NED

National Endowment
for Democracy

Supporting freedom around the world

Strategy Document

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The shattering events of September 11

radically altered the world in which we live, compelling people in societies throughout the world to reexamine their fundamental goals, priorities, and assumptions. While we believe that the basic democratic goals that have guided the National Endowment for Democracy since its inception remain every bit as valid today, we also recognize the imperative of rethinking our priorities and approaches in light of the transformed international landscape. The Strategy Document approved by the NED Board in 1997 was, in any event, due to be revised at this time, taking account of new developments during the past five years that affect democracy and the NED's role in promoting it. The events of September 11 have turned this routine, albeit consequential, exercise into an urgent necessity.

The 1997 Strategy Document was drafted at a time of shrinking budgets and stipulated that the NED could remain a dynamic and creative center for the promotion of democracy only if it devised methods to do more with less. It was hoped that through the imaginative use of human resources, the NED could enhance the impact of its grant-making. The methods proposed included expanding cross-border assistance aid extended by activists in new democracies to other democratic struggles in neighboring countries; encouraging the creation of NED-like institutions in established and new democracies; using the NED's growing research capability to strengthen intellectual exchange and deepen the understanding of democratic development; and adapting to the new era of economic and technological globalization by fostering the globalization of the democracy movement. The NED fulfilled this last objective by launching the World Movement for Democracy, a proactive network of practitioners and thinkers committed to strengthening collaboration among democratic forces around the world.

The 1997 Strategy Document saw a special role for the NED in the era of globalization, a phenomenon that was understood to involve far more than simply removing barriers to trade. Two of the principal engines of globalization, the communications revolution and the greater ease of movement, also made possible the more rapid spread of ideas and information, together with the possibility of building stronger human networks. With its independence and operational flexibility, and especially with its global and multi-sectoral approach and focus on values and ideas, the NED was in a position to take advantage of the technological revolution to strengthen international solidarity among people from diverse political systems, sectors of work, and societies around shared democratic principles.

But the 1997 Strategy Document also called attention to some of the dangers accompanying globalization, especially the growth of intra-state problems such as ethnic hatred, social breakdown, and nationalist and religious extremism whose consequences could be felt far beyond the borders of the countries in which these problems originate, whether with respect to refugees, terrorism, crime and drugs, or weapons proliferation. The lowering of national barriers meant that destructive transnational forces could threaten democracy and peace, even turning weak, failed states into a base for far-flung terrorist or criminal operations. In the aftermath of September 11, these aspects of globalization suddenly appear more menacing than almost anyone could have imagined when the Strategy Document was drafted five years ago.

The response to the terrorists must obviously begin by dismantling their networks, ending the support they receive from states, and strengthening domestic and international defense capabilities. But in addition to responding to the

immediate security threat, it is also necessary to help democracy take root in those countries of the Middle East, Africa, South and Central Asia, and other regions that now breed or support terrorists. It is in these Muslim countries or regions, more than anywhere else, that terrorism feeds off tyranny, finding recruits among the politically repressed and sanctuary from states that use terror against their own people. Building effective political institutions is the surest way to sever the link between terror and tyranny and to advance the values of democracy, individual rights, and cultural pluralism in the Middle East and elsewhere in the Muslim world.

Promoting democratic institutions and values in the Muslim world is thus one of the most urgent challenges now facing the NED. But it is not the only one. While the attacks of September 11 riveted the focus of international attention on the threat of terrorism, they did not sweep away or resolve the problems of dictatorship, semi-authoritarianism, corruption, back-sliding, and ethnic conflict that existed before September 11 in Latin America, East Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Europe, and the NIS. If anything, the attacks aggravated these problems by accelerating the downturn in the world economy that was already underway, and by heightening security concerns that dictators often use to rationalize and tighten their controls. Although there is no evidence yet of a new wave of democratic setbacks, the gains of the past decade are today more tenuous than they were before September 11, and democratic progress may be more difficult to achieve in the new international environment.

