

A DIPLOMAT'S HANDBOOK

for Democracy Development Support

Second Edition



The Diplomat's Handbook is a project commissioned by the Community of Democracies, and produced by the Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD). The First Edition was produced with the financial support of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, Freedom House, the Princeton Project on National Security, the US Department of State, the Governments of Chile, India, and Morocco, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Government of Canada.

The *Handbook* project was conceived by Ambassador Mark Palmer. Preparation of the *Handbook* has been a partnership between Project Head, Ambassador Jeremy Kinsman (jeremykinsman@diplomatshandbook.org), who has been principally responsible for the text of the *Handbook* itself, and the Director of Research, Kurt Bassuener (kurtbassuener@diplomatshandbook.org), who has been principally responsible for producing the *Handbook's* case studies.

The original project benefited from the active partnership of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs of Princeton University, whose graduate students conducted extensive research and prepared written drafts for country case studies, namely Bryan Crawford-Garrett, Hanna Jung, Britt Lake, Bart Szewczyk, and Taya Weiss. Patricia Marsden-Dole and Terry Jones, who served as Canadian High Commissioner and as Deputy High Commissioner in Dar es Salaam, drafted the Tanzania case study.

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The text which follows and the case studies benefit from the generous contributions and advice of many former and current diplomatic practitioners, scholars, members of policy centers and nongovernmental organizations, and development experts. The case study on China was drafted by Chantal Meagher, the case study on Cuba by Jeremy Kinsman, and the case study on Egypt by a variety of experts, including Stephen McInerney, Moataz El Fegieri, Michele Dunne and Issandr El Amrani. The Belarus and Ukraine case study updates were undertaken with the assistance of Iryna Chupryna of the Democratization Policy Council.

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COMMUNITY
OF DEMOCRACIES
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Council for a Community
of Democracies

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The Palmer Fund

In spring 2010, the Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD) established the Ambassador Mark Palmer Founder's Fund (the "Palmer Fund") to advance democracy through the *Diplomat's Handbook* and related projects, named in tribute to Ambassador Palmer's lifetime of commitment and achievement. Ambassador Palmer is a founder of CCD and Vice President of its Board of Directors.

Throughout his multifaceted professional career Ambassador Palmer has made significant and continuing contributions to the advancement of democracy across the globe, which range from his participation in the US civil rights movement, to supporting dissidents throughout communist Europe as a diplomat, then as US Ambassador to Hungary during its crucial transition to freedom, as a co-founder of the National Endowment for Democracy, as Vice Chairman of Freedom House for over two decades. In recent years Mark Palmer established the first independent television stations in six central European countries. He also authored the 2007 ADVANCE Democracy Act.

The Palmer Fund provides for multi-year financial support through 2014 to the *Diplomat's Handbook* and related projects. These include annual updates, drafting of case studies, enhanced distribution, production of a film based on the handbook's text and case studies, and coordination of a series of "train the trainers" events in partnership with the College of Europe and other institutions, the first of which took place in Warsaw with subsequent sessions planned for Chile and elsewhere. The Fund will also support the Palmer Prize, which will be awarded to diplomats who have supported democracy promotion through their work and collaboration with civil society groups.

In addition to the *Handbook* initiative, the Palmer Fund will support CCD's related projects to advance democracy through broader efforts to promote democracy education. Further, it will develop professional exchanges as well as the development of the International Steering Committee (ISC).

The Palmer Fund would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Sándor Demján Foundation. Sándor Demján, one of Hungary's leading businessmen is the current chairman of the Trigranit Development Corporation. He was recognized in 2005 by Ernst and Young as Entrepreneur of the Year.

Palmer Prize for Diplomats

The adherence of 106 democratic countries to the Warsaw Declaration created a new standard for diplomacy. The Palmer Prize seeks to honor those diplomats who are actively engaged in the realization of those standards. The award is intended for diplomats who display valor under difficult circumstances and take risks or are especially inventive in their sustained efforts to assist civil society to advance democracy in their countries of assignment. Our models for the award are drawn from the experiences highlighted in the [*Diplomat's Handbook for Democracy Development Support*](#), a work inspired by Ambassador Mark Palmer and by his exceptional service to the cause of democracy as United States Ambassador to Hungary during that country's transition to democracy.

Criteria:

1. Demonstrated support for civil society's right to freedoms of assembly, expression, and other principles as outlined in the [*Warsaw Declaration of the Community of Democracies*](#).
2. Supported efforts to assure broader political participation.
3. Contributed significantly to assuring free and fair elections.
4. Sustained efforts to support human rights, including actions which resulted in a release of prisoners of conscience, an end to cruel and inhuman punishment.
5. Facilitated a broader dialogue on democratic reform.
6. Coordinated effective international efforts to advance movement toward democracy.
7. Identified and articulated the importance of democratic values, despite working in a closed / authoritarian society.
8. Contributed innovative ideas and support for the consolidation of democratic institutions in countries in transition.
9. Upheld the idea of rule of law in countries where it is not practiced.

Nominations can be made by foreign ministries or civil society. Submissions are accepted until December of the year preceding a ministerial meeting of the Community of Democracies with the prize being announced every 2 years at the CD Ministerial.

Please direct all nominations and/or questions to the secretariat of the nongovernmental International Steering Committee of the Community of Democracies, info@diplomatshandbook.org.

