November 6, 2003
Official Commemoration of the Twentieth Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy

1983 Twentieth Anniversary 2003

National Endowment for Democracy
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Welcoming Remarks
Vin Weber
Chairman, National Endowment for Democracy

Remarks by Congressional Leaders

Keynote Address
George W. Bush
President of the United States

Closing Remarks
Carl Gershman
President, National Endowment for Democracy
Twentieth Anniversary Message

Throughout these years, the political support for the NED in the U.S. Congress, and its stature at home and abroad, continued to grow. The NED has many people to thank for this. They include officials in both Republican and Democratic administrations — above all President Ronald Reagan, whose Westminster Address launched the whole effort — who supported the NED and respected its independence; Members of Congress who believed in the NED and fought to defend it when it was a controversial new idea under attack from many quarters; the members of the NED’s prestigious and politically balanced Board who have served out of devotion to the NED’s mission, providing leadership, credibility, and guidance; the boards and the staffs of the NED’s four party, business, and labor core institutes who have developed and implemented global programs, advancing NED work and standing in scores of countries; and the NED’s own staff, who have brought immense expertise and devotion to the work of the NED and who are admired by democratic activists throughout the world.

Ultimately, of course, it is these activists who are most responsible for whatever success the NED has enjoyed. The NED idea and program would not work and find such resonance abroad if there were not people around the world, in vastly different political and economic circumstances, who believe in democracy and who have the courage and will to fight for it. Anyone who thinks that democracy is an idea or system suitable only for people in the West — the United States, Europe, and a few other countries — needs only to meet some of these activists to appreciate how mistaken this point of view happens to be, and how disrespectful it is of the democratic aspirations of non-Western peoples. The efforts by the NED and others to advance democracy would be futile if there were not a hunger for democracy where it doesn’t exist, and a determination among the least powerful in developing countries to use the instruments of democracy to defend their interests and to expand the horizons of human freedom and social justice.

Some of the NED founders — Dante Fascell, Lane Kirkland, Al Shanker, and Louis Martin — are no longer with us. But they and others, such as the late Walt Raymond, left us with an institution that continues to advance their democratic ideals and that embodies in the finest way the American belief in self-government and the dignity of every individual. It is in that spirit that we celebrate a milestone for the NED and affirm our belief in the capacity of people everywhere to achieve the blessings of democracy.

Vin Weber, Chairman, National Endowment for Democracy

Carl Gershman, President, National Endowment for Democracy

The following timeline is an attempt to illustrate a few highlights of the impact of NED and its many grantees over the past two decades. NED and its four core institutes — The American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS) and its predecessor the Free Trade Union Institute (FTUI), the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) — have assisted literally thousands of grass-roots organizations in more than ninety countries. This timeline leaves out many important programs, and cannot adequately convey the long-term commitment that has helped sustain our democratic allies in so many situations. Nonetheless, it does provide a glimpse of NED’s efforts to assist all those aspiring to the universal values of freedom and democracy.

Throughout these years, the NED adapted its work to the changing political conditions, looking always to remain at the cutting edge of democratic struggle and to play a catalytic role within an expanding democratic movement. Through an infant organization in the 1980s, when the ‘three wave’ of democratization was gathering strength, the NED was able to engage with the major democratic forces of the period, aiding the Polish Solidarity movement and dissidents in the communist world as well as the peaceful struggles against apartheid in South Africa and against dictatorship in the Philippines, Chile, Nicaragua, and many others countries. In the 1990s the NED expanded its grants program to every part of the world and also launched two far-reaching initiatives: The International Forum for Democratic Studies which publishes the Journal of Democracy and links the democracy research and practitioner communities; and the World Movement for Democracy, which promotes solidarity and cooperation among democratic movements throughout the world. And in the aftermath of 9/11, the NED dramatically expanded its work in the Arab Middle East and in the Muslim world generally, aiding movements pressing for political liberalization, accountable government, economic modernization, increased women’s participation, and an end to the political abuse of religion.

During these years the NED has stood with us for 20 years, and their continuing support today allows us to share our successes with other countries in transition.

—Hernando de Soto, President, Instituto Libertad y Democracia, Lima, Peru

CIPE and NED have stood with us for 20 years, and their continuing support today allows us to share our successes with other countries in transition.
I send greetings to those gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy.

We are committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace, not only for our own security, but for the benefit of people all around the world. We have a responsibility to protect the ideals on which our country was founded, the unalienable rights of every person to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Since 1983, the Endowment has worked to strengthen democracy and spread freedom. By working together, we can build a better world for our children and help ensure a more prosperous and peaceful future for all.

