



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NDI DELEGATION WILL FIELD INTERNATIONAL MISSION TO OBSERVE GEORGIA'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

TBILISI – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) announced the arrival today of its international observation delegation for the Oct. 1 parliamentary elections in Georgia. The group, which includes representatives from seven countries, is made up of current and former members of the U.S. Congress, former ambassadors and parliamentarians, representatives of nongovernmental organizations and regional specialists.

Leading the mission are U.S. Rep. Gregory Meeks of New York, a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ranking member on the Subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia; former U.S. Rep. Sam Gejdenson of Connecticut, a member of the NDI board; Per Eklund, former ambassador of the European Union delegation to Georgia and a senior fellow at the Stockholm Institute for Security & Development Studies; and Kenneth Wollack, president of NDI.

The delegation's purpose is to demonstrate the international community's continuing support for democratic processes in Georgia. NDI recognizes that these are important elections for Georgia in which there is strong competition and a real choice. The Institute encourages broad and constructive engagement in the election process, noting that ultimately it will be the people of Georgia who judge the credibility and meaning of the elections. NDI first opened an office in Georgia in 1994 to support the development of the parliament, political parties and civil society.

In Tbilisi, members of the group will meet with candidates, government and election officials as well as representatives of political parties, civil society, the media and the international community.

They will draw on the findings of an NDI pre-election mission that visited Georgia in June to assess the political environment and election preparations, as well as the analysis of NDI long-term observers who have been in the country since the beginning of August. The pre-election delegation was comprised of Robin Carnahan, the chief election official in the state of Missouri; Gejdenson; Eklund; Wollack; and Luis Navarro, NDI resident director in Georgia. A copy of the delegation's statement can be found [here](#). Reports from the long-term observers can be found [here](#).

After briefings in Tbilisi, teams of observers will deploy to locations around the country, where they will meet with local electoral authorities, party and media representatives, and domestic election monitors to assess the electoral environment. On election day, the NDI observers will visit polling stations and counting centers in their respective districts. They will then return to Tbilisi for debriefing and to prepare a preliminary statement, which will be released at a press conference, tentatively scheduled for Oct. 3.

The NDI observer mission will conduct its activities in a nonpartisan, professional manner in accordance with Georgian law and the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. NDI also will remain in close contact with Georgian domestic monitoring groups and other international observer delegations throughout the electoral period.

NDI's delegation is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. Also with support from USAID, NDI is assisting the efforts of nonpartisan citizen groups to monitor the election process.

NDI is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

For more information about NDI and its programs, please visit www.ndi.org.

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