

Joint Statement of Foreign Ministers of the Convening Group Community of Democracies September 12, 2000

The Foreign Ministers of countries that comprise the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies met in New York on September 12 during the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations. In a session chaired by Poland, host of the June 25-27 inaugural meeting of the Community of Democracies in Warsaw, the Ministers jointly

- thanked countries from all the world's regions and major cultures that accepted their invitation to participate in the Warsaw meeting, and expressed gratitude to the leaders of many international organizations for their attendance, especially to Secretary General Kofi Annan for his moving statement of support;
- thanked the United Nations Secretariat for circulating the Warsaw Declaration and the list of the 106 countries that endorsed it in Warsaw, together with the Warsaw Communique, as official documents of the General Assembly (Doc. A/55/328);
- announced their intention to convene the informal "democracy caucus" at the United Nations that was discussed by the many countries that participated in the Warsaw Conference and endorsed its official Communique. The "democracy caucus" will meet during the 55th session of the General Assembly, and will comprise those countries that have endorsed the Warsaw Declaration of democratic principles;
- invited participants in the "democracy caucus" to exchange information, support resolutions, and undertake other activities that encourage and assist countries that have chosen the democratic path;
- offered support for resolutions that promote and strengthen democracy such as that adopted by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights earlier this year in Geneva, and that which calls for participation in the Fourth Conference of New or Restored Democracies to be convened in Benin on December 5, 2000;
- welcomed the offer of the United Nations Development Programme to sponsor an ongoing forum to assist, at their request, governments and non-governmental organizations that seek more effective means of cooperation and assistance in strengthening the values and institutions of democracy;
- welcomed support offered by the Secretary General of the Organization of American States for a conference of multilateral and regional organizations to discuss the ways such organizations are cooperating to promote democracy and address threats that may arise to it;
- considered ways for encouraging other meetings and activities at which the "best practices" of countries taking the democratic path can be presented and discussed;
- directed their senior officials to prepare proposals that will delineate the criteria to enable countries to participate in the Community of Democracies and establish procedures to govern its activities, and those of the informal "democracy caucus";

- recognize that, in situations in which regional procedures fail to produce a consensus candidate for a U.N. body, it would be appropriate for participants in the Community of Democracies, in casting their votes, to take into account among other considerations whether countries contesting the seat have endorsed the Warsaw Declaration;
- agreed to meet regularly at the ministerial level, including at the annual meetings of the United Nations General Assembly.

Recalling the support expressed in the Communique of the Warsaw Conference for a second conference to be held in Seoul, the Convening Group welcomed a presentation by the Republic of Korea on its plans to host this meeting at the COEX Conference Center on October 21 and 22, 2002.

The Convening Group reaffirmed its belief that the Community of Democracies has a valuable role to play in strengthening the United Nations system, in improving understanding between the nations, and in helping to overcome divisions that too often impede cooperation for peace, respect for human rights and the eradication of poverty.

Members of the Convening Group, Community of Democracies:

Chile, Czech Republic, India, Republic of Korea (represented by special envoy of the Foreign Minister), Mali, Poland, Portugal, USA.