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Preface by President Vaclav Havel

Leader of the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia

Prague, April 2008

I was thrust into top-level politics by the revolutionary events at the turn of the year 1989/1990 without any diplomatic training – “from the prison cell straight into the presidential palace” so to speak. At the same time, hundreds of my similarly unprepared fellow-citizens found themselves, like me, in high office or posts of influence. I often envied all those graduates of diplomatic schools with their command of several languages and international law, and their wealth of personal experience. During those first months, we were obliged to overcome any shortcomings in the introduction of democratic standards in our country by means of improvisation, dramatic invention and concepts based more on common sense than on hundreds of analyses and expert documents. I am still amazed that in those years it was possible to push through things in a single week that in conditions of stability would take several years to prepare and have approved. I also recall how many governments were taken unawares – as often before in history – by the lightning course events in countries, whose evolution and situations have been monitored for years by hundreds of diplomats and international observers, who had provided thousands of detailed reports. I cited those two examples simply to demonstrate that diplomacy cannot function properly without personal commitment and a strong determination to find solutions and attain objectives, it cannot simply rely on the recommendations or decisions of central machinery. I hope that this book will inspire all its readers to take a creative part in the propagation of civic freedoms and democratic standards throughout the world.



Ministers' Foreword

Responding to requests from civil society and governments, diplomats make important contributions to democratic development. Their work is largely unknown. Outdated stereotypes of our profession persist. This “Diplomat’s Handbook” begins to tell our story through case studies of practical measures diplomats from many democratic countries have taken across the globe.

The “Handbook” recognizes that democracy cannot be exported or imported. It must be developed by the citizens of the country concerned. There is no one formula for success. But outside assistance is often requested, and there is a dearth of professional material for training and guiding our diplomats in deciding how they can appropriately respond. Civil society as well as governments can benefit from the “Handbook”, gaining a better understanding of what they can request from diplomats, who in today’s public diplomacy represent their own civil society as well.

Therefore the “Handbook” offers a menu of choice, a tool box of steps which have worked, beginning with listening and understanding and proceeding through many forms of cooperation.

We urge the 125 diplomatic services represented in the Community of Democracies to use and to contribute to this new tool for our profession. The “Handbook” is a “living” document. The Community’s Convening Group and Secretariat, the nongovernmental International Steering Committee, the Council for a Community of Democracies and Canadian Ambassador Jeremy Kinsman, the Handbook’s primary author, and its Research Director Kurt Bassuener will regularly update it and welcome your comments and contributions online at: www.diplomatshandbook.org. We wish to recognize the work of our democratic diplomats by featuring them in further case studies and through practical examples.

Signed by:



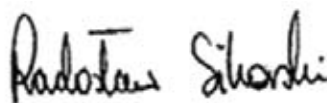
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Chapter 1: Introduction

THE RATIONALE

The Community of Democracies was convened in Warsaw in 2000 to find ways “to work together and strengthen democracy” and celebrates its tenth year of existence with a commemorative high level meeting in 2010, again in Poland, in Kraków.

As Cambridge scholar John Dunn has observed, while democracy has come to “dominate the world’s imagination,” it has also aroused in some quarters fear and suspicion.

Democracy is not an end in itself. As a form of governance relying on the consent of the governed, democracy is a means of fulfilling individual lives and pursuing common purposes. As such, democracy expresses human aspirations which are judged to be universal.

While no single model of democracy has pride of place, the essential positive components of democracy are straightforward. Among the most prominent are: elected, accountable government; the transparent and equitably applied rule of law; independent media; protection of human rights and freedom of speech; and equal participation by all in selecting political representation. These democratic values represent achievable ideals which today are reflected in the political cultures of most of the world’s peoples and in the aspirations of many others.

By most counts, the number of “free” states has more than doubled in the last few decades, while the number of states considered “not free” has dramatically declined.

Favorable evolution proceeds on every continent, drawing inspiration from history-changing leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Kim Dae-Jung. Notable examples of democratic restoration, consolidation, or advance in recent years include Ghana, Mali, Nepal, Taiwan, and Ukraine – and, as Chilean novelist Isabel Allende declared, “Latin America has opted for democracy.”

John Menru of Tanzania was thinking of a new political climate for Africa when he cited these goals to the late Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński, but his aims were universal:

- a. adopt as binding the principle of dialogue;*
- b. ensure society’s participation in public life;*
- c. observe fundamental human rights;*
- d. begin democratization.*

Several African countries – notably Botswana, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Mauritius, South Africa, and Tanzania – stand out for fair elections – some for several cycles, and some more recently. They have been applying themselves diligently to fair and effective governance, even if some emphases – e.g. laws in Malawi that criminalize homosexuality – challenge global norms on human rights.

Observers point, however, to an apparent negative counter-trend, including in Africa where other governments have made little progress against corruption. As documented in the World Movement for Democracy’s report *Defending Civil Society* (2008), democracy’s recent reverses have been propelled in part by an authoritarian backlash against the greater openness afforded by new communications technologies and the natural international solidarity these offer civil society. The 2010 Freedom House Annual Report *Freedom in the World* identified a “freedom recession.”

Authoritarian regimes are banding together in a form of resistance to democratic change, in what Belarusian analyst Vitali Silitski termed in a publication of the German Marshall Fund “the authoritarian internationale.” Some of them laud the stability of “liberal authoritarianism” over the dangers of “illiberal democracy”, especially as they point to the global economic recession and financial crisis that began in the autumn of 2008.

While it is hardly plausible that humans anywhere would prefer governments which ignore the principle of consent of the governed in favor of coercion, authoritarian repression can keep the lid on for a time. But repressive government will fail in the longer run: as Gandhi observed, “Even the most powerful cannot rule without the cooperation of the ruled”, truer than ever now, when democratic norms are much more widely apparent because of the information revolution.

THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AND NON-VIOLENT CHANGE

“Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is the supreme law. By it alone can mankind be saved.”

- Mohandas K. Gandhi

Each democratic culture emerges from civil society in a singular way. But many of the challenges in achieving and consolidating democracy are shared, especially the always challenging transition from a non-democratic society toward democracy, via the building blocks of civil society.

