gov.na"



Namibia, continued from cover

legislators with making more informed decisions, as lawmakers use the network to produce legislative briefing papers, conduct research on the Internet and communicate via electronic mail to their colleagues within parliament and around the world.

NDI worked for more than a year with the speaker, chairman and parliamentary staff to build the PRS, providing computers, printers, network hardware and information software, as well as support for wiring the system throughout the parliament buildings.

To allow legislative personnel to take advantage of PRS technology, NDI conducted intensive training courses for dozens of parliamentary staff members on basic computer skills, including electronic mail and word processing software. NDI also organized a course on utilizing Internet resources and searching electronic databases.

In 1997, NDI will continue computer training for MPs and staff, including a "train the trainers" program designed to expand the parliament's own capacity to educate new staff about the computer network and the Internet. In the meantime, the Namibian parliament can now be contacted at the e-mail address: parliament@parliament.gov.na.

Malawi

During Malawi's one-party era, members of parliament served no representative function and rubber-stamped legislation without consideration. NDI research has shown that today, more than two years after conducting their first multiparty national elections, Malawians are enthusiastic about democracy, but demand a greater voice in government and greater



National Assembly Speaker Mosé Tjitendero (seated) experiments with new computer facilities during opening ceremony for the Namibian legislature's Parliamentary Research Service. Also pictured (l to r): NDI computer adviser Chris Spence, NDI Field Representative Erin Martin, National Council Chairman Kandy Nehova, parliamentarian Siegfried Wohler and the U.S. Ambassador to Namibia, George Ward.

interaction with their elected leaders. Working with an advisory group of parliamentarians, NDI recently published two documents that provide practical advice on the representative responsibilities of lawmakers, including their capacity to communicate with citizens and incorporate public concerns into the decisionmaking process. In a related program, NDI conducted a program for women political and civic leaders on ways in which they could advocate their interests through legislative initiatives introduced by women parliamentarians.

Mauritius

In his 1995 race for prime minister, Labour Party leader Navin Ramgoolam ran successfully on a strong anti-corruption platform. Allegations that public officials were unduly influenced

by private financial interests led to public cynicism about government institutions and the defeat of the ruling Militant Socialist Movement party. Once in office, the newly elected prime minister was faced with drafting new rules of conduct for government employees. During a visit to NDI's Washington D.C. office last October, Ramgoolam requested information about anti-corruption and ethics laws in other countries. In cooperation with the U.S. Information Service, NDI sent experts to Mauritius in December to inform key leaders about comparative ethics rules and regulations. After listening to NDI's presentations, a top civil service official asked the ethics specialists to incorporate the key elements of their presentations into his draft code of conduct for civil servants.

Mozambique

Mozambique's parliament continues to debate an appropriate date for the country's first municipal elections. While national elections in 1994 represented a major step in Mozambique's democratic transition, Mozambican citizens know little about the role of their newly elected Assembly and believe that parliamentarians are isolated from the daily concerns of most people. Likewise, most voters are unfamiliar with the function of municipal government and the meaning of local elections. At NDI-sponsored forums throughout the country, citizens and elected officials discuss a broad



At an NDI-sponsored forum in Beira, Mozambican citizens and elected officials exchange views on public policy issues.

Southern Africa

range of topics including citizens rights, community development and reform of the constitution. The meetings, which are broadcast by Radio Mozambique, promote public confidence in the decisionmaking process, and enable lawmakers to listen to their constituents and articulate public policy positions.

South Africa

South Africa's recently adopted, post-

apartheid constitution replaces the country's Senate with a National Council of Provinces (NCOP), a new legislature that will draw its membership from the nine provincial parliaments. In preparation for NCOP's implementation, NDI conducted a series of programs to familiarize legislators, political leaders and civic activists with the function of a "second chamber" and how it might be used to help broaden public participation in policymaking. Gugile Nkwinti,

speaker of the Eastern Cape provincial parliament, said that the discussions allowed South African legislators to examine NCOP at a "completely higher level and with new dimensions to consider." NDI also organized complementary activities to familiarize South African policymakers with a NCOP counterpart in nearby Namibia as well with similar legislatures in India and Malaysia.

