



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEMENT BY NDI ON TODAY'S VERDICT IN EGYPT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is shocked and deeply distressed by the unjust conviction today of its employees on trial in Egypt and those of the International Republican Institute, Freedom House, the International Center for Journalists and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The work of these 43 individuals to strengthen and support democracy in Egypt should be commended, not prosecuted. The verdict also has a chilling effect on the important efforts of civil society in Egypt.

NDI intends to appeal this decision and hopes that the court's decision will be overturned. The Institute will do whatever it can to clear the names of its innocent employees.

NDI's programs in Egypt included sharing international experiences on democratic transitions, training for the long-term development of political parties, and assistance to civil society organizations engaged in election monitoring, civic education and nonpartisan voter education. At no time has NDI ever funded any political party or movement. The Institute has never sought a particular electoral outcome, and it has never aligned itself with any political party, ideology or candidate.

Those wrongfully convicted were ultimately the victims of an intergovernmental dispute between the U.S. and the then-Egyptian government. The Egyptian authorities at the time claimed that the U.S. democracy assistance funds were intended instead for use by them.

From the moment it opened an office in Egypt in 2005, NDI was open and transparent in all of its activities. The Institute applied for registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at that time and had been assured by the government since then that its papers were in order and that registration was pending. In fact, in 2006, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, another ministry involved in registration, wrote that NDI's activities complied with Egypt's current NGO law (Law 84). In January of 2012, NDI was invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to update its registration request from 2005, which is still pending. Throughout its time working in the country, NDI maintained open, transparent and constructive relationships with the government of

Egypt, and at no time was the Institute asked to stop its work or close its office. Those circumstances make today's verdicts particularly troubling.

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The National Democratic Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental 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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