

APPENDIX A



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International Participant Biographies

Karen English held elected positions for fifteen years in the U.S. House of Representatives, the Arizona State Senate, and the Coconino County Board of Supervisors. While in the House, Representative English served on the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Education and Labor. In Arizona, she served as chairperson of the Senate Environment Committee and helped pass legislation aimed at protecting the state's natural resources. In May, 1996, she participated in an NDI parliamentary seminar on ethics and transparency in government in Madagascar and in 1995 was the co-chair of an international delegation for election observation in Cote d'Ivoire. She currently serves as Manager of Public Dialogue Alternatives in Phoenix, Arizona, and is an adjunct professor in the Political Science Department at Northern Arizona University.

François Froment-Meurice is a former French Member of Parliament, who served as Secretary General of the Christian Democrat parliamentary group in the French Parliament from 1986 to 1990. From 1991 to 1994 Froment-Meurice served as a Deputy in the European Parliament with the European Popular Party. He has participated in past NDI programs, including a 1994 parliamentary training program in Russia and another 1994 seminar on the role of Parliament in Malawi's Constitutional Democracy, a May 1996 program in the West Bank and Gaza on constitutional development, and a seminar on bicameral relations in Kyrgyzstan in October 1996. He is currently Councillor of State where he is both the top legal advisor to the French government and the French High Court.

Mike Watson was for eight years, until 1997, the Member of Parliament for Glasgow Central in the British House of Commons. He will return to Westminster in October 1997 as Lord Watson, having been elevated as one of Tony Blair's new group of working peers. Having served as a member of the most powerful select committee, the Public Accounts Committee, he has a good working knowledge of the civil service and the various government departments at both the local and national level. During his career in Parliament, Watson chaired Labour's Overseas Development Aid Committee and gained experience working with NGOs and aid agencies. As a Regional Officer for many years with a leading trade union, he devised and implemented campaign strategies which emphasized both industrial and political issues. He is currently the Director of P.S. Public Affairs Consultants, in Edinburgh, Scotland and a visiting research fellow at Strathclyde University's Department of Government.

APPENDIX B

Role of Committees in an Effective Parliament

NDI Seminar: Sanaa, YEMEN
House of Peoples' Representatives
October 27-29, 1997

DAY 1: Monday, 27 October 1997

- 8:30-9:00am** **Welcome:** Derek Butler, NDI Field Representative
Speaker of Parliament: Sheik Abdullah Bin Hussain Al-Ahmar
- 9:00-9:15am** **Keynote Address: Why Committees Matter**
- 9:15-10:45am** **Session 1: Committee Organization and Procedure**
- 12 minute presentation by one international
 - 5 minute commentaries by two internationals
 - Approximately 1 hour: questions and answers
- This will be a general session covering the essential roles of committees in democratic legislatures, their structure and composition, the notions of referral and scheduling, the creation of joint or sub-committees, the documentation of proceedings, decision making processes and relations with the relevant ministry. Each international will present briefly the role of committees in their respective systems and their organization and procedure.*
- 10:45-11:00am** **Coffee Break**
- 11:00-1:30am** **Parliament in session**
- 1:30-3:00pm** **Lunch, hosted by NDI**
- 3:00-5:00pm** **Session 2: Legislative Review**
- 12 minute presentation by one international
 - 5 minute commentaries by two internationals
 - Approximately 1 hour: questions and answers
- This session will cover topics such as bill analysis, debate, proposal for amendments, drafting and distribution of reports, consideration of reports in the plenary, and the role of staff in the process. It should also touch on the variety of political, legal, technical, and procedural considerations required for legislative review.*
- 5:00-6:15pm** **Open Dialogue: Traditional Yemeni setting (see Terms of Reference)**
This will be a discussion with the committee chairs of the topics discussed

earlier in the day. It will provide an opportunity for them to ask more questions and for the internationals to focus on a few specific issues, including: issues of staff management and functions, ways and means to build relationships with other national parliaments in the region and around the world, and concrete measures to obtain sufficient resources (briefing papers, comparative studies, expert consultants, etc) to enable the committees to perform their functions efficiently. The discussion should also touch on how to maximize committee staff, how to develop resources for the committee, and the role and responsibilities of committee chairs.

DAY 2: Tuesday, 28 October 1997

- 9:00-10:45am** **Session 3: Committee Hearings: Public, Expert and Government Participation in Review of Policy and Legislation**
- 12 minute presentation by one international
 - 5 minute commentaries by two internationals
 - Approximately 1 hour - break into small groups to discuss
- This session will consider the important issues of purpose, scope and content of public hearings, the organization of same, communication with media and public at-large, calling of witnesses, analysis of testimony, issues of closed versus open meetings and hearings outside of parliament are also important.*
- 10:45-11:00am** coffee break
- 11:00-12:30am** **Session 4: Committees Relationship with the Executive**
- 12 minute presentation by one international
 - 5 minute commentaries by two internationals
 - Approximately 1 hour - break into small groups to discuss
- This session will examine in more detail the relationship of committees with the executive branch in different systems. Topics will include developing relationships with relevant ministries, respective roles of legislatures and executive branches of government in developing and passing legislation, the role of government witnesses, the rights of legislatures to obtain information from the executive to inquire into the operations of government ministries, and how to ensure that regulations issued by the executive are consistent with legislation.*
- 12:30-1:30pm** Working time
- 1:30-3:00pm** Lunch, hosted by NDI

3:00-8:00pm

Open Dialogue - Generating Recommendations

This final session will focus on reviewing the subjects raised during the program and generating recommendations on how the committee chairs can strengthen and enhance the role of committees in the legislative system.

COMMITTEE CLERKS AND ASSISTANTS

DAY 3: Wednesday, 29 October 1997

9:00-9:30am

Opening remarks and welcome

9:30-11:00am

Session 1: Role of Committees Staff

This session will provide an opportunity for the internationals to discuss how members utilize staff in their different systems, how staff meet those needs and what resources they offer to their members.

- *12 minute presentation by one international*
- *5 minute commentaries by two internationals*
- *Approximately 1 hour: questions and answers*

11:00-11:30am

Coffee Break

11:30-1:00pm

Session 2: Committee Organization and Procedure

- *12 minute presentation by one international*
- *5 minute commentaries by two internationals*
- *Approximately 1 hour: questions and answers*

In this session, the internationals will have a chance to cover how committees staff can assist the members in the documentation of proceedings, in structuring committee meetings and hearings; with the notions of referral and scheduling, and with the relationship with the relevant ministry.

