



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 15, 2009

**Contact:** Kathy Gest, Washington  
[kgest@ndi.org](mailto:kgest@ndi.org), +93 (0) 799441905  
Rob Runyan, Washington  
[rrunyan@ndi.org](mailto:rrunyan@ndi.org); 202-728-5541

**NDI Fields Election Observation Mission  
For Afghanistan Presidential and Provincial Council Elections**

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is conducting an international election observation mission for the Aug. 20 presidential and provincial council elections in Afghanistan.

The Institute is mobilizing more than 100 international and Afghan observers who will observe every aspect of the election process, including the campaign, balloting on election day and the counting of the ballots. The delegation will issue a preliminary statement in the days following the election.

By the end of July, NDI had deployed 27 long-term observers throughout Afghanistan, covering all of the country's regions and the capital. For four weeks before and close to two weeks after election day, the observers will monitor electoral activities and meet with candidates, political parties, government officials, representatives of the Independent Election Commission, international and Afghan NGOs, domestic election monitors and other organizations related to the electoral process.

On and around election day, alongside the monitoring efforts of the long-term observers, the Institute will field additional national and international short-term observers to monitor voting and counting processes in polling stations around the country.

The mission's international observers – a diverse and experienced group with representation from Australia, Canada, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Paraguay, Philippines, Serbia, United Kingdom, United States and Zimbabwe – includes current and former government, political party and election officials, legislative staff, representatives of democracy and human rights organizations, and academics.

Through this observation mission, NDI seeks to demonstrate the interest of the international community in the development of the democratic political process and governance in Afghanistan, and to present an accurate and impartial assessment of the political environment and activities surrounding and including the Aug. 20 polls.

The Institute's election observation will be carried out in accordance with the [Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation](#), which is endorsed by 35 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including the United Nations Secretariat.

The mission builds upon NDI's 25 years of experience observing over 200 elections around the world and its significant election-related and operational experience in Afghanistan. The Institute arrived in Afghanistan in early 2002 and has since conducted programs to promote the participation of Afghan civic groups and political parties in the country's political and electoral processes. A major

component of NDI's work involves building the capacity of provincial councils, the only elected bodies below the national level.

The Institute's election observation mission in Afghanistan is funded through a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

*The National Democratic Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. More information is available at [www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org).*