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**NDI MOURNS THE DEATH
OF FORMER PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT CORAZON AQUINO**

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) expresses its condolences to family, friends and supporters of former Philippine President Corazon Aquino, who died Aug. 1.

Described by NDI Chairman Madeleine K. Albright as a trailblazer with courage and charisma, Aquino received the NDI W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award in 2004, some 18 years after she was elected to the presidency as part of a “people power” movement that swept dictator Ferdinand Marcos from office.

In accepting NDI’s award, Aquino said, “For my countrymen, as for Americans, the root of people power may be found in the conviction expressed by the preamble of most democratic constitutions: ‘We the people...’ These words are a reminder from the sovereign people that their consent to be governed is not an abdication of further responsibility for their political fate. Those words should remind governments where power originates and where, if they are not careful, it may return again... For me, [people power] has seemed nothing more than the voice of decency in the mouths of the brave.”

Aquino described herself as a “plain housewife” before entering politics after the assassination of her husband, Benigno Aquino, in 1983 upon his return to the Philippines from exile. When Marcos called snap elections in 1986, she was drafted to run by opposition forces and scored a resounding victory.

“Corazon Aquino entered the race and electrified the nation,” Albright said at NDI’s 2004 awards ceremony. “While in office, President Aquino established a proud legacy—of constitutional reform, sound economic leadership and support for the rule of law. When her term expired, she turned power over to her duly elected successor, signaling her understanding that—in building democracy—the first free election is important, but it is the second that often matters most.”

“NDI mourns President Aquino’s passing,” said NDI President Kenneth Wollack. “We join her many admirers around the world in celebrating her life and honoring her legacy.”

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