Of course, democracy activists and members of civil society struggling to create democratic conditions under non-democratic regimes often face the harsh dilemma of finding the most effective methods for wresting change from unbending authoritarians. Impatient partisans of change are tempted sometimes by the option of violent direct action. But repressive state security machinery can wield a cruel upper hand against violent insurrection which, in any case, can alienate the majority of citizens concerned about safety.

The most effective route for transformation by civil society of authoritarian repression has been that of peaceful assembly and demonstration, including organized civil resistance, often when a specific issue or grievance fires public discontent and protest. Gandhi defined the model for nonviolent civil disobedience against unjust laws in the first campaigns for human rights he launched in South Africa, which he then applied in the campaign for the self-determination of India.

Nonviolent civil resistance has played an important and beneficial role in democratic transition because in contrast to violent insurgency, it teaches democratic values en route to change. Nonviolent movements provide autonomous space for learning decentralized and deliberative methods of policy choice and coalition-building. Because nonviolent movements are participatory and decentralized, they can constitute “incubators of democracy” that assist the transition to democratic governance after a repressive regime collapses. NGOs constitute a factor of continuity as a country transits from top-down control to an institutionally accountable pluralist society.

Once launched, democracy’s concrete rewards must be evident to citizens. Democracy relies on the realization of certain basic human needs and must aim for their improvement. The test of the democratic process is at the intersection between the participation of citizens in their own governance, and the effectiveness of governance in confronting practical challenges individuals face.

For example, freedom from extreme poverty has been termed the first of the essential freedoms – or, as Amartya Sen put it succinctly, “Freedom and development are inextricable.”

John Dunn records the history of democracy's triumphs as a "history of political choice." To succeed, the choice must be a demonstrably effective one, not just for the majority reaping the spoils of electoral victory, but across society as a whole.

Achieving **rightful opportunities for women**, and the end to their abuse, are fundamental objectives and necessities. "The world is awakening to a powerful truth," Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn have written in the New York Times. Recalling the Chinese saying that 'Women hold up half the sky', they stress the growing recognition on the parts of organizations as different as CARE and the US Joint Chiefs of Staff that "Focusing on women and girls is the most effective way to fight global poverty and extremism."

Orderly succession of democratically elected political leadership is also a universal need. In announcing the winner of the Mo Ibrahim Prize for African Leadership in October, 2007, Kofi Annan cited particularly ex-President Joaquim Chissano's efforts to build Mozambique democracy on conciliation among ex-opponents. But it is sobering that this award, which is intended to recognize a voluntary, democratic, and peaceful succession of power was not bestowed in 2009 because there was no clear candidate who qualified.

Even though the record of free peoples in self-defense is eloquent, it has been charged that democracy can impede the firm conduct of foreign relations or the organization of defense especially at a time of peril. Authoritarian regimes such as Cuba and Iran invoke threats from outside to justify arbitrary imprisonment of democratic opponents and the general curtailing of civil liberties. In recent years, democratic societies have debated the need to constrain some measure of their established civil liberties in the interests of national security and counter-terrorism. The process of narrowing freedoms is often vexed and the outcome one of unsatisfactory compromises. What is clear is that transparency of purpose and full democratic debate are essential to public support.

It is also debated whether specific economic conditions and models favor democracy taking roots in a society. Some argue that democracy works most effectively only above a certain income threshold. For example, Zambian economist Dambisa Moyo, the author of "*Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*" charges that the West's "obsession with democracy" has been harmful to countries unequipped for it. She maintains that democratic transition first needs an established middle class to succeed. While it is true that an emerging middle class fuelled democratic reform in Mexico, Korea, and Taiwan, there are also notable examples of poorer developing countries choosing and sustaining democracy, such as Mali, or Mongolia.

That being said, China's system of one-party rule combined with pragmatic reliance on free markets and state enterprise in the economy seems at first a seductive model for some poor countries, with special appeal among autocrats who welcome Chinese economic cooperation that comes without lectures on corruption and human rights. At an April 2007 Santiago Roundtable on Democracy in the Americas organized by the Community of Democracies, civil society leaders assessed the problems facing many new democracies in the region. They concluded that the most serious was the too frequent failure to deliver tangible improvements in the lives of citizens. They noted that political parties raise expectations during election campaigns by generating promises of jobs, education and health care that are rarely fulfilled.

A central focus of democracy development support needs to be to help build up the capacity of transitional countries to support the **rule of law** at the core of free societies and market economies. But as Thomas Carothers has written, statutes and courts are not enough if the sense of law does not reside "within the heads" of citizens. Moreover, as Gary Haugen and Victor Boutros point out in *Foreign*

Affairs, in many countries laws are rarely enforced. They note that in a June 2008 report, the United Nations estimated that four billion people live outside the rule of law because “without functioning public justice systems to deliver the protections of the law to the poor, the legal reforms of the modern human rights movement rarely improve the lives of those who need them most.”

Socially responsible private investment can undoubtedly support democratic transformation. But the rewards need to be felt generally by the population as a whole. What is clear is that to sustain public confidence, governments must be able to show positive economic achievement with public benefit.

Democratic practice has to be learned. As señora Isabel Allende observed, “A country, like a husband, is always open to improvement.” Even once embarked, the democratic journey is an on-going and evolving process. Dr. Jennifer Welsh of Oxford University reminds us that elected and accountable government provides the ability of a society to “self-correct” in its pursuit of such policy goals. Poland’s Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski spoke at the Lisbon 2009 Ministerial of the Community of Democracies of the continuing need of a democracy “to re-design itself consensually, without violence.”