Let us join together in sending our best wishes on this special occasion.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
One Hundred Eighth Congress of the United States of America

20th Anniversary
1983–2003

At the First Session

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday, the seventh day of January, two thousand and three.

 Concurrent Resolution

Whereas November 29, 2003, marks the 2oth anniversary of the establishment of the National Endowment for Democracy (hereinafter the "Endowment"), an independent, nonpartisan, not-for-profit public institution that promotes democracy around the world; 

Whereas, through the National Endowment for Democracy Act (22 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on November 29, 1983, Congress has made possible the funding of the Endowment’s worldwide grant programs; 

Whereas 2003 also marks the 2oth anniversary of significant events that have helped shape the world; 

And Whereas the Endowment and its affiliated organizations have supported programs to promote democracy in Russia, South Africa, Eastern Europe, and other non-democratic states, to support democratic values, encourage two-party competition, and promote political participation by women, and many other essential components of civil society; and 

Whereas the world has, as a result of the Endowment, made significant contributions to the efforts of democracy activists to achieve freedom and self-government around the world; 

Whereas the Endowment, through the Journal of Democracy, the International Forum for Democratic Studies, the Washington-Based Democracy Fellows Program, and the World Movement for Democracy, has served as a key venue for democratic movements, scholarship, and networking, bringing together thousands of democracy activists, scholars, and practitioners from around the world; and 

Whereas the spirit of democracy throughout the world, in which the world of the Endowment has contributed much, has enhanced the national security interests of the United States and advanced democratic ideals and values throughout the world; 

Therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress:

1) Commemorates the National Endowment for Democracy for its major contributions to the strengthening of democracy around the world on the occasion of the 2oth anniversary of the establishment of the Endowment; and

2) encourages Congress to support the vital work of the National Endowment for Democracy.

Attest:

Secretary of the Senate

Clerk of the House of Representatives.

We are pleased to send greetings to the National Endowment for Democracy on the occasion of its 20th Anniversary.

The democracy-building programs carried out by the Endowment and its core Institutes have made significant contributions to the efforts of democratic activists to achieve freedom and self-government around the world.

We are proud that congressional support has helped fulfill the vision of NED’s founders and wish you all continued success.

Hon. Dennis Hastert
Hon. William Frist
Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Hon. Tom Daschle

Original sponsors of this legislation include U.S. Senators:


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President Reagan proposes a trip to Moscow by meeting with Soviet dissidents and, among others, President Carl Gellnerman.
1989

5/7—Panamanian voters oust Manuel Noriega in free elections, but Noriega ignores the election results and retains power.

5/14—Argentina elects Carlos Menem president in the first peaceful transfer of power.


8/18—Poland ends 40 years of Communist rule when Party candidates are defeated by Solidarity in parliamentary elections.

The National Civic Crusade for Panama strengthens its base among grassroots networks and promotes mass participation in the May elections.

The National Civic Crusade for Panama

The Documentation Center for the Promotion of Czechoslovak Literature in West Germany maintains an archive of samizdat literature and provides assistance to independent scholars and writers in Czechoslovakia.

11/7—The Communist government of East Germany collapses, on November 9, the Berlin Wall falls.

12/21—Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu falls and on 12/22 is executed with his wife.

11/17–12/29—The "Velvet Revolution" in Czechoslovakia concludes with the ascension of Vaclav Havel to the presidency.

1990

1/3—Gen. Manuel Noriega surrenders in Panama.

The National Civic Crusade for Panama

scores of independent groups and NED's four core institutes conduct a wide range of activities supporting the democratic opposition in Nicaragua in preparation for the 1990 elections. The four institutes support business organizations, labor unions and 14 opposition parties to carry out programs of civic education, voter registration, election monitoring and observation, get out the vote drives, policy analysis and independent media.

NED, through the International Rescue Committee, provides nearly $25 million to Solidarity for a wide range of activities and institutional support.

1991

5/7—Nicaragua ends ten-year civil war and prepares for elections.

NED launches the Journal of Democracy.

1992


12/29—The "Velvet Revolution" in Czechoslovakia concludes with the ascension of Vaclav Havel to the presidency.

12/29—The "Velvet Revolution" in Czechoslovakia concludes with the ascension of Vaclav Havel to the presidency.

1993

1/3—Gen. Manuel Noriega surrenders in Panama.

The Documentation Center for the Promotion of Czechoslovak Literature in West Germany maintains an archive of samizdat literature and provides assistance to independent scholars and writers in Czechoslovakia.

To Vin Weber

Congratulations on the 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy. Few organizations have done as much to advance human rights and increase the prospects for democracy in every corner of the world.