APPENDIX C

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Karen English
The Honorable Francois Froment-Meurice
Lord Mike Watson

FROM: E. Derek Butler, Field Representative

DATE: October 21, 1997

RE: Terms of Reference for workshop with the Yemeni Parliament: The Role of Committees in an Effective Parliament

L INTRODUCTION

Thank you for agreeing to participate in NDI's workshop: "The Role of Committees in an Effective Parliament" being conducted with the committee chairs and rapporteurs of the Yemeni Parliament. The workshop will be held in Sanaa, Yemen on October 27, 28 and 29, 1997, at the House of Peoples' Representatives.

The current Yemeni Parliament was elected April 27, 1997 in national elections, to serve as the legislative branch of the Government of Yemen (GOY). These were the second elections since the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990, and the first since the brief civil war of 1994.

The Yemeni Parliament has been meeting regularly since its election this spring, with the inaugural session held in early May. Although the Parliament has made substantial progress in the initial five and one-half months of its existence, it continues to struggle to have a more significant impact on the legislative process, a more important role in overseeing the activities of the government and a more visible and positive image with the public.

It is clear that the parliamentary committees are a significant institution within the Yemeni Parliament; the committees meet regularly, the committee chairs are serious about their tasks and the Parliament meetings spend considerable time addressing committee reports. However, in general, the committees do not appear to conduct thorough reviews of draft bills. Furthermore, committees do not draft their own bills, but rely on the executive. They have not fully used outside experts or conducted hearings to augment either their legislative or oversight functions. Committees spend some time reviewing citizen complaints, which are submitted to the Parliament

in accordance with the Internal Bylaws, and referred to the appropriate committees by the Presidium.

While Parliamentary members view their own roles positively within the committee system, they have voiced interest in learning about how committees function in other legislatures - particularly in how they relate to the executive, conduct executive oversight and participate in the law-making process. Members too have indicated their desire for training for their committee staff. Hence, the third day of the program will involve committee clerks and assistants. Several clerks hold two jobs in parliament and are therefore unable to dedicate themselves full-time to committee work. One MP confided that staff perceive the position of Clerk as a dead-end, whereas other positions involve opportunities for advancement. This seminar will provide an opportunity for the Parliament and its staff to enhance their roles in helping committees to fulfill their functions.

In assessing the performance of the Yemeni Parliament and the Committee Directorate in recent months NDI has concluded that a program to enhance the ability of the committees to function in the legislative and oversight arenas is a first step in strengthening the institution. It is hoped that this program will simultaneously address three of the more comprehensive issues raised by Parliament members and staff -- the Parliament's relationship with the executive, the work of Committees in being better able to analyze and deal with legislation, and the role of public participation in committee work. Parliament has also expressed the hope that the seminar will result in MPs producing a series of recommendations for changes to current structures and/or approaches to allow for a better functioning of Committees.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the program are:

- 1) To provide the committees with comparative examples of committee functions, structure and operations;
- 2) To interest committee chairs and others in adapting methodology from other legislatures to enhance their legislative and oversight capacity and to utilize committees as a forum for public participation in the process;
- 3) For staff, to achieve an understanding of the above as well as of the expectations of their roles, and helping them in methods to achieve the above.

Subsequent to the workshop, NDI's resident representative will work closely with committee chairs and staff interested in implementing ideas presented at the workshop, such as organizing a public hearing and/or engaging expert consultants to review draft legislation.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

A. Briefing and Preparations

When you arrive on **October 25** we will meet you at the airport and take you to the Taj Sheba Hotel (telephone 967-1-272-372; fax 967-274-129). NDI will provide you with an initial briefing covering your stay in Yemen, the seminar programme, and other general items.

Accompanying this memorandum is a draft workshop agenda. On October 26 we will provide you with briefings on the political context in Yemen and the Yemeni Parliament. This may include meetings with NDI staff, Parliamentary Staff and/or MPs, Political Party leaders, journalists and/or representatives of NGOs. We will also schedule time immediately preceding our seminar to discuss NDI's objectives for this program. We would like to meet as a team to plan the workshop. The agenda in your Briefing Book will serve as a general guideline that we can modify on the basis of the briefing meetings and as we piece together our collective experience. We trust that Members of Parliament will also be forthcoming in their questions to ensure that they obtain relevant and useful information from this workshop. We also hope to provide you with time to see Sanaa, one of the world's oldest cities.

While some MPs speak fluent English, most do not. Therefore, our program will be conducted with the assistance of interpreters. If possible, we will attempt to schedule time before the program begins to practice with the interpreters, and we will ensure that they are available during meals and breaks to help with individual conversations. Please try avoid using idiomatic or otherwise difficult-to-translate language in preparing your discussion outlines and making your presentations (see enclosed NDI publication, *Tips for Training*).

B. Committees Workshop

On October 27 and 28 you will be meeting with Yemeni Parliament committee chairs, rapporteurs (similar to vice-chairs) and other select Parliament members (approximately 50 people), as per the agenda. The draft agenda is designed to address the various key aspects of legislative committees under three basic topics: legislation, executive-legislative relations and public participation. As mentioned above, we will do our best to provide you with the background information necessary for you to have a sense of your audience and, hopefully, an ability to draw attention to those practices and rules applicable to your committees that may be of utility to the Yemeni Parliament Committees.

As indicated in the agenda, the workshop will consist of short presentations from each of the international participants followed by a question and answer session and general discussion. We ask that you limit your presentations to 8 to 12 minutes and speak slowly and clearly, stopping often to allow your translator to repeat what you have said. After 30 minutes or so of panel presentation, time is provided for discussions. Our afternoon sessions will take place in the traditional Yemeni format seated in mufrijs - large ornately decorated rooms, often the 'best in the

house' - seated on low cushions. Much Yemeni business and discussion takes place in such sessions.

We may also ask you to lead smaller group sessions in which Parliament members will be asked to address more specific situations and/or scenarios. These would be intended to provide an opportunity to those members to apply and implement the ideas discussed in the panel presentations and discussion sessions. In order to allow the full participation of those invited, we have scheduled our seminars at a time when Parliament is in recess, therefore we will not have an opportunity to see it 'in action'.

C. Additional Consultations

In addition to the three-day workshop, NDI may schedule individual meetings with committee chairs, rapporteurs and/or staff before or after the workshops on issues of concern to them. **Note:** if you have special areas of interest and would like to meet with a particular Committee chair or MP, please let us know and we will endeavor to arrange it (e.g. if you have an interest in Environment, we could arrange for you to meet the responsible Committee chair).

IV. BACKGROUND

A. General Political Background

Unification and the Rise of Multipartyism

In 1990, the former republics of North and South Yemen were unified, ending years of rivalry and single-party rule in both states. By October of the following year, over 45 parties had emerged in the new climate of pluralism. The country's first parliamentary elections, held in 1993, led to a tripartite coalition among the former ruling parties of the North and South--the People's General Congress (PGC) and the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP)--and the Islah (Reform) Party, a conservative Islamist party with strong tribal links which registered a surprise second place electoral showing. While the results of the 1993 parliamentary contest were challenged by several parties in the immediate aftermath of the elections, the accusations eventually subsided. The elections were widely praised by the international community as one of the most successful and well-conducted in the region's history.