THE COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES

The historical context for democratic outreach is encouraging in that the *Handbook* has emerged when, as observed by Prof. Robert Legvold, for the first time in 300 years there is no strategic rivalry among the world’s leading powers: competition and issue-based friction persist, but not in any existential sense of military competition for influence via proxies among developing countries. Member states of the Community of Democracies have made clear they welcome and actively encourage further peaceful progress toward democratic governance in the world. The Community of Democracies has no ambition to be a bloc defined by or formed in antagonism to non-democratic states, and greatly regrets any tendency of authoritarian states to band together from a sense of shared defensive purpose.

However, if this general policy of outreach and support for democracy development is contradicted by selective and uncritical support for non-democrats as a function of energy, economic, or security interests, there are costs to credibility. As former British Foreign Secretary David Miliband said in Oxford, “We must resist the arguments on both the left and the right to retreat into a world of *realpolitik*.”

This is not to dismiss lightly the merits of foreign policies grounded in the realities of national interests as well as aspirations. But the tendency to concentrate funding for democracy support in a relatively small number of countries where interests are particularly evident, such as Mexico, Ukraine, Indonesia, Georgia, Mali, Afghanistan, or Iraq, should not be at the expense of other countries whose democratic transitions are at a vulnerable stage.

The Hippocratic Oath’s admonition to “Do no harm” also has merit. There is indeed a harmful *realpolitik* history, especially during the Cold War, of democracies intervening to influence and even to counter democratic outcomes elsewhere. The subversion of democratically elected governments for perceived reasons of international competition – Iran come to mind – leaves a bitter legacy that has haunted some relationships for generations. When non-democracies band together, there can also be consequences once a democratic shift occurs. Fidel Castro’s support of the Soviet-backed coup against the Czechoslovak government in 1968, and invasion to stifle political reform, haunts Czech-Cuban relations to this day.

More recently, there have been efforts to force democracy on others, most notably via the invasion of Iraq, that some justified by misappropriation of the tenets of the “responsibility to protect”. Ill-prepared attempts to democratize unstable states by force without the support of the people invite ethnic and sectarian conflict. This *Handbook* favors outside arm’s length commitment by democracies to the long-term development of civil rights and civil society, with the emphasis on responsive support for citizens,

democracy activists, or human rights defenders already engaged in peaceful efforts toward democratic empowerment.

There is, of course, something of a paradox involved. On the one hand, there is a long international history of democrats aiding each other, from the intermingling of the American and French revolutions, to the waves of change which swept over Europe in 1848, or in 1989. On the other hand, democracy is about people developing popular self-government for themselves.

Diplomats from democracies need to carry on the tradition of supporting democrats and sharing practical know-how, while deferring to the truth that ultimately democracy is a form of self-rule requiring that things be done by a domestic civil society itself.

It is in this spirit that participating countries of the Community of Democracies value the opportunity on behalf of democrats everywhere to respond to requests for support from reform-minded groups and individuals struggling to introduce and improve democratic governance and human rights in their own societies, and to work with governments and nongovernmental groups to improve democratic governance.

Attempts to block such responsive support for international civil society are a matter of great concern, especially, as the *Handbook* will set out, the rights to help and be helped are consistent with the aims and obligations of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, as well as the Warsaw Declaration. (These documents as well as others committing signatories to best practices are catalogued in the Annex).

A HANDBOOK TO SUPPORT DIPLOMATIC DEMOCRATIC COMMITMENT

In reaching out, civil society groups have often turned to embassies or consulates of Community of Democracies participating states for advice and assistance. There is no codified set of procedures for diplomats to follow in order to respond effectively. Each situation is different, presenting unstructured problems and opportunities which diplomats need to interpret according to local as well as general merits, including the bilateral relationship itself. The recent actions of authorities in Iran show that repressive regimes faced with popular protest can construct a false narrative of foreign interference, and contest the legitimacy of any contacts between diplomatic representatives and local civil society. This can be potent when popular memory recalls a history of foreign interference.

Over the last decades, the activity of diplomats from democratic countries constitutes considerable past experience with almost every eventuality. On the basis that the record of such activity could provide helpful guidance to practitioners in the field, the *Handbook* attempts to record it. There has been no systematic attempt to capture and record these diplomatic activities before.

This *Diplomat's Handbook for Democracy Development Support* identifies a “toolbox” of creative, human, and material resources available to Missions. It records ways in which Missions and diplomats have drawn from these tools in the past in the interest of democracy development support. The *Handbook* means to cover a full range of conditions and situations, from regimes which are flatly undemocratic and repressive, to phases of post-conflict recovery, to democratic transition and consolidation.

The *Handbook* includes a representative variety of case studies documenting and explaining specific country experiences. It is important that each case study be seen for its specific contextual properties. Nonetheless, there are characteristics which obviously recur. Moreover, it should always be borne in mind that activities and outcomes in one locale can have ripple effects in the region and on wider or specific other relationships.

We also hope to catalogue the growing number of examples of “older” democracies adapting democratic techniques from “younger” ones. The democratic learning experience is not all one-way and capacity-building continues for all. For example, innovative Brazilian methods for enabling citizens to participate in budget-setting exercises in local government have been adapted for use in the United Kingdom.

A review of all these experiences bears out the validity of our belief in our inter-dependence. It will hopefully also provide practitioners with encouragement, counsel, and a greater capacity to support democrats everywhere.

Chapter 2: The International Context

SOLIDARITY

The “venerable practice of international solidarity” has been an important contributing force in the encouragement of democrats and the widening of democratic opportunities for citizens everywhere. In 1989, Vaclav Havel wrote to the International PEN Congress in Montreal which he was not permitted by Czechoslovak authorities to attend in person:

“In today’s world, more and more people are aware of the indivisibility of human fate on this planet, that the problems of anyone of us, or whatever country we come from – be it the smallest and most forgotten – are the problems of us all; that our freedom is indivisible as well, and that we all believe in the same basic values, while sharing common fears about the threats that are hanging over humanity today.”

