

**REMARKS BY KENNETH WOLLACK, PRESIDENT
THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

**THE NCOP NATIONAL CONFERENCE
8 MAY 1998
MEDICINA CONFERENCE CENTRE
CAPE TOWN**

Deputy President Mbeki, Chairperson Lekota, Chairperson Amokosi Suping, Deputy Chairperson Ngcuka, Minister Moosa, Premiers, Ambassadors, Delegates, and Distinguished Guests.

In the last 18 months of our association with the National Council of Provinces as well as the provincial legislatures and the South African Local Government Association, the National Democratic Institute has been fortunate to have first-hand working experience with "cooperative governance". This innovative system can, at times, resemble the American way of governing -- characterised by a process of accommodation and conflict, détente and dispute. However, it is a farsighted concept of governance and, in a very short period of time, it has earned currency in the international market place of democratic ideas and practices which can be used to reconcile divided societies. I am sure that Minister Moosa and his colleagues have some days when they lament their creativity in coming up with this alternative to the conventions of centralism or federalism; but it works. Of course, it can be untidy but such is the nature of democracy. It is the messiest system that humankind has ever devised. By definition democracies live in constant state of creative crises. They are constantly reinventing themselves, testing their ability to meet new challenges. That is the key to their inclusiveness and flexibility, the secret to their dynamism. President Kennedy once said "that democracy is not a final achievement but a call to an untiring effort." That describes best what brings you here for this important two day conference: to talk—to evaluate—to debate—to contemplate.

In contrast to this democratic creativity, autocratic regimes have an unearthly stability. But that is just the point: a government with all the answers must ultimately fail or suppress those who expose it.

Our work with the NCOP is the latest activity in response to Deputy President Mbeki's invitation to NDI back in 1989. Our relationship with the NCOP is part of a series of engagements with democratic nation building in South Africa, which have taught us more than we have ever been able to offer.

We come to the relationship with the NCOP and other South African institutions with a deep sense of humility. We do not even presume to describe it as a partnership. That would be presumptuous. Rather, we have sought to play the role of a supporting actor, providing links between South African politicians, and the practices and experiences of traditional democracies and those societies still in transition. We have strived to serve as your agents in pursuit of knowledge

and information.

As the international arm of the Democratic Party in the United States, NDI maintains offices in more than 30 new and emerging democracies and has official standing in the three largest international groups of political parties. While we are an American organisation and proud of our Democratic Party roots, we are truly international, with a volunteer network of practitioners in more than 45 countries who work with our Institute to share their political experiences. They give concrete expression to the growing solidarity and mutual support system among democrats worldwide.

There is no one model of democracy but rather many models and many experiences. We know too that as the community of democracies has grown, democratic practices have become inseparable from democratic cooperation. Our shared experiences and our ability to help each other—these are our secret weapons.

So when the National Assembly was debating a new code of conduct for its members, and when the President's Office was analysing ethics laws for government ministers, and when the Ministry for Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development was studying options for political party funding and the White Paper on Local Government, and when this body—the NCOP—was being developed, NDI was able to provide relevant experiences from dozens of other countries. This was not an attempt to transplant foreign institutions here but to provide a range of options -- to contribute to an informed debate.

The Deputy President best described this process in his stirring speech on the adoption, two years ago today, of your new constitution. And I quote: "Our sense of elevation derives from the fact that this magnificent product is the unique creation of African hands and African minds. But it also constitutes a tribute to our loss of vanity that we could, despite the temptation to treat ourselves as an exceptional fragment of humanity, draw on the accumulated experience and wisdom of all humankind, to define for ourselves what we want to be."

But this has also been a two-way street as NDI has been able to expose South Africa's democratic transition and democratic institution-building to political leaders from places as diverse as Pakistan and Haiti, Northern Ireland and the West Bank, Angola and Mauritius, Guyana and Thailand. I can tell you from my discussions with Northern Ireland leaders that not a day went by in the recent Belfast talks that a reference was not made to their visit to South Africa last June and their meetings with many of you in this room.