Meeting the challenge of democratization in the Muslim world thus does not warrant a retreat from the Endowment's global approach, which is rooted in the worldwide interests and moral concerns of the United States. On the contrary, it constitutes a powerful new argument for maintaining and strengthening this approach. The fact that NED already has a track record in the Middle East and a network of grantees and contacts upon which to build an expanded program there and in other Muslim regions is due entirely to its global approach, which assumes that no region where democrats are asking for help should be disregarded, no matter how difficult the challenges there might be. Moreover, as September 11 made clear, any seam of dysfunction in the international system, however marginal to the main centers of political and economic interest, can become a source of exposure and threat. In a globalized world, the cancer of breakdown in any country can metastasize to other parts of the global body politic and thus constitutes a danger to international peace and security. In promoting the antidote of democratic institution-building, therefore, it is unwise to write off any country as insignificant or beyond hope. The sorry history of Afghanistan's neglect after the Soviet occupation ended is a cautionary precedent.

Finally, the global defense of democracy is the appropriate and most effective response to the threat posed by Islamic extremists. As has already been suggested, these extremists do not represent a religion or a civilization — which is why the conflict with them cannot be understood as a clash of civilizations — but espouse an ideology of hatred and violence as their means to power. Though it is a particularist and corrupted Islamic ideology, to its zealous adherents it is a universal system of truth and thus a fitting rival to democratic civilization, which they falsely describe as decadent and narrowly Western. Since democracy is a genuinely universal value based on the belief that people everywhere, regardless of their religion or culture, can achieve self-government under the rule of law, it is the natural organizing principle in the struggle to defeat terrorism and to create a stable and peaceful world. That doesn't mean the struggle cannot be won until all people achieve democracy. But the universal aspiration for democracy is the banner under which this battle for the defense of our national interest can most effectively be waged, and it is also the banner under which the NED has always proudly marched.

The challenge facing the Endowment, therefore, is to maintain its global grants program, even as it focuses increased resources and attention on strengthening democracy in the Muslim regions of the Middle East, Africa, and South and Central Asia, where repression and political failure have spawned Islamic extremism. Fortunately, the NED's core budget has grown modestly in the last two years and is now supplemented by special funds for a number of regions or countries to

which the Congress or the Administration attaches particular importance. Nonetheless, the resources available to the Endowment cannot be expected to equal the magnitude of the new tasks it will face in the period ahead. As it has done before, the Endowment will seek to close the gap between resources and objectives by taking full advantage of its multi-sectoral structure and the programmatic capabilities of its four core institutes the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS), the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the National Democratic Institute (NDI); by leveraging small grants to indigenous groups whose spirit and motivation enable them to provide leadership in grassroots democratic pursuits; and by networking such groups to enhance their strength and impact. We will do this on the broadest possible basis so that groups of democratic activists struggling in all regions will feel a sense of support by the NED and other democracy-promotion organizations and networks and be encouraged in their efforts.

It will also be necessary for the NED to develop to the maximum extent possible its ability to act as a catalytic center of ideas and action for democracy groups around the world. Much has already been accomplished along these lines through the International Forum for Democratic Studies and the World Movement for Democracy, and through the growing use of the Internet as a medium for developing support networks among democratic groups. These capabilities will have to be expanded significantly if the Endowment is to meet the challenge of building a stronger, more collaborative international response to the major challenges of democratization.

Maintaining a Global Grants Program

Long before September 11, it had become clear that the forward momentum associated with the third wave of democratization that swept over large parts of the world in the preceding decades had slowed throughout the world and even stalled in some regions. While important gains have been made in recent years in Nigeria, Indonesia, Mexico, Senegal, and Ghana, and while only one major country Pakistan has slid backwards to military rule, the barriers to demo-

cratic progress loom larger today than at any time since the third wave began more than a quarter of a century ago.

