

AN APPEAL TO GOVERNMENTS GATHERED AT THE COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES MEETING

11/12/02 9:30 a.m.

On the occasion of the second Community of Democracies meeting in Seoul, Republic of Korea, November 10-12, 2002, government ministers and civil society leaders from around the world have gathered to address the problems of strengthening democracy on the national, regional and global levels.

Democratic societies confront formidable challenges from an array of internal and external pressures. Individuals and citizen groups must remain vigilant and vocal to secure inalienable rights of freedom and human dignity. Democratic governments must make it their permanent mission to strengthen democratic institutions and promote democratic values, both in their own countries and abroad, as set forth in the historic Warsaw Declaration. They should band together to resist terrorism and criminality, but must do so in accordance with respect for human rights and international law, as stated in the Warsaw Declaration. Democratic states must also redouble their efforts to build stable and prosperous democratic societies at home and abroad as the most effective long-term antidote to extremism and terrorist violence. The world's democracies must devise new ways of cooperating with one another to safeguard the democratic gains of the 20th century and to advance a common agenda for democratic change in the years ahead.

We, the undersigned, in the interest of helping to create an international environment conducive to democratic development, make the following appeal to governments gathered at the Seoul Ministerial Meeting of the Community of Democracies and invite other like-minded citizens to join us.

Strengthening the Community of Democracies

Only governments that respect democratic norms set forth in the Warsaw Declaration should be included in the Community of Democracies.

We applaud the decision of the Convening Group governments* to adopt the democratic standards outlined in the Warsaw Declaration as criteria for participation in the Community of Democracies. We recognize the value of creating a category of observer states that have not yet met these standards and therefore are not allowed to participate in the group's decision-making process until they have made demonstrable progress toward implementing democratic reforms.

We propose the creation of a third category of candidate states which subscribe to these standards and are making demonstrable progress toward them. Candidate states would enjoy all the benefits of membership as long as they continue to make concrete progress.

* Chile, Czech Republic, India, Republic of Korea, Mali, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, South Africa and the United States.

The Community of Democracies should establish a transparent mechanism to monitor and assess which governments continue to meet the democratic standards set forth in the Warsaw Declaration. It should issue warnings and offer assistance when democratic crises erupt. Where political rights and civil liberties are seriously eroding, the Community of Democracies should suspend the government in question unless it is taking concrete steps to improve the situation. If a democratically-elected government is overthrown, the illegitimate regime should be expelled immediately from the Community of Democracies. In making these decisions, governments must systematically consult with civil society organizations, political parties and independent experts, especially those groups actively working to promote democratic reforms in countries under review.

To ensure effective implementation of its plan of action, the Community of Democracies should create and fund a permanent secretariat to carry on its work between ministerial meetings. The secretariat should be charged with establishing a transparent peer review mechanism, monitoring country developments, devising collective responses to threats to democracy, tracking best practices and lessons learned, and coordinating ministerial conference preparations.

Linking Development Assistance to Democracy

Democratic states should increase their bilateral development assistance to governments participating in the Community of Democracies process. In addition, members of the Community of Democracies should receive preferential treatment in multilateral assistance strategies, debt relief and trade privileges, and work together to democratize international financial and trade institutions.

One of the greatest threats to democracy is the prevalence of poverty and inequality. As observed in the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report for 2002, "Advancing human development requires governance that is democratic in both form and substance." To make development aid more effective, government-to-government development assistance should be confined to members and candidate members of the Community of Democracies. In other countries, development aid should be channeled only through nongovernmental institutions, or spent under the direct supervision of the donors, except in certain circumstances of humanitarian emergency.

Democratic governments should also use their voting power at international financial and trade institutions (IFTIs) to make them more transparent, more inclusive of civil society participation, and more responsive to the needs of emerging democracies. Members and candidate members should be given preference for multilateral development bank loans, debt relief and trade privileges. Donor strategies should also embrace increased spending and attention on democracy-building programs and policies, including democratic political party development, free media and citizen participation.

Creating a Democracy Caucuses

Democratic governments that belong to the Community of Democracies should act collectively to promote democratic values, the rule of law and sustainable development. To that end, they should organize their own caucuses at the United Nations and regional organizations.

The world's democracies have a common interest in ensuring that the United Nations and regional organizations reflect their shared democratic values. Members of the Community of Democracies must support each other when electing candidates for key international positions, particularly those relating to democracy and human rights, such as the UN Human Rights Commission.

SIGNED (list in formation)

Larry Diamond
United States

Pavol Demes
Slovakia

Bronislaw Geremek
Poland

George Soros
United States

Emma Bonino
Italy

Margaret Crahan
United States

Genaro Arriagada
Chile

Hadi Soesastro
Indonesia

Morton Halperin
United States

Orville Schell
United States

Madeleine Albright
United States

Rashid Hajili
Azerbaijan

Adam Habib
South Africa

Vira Naniivska
Ukraine

Meddeb Henda
Tunisia

Tomas Pojar
Czech Republic

John Richardson
United States

Heather Hamilton
United States

Salah Aziz
Kurdistan-Iraq/USA

Walter Raymond
United States

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Leyla Yunus
Azerbaijan

John Talbott
United States

Kassie Neov
Cambodia

Hussain Shaban
Iraq – London

Robert LaGamma
United States

Enrique Zileri
Peru

Charles Sampford
Australia

Nizam Assaf
Jordan

Penelope Faulkner
Vietnam

Vo Van Ai
Vietnam

Gibson Sibanda
Zimbabwe

Jana Chrzova
Czech Republic

Marcelo Varela
Costa Rica

Silvia Alonso
Mexico

Rafael Roncagliolo
Peru

Talib Yakubov
Uzbekistan

Carl Gershman
United States

Aleksander Smolar
Poland

Edil Baisalov
Kyrgyzstan

Jiri Rasanen
Finland

Achour Moncef
Tunisia

Adamou Ndam Njoya
Cameroon

Sulev Valdmaa
Estonia

Hakan Altinay
Turkey

George Mathew
India

Heiner Hanggi
Switzerland

Yevgeny Zhovtis
Kazakhstan

Albert Musliu
Macedonia

Bette Bao Lord
United States

Lionel Delatour
Haiti

Dogu Ergil
Turkey

Xia Yeliang
China

Almerindo Jaka Jamba
Angola

Veton Surroi
Kosova

Sam Rainsy
Cambodia

Sihem Bensedrine
Tunisia

Ro Ding
Burma

Marek Kapusta
Slovakia

Hryhoriy Nemyria
Ukraine

Ntomb'futhi Masinga
South Africa

Achour Moucef
Tunisia

George Folsom
United States

Claudia Caldeirinha
Portugal

Can Paker
Turkey

Pande Lazarevski
Macedonia

Marcelino Miyares
Cuba/USA

Gautam Adhikari
India

Roel von Meijefeldt
The Netherlands

Veselin Vukotic
Montenegro

Nina Belyaeva
Russia

Vera Stenskovskaya
Belarus

Christine Loh
Hong Kong, China

Valeria Merino
Ecuador

Tomas Pojar
Czech Republic

Robert Herman
United States

Yuri Dzhibladze
Russia

Rashid Hagili
Azerbaijan

Alexander Lomaia
Georgia

Elizabeth Frawley Bagley
United States

Inna Pidluska
Ukraine

Fiona Hill
United States

Harold Koh
United States

Jennifer Windsor
United States