The tripartite coalition which emerged from the elections broke down in 1994 when a segment of the YSP leadership organized a secessionist movement and a brief civil war between the former North and South ensued. The war ended with a victory for the more conservative northern, government forces and led to the decimation of the YSP. The PGC and Islah, now the junior partner in a two-member ruling coalition, continued to govern the country.

For its part, the Islah seemed the greatest beneficiary of the demise of the YSP. Ideologically at loggerheads, the two parties held one another in much publicized contempt.

However, as elections approached and with the Islah growing weary of its larger and more powerful partner, the interests of the Islah and the YSP seemed to converge in the Fall of 1996. In a remarkable show of multiparty dynamism and real politik, the two parties formed an alliance to contest the behavior of the senior ruling party. The controversy focused around the behavior of the PGC-dominated Supreme Elections Commission and its conduct during voter registration. Thus despite its relatively privileged status as a ruling party, the Islah has approached the elections as an opposition party.

Meanwhile, with much of its leadership in prison or in exile and much of its support base alienated from the party, the YSP became a fractured and disoriented political force. The YSP faced a number of challenges in its quest to rebuild itself structurally and politically in the years following the war. Despite the closing of their offices, confiscation of many of their resources and other restrictive measures taken by government authorities, the YSP began a modest reorganization campaign and planned to field candidates in the 1997 election.

Closely allied to the YSP are several smaller, mostly left-leaning parties organized under the umbrella of the of the Supreme Coordination Council (SCC). While these small opposition parties face a range of organizational, financial and other structural problems, several, including the Nasserist Party, enjoy pockets of support in various governorates around the country. The SCC parties also plan to field candidates in April's elections. The only other notable political force in Yemen is represented by the small parties which comprise the Supreme Council for the Opposition (SCO), which is widely believed to be made up of "shadow" parties. The SCO is allegedly the government-sponsored opposition parties whose job it is to "oppose the opposition" more than to oppose government policy.

Post Civil-War

While the period after unification was marked by a sense of cautious optimism among a large segment of Yemen's population, the period since the 1994 civil war has been characterized by a considerable lack of confidence in the government. This is generally considered to be the result of a government initiated economic reform program tied to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a tightening by the government on the freedoms of speech, assembly and the press and a general perception of a lack of government efficacy despite the introduction of democracy.

Despite these and other challenges, the Yemeni political environment remains relatively open to political contestation. The preparations for parliamentary elections on April 27, 1997, while not without flaws, were part of a political process aimed at advancing Yemen's democratic development. The legal structure for the April 27 elections compared favorably to that of other transitional democracies. Administrative preparations for the elections, while not without problems and serious challenges, were commendable. Political parties and candidates actively positioned themselves for the elections. Most important, Yemenis appeared enthusiastic about advancing democracy and the level of women's participation was encouraging. Moreover, as the elections approached, the government has allowed the

institutions of civil society to play an active role in promoting public participation in political processes. Chief among these is the Arab Democratic Institute (ADI), which mounted a nationwide voter education campaign, organized thousands of volunteers from all over the country to monitor all aspects of the electoral process. In addition, ADI was actively involved in an effort to increase women's participation in the elections as both candidates and voters.

Yemen remains unique among its neighbors in the level of pluralism and political competitiveness that exist in the country. The poorest country on the Arabian Peninsula, and steeped in traditional culture and values, Yemen is an unlikely candidate to take the lead in promoting democracy in the region, yet that is increasingly its chosen role. The 1997 election represented an important test of consolidation of democratic institutions for this fledgling democracy. *For more historical background please see the briefing paper located in your briefing book.*

B. The Yemen House of Peoples' Representatives

The current Yemeni parliament was created during unification in 1990 from North Yemen's Consultative Assembly (159 members), South Yemen's Supreme People's Council (111 members), and appointments by the New Presidential Council (31 members). The first full-fledged elections were held in 1993, and again more recently in April of 1997. It has 301 members elected from single-member, first-past-the-post constituencies. The GPC currently holds 224 seats, followed by Islah with 63 MPs. The remaining 14 seats are held by 2 members of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, 3 members of the Nasserites Popular Unionist Party, 2 members of the YSP, 5 independents and 2 seats are still in dispute. Sheik Abdillah Bin Hussain Al-AHMAR (Islah) is the current and prior speaker of the parliament. Islah was formerly in coalition with the GPC, and still does not consider itself part of the formal opposition.

The newly-elected Yemeni Parliament faces unique challenges and is of enormous potential importance to the prospects for democracy in Yemen. Given the GPC's full control of the executive and legislative branches, it will have to answer for running the country in the next elections, whereas it has previously blamed its coalition partners for whatever problems it has faced. The proper and democratic functioning of the legislature and its committees can only help to strengthen the democratic consolidation in Yemen.

The legislature faces unique circumstances, including the lack of a clear opposition party in the chamber, the lack of effective executive oversight given the GPC's majority in both government branches (one GPC MP criticized his party for interfering in the assignment of committee memberships and was subject to undetermined sanctions) weak legislative review and an incapacitated parliamentary staff, due to lack of training and resources.

As noted earlier, the Parliament has been meeting regularly during the first two weeks of every month since the beginning of May, except for a summer recess in August. The

Parliamentary committees generally meet each day Parliament sits. Most committee business takes place in afternoon sessions from 3pm onwards, in traditional Yemeni settings.

Committees

There are 17 committees organized along parallel lines with the ministries in government. Attached is a list of the committees.

Deputies can be members of only one committee. Currently 257 of 301 deputies sit on committees, with membership of each committee set at 15. Under proposed revisions of the Internal Charter (Rules of Procedure) the minimum number of members for committees will be 11, the maximum 15.

Deputies are assigned to committees after a theoretically fair process. A form is distributed asking questions about experience, education background and interests. Deputies indicate two choices of preference, and the Presidium then assigns members based on this survey. The Presidium then submits a report to the Plenary consisting of the entire recommendations for committee membership, which must be either approved or rejected *en masse*. There is no line-item veto power. The Presidium may also consult with individual deputies if their choices of preference are not available.

Committee positions (chairs, vice-chairs or rapporteurs) are elected in the first committee meeting, which is chaired by the eldest deputy present, who also chairs in the absence of the other two. It appears the chairmanships are distributed on the basis of proportional representation in the chamber, up to a point. This appears to take place by agreement between the major parliamentary parties that certain committee chairs, through understanding, will be elected within these constraints.