Latin America and the Caribbean (cont'd)

Nicaragua, continued from cover



materials. NDI drew on its network of election specialists from Bulgaria, the Dominican Republic, Mexico,

Panama and Peru to discuss their own domestic election observation efforts at training seminars throughout the country. In addition, the president of the Panamanian election tribunal advised ET leaders during the accreditation process and a Canadian statistician worked closely with ET's technical team to design and implement a "quick count," or independent vote tabulation, of the presidential race.

On election day, more than 4,200 ET volunteers monitored nearly 90 percent of Nicaragua's 9,005 polling sites. Many volunteers spent more than 16 hours observing the polling process and vote count. ET's preliminary statement noted that turnout for the elections was high throughout the country; political party pollwatchers were present at 98 percent of voting tables; and the vote was secret in the vast majority of polling sites.

At a post-election event attended by members of the election commission,

"Also inspiring has been the rise of Etica y Transparencia, a coalition of citizen groups which overcame obstacles from the government and political parties to field 4,000 young election monitors."

THE ECONOMIST

Nicaraguan civic leaders, and representatives of international organizations and foreign governments, ET recognized the accomplishments of its national and regional volunteers. Also, at a surprise ceremony during the seminar, ET presented NDI field representatives Melissa Estok and Peter Redmond with a scroll of appreciation for their "lasting friendship, dedication and loss of sleep" to help the cause of a transparent Nicaraguan electoral process.

NDI's future work with ET will focus on strengthening the group's organizational capacity and expanding its civic education agenda in a post-election environment.

Following the elections, Nicaragua took an historic step toward establishing

civilian control of the armed forces when the president-elect nominated a civilian minister of defense, an important first for the country. Nicaragua's history of politicized armies and authoritarian regimes hindered the country's democratization process. Much has changed in the six years since the 1990 transition elections when political leaders and military officers rarely sat down with one another.

Most recently, NDI has worked with the Nicaraguan Center for Strategic Studies (CEEN), a nongovernmental organization dedicated to promoting democratic civil-military relations. Training programs conducted by NDI and the CEEN for political, civic and military leaders included developing recommendations for the creation of a civilian-led ministry of defense. The CEEN's president was recently appointed by president-elect Alemán to serve as vice-minister of the new defense ministry.

Guatemala

More than 35 years of bitter civil war have left Guatemala's political institutions weak and unrepresentative. Indigenous people have been the group most marginalized by traditional political parties. Until Mayan descendants can be involved fully in the political process, Guatemala's governing institutions will remain disconnected from a majority of

"In yet another indication of the civic spirit and seriousness with which Nicaraguans approached today's vote, a newly organized non-partisan group called Ethics and Transparency was able to mobilize more than 4,000 people to serve as election monitors."

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Latin America and the Caribbean

the population. Some observers believe that such alienation can be a potentially destabilizing force in the nascent democracy. NDI is conducting a nationwide study on popular attitudes toward democratic institutions and political participation. The study findings will help determine how political leaders might be able to promote the involvement of the indigenous population in running for political office, serving in political leadership positions and advocating their concerns to elected representatives.