The countries where these barriers are greatest, and where the NED will concentrate most of its resources, fall into two broad categories: dictatorships and semi-authoritarian systems. The problems and program needs differ from one category to the other, and there is also great variation within these categories. Dictatorships include both totalitarian and authoritarian systems, and semi-authoritarianism includes countries that are moving toward or away from full democracy, or are not moving perceptibly in either direction. In addition, there are also two other categories where the NED will concentrate lesser resources: transitional countries where there has been significant progress in democratization, but where democratic institutions remain weak; and war-torn or failed states that lack virtually any institutions of governance, democratic or otherwise.

Opening dictatorial systems: The NED has always placed special emphasis on opening closed dictatorial systems, because the needs are so great and the courage of the pro-democracy activists is so admirable. Moreover, these countries tend to be ignored by most democracy-assistance institutions, which require an in-country presence (and thus the permission of the host government) before they will conduct programs or provide support. The NED's policy of making direct grants to indigenous groups as well as to groups based in exile has enabled it to play an effective role in these difficult situations, often at a relatively low financial cost. The objective is to create internal and external pressures for liberalization by aiding internal pockets of activity and linking them to like-minded groups in other countries, thereby strengthening their resolve and impact and also their international support.

NED programs in dictatorial countries place special emphasis on the defense of human rights and the provision of access to independent information, activities that are necessary first steps in opening closed societies. The principle governing such programs is feasibility. The NED presses the limits of what is possible — aiding groups working to create new openings, to defend democracy

activists, to develop alternative channels for the flow of information, and to promote capacity development and democratic education within the democracy movement itself as well as the wider society. If space opens up to make it possible to conduct democracy programs inside dictatorial countries with the acquiescence of the government, NED readily takes advantage of this opportunity, in accordance with its pragmatic approach. If access to the Internet is available, even if it is highly restricted, the Endowment will seek to take advantage of that channel, too. The NED and its institutes also seek to build international pressure for democratic openings, as in the case of Burma, where American labor has defended the rights of Burmese workers in the International Labor Organization, and NDI has recruited more than 3,000 parliamentarians in a campaign of international solidarity.

NED programs in dictatorial countries thus vary along a spectrum of possibility. For example, in North Korea, which is the most closed country, the NED has provided support to groups in South Korea that document the repressive conditions in North Korea and are working to build an international campaign for the defense of human rights there. In Burma, it has supported cross-border efforts that provide training, education, and information to Burmese groups to help them develop their institutional capacity and their ability to communicate internally and with the international community. In Cuba, where it has become possible to support internal democratic groups, the NED has provided assistance to journalists, independent workers organizations, and cooperatives, all the while maintaining exile-based programs that defend human rights, provide uncensored information, and encourage dialogue within Cuba and in the diaspora about the political future of the country. And in China the NED has conducted an even more diversified effort, aiding both internal programs to promote democratization, worker rights, and market reform; and external programs that defend human rights and provide access to independent ideas and information.

In these and other dictatorial countries, the NED should continue to take advantage of any opening, however limited it may be, and to find ways to strengthen independent enclaves of democratic

thought and activity. The cause of democracy in such countries and the quality of NED programs there are so compelling that Congress has begun to provide special funding to the Endowment to expand its programs in Burma, North Korea, and China, including programs that support the rights of Tibetans and dialogue about Tibet's political future. As NED does so, it should fully utilize its unique capacity to pursue an integrated approach that is multi-sectoral, involves both internal and external programs, and builds international solidarity networks and campaigns.

Democratizing semi-authoritarian countries:
By far the largest and most diverse group of countries comprises the second category, semi-authoritarianism. This is one of many terms (including pseudo-democracy, hybrid regimes, and competitive authoritarianism) used to describe regimes that fall somewhere between dictatorship and the genuine political openness and competition of electoral democracy. A factor common to all such regimes is that the elections are not free and fair, because they are constrained and controlled by the ruling party or otherwise distorted by fraud and manipulation. In addition, such regimes tend to have an overwhelmingly dominant executive; formal democratic structures but authoritarian political culture and practices; serious human rights violations; residual authoritarian laws even where there is a new democratic constitution; and a very high level of corruption and inequality. The rule of law is extremely weak, as are the institutions of the state that are supposed to provide security and look after the social and economic needs of the people.