Deputies are expected to attend all their respective committee meetings, and may at leisure attend other committees meeting of which they are not members. In the latter they may participate in discussions or submit written comments but have no right to vote. If deputies are absent without excuse, a formal "letter of blame" is written by the Chairman. No temporary substitutions are allowed if a member can not make it to a meeting, though a permanent replacement may be designated by the Presidium. This allowance is also used when a member is sick or serving on another Special Committee.

Voting in committees, as in the Plenary sessions, is by raising of hands. The Constitution states that deputies represent the entire country and their votes may not be "controlled", but are free and independent. Generally, as in most parliaments, members vote in accordance with their parties, though some do vote independently more frequently than others.

Reports are drafted by the committee clerks in consultation with the Chairman, submitted to the committee for consideration and redrafted. While dissenting or minority reports are not allowed, disagreements or dissenting views are noted in the single report to the plenary.

Committees do have the power to draft legislation, but in practice they rarely do so because of a lack of means and perhaps because of the more general tendency in most democracies for this function to be assumed by the executive branch. For the most part, draft bills originate with the executive branch or the Consultative Council, an interim upper chamber that is appointed, and are presented to the Parliamentary Presidium and come before the Plenary for debate. They are then assigned to their respective committees by the Presidium. Draft bills can be required to be examined in more than one committee, though not concurrently, depending on their comprehensiveness.

With few exceptions, such as a request from the government to deal urgently with a matter, all draft bills go to committees. There is also a provision for the plenary session to revert to what is called in some parliaments "Committee of the Whole [House]. Here, the Speaker chairs. The decision to deal with a draft bill or matter in the plenary is taken by the Presidium, particularly at the request of the government to deal with a matter expeditiously.

The committees consider the draft legislation and consider research conducted by the clerks. While they enjoy the power to call and question witnesses from the appropriate ministries (particularly those who may have drafted the bill) or from the public at-large, such as nongovernmental organizations or others affected by the legislation, they do not often exercise this prerogative. They are without the power of subpoena enjoyed by other parliamentary committees in the Commonwealth or US traditions. Committees may also read written reports submitted by NGOs, Chambers of Commerce, etc. The public can also contact a clerk or chairman and ask to come before a committee, at the committee's discretion. Of course, it is noted, these submissions, verbal or written, are not binding on the committee's work.

Committees may not actually modify legislation, but only make recommendations and proposals which are reported in reports to plenary sessions where they may be considered and voted on. After the bill is returned to the plenary session, subject to its approval, it goes to the President of the country. Without going into details here, it is important to note that bills once made law (decreed) are taken up by the Committees Directorate again, to be circulated to interested parties, and entered into computers. The General Manager of the Committees Directorate recognized that this should not be part of the Directorate's work but said they had an interest in ensuring the legislation was adequately distributed, and put into databanks for research and ease of access. Another department is responsible for having the law published in the Official Gazette.

Committees also play a role in helping to resolve public complaints, a kind of ombudsman function. After a citizen has exhausted all other methods or avenues in dealing with a problem with a government ministry, he or she may appear before committee, first by approaching the

clerk or chairman. Some committee members acknowledge that the Complaints Committee has this function formally, for individuals, but that really serves no purpose and its functions could be handled by the other committees.

At present there is no formal link between the committees and their respective ministries, though the Internal Charter, currently under revision, may contain some proposal to allow committees to designate a liaison. It is now done informally via the clerk, chairman, or the Presidium, depending on the nature and formality of the request. Sub-committees may also be designated to establish contacts with the respective ministries. The current Internal Charter says such contacts must be made through the Presidium, but that is now going to be revised to give the committees power to do on paper what they already do in practice.

C. NDI's Work in Yemen

NDI has conducted programs to assist the democratic process in Yemen since before the 1993 parliamentary elections. At that time, NDI helped to coordinate an effort by the National Committee for Free Elections (NCFE) to recruit and train more than 3,000 volunteers to monitor the parliamentary races, increasing public participation in the process and enhancing public confidence in the results. The 1994 Yemen civil war interrupted NDI's programming but it was renewed when NDI visited Yemen in May 1995.

Since 1995, NDI has provided assistance to Yemen's political parties and party coalitions concerning issues of long-term organizational development. In response to interest expressed by political parties, NDI organized a three-day symposium in July 1995 on political party development in Sanaa. This was the first all-parties event of its kind in the country's history and proved to be a great success.

Encouraged by the parties' responsiveness to the project, NDI maintained contact with each of the parties in Yemen. In October 1996, NDI opened a field office in Sanaa to continue training of the political parties in anticipation of the April 1997 elections. Beginning in October, NDI conducted a series of workshops with all political parties aimed at strengthening party internal and external communications. The workshops aimed at getting the parties to be not only more organized but also more "voter-focused" in their activities. In order to follow up with the parties, an NDI staff member visited party branch organizers in their own governorates to discuss applications of the information gathered during the workshops.

At the request of Yemen's party leaderships, NDI also conducted a program to enhance the parties' abilities to effectively scrutinize the electoral process. The NDI field representative conducted 22 workshops throughout the country in February 1997 with party representatives who were responsible for training party pollwatchers.

Parallel to NDI's work with political parties, NDI renewed its assistance to a Yemeni nonpartisan election monitoring effort in 1996. NDI provided technical and financial assistance to the Arab Democratic Institute (ADI) from May 1996 through the election. ADI was successful in organizing more than 10,000 domestic monitors for election day and in conducting voter education programs.

In March 1997, NDI received the invitation from the government of the Republic of Yemen to monitor the 1997 election. From March 16-24, a four member international observer team noted many positive aspects of the pre-election process, as well as issued specific recommendations for improvements. A 39 member international delegation visited Yemen from April 23-30, and despite some flaws in the pre-election and election-day processes, found the elections to be a positive step in Yemen's democratic development.

APPENDIX D

NDI Delegation on Role of Parliamentary Committees

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a US-based, non-profitable NGO. It aims, with the help of worldwide action network of volunteer experts, to consolidate and expand democracy around the world.

Upon the request of Yemeni parliamentarians, a three-member delegation from the NDI has recently visited Yemen to conduct lectures on the role played by specialized parliamentary committees in the democratic process. The delegates met several parliamentary committees' heads, deputies, rapporteurs, and staff.

Yemen Times interviewed two of the delegates. Excerpts:



Ms. Karen English is a former member of the American Congress and head of the committee on environment at the Senate. She is an assistant professor of political science at the North Arizona University.

Q: Do you envisage a bigger role for Yemen women in parliament and in public life in general?