Globalization has radically altered the context for democratic indivisibility by multiplying awareness through greater ease of communication even within formerly closed or remote societies.

The nation-state remains the most relevant context, however. States sign and hopefully ratify international conventions and organizations affirming the acceptance of human rights. But ultimately these are subject to circumstances, laws, and justice systems within states. Moral philosopher Tzvetan Todorov pointed out in his Oxford Amnesty Lecture that the inhabitants of most countries derive their legal rights much more as citizens of states than as citizens of the world. The Community of Democracies therefore counts as an important objective the strengthening of the capacity of states to assure the rights of its citizens.

Each country experiences in its own way the passage toward the democratic form its citizens choose as most suitable for their own society. But there is one point in common to all such passages: democracy cannot be imported from outside, much less imposed. Reform movements can only emerge from within societies.

Of course, the odds against them can often seem uneven. As US author Robin Wright observed, the contests between “inexperienced democratic activists with limited resources” and regimes “who have no intention of ceding control” can seem an “unfair battle.” While external support and mentoring of skills can help them succeed, outside allies and helpers must always follow the lead of domestic reformers and agents of change. We have seen in Burma/Myanmar and Iran that the crackdowns of security forces willing to use deadly force to support their status quo can obtain more time for an authoritarian regime, but its time will one day run out in favor of justice for the people.

IMPLICATIONS OF AN ERA OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

In deepening the truth that all democrats are potential partners, the revolution in information technologies and techniques has dramatically altered international reality by providing, at least for those with the necessary means, virtually free access to information from outside – unless local authorities block it.

The globalization of information encourages connections, awareness of norms elsewhere and the comparing of notes on best policies and practices. The young who are increasingly literate are especially connected abroad, and to each other through mobile communications devices.

The cascade of new communications technologies has had a profound impact on events, not all positive. Terrorist and xenophobic groups also mobilize and recruit supporters via new technologies. In Kenya, organized racist messages circulated via cell-phone texts prior to the January, 2008, elections which

broke down along tribal lines. In the struggle between the government and military against “Red Shirt” opposition in Thailand in May 2010, both sides used Twitter to attack the other.

But one does not have to be a “techno-utopian” to recognize the immense benefits of new communications technologies to democracy overall. Western radio and TV broadcasts hastened change in Eastern Europe. Fax machines connected Chinese students to the outside world in 1989. The Internet then became pivotal in rallying widespread participation in civil resistance. In Serbia, Ukraine, South-East Asia, Lebanon, and Venezuela the new tool of text messaging mobilized popular demonstrations. More recently, as in Iran, Twitter and Facebook became key connectors, though the regime tried intermittently to shut the networks down. A prominent example is Egypt’s “Facebook Revolution” in April 2008 that mobilized a general strike and street actions over economic and political issues.

An internationalist culture of “netizens” has emerged. Hand-held communications devices enable them to witness and communicate to the world events as they unfold, in real time. Such “netizens” and bloggers made the whole world the witness of the harshly violent repression of peaceful demonstrations in Burma/Myanmar in 2007. The combination of netizens’ digital cameras and global websites such as YouTube showed the world the tragic killing of Iranian student Neda Agha Soltan on a street in Tehran. Such episodes demonstrate that it is becoming harder and harder for repressive regimes to use brutal force without being exposed.

However, there is every indication they will continue to try. There have been obvious recent high-profile examples of constrained societies adopting defensive moves, especially during periods of agitation or protest through targeted efforts to restrict Internet access and close off sites, and the shutting down of wireless networks.

In China, many foreign news outlet sites or specific news reports are periodically blocked or selectively filtered by “The Great Firewall” created by the Chinese government to keep Internet users from communicating freely with the outside world in an enduring effort to impose a considerable degree of censorship, especially when public protests occur such as in Tibet and Xinjiang.

But such walls have been circumvented with the assistance of supporters of access to information outside. The Global Internet Freedom Consortium generated anti-censorship software, FreeGate, to by-pass the blockage of sites within China itself by accessing rapidly changing servers outside China. FreeGate can be downloaded by Internet users everywhere and was widely used during the shut-down of servers and sites in Iran in 2009. The Chinese Internet Project at the University of California, Berkeley, the international Tor project, and scholars at the Munk Center of the University of Toronto also provide programs that similarly enable Internet users in closed societies to maintain access to outside news outlets, and contacts with the outside world.

But as Prof. Xiao Qiang who heads the Chinese Internet Project has said, “They’re getting more sophisticated. They learn from past mistakes.” The Chinese authorities studied episodes of protest in Eastern Europe and Iran to devise defensive technological intervention techniques, in an attempt to control communications, monitor e-mail, and define public opinion. Sadly, western-based technology companies have exported monitoring software and hardware that enable repressive regimes to take such measures to counter a free Internet.

Moves to limit connectivity have costs. Competitiveness in a digital world in societies such as China or Iran where Internet users are multiplying daily will be greatly hampered by limiting Internet access. A workforce with no Internet access risks isolation. For example, by continuing to try to block Internet access for young people, the Cuban regime will greatly handicap them and Cuba’s future. In any case,

bootleg servers get around the regime's walls.

As technology continues to evolve, the tension between the formidable momentum toward open communication, and repressive governments' wish to control events, will continue. Embassies do have a role to play, sometimes *in extremis* opening mission communications systems to local citizens.