Ironically, these problems are the product of the democratic revolution of the past decades or to be more precise, the unfinished democratic revolution. The fall of authoritarian regimes in Latin America, the Soviet bloc, and large parts of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa triggered major efforts to foster democratic transitions in scores of countries, involving the promotion of free elections, economic reform, civil society, good governance, and the rule of law. In Central Europe and the Baltic countries, as well as in parts of Latin America and East Asia, these efforts produced significant results. But in the large majority of cases they came up against ingrained legacies of

authoritarian culture and practice. As many transitions stalled, hopes for an inexorable forward movement toward democracy gave way to the realization that democratization is a slow and arduous process, subject to reversals, and that some variation of semi-authoritarianism, more or less harsh, is likely to persist in many former dictatorships for some time to come.

The NED must stay engaged in semi-authoritarian countries such as Russia, Ukraine, Kenya, Venezuela, and Morocco, whose success or failure will significantly affect the prospect for democratic development in their respective regions. Moreover, since semi-authoritarianism involves shortcomings in so many different sectors, the NED, with its multi-sectoral structure, has a special role to play in crafting a comprehensive response. It should thus take full advantage of its ability to work simultaneously in different areas, strengthening not just civil society and independent media, but also political parties that can build effective governing coalitions, and business associations, trade unions, and policy institutes that can mediate between the state and the market and effect real economic reform.

In working to promote democratization in semi-authoritarian countries, it is important that the NED and its institutes:

- Assist efforts to establish more neutral, independent, and effective election administration and to assist civil society organizations and the mass media in monitoring the conduct of elections.

- Work to expand the constitutional, legal, and political space for civil society, NGOs, and opposition political party development.

- Establish linkages between civil society and political parties, and also promote collaboration between them and independent media, trade unions, business associations, and the grassroots informal sector.

- Develop practical strategies with feasible objectives, focusing on building up subcultures of democratic activism that try to achieve incremental gains, but that can also

provide leadership if and when opportunities arise for more substantial breakthroughs.

- Encourage cross-border assistance within regions as a way of strengthening democratic cooperation and solidarity, sharing relevant experiences, building on local momentum for change, and promoting regional integration and the gradual enlargement of democratic practice.

Consolidating new democracies:

In many countries, democratic institutions have been established only recently and are still very weak, and there is broad support within and outside the government in favor of deepening democratic consolidation. In such emerging democracies as Thailand, Mexico, Bulgaria, Ghana, or Bangladesh, democracy cannot be taken for granted and back-sliding is an ever-present possibility. (One need only remember the complacency about Venezuelan democracy just a decade ago.) The Endowment should continue to reserve some resources for programs in such countries, even as it concentrates most of its resources and energies on countries where democracy is less advanced. In doing so, the NED should pay close attention to the problems of governance, working to make governments more accountable and transparent in their functioning; generating, supporting, and sharing innovative solutions to problems of consolidation; increasing broad-based participation in the political process; and strengthening the capacity and transparency of political parties.

The consolidation of these emerging and vulnerable democracies is especially important at a time when progress has stalled on so many other fronts. Not only do models of successful transition help lift the spirits of those trying to break out of semi-authoritarianism. They also offer practical lessons in how to overcome the obstacles to making democratic institutions effective. No one is more capable of transmitting these lessons than the activists from newly consolidated democracies. Their contribution to those still struggling against the legacies of authoritarianism is one of the less appreciated by-products of successful transitions.

Healing war-torn societies: In many regions, the political uncertainties unleashed by the end of the Cold War and the pressures of globalization have led to the breakdown of old political structures and to heightened religious and ethnic conflict. While the wars in the Balkan region have attracted the most attention, many conflicts in such countries as Somalia, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Afghanistan have been even more devastating.

Efforts by the international community to negotiate solutions to such conflicts are generally limited to holding talks among leaders of different ethnic, religious, or tribal factions. But peace agreements will not last unless civil society is brought into the process and becomes invested in negotiated solutions through an inclusive democratic process. Including civil society groups also has the effect of diluting the influence of some non-democratic people who control armed factions and thus must be part of the talks.