A: It does appear that Yemen is perhaps a little more progressive than other countries in the region. The fact that there are two women already in parliament indicates there is a significant role for women in parliament. I suspect, like in most democracies, as women become more involved there will be more interest by other women.

Q: How do you see role of democratic NGOs in consolidating the democratic process in Yemen?

A: Private initiative organizations have played a role in developing democracies all around the world. The role they usually play is to remind that democracy that there are aspects to a country's society or culture that need to be incorporated into the plan. They will continue to play an important role in helping design a democracy.

Q: How does the NDI help with the process of democratization?

A: NDI has been involved in training people how to hold open elections. But in this particular conference, the NDI has invited three of us. We all have democracies and parliaments with some similarities to Yemen. We were invited to share our own experiences. NDI accomplishes exposure and an opportunity to discuss a variety of ways to accomplish something. The best decisions are informed decisions. If the members that we have met have five or six ways to solve a problem then they can choose the best one.

Q: How do you view the progress of democratization in Yemen?

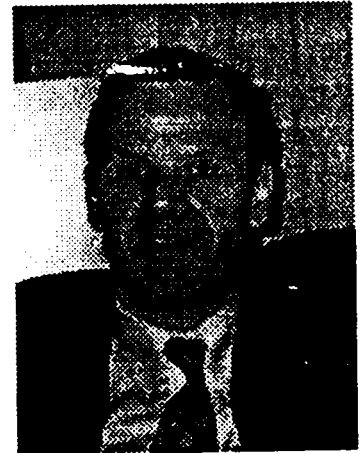
A: I am very impressed. It is such a new democracy. I am pleased by how far things have moved in such a period of time. The US has taken 200 years to accomplish something. Yemen has taken 2 or 3 years. The people of Yemen should be congratulated for moving very swiftly in the area of democracy.

The people of Yemen should be congratulated for moving very swiftly in the area of democracy.

Q: Any last comment?

A: One of thing that I found so interesting is how much people are engaged in doing what is right for the country. I have met people from different regions of Yemen. They all seem to have a similar interest which is designing a system that is best for the country, and maintains the values of democracy. Sometimes that is not the case in the US. It is such an honor to work with people like that.

Mr. Mike Watson has, for seven years, been a member of the British House of Commons, and is now a member of the House of Lords. Lord Watson is currently a reader at the University of Strathclyde and a consultant at P.S. Public Affairs Consultants LTD.



Q: What is the purpose of your visit to Yemen?

A: The purpose of the visit is to pass on to Yemeni members of parliament the experience of myself and other colleagues of the operation of parliamentary committees. I have a considerable experience of the senior committees in the British parliament. I have been passing on that experience to the deputies and the staff that serve the committees which are a very important part of a democracy. They ensure that the workings of the executives can be opened up to the public and questioned. We have been simply saying what is happening in France, the US and Britain.

Q: What have you achieved in this visit?

A: From my point of view, I have also been learning because democracy in Yemen has moved very quickly. It has been very interesting and fascinating for me to hear of the experiences of your people. We can think of it as a two-way process. I don't come here to say that this is how it should be done. All I say is this is what we have done in the British parliament. There are some things that are good and others not so good about it. Perhaps you want to take some of these things into your account when you change your democratic structure.

Q: Scotland and Wales had recently voted to have their own parliaments. Do you see this happening in Yemen - southern and northern parliaments, say? Is it a healthy sign?

A: I would see it differently. Scotland has voted to have its own parliament but that does not mean it is going to stop being part of the UK.

In Yemen, if there is going to be a separate parliament it will not be north and south Yemen. It will be in different regions of the country. But I don't think this is something you should do in the near future. I think you need to establish a system of local government to complement what you do in your national government. I have been talking to people from the north and south of the country, everybody said they want to remain united as a nation.

What is happening in Scotland is that government is decentralizing. Too much power is held in London. The people in Scotland and Wales want more say in their affairs. So they voted to do that. Within Yemen, you are still coming together as a country so any question of decentralizing is something for the future. But I think in general it is a good thing.

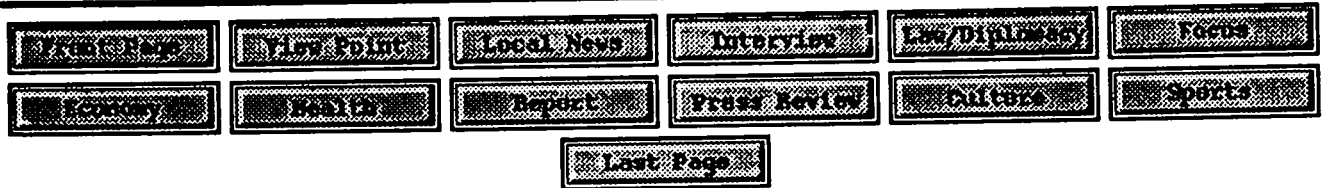
Q: What are your impressions of the process of democratization in Yemen ?

A: I think it is very impressive. It is difficult to build a democracy. It does take time and commitment on behalf of those involved to make sure it works. I am in no doubt at all that the people we met from the deputy speaker down through the committee chairs and MPs are determined to do that.

One of the signs is that the General People's Congress party does not try to run everything themselves. They bring in the opposition parties such as Islah and Baath. Democracy is an inclusive operation. Yes, the party that gets most votes must rule the country, but that does not mean excluding everybody else. That is happening in Yemen. It is a good sign. I think it is already clear only 3 years after your civil war that the democracy is what people want.

Q: Any last comment?

A: We have been received with great warmth and friendship. The visit has been a pleasure, although we have had a very hard work with no time for sightseeing. I think the Yemeni deputies and committee secretaries have found it useful as well.

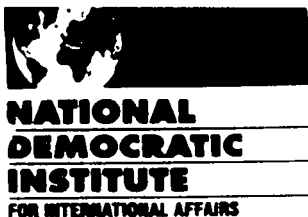


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APPENDIX E



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STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (NDI) PRE-ELECTION ASSESSMENT DELEGATION

Sana'a, March 23, 1997

I. THE DELEGATION AND ITS WORK

This statement is offered by a four-member international pre-election assessment delegation organized by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). The delegation visited the Republic of Yemen from March 16 through March 24, 1997. The purposes of the delegation were to demonstrate the interest of the international community in the democratic process underway in Yemen and to examine conditions prior to Yemen's April 27 parliamentary elections.

The delegation's work was part of NDI's election-related activities in Yemen, which will also include an international observer delegation to the April 27 elections. NDI staff will remain in Yemen until the final results of the election are determined. Additional statements will be released by the NDI election observer delegation, and NDI will issue a final report after definitive election results are announced.