A NEW PARADIGM FOR DIPLOMACY

As a profession, and in practice, diplomacy is undergoing radical change in its opening to public diplomacy, even though, as Ministers Amado and Sikorski point out in the Foreword, "Outdated stereotypes of our profession persist." The International Forum on Diplomatic Training annually brings together heads of diplomatic academies to discuss informally the challenges of transformation. At the 2007 meeting in Maputo, the former president of Mozambique, Dr. Joaquin Chissano, charged diplomats with the responsibility to engage more with civil society organizations. Such essential engagement is often contested in repressive societies. But as a Canadian Ambassador affirms in the case study on Cuba, diplomats today are virtually accredited to the full range of the country.

Once, the conduct of diplomatic relations was strictly on a state-to-state basis, pursued through private exchanges between diplomats and government officials. In recent years diplomacy as practiced by many democratic nations has "gone public" and has taken on more of a human face. For most democracies, the days are past when their embassies were concerned only with maintaining "good relations" with the host government, irrespective of its character, as a former diplomat recalled of his mandate in Burma / Myanmar in the 1980s, when human rights were not high in the hierarchy of embassy priorities. Indeed, bilateral relationships and strategic engagement, even with authoritarian regimes, can be put to use to support the rights of civil society and democracy advocates in the host country.

Today, ambassadors and diplomats are much more likely to emphasize broader and direct engagement with the people of the host countries, and not only government officials. Moreover, diplomatic relations are only one international channel: everywhere, international networks of contacts of NGOs, scholars, researchers, businesspeople, and citizens are forming around issues, interests, and tasks, all facilitated by communications technologies. The working landscape for internationalists and democratic activists is multifaceted. It requires diplomacy to respond – to be, in the words of Ambassador Jiří Gruša at the Maputo meeting of the International Forum, "a tree with many roots."

The Princeton University project, "Forging a World of Liberty Under Law" outlines as a common goal of democracies the support of "Popular, Accountable, and Rights-regarding governments ("PAR"). The approach eschews interference, but advocates that "the best way to help bring governments up to PAR is to connect them and their citizens in as many ways as possible to governments that are already at PAR and provide them with incentives and support to follow suit."

It is in this spirit that in contemporary diplomacy, embassies and consulates become vehicles of public diplomacy and outreach, and brokers promoting contact and communications between the peoples and nongovernmental organizations and groups of both sending and host countries. In addition to encouraging and facilitating some of these connections, embassies are called upon to promote and defend the rights of people to so communicate. They also intervene when necessary to defend and support threatened human rights defenders and democratic activists, either demonstrably in public view, or, as the case merits, privately, below the radar. Consistent messaging on human rights and governance is a central part of the country mission of many democracies, as agreed with authorities at home. A democracy has to be able to demonstrate democratic leadership by example.

The *Handbook* will illustrate the many ways this has happened in the past, including occasions when

authoritarian governments attempted to intimidate or expel diplomats for such legal activity. Repressive governments can and do push back against direct contact between diplomats and civil society. An extreme example occurred in 2009 in Iran where locally-engaged employees of the UK Embassy not enjoying immunity were arrested and put on trial for subversion. It may be that in circumstances where local authorities are seeking to blame outsiders for internal protests whose legitimacy they do not wish to acknowledge, different outreach methods will be required.

In certain circumstances, where the legitimacy of direct support of civil society, especially advocacy groups, is challenged, non-governmental organizations, to which embassies should defer, often take up the slack. NGOs are not cats' paws of embassies or of national interests per se. But they share developmental ideals and have a common interest in civil society's aspirations to democratic governance.

A DIPLOMACY OF COMMITMENT

“Committed diplomacy – going beyond formal duty and applying a humanist perspective – not a legalist or a ‘realist’ one – to international relations is nested in the oldest tradition of that discipline.....The diplomatic field can obtain concrete results, which enable the recognition, assistance, and even the freedom of victims of dictatorial persecution. No diplomat should feel out of bounds when doing so. Quite the opposite.”

- From “On Diplomatic Commitment to Human Rights” by Pablo Brum and Mariana Dambolena, *Documentos*, CADAL (*Centro Para la Apertura y es Desarrollo de América Latina*), May 14, 2009

In vexed circumstances when complications ensue in bilateral relations, it is essential that diplomatic initiative in support of human rights defenders and democratic activists be welcomed and even rewarded by the career culture of foreign ministries. Even in the most difficult and circumscribed circumstances, there is much that a creative and committed diplomat can do, as the following pages will illustrate.

REVOLUTION, REFORM, AND EXTERNAL SUPPORT – CASE STUDIES

There is in practice a “right to be helped” as well as a “right to help.” The role of outsiders is never primary, but their catalytic support can be pivotal.

All Situations are Different

Each country and situation is different, but there are common patterns in how international solidarity benefits extended struggles for human rights and self-determination.

This *Handbook* with its Toolbox and wide portfolio of case studies is meant to be applicable to a wide variety of conditions. Diplomats of democratic governments have different challenges depending on whether they are assisting democrats living under repressive regimes that actively abuse the population, supporting fragile emerging democracies in the process of transition, including in stabilizing post-conflict recovery conditions, or working with recently transformed democracies to consolidate democratic gains.

The country case studies reflect a wide distribution of experience geographically and chronologically. As emphasized earlier, democratic societies flourish on every continent. The case studies are also selected to present an apt variety of transition-types.

The First Edition of the *Handbook* documented peaceful transitions in self-governance, such as in Tanzania. The obligation of democratic solidarity needs to apply to support for a wide array of countries, and civil society, in the difficult process of democratic development and consolidation, and not just to

countries self-nominated by their strategic or other interest.

The *Handbook* presents case studies of successful transitions from repressive societies to democracy, such as in South Africa and Chile. The country case studies focus principally on diplomatic activity to support civil society in-country prior to the end of authoritarian rule. But in such countries where democratic activists had worked to end authoritarian conditions, transitions to democracy were greatly aided by opportunities over the years for them to prepare for democracy through access to programs administered internationally to develop their competence in law, economics, and other key areas of governance. The pertinence of organized civil resistance as an “incubator” of democracy is stated in the Introduction.

