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June 3, 2009

Contact: Kathy Gest, kgest@ndi.org, +202-294-8025
Ayman Mhanna, amhanna@ndi.org, +961 3 958 643

**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE DELEGATION ARRIVES
TO OBSERVE LEBANON'S JUNE 7 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS**

BEIRUT – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) today announced the arrival of its international observer delegation for Lebanon's June 7 parliamentary elections.

Leaders of the 44-member delegation include John E. Sununu, former U.S. senator from New Hampshire; Audrey McLaughlin, former leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada; Robin Carnahan, secretary of state of Missouri (U.S.); and Frank G. Wisner, former U.S. ambassador to Egypt and India. Other delegation members include Paul Dewar, Nevin Gaye Erbatur and Birgitta Ohlsson, members of parliament respectively from Canada, Turkey and Sweden; Ahmed Herzenni, president of the Advisory Council on Human Rights of Morocco; Emeka Ihedioha, majority whip in the Nigerian House of Representatives; and Nancy Soderberg, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

The observers, a diverse group from 21 countries, include current and former government, political party and election officials; parliamentarians and legislative staff; representatives of democracy and human rights organizations; and scholars.

Through the observation mission, NDI seeks to demonstrate the interest of the international community in the development of the democratic political process and governance in Lebanon, and to present an accurate and impartial assessment of the political environment and activities surrounding and including the June 7 polls.

Members of the delegation will meet with candidates, party leaders, government officials, representatives of the major political alliances and various other leaders from the women's, civil society and international communities as they prepare for deployment to observe voting around the country.

Their activities will be informed by the work of an NDI pre-election delegation that visited the country from May 5-8. In its [report](#), the delegation assessed the pre-election political climate, noting positive political reforms under Lebanon's new electoral law. It also made a number of recommendations for steps that could be taken to enhance the credibility of the June 7 polls.

The larger delegation also will hear from an NDI team of experienced long-term observers who have been in the country for 10 weeks, assessing the pre-election period in five regions of the country.

The Institute's election observation will be carried out in accordance with the [Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation](#), which is endorsed by 32 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including the United Nations Secretariat. NDI's mission was accredited by Lebanon's Ministry of the Interior, and the Institute is grateful to the ministry for welcoming this and other international observation groups.

NDI has sponsored [democratic development programs in Lebanon](#) since 1995 and has maintained an office in the country since 2001. The Institute's international election observation mission in Lebanon is funded by 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.

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