Guyana

Competitive polls in 1992 ushered in a new era of democratic development in Guyana. But years of controversial elections and undemocratic rule have led to public cynicism and disenchantment. NDI's program assists Guyanese efforts to promote confidence in the country's governing institutions. The Institute works with the National Assembly to upgrade the legislature's library facilities, which currently fail to meet the basic research needs of lawmakers. To contribute to the debate underway to reform the country's constitution, NDI brought to Guyana two African parliamentarians to advise authorities tasked with overseeing the reform effort. In

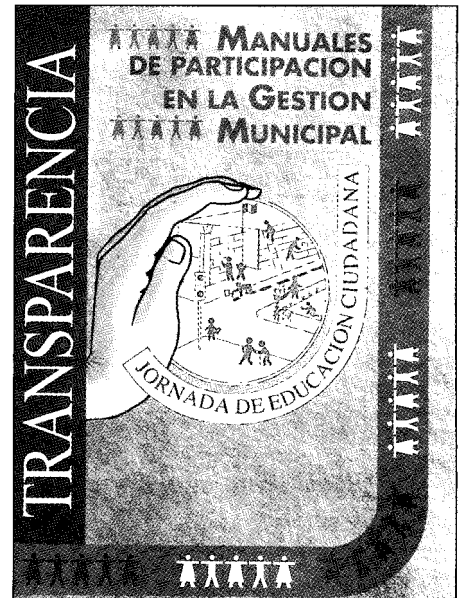
cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government, NDI also developed a program to assist new local officials, many of whom are unfamiliar with formal management and financial accountability systems.

Mexico

After two years of negotiations, the Mexican Congress recently passed electoral reforms considered crucial for bolstering public confidence in the election process and promoting political stability in the country. NDI supported the activities of a coalition of 400 civic organizations, the Civic Alliance (Alianza Cívica-AC), to guarantee the integrity of municipal elections in 1996, test the political will of the parties to conduct open and honest elections, and lay the groundwork for monitoring elections in 1997. With NDI support, AC observed the administration of elections in five municipalities and collected information on the entire electoral process, which was later used to address irregularities before and after the voting.

Paraguay

Although international pressure and citizen outrage thwarted a military coup carried out last April against the democratically elected president, Juan Carlos Wasmosy, the event underscored the weakness of democratic institutions, including political parties. If democracy in Paraguay is to be consolidated, observers contend that parties must begin to represent the needs and aspirations of the electorate. NDI works with political parties to broaden their political base, increase their responsiveness and develop specific policies for governing. Training programs focus on providing practical information on organizational planning, membership recruitment and mechanisms for internal democratization.



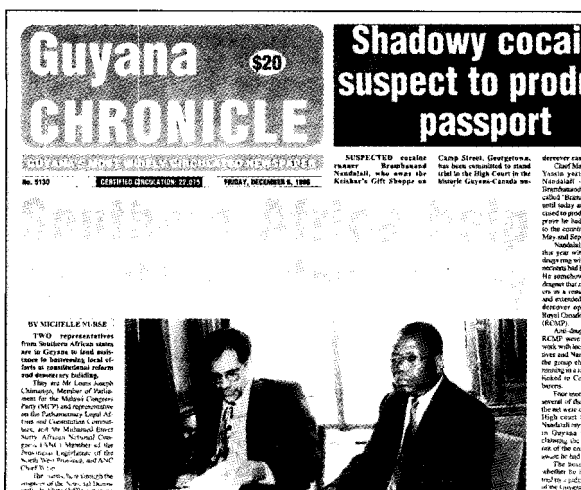
Cover of a manual on citizen participation in local government prepared by Transparencia, a Peruvian-based civic organization.

Peru

Peru's 1993 constitution and municipal elections last January opened opportunities for increased public participation in local government. However, few citizens are knowledgeable about the functions of municipal authorities or how they might advocate their concerns to local officials. NDI supports the efforts of the Lima-based civic organization, Transparencia, to raise citizen awareness about the responsibilities of elected officials and to increase public involvement in local government decisionmaking. Workshops involving representatives of community groups and local government officials have been held in more than 30 provinces throughout the country. Transparencia has also drafted manuals containing creative methods to inform citizens about democratic principles, the role of local government, and their right to participate in municipal affairs.

Venezuela

Economic crises, coup attempts, the ouster of a president on corruption charges and electoral irregularities have



The Guyana Chronicle gives front page news coverage to visit of African lawmakers. Pictured are South African parliamentarian Mohamed Enver Surty (left) and Malawian parliamentarian Louis Joseph Chimango.