This pre-election assessment delegation included election experts and political and civic leaders from three continents. Delegation members have participated in numerous electoral assessments and international election observer delegations around the world. The members of the delegation included: Maria Leissner (Sweden), former leader of the Swedish Liberal Party and former Member of Parliament; Conny McCormack (United States), who as Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk directs election administration for Los Angeles, California; Guillermo Marquez Amado (Panama), former President of Panama's Electoral Tribunal; and Patrick Merloe (United States), NDI's senior official for electoral programs. The delegation was assisted by NDI program staff, including David Nassar and Margaret Zaknoen.

The delegation was charged with several tasks: (1) to assess the legal framework for the elections in light of international standards for fair electoral competition; (2) to review the state of preparedness of the electoral administration; and (3) to gauge the political environment surrounding the elections and the degree to which the public is being notified about the electoral process and about the candidates so that they may make a free and informed choice. The delegation's activities were conducted in accordance with recognized standards for international election observation, which is now accepted throughout the world. The delegation did not seek to interfere with or to certify the election process, and it recognized that ultimately it is the people of Yemen who will judge the fairness of the elections.

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The pre-election delegation conducted meetings in Sana'a with members of the Supreme Election Committee (SEC) and other government officials, including President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Speaker of Parliament Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Ahmar and Prime Minister Abdulaziz Abdulghani, leaders of Yemen's political parties, leaders of Yemeni nongovernmental organizations involved in monitoring the election process, journalists and other Yemenis concerned with the elections, as well as with members of international organizations providing assistance for the April 27 elections. The delegation traveled to Aden and Taiz, where it met with local election officials, political party leaders, candidates, nonpartisan national election monitors and others involved with the upcoming elections.

NDI has conducted programs to assist the democratic process in Yemen since 1993. Since 1995, NDI has provided assistance to Yemen's political parties and party coalitions concerning issues of long-term organizational development and training of pollwatchers for the upcoming elections. NDI's initial activities in Yemen focused on assisting domestic nonpartisan election monitors for the 1993 elections, and the Institute has provided assistance to such efforts in Yemen over the last year. While NDI's election assessment and election observer delegations are distinct from its other programs in Yemen, the visits of NDI staff to different parts of the country over the last several months helped in providing background information for the delegation.

II. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

SUMMARY

The delegation noted many positive aspects of Yemen's election process and recognized that the April 27 elections are part of a political process aimed at advancing Yemen's democratic development. At the same time, the delegation developed serious concerns about issues that could affect public confidence in the political process and attitudes about the elections.

The legal structure for the April 27 elections compares favorably to that of other transitional democracies. Administrative preparations for the elections, while not without problems and serious challenges, appear to be on course for election day. Political parties and candidates are actively positioning themselves concerning the elections. Most important, Yemenis appear enthusiastic about advancing democracy. The delegation was also pleased to note efforts by election authorities, political parties and nongovernmental organizations to increase women's participation in the election process.

The delegation recognized that Yemen has held only one other parliamentary election since unification in 1990, and it suffered a civil war in 1994. The political leaders with whom the delegation met all stressed the need to carry out peaceful and open political competition. Actions by several political parties, however, present important issues for consideration. These issues include

(1) "coordination" agreements among political parties not to oppose one another in a large number of the parliamentary constituencies, and (2) the announcement of a boycott of the elections by the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which was the third largest party represented in parliament following the 1993 parliamentary elections and the largest opposition party. The YSP boycott could be joined by one or more of the other parties, while three of the four largest parties and several smaller parties apparently have decided to participate in the elections.

The delegation also was concerned about issues raised by numerous sources regarding the credibility of the voter registration process and additional matters regarding aspects of the election preparations and of the upcoming official campaign period. The delegation has offered several recommendations in the spirit of international cooperation and the hope of providing assistance to Yemeni authorities and to political and civic leaders, who uniformly expressed strong interest in conducting an open election process.

A. Legal Framework for the Elections

In addition to its meetings noted above, the delegation reviewed the Constitution of the Republic of Yemen, the election law and regulations relating to the April 27 elections. The delegation observed that, in general, the legal framework for the elections compares favorably to those of other transitional democracies. In particular, the delegation noted the following points.

- 1) The Constitution requires adherence to international instruments that set standards for observing civil and political rights related to genuine democratic elections, and it provides explicitly for protection of such rights. (Articles 6, 24, 25, 31, 40-42, 47, 50, 56, 57, 63.)
- 2) The Election Law provides for universal suffrage, a secret ballot and voting based on the free will of the voter and calls for the Supreme Elections Committee (SEC) to take affirmative steps to encourage women to exercise their electoral rights. (Articles 3-6, 47, 50, 64, 97, 98.)
- 3) The Election Law calls for the SEC to be independent and politically neutral. (Articles 22, 24, 26, 32, 33.)
- 4) The Election Law addresses a number of issues relating to campaign resources. These include requiring the SEC to provide equal access to the official media for all candidates to present their electoral programs; placing the official media at the disposal of the SEC for such access and to conduct voter education; providing for equal space for candidates to publicly post their election materials, and banning use of public funds, institutions or organizations in election campaigns for the advantage of a candidate or party (Articles 35-38.)
- 5) The Election Law provides for political party/candidate pollwatchers, Yemeni nonpartisan election monitors and international election observers, which increases the ability of political

contestants and the public to view and better understand the election process and thereby develop confidence in sound election practices. (Articles 58, 61, 64, 65-67, 70, 104.)

B. Electoral Administration

The delegation noted that administrative preparations for election day, while not without problems and serious challenges, appear to be on course. Election materials are in the process of being distributed, a training program for pollworkers is being initiated, candidate nominations have started, and distribution of voter identification cards is beginning.

Voter Registration: The delegation received reports from all of the political parties with which it met and from Yemeni nonpartisan election monitors that there were serious problems in the voter registration process, the so-called "first phase" of election preparation. Issues raised included: allegations of the SEC not meeting legal requirements for conducting voter registration at each polling station, using mobile voter registration in a manner that disadvantaged localities with strong support for opposition parties; multiple registrations (especially of women and the military); registration of underage persons; and moving military forces in order to register them in constituencies where their presence could affect the electoral balance in favor of the governing parties.

While the delegation could not investigate allegations concerning the registration process, it called on political parties to present evidence of alleged problems in voter registration, and called on the authorities to take steps to address concerns raised about proceeding to the elections on the basis of the present voter lists.

The delegation was made aware of court rulings regarding problems in the voter registration process and was concerned that agreements among political parties led to non-enforcement of some judicial decisions and withdrawal of numerous electoral complaints. Failure to correct problems in the voter registration process in favor of political agreements tends to weaken public confidence in both election and judicial processes.

The delegation noted with regret that incidents of violence took place between supporters of some parties during the registration process, and the delegation expressed hopes that actions by authorities to increase public confidence and actions by parties to control their supporters will be able to prevent such clashes in the immediate run-up to the elections.