In many of these situations, the NED has been able to provide critically-needed support to groups in civil society that defend human rights, educate about democracy, and provide training in conflict resolution. Often they use innovative techniques, including popular theater and concerts as well as traditional media, to build trust and nurture a culture of tolerance. In effect they establish enclaves of democratic values and inter-ethnic dialogue and become centers of grassroots pressure for peace and reconciliation. They also help marshal international support for democracy assistance and the defense of human rights. If negotiations are started, they can then give voice and representation to civil society in the process of establishing peace. In a postwar setting, they can also help the process of healing and offer an alternative model and vision of democratic social and political organization.

In divided societies, the NED should continue to emphasize programs that build a culture of peace as a necessary foundation for democratic development.

Aiding Democracy in the Muslim World

The Muslim world is a vast region that consists of more than one billion people and stretches some 10,000 miles from Morocco to Indonesia. It is an immensely diverse region politically, composed of countries that fall into all of the categories listed above from dictatorships such as Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Turkmenistan; to semi-authoritarian countries like Pakistan, Egypt or Tunisia; to electoral or emerging democracies such as Turkey, Mali, Indonesia, and Bangladesh; to war-torn countries like Algeria, Sudan, Somalia, and Afghanistan. Fully one-eighth of the world's Muslim population lives as a minority in democratic India.

While recognizing this diversity, there are three principal reasons for highlighting the importance of aiding democracy in the Muslim world. First, there is a significant democracy gap between the Muslim world as a whole and the rest of the world. Only 11 of the 47 countries with a Muslim majority (23 percent) have democratically elected governments, as compared with 110 of the 145 non-Muslim countries (76 percent); and none of the 16 Arab states is an electoral democracy.[1] Second, it is also within the Muslim world that democracy is under political and ideological challenge from Islamic movements that preach intolerance and hatred. Such movements may not be broadly representative of the population in the countries where they exist, but their influence is considerable. Finally, since such movements often resort to violence to achieve their ends, it is within the Muslim world where the absence of democracy has provided fertile soil for the growth of terrorism that targets the world's democracies.

The crisis precipitated by the attacks of September 11 and the new war on terrorism have placed the issue of democracy in the Middle East and in other non-democratic parts of the Muslim world on the agenda of the international community. Before the present crisis, democracy was often viewed as a Western system incompatible with Islamic culture and doctrine. The fear that Islamic fundamentalists might take advantage of democratic elections to impose a theocratic system, and the absence in the Middle East of discernible pro-democracy movements, discouraged efforts to support democratic development in authoritarian Muslim countries, especially those ruled by regimes ostensibly committed to protecting significant Western security and economic interests.

[1] *Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2001-2002*

Not surprisingly, political repression has helped inflame religious extremism by forcing dissent into the mosque. The rise of terrorism and the widespread realization that such extremism is connected to the failure of political institutions in many Muslim countries have led to a growing recognition that efforts must be made to encourage political and economic modernization in the Arab Middle East and elsewhere in the Muslim world where it is lagging. Accompanying this new attitude is a sharpened clash within Muslim countries themselves between Islamic fundamentalists and moderate elements, both secular and religious, which are prepared to challenge the attempt by extremists to seize control of Muslim society and Islamic faith. For these moderates, democratization has become a matter of sheer survival.

They face four inter-related challenges. The first is to liberalize the political system, ending repression and human rights violations, permitting freedom of expression and association, and introducing genuine party contestation. The second is to modernize the state and the economy, so that meaningful steps can be taken to reduce poverty, ignorance, and inequality and to provide young people with opportunity and hope. The third is to control corruption and establish a genuine rule of law. And the fourth is to end the political abuse of religion and to reconcile Islam the framework in much of the Muslim world for political and social activism — with modern concepts of pluralism, citizenship, and individual rights.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the precondition for progress on any of these fronts is a new birth of will and determination within the Middle East and other non-democratic parts of the Muslim world to strive for human rights, free institutions, and responsible, elected government. But having said that, it is also true that international support can make a crucial difference. It is needed from a practical standpoint, and it also sends the message that democratic activists in Muslim countries are not alone.