Latin America and the Caribbean

affected Venezuela's once-stable democratic institutions. Citizen disenchantment has been reflected in the electoral arena, where abstentionism continues to climb. The Venezuelan congress is debating electoral reforms that are designed to enhance citizen confidence in national, state and local elections slated for 1998. NDI recently cosponsored a nationwide citizen "consultation" on electoral reform issues in partnership with the Caracas-based civic group, School of Neighbors. The results of the consultation were presented to congressional leaders. NDI also orga-

nized an international seminar on electoral reform, enabling Venezuelans to learn from the experiences of Argentina, Colombia and Mexico.

Latin American and Caribbean Civic Network

Civic groups have played key roles during peaceful democratic transitions in the hemisphere by mounting voter education campaigns to improve the credibility of elections. Today, civic groups are working to consolidate democratic gains by strengthening traditionally

weak institutions such as legislatures, political parties and local governments. Given limited resources, most civic groups are unaware of the activities and materials of counterpart groups in the region. NDI's "civic network" promotes an exchange of expertise among Latin American civic groups that are working to encourage citizen participation in the political process. NDI's Spanish-language resource library, Internet network and mailing of resource materials respond to requests from civic organizations throughout the hemisphere.

International Visitors Forum

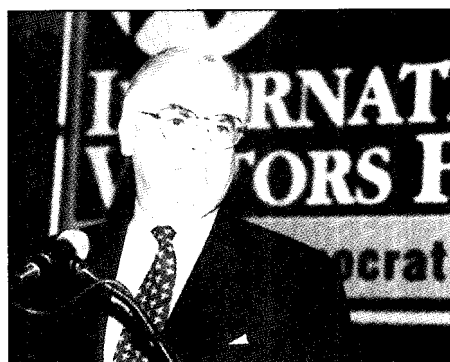
International Visitors Observe Democratic Convention

"This is such a diverse group; I feel as if I'd just walked into the General Assembly," quipped then-U.N. Ambassador Madeleine K. Albright in her opening remarks at NDI's program for international visitors to the Democratic National Convention.

Albright was addressing more than 700 political and civic leaders from democratic countries large and small who converged on Chicago last August to observe one of America's oldest political traditions: the designation of the party's nominee for president and vice president.

From August 24 to 29, NDI's International Visitors Forum (IVF) provided foreign guests from more than 100 countries a unique view of America's political process and its brand of pluralistic politics. Attendees included heads of government, cabinet ministers, members of parliament, political party leaders, Washington, D.C.-based ambassadors and civic activists.

The international visitors heard journalists, policy analysts, and political practitioners from the Democratic and



Then-Democratic National Committee General Chairman, Senator Christopher Dodd, welcomes international visitors to the Democratic Convention.

Republican parties address such topics as running for office, foreign policy decisionmaking, presidential campaigns and the workings of the White House.

In addition to a full schedule of seminars and speakers, visitors watched the convention proceedings each evening from inside the United Center, the site of convention, and from NDI's "International Visitors Lounge" located in downtown Chicago.

In delivering opening remarks at the IVF, NDI Chairman Paul G. Kirk, Jr. described the dynamic relationship between democratic activists around the world and NDI. "For 12 exciting years under NDI's auspices, we have gathered together political leaders from your

countries with those from other lands," he said. "We have exchanged ideas with one another—about our respective cultures and our national character; about our ethnic heritage and our histories; about our political processes and about our people; about our hardships of the past and our hopes for the future. Throughout, you have taught us patiently, befriended us heartily, and inspired us greatly."