The First Edition of the *Handbook* also presented case studies of ongoing situations, such as in Burma/Myanmar and Zimbabwe where repressive regimes are seemingly indifferent to outside counsel, at least from democracies, and where diplomats operate in difficult circumstances of minimal productive communication with host authorities but who continue to be seen by democratic activists in those countries as sources of encouragement and support. These studies, as well as those on Belarus and Ukraine are updated in the Second Edition.

The Second Edition includes additional case studies on China, Cuba, and Egypt, important undemocratic countries facing challenging circumstances, where civil society and democracy activists are narrowly constrained, and where outside influence is officially contested.

The Value of Example in International Solidarity

Influence is often through the power of example. Activists and reformers often seek inspiration from models other societies provide, and take counsel from the comparable prior experiences of other reformers, most of which are relatively recent. After all, the consolidation of effective democratic systems is mostly a phenomenon of the latter half of the 20th Century, spurred by the aftermath of World War II, decolonization, the end of dictatorships in Greece, Portugal, and Spain in the mid-1970s and, more recently, the end of Cold War competition.

The examples of nonviolent conflict developed in the Indian independence movement and the US civil rights movement have provided strategic and tactical inspiration to hundreds of millions of aspiring democrats. More recently, the experience of the *Solidarność* (“Solidarity”) movement in Poland had immense influence beyond its region. Institutional example can be passed on, such as the Chilean effort to construct a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose model lent itself later to adaptations in Peru, South Africa, Rwanda, and Morocco as well as in other post-authoritarian and post-conflict locales. Civil society’s response to threats to the integrity of election processes also takes instructive cues from those who experienced similar attempts elsewhere – an example being the learning process of Ukrainian democrats with transition veterans from other European countries such as Serbia and Slovakia.

Internal, domestic actions which were decisive in these and other struggles for democracy – the demonstrations, boycotts, and other forms of non-violent civil resistance – drew from a supportive external framework of psychological, political, and practical measures which circumscribed the options of non-democratic governments.

Positions taken internationally by outside democratic governments and prestigious individuals can be crucial. In Chile, external support to civil society began with humanitarian action offering asylum to thousands of refugees after the *coup d’etat* of September 11, 1973. For the next 15 years, the resulting diaspora of Chilean exiles kept the repressive political condition of Chile high in the consciousness of democrats everywhere.

In consequence, trade union movements in Europe and North America, political parties, such as European social and Christian democrats, and individual political leaders such as German Chancellor Kohl or Senator Edward Kennedy provided Chilean citizens with confidence that they were not alone in the struggle which began to build up against the Pinochet dictatorship's repression. Activists in South Africa recall the inspiration provided by Senator Robert Kennedy's speech in South Africa in 1968 which was preciously preserved on forbidden long-playing records.

Not taking a position in support of democratic activists or reformers can also be negatively crucial. As the President of Venezuela Carlos Andrés Pérez once said, non-response can be a form of intervention.

Repressive regimes also study prior examples.

Authoritarian regimes do try to claim legitimacy by pointing to support from countries reliant on them for security or other interests. As noted above, it is usual for democratic governments and their representatives to condition state-to-state cooperation (except humanitarian aid) on the modification of behavior. But it is vital for democratic governments to do more than episode-by-episode protest of human rights violations. They need to maintain sustained programs of democratic development support, including insisting on ongoing dialogues with the host countries to deal with basic conditions, and especially those affecting civil society. Even many authoritarian regimes feel obliged to feign some reformist intentions. These can provide democratic activists and reformers with potentially valuable openings and opportunities.

However, once it is clear that engagement with host country authorities will be unproductive, or when a regime resorts to deadly force to try to preserve the authoritarian status quo, human rights dialogues can be counter-productive.

It is important then that democracies make their positions clear to offset claims of international support by repressive regimes abusing their populations. A powerful method is coordinated international action for targeted sanctions such as the embargo on petroleum products and arms on the South African apartheid regime. Coordinated sanctions also made South African finances unsustainable, especially in regard to the expenses of equipping for war with front-line states. In this case, the crucial factor was that external sanctions were demanded by South African anti-apartheid movements, the ANC and UDF. A vital question today is the extent to which international solidarity is available: if rich petro-states or others unsympathetic to democracy counter sanctions with their own economic aid, the effect is weakened.

Sanctions can also be controversial because they can hurt the innocent in an oppressed society unless carefully targeted on the accounts, assets, and international mobility of oppressors themselves. The US sanctions and embargo on Cuba is held up by many as being more punitive than remedial. An example of targeted sanctions are reinforced European Union measures against members of the Burmese judiciary responsible for the legal persecution of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and against state-run enterprises and the key personnel of the ruling junta.

Sustaining International Support for Civil Society

The importance of civil society in forming the basic building blocks of democratic governance cannot be overstated. The encouragement and assistance of links forged with civil society outside were instrumental in the formation of broad-based coalitions of activists and reformers in such struggles as Chile or South Africa.

Civil society's emergence can be based on a wide range of groups that may not have explicit political goals. In South Africa, many ANC organizers had their first experience of the dynamics of an autonomous

group in setting up football clubs. Local groups formed from the full spectrum of social activity including issues of women's and youth rights, ecological protection, a free press, culture and performance, home or land owners' rights, and professions such as law or architecture, represent essential human capital. They benefit from the support of the extensive international networks of foundations, agencies, and organizations in democratic countries with a mandate to promote contact and democracy development across borders. Helping them make the connections is an essential task of the new democratic diplomacy.