The NED, with its multi-sectoral structure and the emphasis it has always placed on encouraging democratic values and ideas, has the capacity to provide help in all four areas. For example, NDI and IRI, the NED's party institutes, can expand their work with moderate political leaders, legislators, and parties in Muslim countries, seeking new openings to improve party communications and outreach, to encourage women's participation in politics, and to promote contacts and exchange among Muslim parties and between them and the major international bodies representing parties from around the world. CIPE, the NED's business institute, can promote good governance and economic reform by strengthening private voluntary business associations and think tanks as advocates of open markets, legal and regulatory reform, transparency, sound corporate governance, and a stronger role for women in the economy. NED can also build upon the support it already gives to a wide array of grassroots organizations in the Middle East that defend human rights, train women to become leaders in politics and civil society, and promote civic education and women's rights in the context of Islamic texts and traditions. ACILS, the NED's labor institute, can also expand its efforts to train union organizers to defend the rights of workers and the poor.

It is especially important that NED and its core institutes try to involve in their programs liberal Muslims individuals who work within the Islamic tradition and who are also in favor of liberal democracy as a way of strengthening these elements and countering the political abuse of religion. Many NED country programs already involve liberal Muslims, as do regional and sub-regional programs. Such programs can be expanded in the Middle East and, where appropriate, in parts of Asia and Africa to strengthen existing networks of liberal Islamic thinkers and activists and develop new ones; to promote a public discourse on Islam and democratic politics; and to develop civic education programs that provide a modernist treatment of the role of Islam in public life.

It is also important that more focus be given to the dissemination of first-hand accounts and systematic analyses of life in Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan under the Taliban, the three contemporary examples of theocratic dictatorships. Conversely, there are positive lessons to be learned from the experiences of Turkey, Bangladesh, Mali, Senegal, Bahrain and other contemporary examples of Muslim countries where democratization has progressed. Where

appropriate, efforts should be made to include in these networks and discussions Muslims living in Western Europe and North America, whose experience of democracy may significantly influence Islamic political thought.

Expanding women's leadership training programs is critically important for the promotion of democracy in Muslim countries. Empowering women at the grassroots level and promoting their enhanced participation in the political and cultural life of Muslim societies are preconditions for democratic progress. Programs already underway to develop women's leadership capabilities should be expanded in the Arab Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia and, when feasible, in Iran and Afghanistan as well. Various types of media can be employed to reach larger numbers of women in Muslim countries

Since the Middle East is the region of greatest need and priority in the Muslim world, the NED should look to expand its grants program there, building on the projects, relationships, and experience it has already developed. South and Central Asia should also be the focus of increased attention and programming. Where possible, the NED should seek to apply its experience in cross-border democracy assistance to these regions, developing initiatives that enlist the cooperation of democracy groups in countries such as Turkey and Bangladesh in the overall effort.

Strengthening International Democratic Collaboration

There has not been a time since the NED was established nearly two decades ago when the importance of its mission was more widely appreciated and understood than it is today. Nonetheless, a word of caution is in order. Though NED's budget is no longer shrinking, its goals far outstrip the available resources. And while the sense of urgency brought on by the attacks of September 11 has made Americans acutely aware of the need for engagement in a very dangerous world, it remains necessary to make the case for the importance of promoting and strengthening democracy. The over-riding priority of the United States today is defending the nation against the threat of terrorism. Immediate security interests must take precedence over all

other concerns. A powerful case can be made, of course, that the promotion of democracy serves these interests, but the case must be made. It is not self-evident. The argument that only through democracy can genuine peace be achieved is one that we will have to make repeatedly and forcefully, especially if the United States is successful in the new war, as we expect and pray it will be, and the sense of urgency subsides.

