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NDI ESTABLISHES SILICON VALLEY PRESENCE

WASHINGTON, DC – Given the increasingly important role that technology is playing in democratic reform efforts globally, NDI has named Sarah Oh to serve as its partnerships representative in Silicon Valley. Oh will be based at the **Impact Hub** in San Francisco, a collaborative working space that describes itself as part innovation lab, part business incubator and part community center. She will be responsible for liaising with NDI partners and tech innovators in Silicon Valley and throughout the Bay Area.

Technology is having a profound impact on how citizens communicate with their governments. Social media has transformed the way citizens organize politically. But in many cases, governments, parliaments and political parties have been slower in adapting new technologies to engage and respond to citizens. By establishing its presence in Silicon Valley, NDI seeks to deepen and expand its global network of civic and tech innovators to ensure that its international democracy assistance programs incorporate current best practices in a rapidly evolving field.

“Technology is transforming society and governance, and many of the new ideas driving this transformation are emanating from Silicon Valley,” said NDI Chairman Madeleine Albright. “An NDI presence in the Bay area, which has become a hub for innovation and creativity, will help us maximize opportunities for collaboration and partnerships. These new connections can be very helpful to the governments, political parties and civil society groups that benefit from NDI programs around the world.”

Last April, NDI joined with the Stanford University Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law (CDDRL), Omidyar Network, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) to sponsor a [two-day conference](#) in Silicon Valley that brought together senior tech leaders, innovators, policymakers and scholars from around the world to explore how technology is changing the ways democracies function and to help them bring their responses into the digital age.

Oh also provides technical and institutional support to NDI's legislative and governance programming around the world and supports a growing practice focused on democratic innovation. Together with the Sunlight Foundation and the Latin American Network on Legislative Transparency, NDI supports OpeningParliament.org, a forum that connects more than 130 tech-savvy civic organizations from 75 countries that are working to open their countries' legislative institutions. In part through its work to support this network, NDI has been asked to co-lead, with the government and Congress of Chile, a Legislative Openness Working Group of the Open Government Partnership (OGP). Among her other responsibilities, Oh will liaise with the OGP Support Unit in San Francisco.

Before joining NDI in 2010, Oh worked as a communications consultant advising Fortune 100 companies. She received a B.A. from Northwestern University and is a California native.

NDI is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to support and strengthen democratic institutions through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

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