NED has supported the work of The Carter Center through the National Democratic Institute with joint election observation missions to Panama, Indonesia, Nigeria, the Dominican Republic, Zambia, and Paraguay. NED is a vital institution for assisting the peaceful expansion of democracy throughout the world. By supporting programs that build political parties, civil society, free markets, and independent unions and protect the rights of individuals, NED and its affiliated institutes have given concrete expression to our country’s commitment to a more just, peaceful, and humane world.

Rosalynn joins me in extending our best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Vin Weber
Chairman
National Endowment for Democracy
1101 15th Street, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
On the occasion of your twentieth anniversary, I send my warmest congratulations to the National Endowment for Democracy. You have provided invaluable material, technical and moral support to democracy activists in many countries. I offer my hopes that you will continue to play your important role in many parts of the world in the months and years to come.

Tony Blair

The Prime Minister

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

For the last 20 years the National Endowment for Democracy has played an important role in supporting and encouraging people’s aspirations for freedom. It should be proud of the work it has undertaken, often in the most challenging environments of the world, to promote democracy and the values of a just society. The Endowment has proved itself to be a practical source of assistance for those who are struggling to foster and strengthen democratic institutions in their own countries.

In accordance with the values it promotes, the National Endowment for Democracy has never sought to dictate a single model or process to the countries it supports. Instead it recognizes and respects the diversity of political cultures. All democracies have different traditions, and democracies can and should reflect the diversity of political cultures. Not all democracies have the same foundations, as all democracies have the same foundations, which is the right to self-determination and the rule of law.

Australia too is committed to the promotion of democracy around the world. Our country’s development assistance is focused on promoting one of the National Endowment for Democracy, the Centre for Democratic Institutions. The Centre has followed the principles of the National Endowment for Democracy, which has seen the Centre for Democratic Institutions widely across the globe.

On behalf of the Australian Government, I give you my warmest congratulations on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the National Endowment for Democracy. We have every confidence that it will continue to be a force for good in an often chaotic and dangerous world.

John Howard

Prime Minister

Canada
The occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy inspires me to a short personal reflection.

At the time when the endowment was established we in Prague, the velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia, and the electoral victory of the Solidarity movement in Poland. Our society embarked on the complicated path of transformation. Even in this period the variety of grants and transferred know-how provided essential support to our young democracy.

I therefore believe that my personal experience attests to the necessity of organizations such as the National Endowment for Democracy. What I have in mind is especially the support of dissidents, journalists, and freethinking students in societies that still remain closed (e.g., North Korea, Vietnam, Turkmenistan, Byllonussia, Syria, or Zimbabwe), but also the support of countries that are already transforming from totalitarian and authoritarian to democratic.

I welcome the fact that the National Endowment for Democracy today supports not only the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but it provides hope also for the opposition elsewhere in the world. The support of brave people such as my friend Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma or Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas in Cuba, the strengthening of democratic forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Middle East — all these efforts are absolutely essential for the spread of freedom and democracy, as well as stability and prosperity in the present-day world. It is also for these reasons that the National Endowment for Democracy deservedly symbolizes the American commitment to support freedom and democracy in the world.

I congratulate you on the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of your organization and thank you for all the good that you have already accomplished for democracy around the world, and, as I believe, you will still accomplish.

Thank you! Štefan Füle
For much of the past two decades, I have observed closely or participated directly in the work of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and its affiliated institutes — as a founding vice chair of the National Democratic Institute, as a board member of NED, as ambassador and secretary of state, and now as chairman of NDI. With this history in mind, it is deeply gratifying for me to congratulate you on NED’s twentieth anniversary.

The world has changed so much during NED’s brief existence, and the Endowment has contributed immeasurably to that change. The people of Serbia deserve credit for ousting Slobodan Milosevic and ushering in democracy but the NED family of institutions provided essential, timely and history-making support. The same is true in so many parts of the world including Poland, Chile, Mexico, Nigeria and my own native land of Czechoslovakia. Today, the work continues as NED is reaching out to democrats who are struggling against tremendous odds working in the harshest environments, in Burma, Congo, Cuba, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Endowment was founded on a simple principle: that democracy is inseparable from human dignity and peace. It has been dedicated to building a true community of democracies in which free peoples help and learn from each other, while promoting the ideals to which our citizens and societies aspire. Nothing could be more in keeping with American ideals or more consistent with the best interests of the United States.