Impartiality of the SEC. While the law provides for an independent and neutral SEC, the delegation noted claims by almost all political parties with whom it met that the SEC showed partiality toward one or both of the governing parties during the registration process, in selection of sites for polling stations and in other ways. The delegation also noted actions by the SEC to

safeguard its independence from political influence. The delegation encouraged the SEC to initiate and maintain dialogue with the political parties and to allow the parties and the public to view SEC activities in order to increase public confidence in the elections.

Ballot Design and Voter Education. Ballot design is not yet complete, which creates a serious challenge. Yemenis have not accumulated a great deal of voting experience, and for the first time ballots will include symbols for parties and independent candidates. Completion of ballot design is needed in order to conduct sufficient voter education before election day, as well as to complete ballot production for distribution to the polls. The latter task is complicated by the potential need in some constituencies to correct ballots due to last minute withdrawals of some candidates. The short period from the close of candidate nominations to election day leaves little time to produce ballots. It also leaves little time for candidates to conduct voter education about their place on the ballot, which could be complicated in constituencies where an expanded or two-sided ballot is required by a large number of candidates. If these matters are not addressed early, voter confusion could cause problems at the polls.

Education about voting procedures and the importance of voting -- as well as where and when to vote and how to obtain a voter identity card -- is urgently needed. Such education is being conducted by Yemeni nongovernmental organizations concerned with the elections and may be done by political parties and candidates. The SEC, however, is required by law to conduct such educational activities, and the official media is to be at its disposal to do so. This is particularly important given the large number of voters who cannot read. In addition, special messages will be needed to encourage women to obtain voter identity cards and to vote. The delegation was concerned that widespread voter education is not yet taking place across the country.

Women's Participation in Election Processes. The delegation noted the enthusiasm of women about the elections and a genuine desire to participate more actively in the election and political processes. The delegation was encouraged by steps taken by election officials, political parties and nongovernmental organizations to increase the number of women who registered to vote. The increase in women's registration was dramatic in a significant number of parliamentary constituencies. In some constituencies, however, the number of women registered is still quite small. In two constituencies, no women are registered to vote. In addition, the requirement for a photograph on voter identification cards may cause many women who registered not to obtain their cards. This would prevent them from voting. Special efforts will be necessary to avoid this problem, such as voter education and actively publicizing pronouncements by religious leaders that women may be photographed in order to participate in the elections.

Media. The delegation noted that there is a diversity of opinion presented in Yemen's printed press. Radio, television and the news agency are all part of the official media. Given the large number of people who cannot read in Yemen, radio and television play a crucial role in shaping public opinion concerning electoral choices. The absence of private and independent public broadcast media

is also important in such circumstances. While the law requires equal access to the official media during the election campaign for political contestants, the shortness of the campaign may not provide sufficient opportunity for parties and candidates to reach voters with adequate information for them to make informed choices. Moreover, the delegation received numerous reports of unbalanced news coverage of issues, parties and personalities of import to the elections. In circumstances where broadcast media is under official control, steps are required to ensure balanced coverage of parties, candidates and issues of national importance during the entire pre-election period.

C. Election Environment

The delegation noted that political parties are actively positioning themselves for the elections. Candidates are in the process of filing nomination papers and are preparing to begin their campaigns. The news media, particularly the printed press, are covering the elections and political developments from differing perspectives. The delegation also noted the substantial and positive contribution to electoral preparations being made by Yemeni nongovernmental organizations, such as the Arab Democratic Institute and the Election Monitoring Committee, in election monitoring, civic education and encouraging women's participation.

At the same time, the delegation had serious concerns about issues that could weaken public confidence in the political process and the elections. Taken together with problems in the voter registration process and the methods used to settle those problems, the issues merit serious consideration.

Coordination Agreements. Political agreements are being arranged between the two governing parties ("coordination agreements"), and in some cases between one or both of them and other political parties, not to offer candidates against the other party in certain parliamentary constituencies. A large number of constituencies apparently will be affected by such agreements. The delegation was told by leaders of almost all of the parties that the motivations for such agreements are to reduce tensions and avoid the potential of violent clashes in some constituencies and to help ensure seats in parliament for smaller parties.

It is understandable, in light of the potential for violent incidents and experiences in the 1994 civil war, that a desire for stability and inclusiveness towards certain parties could make coordination agreements attractive. Also, coalition arrangements are not uncommon in democracies, before and after elections. Nonetheless, in a country without strong democratic traditions and with weak democratic institutions, such agreements could be perceived by voters as limiting their abilities to make genuine choices at the ballot box, which could weaken public confidence in the elections.

Election Boycott. The YSP has decided to boycott the April 27 elections. They may be joined by one or more other parties in this effort. The decision of a party, or the decision of any

voter, to lodge a peaceful protest by not participating in an election is a legitimate form of political expression. Such a decision, however, limits the choice of voters. This is more unfortunate in light of the effects of the coordination agreements and in light of YSP's present position as the largest opposition party in parliament.

The delegation noted reasons for the boycott advanced by leaders of the YSP and heard explanations of the boycott from other political parties as well. The delegation also noted that several elements of the YSP may find ways to stand for election as independents. The decision to boycott came about after negotiations with the ruling parties over YSP claims of unfair treatment, particularly since the 1994 civil war. The YSP also has negotiated with other opposition parties for their support. The delegation encouraged all sides to continue and heighten dialogue that might lead to YSP's participation in the electoral process.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The delegation noted the many positive elements of the pre-election environment, electoral organization and the legal framework for the elections. In addition, the delegation appreciated the openness and serious attitude of government leaders, election officials, party representatives and candidates and civic leaders with whom it met. In the spirit of international cooperation and in light of these positive factors, the delegation offers the following recommendations.

1) **Political Dialogue:** All of the leaders with whom the delegation met expressed a desire for dialogue among the political parties in order to ensure inclusiveness, stability and a peaceful election process. Such dialogue should continue and be heightened by all sides in order to encourage that those boycotting the elections either decide to participate in the elections or otherwise engage constructively in Yemen's political process. At the same time, the delegation also expressed hope that concern for inclusiveness and stability that have motivated the coordination agreements should not be allowed to impact adversely on a genuine multiparty system. Dialogue is also needed among the parties and the SEC to address ways to avoid incidents of violence related to the elections.

2) **Increased Transparency:** The SEC and local election officials are working to prepare for the elections, yet many of the political parties lack confidence in the SEC's impartiality. It is recommended therefore that the SEC actively engage in dialogue with the political parties concerning its activities in the run-up to the elections. The dialogue might include regular meetings with the parties in the period leading to the elections -- to provide information and listen to their concerns -- which could improve confidence in the election process.