The tasks that NED confronts are formidable in their scope, complexity, and difficulty. Any one of them — strengthening enclaves of independent activity in dictatorial systems, democratizing semi-authoritarian countries, consolidating new democracies, healing war-torn societies, and placing a heightened emphasis on addressing these challenges in the Muslim world would provide steady work for the NED or any other democracy-promotion institution far into the future. But it is NED's mission to address all of these tasks, and to nurture democratic values and culture in every country where it works.

The NED seeks to accomplish these objectives through its grants program, which provides concrete assistance to democratic practitioners throughout the world. Increasingly, it has sought to re-enforce this support through activities that strengthen collaboration among democratic forces within entire regions, across different regions, and among democracy groups active in different sectors of democracy work. The NED should seek to further develop these activities in three major areas:

Strengthening solidarity networks among democratic activists and thinkers: Since its founding, the NED has developed a number of activities that supplement and bolster its grants program by making it possible to build partnerships and support networks among democrats throughout the world. These activities include the International Forum for Democratic Studies, which conducts a program of research and conferences and houses the Journal of Democracy, the leading voice in discussions of the problems and prospects of democracy around the world. The Forum also oversees the Democracy Resource Center, which facilitates a worldwide flow of information on democracy, and maintains

a Democracy Fellows Program for both scholars and democratic activists.

The 1997 Strategy Document called upon the NED to expand these activities by creating a worldwide community of democrats, committed to building proactive networks of democrats and fostering collaboration and solidarity among democratic forces around the world. Charged with this responsibility, the NED convened the Founding Assembly of the World Movement for Democracy in New Delhi, India, in February 1999, bringing together democrats from more than 80 countries. It organized the Second Assembly the following year in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

The World Movement is a genuine network of networks, consisting of broad-based regional networks and others covering such functional areas of activity as civic education, democracy research, local government, and women's empowerment. It also makes possible cross-fertilization among the different regions and functional areas by focusing on issues of common concern, such as aiding democrats in closed societies and semi-authoritarian countries. The World Movement has placed special emphasis on developing the Internet as a tool of democracy promotion, helping networks to create and link their websites, and assisting NGOs in overcoming the chief obstacles to effective technology use.

Now that the World Movement is a reality, the challenge is to institutionalize the various networks that have been established and to help them become self-reliant by developing their own sources of operation and support.

Enlisting the support of other democracies:
During the past decade, the NED has encouraged other democracies, especially those recently consolidated, to create their own democracy foundations; and it has supported cooperation among these institutions in pursuit of common objectives. In addition, in cooperation with private groups in South Korea and India, it has created joint initiatives that engage these important countries in the promotion of democracy in their respective regions. The concept underlying all of these efforts is to support the expansion of democratic communities of

countries in Europe, East and South Asia, and the Western Hemisphere. The outward enlargement of democracy from its major regional centers complements efforts to promote democracy at the periphery, where it is often weakest.

Fashioning a global response to the challenges of democratization:
During the past decade, the field of democracy-promotion has grown dramatically and now comprises, in addition to many quasi-governmental democracy foundations like the NED, private foundations, government agencies, and multi-lateral agencies such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the Organization of American States. With the events of September 11, it has become more necessary than ever before for such institutions to develop new forms of collaboration. The NED should look for opportunities for example, the non-governmental forum of the inter-governmental Community of Democracies to organize a common discussion among these institutions, which should also include democracy activists and thinkers from countries where democracy needs support. The purpose would be to strengthen international democratic cooperation and to encourage and help formulate a global response to the challenges of democratization.

Taken together, the goals set forth in this Strategy Document constitute an ambitious agenda, one that calls for maintaining a far-reaching global grants program and for integrating into it a new focus on aiding democracy in the Muslim world. It also calls for mobilizing a broader international response to the critical challenges of democratic development. In carrying out this agenda, it is essential that the NED continue to give practical help where it is most needed; to give moral support to all those who are fighting for democracy, especially those who are the most isolated and face the most difficult challenges; and to build a new momentum for democratic progress. It is in that spirit of solidarity and hope that we put forth this strategic plan.

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