As NED reaches its 20th birthday, its leadership and staff can be deeply satisfied with all it has accomplished. But I know you are focused far more urgently on the hard jobs that remain to be done. I salute all who have contributed to your success, and look forward to working with you as you strive to build on that record in years to come. I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,
Madeleine K. Albright, Chairman
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs

For two the past two decades, support from the National Endowment for Democracy has enabled the International Republican Institute to further its mission of educating people, parties, and governments on the values and practices of democracy. We are delighted to be an integral part of the NED family, and look forward to future collaboration in advancing freedom and democracy.

Senator John McCain, Chairman
International Republican Institute

From its conception twenty years ago, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) recognized that political and economic freedom are mutually reinforcing. That message is even more vital in today’s world where political repression and economic isolation are robbing a generation of hope and fueling terrorism. NED’s pioneering vision and comprehensive global view have been critical factors in its many successes over two decades. The Center for International Private Enterprise is proud to be a key part of the Endowment’s historic, path-breaking programs.

Thomas J. Donohue
President and CEO,
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
President, Center for International Private Enterprise

On behalf of the thirteen million working women and men of the AFL-CIO, I congratulate the National Endowment for Democracy for the important successes of its first twenty years. As one of its founding organizations, the AFL-CIO is proud to have participated with the Endowment in the promotion of democracy around the world. We deeply appreciate the support our Solidarity Center has received to strengthen democratic trade unionism — one of the building blocks of democracy.

The victories we leave behind pale in comparison to the challenges before us. Today, even with the spread of democracy that we celebrate, two-thirds of the world’s people are not free to determine their own destiny. Despite the increased efforts to create a world under law, basic human rights are trampled in too many countries. And now the threat of global terrorism places a strident on the security of people here and across the world.

These profound challenges to our core values require that the United States work within the communities of nations, and the growing number of more stable and democratic nations in particular, in pursuit of common cause. Accordingly, the role of the Endowment is now more vital than ever. The AFL-CIO takes this opportunity to reaffirm our support for the important work done by the NED. For our part, we will continue to promote a more democratic and just world in which all workers and their families live in peace and security. Have a voice in their own future, and a fair share of the prosperity they create.

John J. Sweeney, President
AFL-CIO
In November 2003, the National Endowment for Democracy will be celebrating its 20th anniversary.

This will be an opportunity to tell you how significant NED’s activities are in the promotion of democracy across the world.

The men and women who work for this foundation work untiringly in the support of fundamental values that are the basis of our societies and that have never been more topical than at present.

It seems appropriate to congratulate the entire team at NED, notably Carl Gershman, for the tremendous work they have continually accomplished over the last twenty years, for liberty and human rights, even when sometimes conditions were difficult.

This is also a time for the Robert Schuman Foundation to emphasise how vital the close links are that were established between the two institutions several years ago.

For the last few years we have jointly taken part in some very important events with one goal in mind: to work towards the essential strengthening of a network of institutions and foundations that strive to face the challenges made on democracy at this the start of the 21st century.

Our task is a common one, we share the same values across the Atlantic Ocean and yet in spite of the immense progress that we might have achieved this task is still far from being completed.

Our effort will never be sufficient to vanquish the last pockets of resistance. NED will be one of our main spearheads.

The Robert Schuman Foundation would like to reiterate the esteem and admiration it holds for this foundation and simultaneously say how much we enjoy working together with NED.

Above all we would like to wish a very HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Jean-Dominique GIULIANI,
Chairman
Robert Schuman Foundation
Paris, France

Congratulations to the National Endowment for Democracy on reaching your twentieth anniversary.

We are happy to join with many others in celebrating this important landmark, and we congratulate you on it.

In its short life the NED has accumulated an impressive catalogue of support for those working for democracy in many countries in the world. You have been at the leading edge of the movement we share: you have not only developed an impressive range of services but provided a model on which others have been pleased to draw in seeking to advance the cause of democracy and freedom. We have reason to be grateful for your work, just as do those many agencies and peoples you have supported.

We look forward to continued work in close association with you as your third, our second, decade unfolds. My colleagues join me in sending you our very best wishes.

Yours sincerely

David French, Chief Executive
Westminster Foundation for Democracy
London, England

In 1984 the Center for International Private Enterprise and the National Endowment for Democracy offered early support to pioneering reforms in Peru. Recognizing the link between participation in economic society and democratic society, NED and CIFE buttressed the Institute for Liberty and Democracy’s efforts to give the poor legal title to their property and the tools to release the wealth locked up in those assets. Economic reform began political stability as the hope of a better future presented the people of Peru with a credible alternative to the Communist insurgency and undercut popular support of the Shining Path terrorist movement. CIFE and NED have stood with us for 20 years, and their continuing support today allows us to share our successes with other countries in transition.

Hernando de Soto, President
Institute for Liberty and Democracy,
Lima, Peru
Directors of the National Endowment for Democracy

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