3) **Voter Lists:** The political parties participating in the April 27 elections have agreed to proceed with voter lists generated in part from the recent voter registration process. Given the numerous complaints concerning the election registration process and given that most political parties

express a lack of confidence in the voter lists, action will be needed to avoid election day problems connected with those lists. The delegation recommends that the SEC set forth clear procedures, after consultation with the parties, to resolve such problems. The procedures should address, among other matters: methods for candidate representatives to challenge persons suspected of impersonating a registered voter and/or challenging persons suspected of being underage. The procedures should also address ways of preventing multiple voting by using indelible ink, tested to the satisfaction of candidate agents and election monitors present in the polling stations.

4) **Voter Education:** The delegation noted plans for a variety of civic and voter education programs to be carried out in the short period remaining before the April 27 elections. Continued and heightened efforts should be made to conduct education campaigns concerning the importance of voting, voting procedures and the need for peaceful electoral competition. The delegation urges the immediate completion of ballot design in order to facilitate education about the use of symbols for parties and independent candidates appearing on the ballot.

5) **Women's Participation:** The SEC should conduct widespread and vigorous voter education aimed at encouraging the participation of women in the election, including actively publicizing pronouncements by religious leaders that women may be photographed for their voter identity cards. Steps also may be needed to ensure unimpeded access by women to polling stations, which should be incorporated in the election day security plan and should be publicized.

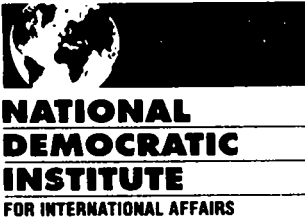
6) **Media Access and Fairness:** Candidate access to the official media, as provided by law, could prove inadequate for voters to receive sufficient information needed to make informed choices at the ballot box. In addition, news coverage in the official media must be balanced in order to provide for a fair election. The SEC therefore should take immediate steps to provide adequate time for political parties and candidates to present messages to the voters. The exact amounts of time, the hour of presentation and the format could be determined upon discussions with the political parties. In addition, the delegation recommends that the SEC use its authority over the official media concerning electoral matters to ensure accurate and balanced coverage of all political contestants. The delegation also recommends that the political parties and Yemeni nonpartisan election monitors observe media behavior leading to the elections and report to the SEC and the public concerning their findings. Following the elections such organizations may encourage public discussion concerning issues of fairness in political coverage in non-election periods and the importance of private and independent public broadcast media.

7) **Public Assurances:** The delegation also recommends that government leaders, the SEC, candidates and other political and civic leaders take further effective steps to assure the public that the elections will take place in a calm and peaceful environment. It would also benefit public confidence if the government and the SEC issue statements reminding the public that the law prohibits anyone from threatening or using official status to influence the way any voter, including any member of the military, casts a ballot.

The delegation greatly appreciates the hospitality extended to it by representatives of the SEC and other governmental officials, political party leaders and candidates, leaders of nongovernmental organizations, members of mass media and civic leaders. The delegation could not have accomplished its tasks without the generous cooperation of those with whom it met. NDI remains committed to assisting those who are working to advance the democratic process in Yemen. NDI will continue its activities in Yemen through the work of its international election observer delegations and staff presence throughout the election and immediate post-election periods. Further reports will be issued as part of these efforts.

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APPENDIX F



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NDI Programs to Strengthen Newly Democratizing Legislatures

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs has conducted a variety of programs to help strengthen legislatures in democratizing countries throughout the world. While variations in constitutional and electoral systems provide different foundations for legislatures, NDI's programs are adapted to suit various political and legal situations.

NDI's programs provide technical assistance to support the development of representative, accountable and transparent legislatures that are responsive to the electorate, participate in the drafting of legislation and oversee the executive branch. In general, NDI conducts legislative development programs in countries that have recently experienced democratic elections. NDI gears its programs towards strengthening the role of the legislature in a country's governance.

NDI's programs with developing legislatures are usually implemented by field staff with legislative experience who provide ongoing consultations, advice and information on democratic legislative practices. The programs are supplemented by periodic workshops at which legislators from other, relevant systems lead discussions and share information on topics of concern to in-country legislators. To date, NDI has included in this manner more than fifty legislators from two dozen countries in its programs.

Institutional Development: Technical Assistance Programs

While NDI designs its programs to address the specific needs of a given legislature, developing legislatures often face similar developmental hurdles. NDI provides technical assistance to new legislators engaged in the institution-building process on a range of topics including:

- committees;
- constituency relations;
- executive-legislative relations;
- legislative drafting;
- legislative transparency.
- political parties in the legislature; and
- rules of procedure.

NDI has also conducted general orientation programs for newly-elected legislators and training programs for legislative staff.

Recognizing that accountable, transparent and representative legislatures develop in large measure in response to public demand, NDI has also worked with organizations and institutions outside the legislature, conducting programs for the media and for non-governmental organizations, addressing their respective roles in the legislative process.

Issue-Specific Workshops

Another type of program is designed to help legislatures address substantive issues of legal reform central to democratic transitions such as laws regulating access to government information, election laws, ethics rules (financial disclosure obligations of elected and appointed officials) and the reorganization of local government or establishment of an independent judiciary. NDI has also assisted legislatures reviewing draft constitutions, focusing particularly on the role of the legislature in a democratic system.

These projects frequently are organized in partnership with the relevant legislative committees, and NDI invites international experts to share their experience and knowledge in the specific policy area under consideration. Rather than direct legislators to enact specific laws or policies, NDI's goal is to provide a menu of comparative options and to demonstrate generically how laws can be made -- how expert research, political objectives and the public interest are reconciled in the context of important structural issues.

NDI's Legislative Research Series

NDI has published the first two papers in its Legislative Research Series, a series intended to provide legislators in developing democracies with comparative information about legislative practices and democratic norms around the world. These papers provide urgently needed and up-to-date information from legislatures in countries from all the regions of the world about practical questions of importance to legislators in new or newly democratic legislative bodies.

The first, 17-page paper, *Presiding Officers: Speakers and Presidents of Legislatures*, compares the characteristics and functions of the speaker in various legislative systems using three models -- Westminster, U.S. Congress and French Bureau. *Committees in Legislatures: A Division of Labor* is a 47-page document that explores the structure and function of legislative committees. This second paper in the series has an extensive appendix of detailed information on specific issues collected from 20 legislatures around the world presented in chart form about the rules and practices of their committee systems.

In 1997, NDI is conducting legislative programs in: Bangladesh, Georgia, Ghana, Guyana, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Russia, South Africa, Ukraine and West Bank/Gaza.

For further information, please contact Susan R. Benda, NDI Director of Governance Programs.