There are those here – including the Chairperson and the Minister — who have enthusiastically responded to the call to monitor elections, help other parliaments become more professional, to build political parties. Artfully, you have provided this assistance without injecting yourselves into the internal affairs of other countries.

These cooperative approaches are not merely a matter of common sense. They convey a deeper truth to courageous democrats struggling against tremendous odds. That other nations have traversed the same course. That while autocracies are inherently isolated and fearful of the outside world, democracies

can count on natural allies and an active support structure. More than ever, democrats are responsible for each other, as events in one nation can resonate in others, for good or for evil. We must use our interconnectedness as a force for mutual support, as a strategic weapon for peace. Each success will breed success. Each failure averted will avert others.

The sheer variety of democratic experience is a powerful weapon against appeals to fear and division. It illuminates the common interests among nations and underscores a basic truth—that democracy, with its emphasis on inclusion and compromise is an anecdote to conflict. South Africa, which has been through some of the darkest days that a society can endure, knows this best. When the concept of power was not enlightened persuasion but physical force.

As you discuss the role and functions of the NCOP, as a representative of a political party institute, I would only remind you that as elected officials and political party leaders you are indispensable to the work of democracy. The fate of parties and political institutions, such as parliaments, will in large measure determine the prospects for freedom in new democracies and old ones.

In recent years, civil society organisations have become the favored recipient of international assistance. The international community has buttressed civic groups, aided them and abetted their rise. This has been a good and necessary effort. But increasingly, public and private resources are being channeled to programs that develop civil society groups to the exclusion of political parties and political institutions, such as parliaments. However, civil society without effective political institutions create a political vacuum. It sows opportunities for demagogues who promise to cut out the middleman such as legislatures which are the foundation of representative government.

Political parties aggregate interest, especially in diverse societies. They create ground for compromise which was the example to the world of the all-parties negotiated settlement in South Africa.

We wish you every success over the course of the next two days and on behalf of NDI, I thank you for your friendship; we look forward to continued collaboration in the years to come.

**Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright**

Introduction of President Clinton at the National Democratic
Institute, Welcoming Luncheon Gala
Los Angeles, California, August 14, 2000
As released by the Office of the Spokesman
U.S. Department of State

[Text as Prepared for Delivery]

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Winnick, for that introduction, and thanks to Global Crossing for the wonderful support it is providing to important causes worldwide.

Mr. President, Paul Kirk, Ken Wollack, Jean Dunn and friends of the NDI, Mr. And Mrs. Biehl--who have done so much for so many people; Secretary Glickman, Acting Secretary Goyer, Senators and members of Congress, excellencies from the diplomatic corps, distinguished international visitors and special guests, I am very pleased to participate in this Annual Luncheon. It is one of my favorite events of the year, when this organization that champions democracy comes together with champions of freedom from across the globe.

It is especially appropriate to hold this event at the outset of one of the great celebrations of democracy, the Democratic National Convention. Of course, as Secretary of State I am barred by tradition from playing a partisan role. And I want the record to reflect that I am completely neutral. In fact when I began this job, I had all my partisan instincts surgically removed. I would never publicly identify myself as a Democrat with a capital "D."

Fortunately, the promotion of democracy happens to be a centerpiece of American foreign policy. So when I say "hurrah for the democrats", it's perfectly legitimate--you just have to listen for the small "d." So immediately after this event I will be leaving Los Angeles to visit some democracies -- Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Ecuador.

Today I would like to begin by saying that two of the moments in my life that I most cherish were the day I first arrived in America seeking refuge from totalitarianism and the day I was asked to become Secretary of State.

For the first, the opportunity to live in freedom, I am eternally grateful to America. For the second, the opportunity to give something back to my country, I will always be grateful to President Clinton.

So, my assignment today is very welcome to me, although it may seem unnecessary to you, and that is to introduce the most famous person in the world. You might think there is nothing new to say about President Clinton, but I believe there is at least one thing that has not been said enough. This President is one of the strongest international leaders the United States has ever had.

When the Clinton-Gore Administration took office, America was being blamed for