During a luncheon at Chicago's Navy Pier on August 25, NDI presented its 10th annual W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award to Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Prize-winning leader of Burma's democracy movement, and for-



Panel examines "An Insider's View of the White House." Pictured (l to r): White House Director for Public Liaison, Alexis Herman; former White House Chief of Staff, John Sununu; Senior White House Correspondent for CNN, Wolf Blitzer; former White House Counsel Abner Mikva; and former White House Director for Legislative Affairs, Patrick J. Griffin.

International Visitors Forum

mer Vice President Walter F. Mondale. (See story on page 18.)

Throughout the week-long program, the international visitors were also able to share their perspectives with each other on democratic development throughout the world. NDI President Kenneth Wollack said that the IVF was designed not only to "promote a better understanding of the U.S. political process, but also to develop international partnerships able to further the global trend toward democracy."

The IVF was funded by private contributions and was organized in cooperation with the Democratic National Committee and the Chicago '96 Host Committee.



Former Republican National Committee Chairman Frank Fahrenkopf, Jr. (left) and NDI Chairman Paul G. Kirk, Jr., a former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, discuss party conventions and presidential debates.



Audience listens to panel on "Running for Office" featuring *San Francisco Examiner* Bureau Chief, Christopher Matthews; Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt; former Governor Ann Richards; and former vice presidential candidate, Geraldine Ferraro.



Shazia Z. Rafi, Secretary-General of Parliamentarians for Global Action, asks question of IVF panelists.

NDI would like to thank the following corporations, foundations and individuals who contributed to the International Visitors Forum.

- | | |
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Harriman Democracy Award Luncheon

NDI Honors Aung San Suu Kyi and Walter F. Mondale

“This honor conferred on the friend I hold dearest in this world means a great deal to me,” remarked Dr. Michael Aris in accepting NDI’s W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award on behalf of his wife, Burmese democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. “It shows that it is not only I who stand by her...others who share the same values throughout the world, and principally those in her own country, stand by her side” he said to a gathering of more than 1,200 guests including some who had previously challenged nondemocratic regimes in their own countries.

NDI presented its 10th annual democracy award to Suu Kyi and former Vice President and then-Ambassador to Japan, Walter F. Mondale, at a luncheon on August 26 at Chicago’s Navy Pier during the 1996 Democratic National Convention. The audience included cabinet secretaries, members of Congress, business and labor leaders, and 700 international visitors to the Democratic Convention. (See related story.)

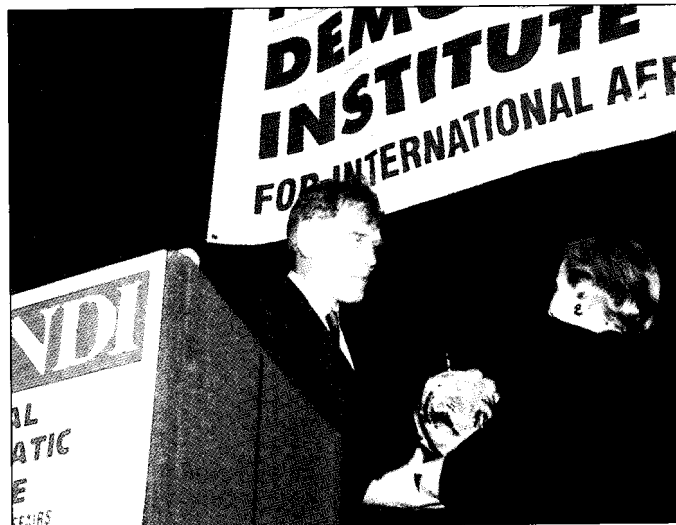
In his remarks, NDI Chairman Paul G. Kirk, Jr. paid tribute to Suu Kyi and Mondale by recognizing the bravery of those fighting for democracy. “NDI bears constant witness to the courage...of a valiant people engaged somewhere in the world in the early stages of an uncertain struggle toward a democratic life,” Kirk said. “By the selection of our 1996 honorees...we reveal the timeless truth that those who contribute constantly and heroically to the values of democracy must never be taken for granted, but be suitably honored.”

NDI President Kenneth Wollack read a letter from President Bill Clinton who described Suu Kyi as someone “...perhaps more than anyone today, who epitomizes the quiet endurance of democratic ideals in the face of violent repression...” Clinton noted that Ambassador Mondale “has made it his life’s mission to strengthen democracy—both here and abroad.”

In presenting the award to Mondale, former U.S. Senator Thomas Eagleton called his longtime friend and colleague “a man of unequalled candor and political guts. He knows his political values and he will never stray from them,” Eagleton said. “His values are in his mind, heart and soul.”

Mondale, who chaired NDI’s Board from 1986 to 1993, said that the Institute “continues to have a truly special mission in American foreign policy. It is based on an understanding that building democracy is hard work—and a conviction that democratic nations have a responsibility to help others in building democracy.”

Then-U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright presented the award to Aung San Suu Kyi who could not attend the ceremony because she would be barred from returning to her country by the ruling military regime. In commenting on her recent visit with Suu Kyi, Albright described her impressions of the woman whose name has become synonymous with democracy in Burma. “Outwardly fragile, she is clearly very strong; outwardly serene, she harbors a deep passion for truth; outwardly determined, she searches not for confrontation, but for reconciliation,” said Albright. She concluded with an appeal to the international community to support the democracy movement in Burma. “Today, Aung San



Dr. Michael Aris accepts the NDI Democracy Award from then-U.N. Ambassador Madeleine K. Albright on behalf of his wife, Aung San Suu Kyi.

Suu Kyi is on the front lines. It is up to us to remember that solidarity is a beautiful word not only in Polish, but in any language.”

In accepting the award for Suu Kyi, Aris paid tribute to his wife and her tireless efforts to bring democracy to Burma. His testimonial described the personal sacrifices endured by Suu Kyi and her democratic colleagues. In closing, he asked the audience to “join me in my prayer that we live to see Suu’s hopes

continued on back cover



Former Senator Thomas Eagleton (right) introduces NDI Democracy Award recipient, former Vice President Walter F. Mondale, and Joan Mondale.

Acknowledgments

NDI is grateful to those individuals who assisted the Institute's democratic development projects from August through December, 1996. Their experience and expertise were central to NDI's efforts, and we wish to acknowledge their important contribution.

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

MIRIAM MALUWA, Malawi
HILARY FYFE, Zambia

SOUTHERN AFRICA

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FRAN FARMER, Kenya
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STEVEN GORRIS, Belgium
ALLAN GREEN, U.S.
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MICHAEL HISHIKUSHITJA, Namibia
AJIT JOGI, India
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come true, that the long drought ends and her country blossoms in the true spring of freedom."

The luncheon featured a special video on Aung San Suu Kyi and the Burmese democracy movement. NDI traveled to Rangoon earlier last year to notify Suu Kyi of her selection for the award and to film her remarks for inclusion in a video presentation commissioned for the award ceremony. Suu Kyi's own words eloquently summarized the fight for democracy in her country that is ruled by State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). SLORC refused to allow Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy to take office after it won 81 percent of the parliamentary seats in the 1991 elections. "Fear is the biggest thing about Burma these days. SLORC rules by fear. It lives by fear," said Suu Kyi. "I think it's only people who are frightened who try to frighten other people."

Her remarks also addressed the debate about the suitability of democracy in Asian countries. "Those who argue that democracy is not applicable in the Asian context, these people generally belong to Asian governments," she said. "The peoples of the countries of Asia, they generally believe in democracy because democracy is a system which values the people."

Mondale also spoke about the universal appeal of democracy. "In Asia, too, we can hear many of the familiar arguments against democracy," he said. "They are the tired, self-serving excuses of dictators and autocrats threatened by democratic power. The truth of democracy is exactly the opposite of what they say."

Each year NDI presents its Democracy Award to individuals from the U.S. and abroad who exemplify the commitment of NDI and the Democratic Party to democracy and human rights.

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