Authoritarian regimes are increasingly limiting space for civil society to operate and often ban outside financial and other assistance for civil society from foreign governments. Indeed, rulers such as Vladimir Putin attempt to portray reformers as being in the pay of foreign embassies. Cuba has made it a criminal act to accept such financial support. In an extreme example, the prosecution in recent show trials of reformers in Tehran charged the accused with being "arms of the velvet revolution... the women's movement, the human rights movement, the labor-syndicate movement, non-governmental organizations and civil-ethnic movements." In effect, the prosecutor was indicting the Iranian people.

But such paranoid circumstances can make direct embassy and other external financial support, however modest, risky for local civil society, and especially for the recipients. Indirect extension of support through international advocacy groups and organizations may in some circumstances offer apt alternatives for all concerned. Such NGOs do often receive democratic government financing under growing democracy support programs, but their independent operation in the field should demonstrably be at arms' length to government, which in any case often enhances their credibility and effectiveness.

Democracy-building and the pursuit of human rights are secular political issues for the vast majority of activists. However, there is a long history of faith-based groups assuming active roles. The Roman Catholic Church played a central ethical and practical role in comforting opponents of the dictatorship in Poland, Chile and the Philippines. The martyrdoms of Archbishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador, and of the Maryknoll sisters, have inspired countless Salvadorans and democrats everywhere. Buddhist monks' are at the forefront of opposition to dictatorial rule in Burma / Myanmar, and in support of human rights in Tibet today. The Muslim Brotherhood in its various forms has effectively challenged authoritarian rule in countries in the Middle East. In Cuba, religious communities draw social partnership and development support from related congregations outside.

It is not surprising that the sense of values at the core of democracy support in foreign policy has also helped enlist the support of faith-based groups in promoting human rights abroad. Particularly noteworthy was the expulsion of the South African Dutch Reformed Church from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches which deepened the sense of isolation felt by those parts of the public on whose support the apartheid regime relied.

Church groups are at the forefront of advocacy for development assistance as well, and many support faith-based NGOs such as World Vision, Caritas, or Catholic Relief Services. The San Egedio Foundation is an example of a faith-based group dedicated to the mediation and peaceful settlement of disputes.

ELECTIONS

Although there is much more to democracy than free and fair elections, the right of people to freely choose their representatives in government is a basic requirement of democracy.

International agencies help and advise in the technical organization and administration of elections, as well as the elaboration of electoral laws. Several development assistance programs support projects designed to assist and engage greater public understanding of how citizens benefit from and participate in the electoral process.

Such regional or inter-regional organizations as the European Union, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the OAS, or the Commonwealth of Nations, formally prescribe democratic practice as a pre-condition of membership, and monitor and verify elections as free and fair or not. However, some OSCE members pay only lip service to democratic practice and even contest the organization's prerogatives to verify their elections, some of which have not been judged free and fair.

An example of international cooperation in election support was the ASEAN-led "Friends" of Cambodia exercise before, during, and after the first Cambodian-run multi-party elections in 1998, including the establishment and counseling of an inaugural National Election Commission. Indonesia and the Philippines headed a multi-nation group and with prominent Japanese involvement, brokered talks to permit all political leaders in exile to return to participate. The elections resulted in a hung Parliament and diplomats encouraged and helped King Sihanouk then broker a negotiated and stable political outcome (that unfortunately did not progress to full democratic transition).

When elections are at risk of being manipulated, a full range of international contacts and experience in mobilizing civil society can come into play. Ongoing NGO contacts had a key role in electoral crisis management such as occurred in Ukraine in 2004, or earlier in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, and Georgia, and later in Kyrgyzstan. The success in redeeming the 2004 election's integrity in Ukraine was due to the democratic and reform movements' mass protests and pressures, but sustained international support over time from governments, embassies, and people-to-people NGOs played an important background role, as the *Handbook* case-study on Ukraine will demonstrate. The fact that the 2009 presidential election has been widely judged fair and free is an encouraging sign of institutionalized behavioral change.

The 2008 presidential elections in both Kenya and Zimbabwe have been especially challenging. The Kenyan experience shows the importance of helping emerging democracies to do more than mimic election management techniques: human rights need to be embedded in practice and in law so that winning partisan or ethnic majorities do not suppress minority losers. Effective mechanisms for mediation of conflicts are needed to ensure post-election stability. Office-holders need to habituate themselves to the competition of those who legitimately oppose them, which does run against the grain of custom in many societies.

When elections take place in thoroughly non-transparent conditions, as in Iran's presidential election in June, 2009, where there is no independent electoral commission, nor foreign observers, and where opposition representatives were pushed away from scrutiny of the transport and opening of ballot boxes and the counting of ballots, a regime pays an enormous price in international credibility. But the costs internally run even deeper. Ultimately, regimes without demonstrable, verifiable, public support through a legitimate and transparent electoral process will be contested and will fall.

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

As noted earlier, holding elections represents only one of many starting points for democracy. In some cases, election winners once in power are tempted to limit democracy or slide back toward outright autocracy. "One person, one vote, one time" was a slogan skeptical of democracy in South Africa, and has been used to deny office to the Muslim Brotherhood in more than one Arab country.

Sadly, the slogan has described a real tendency elsewhere. Elections are abandoned or become rigged in order to preserve power, with a deeply corrosive effect on public morale which can endure for many years. Publics whose protests had led to the introduction of democratic reform can re-ignite when the outcomes slide back into authoritarianism as in Kyrgyzstan or are overturned by the military as in Thailand.

Dictatorship is seldom only about one-man rule. As Morgan Tsvangirai has pointed out when he was opposition leader in Zimbabwe, a political culture of abuse and corruption can outlive any specific authoritarian leader, as beneficiaries seek to consolidate and perpetuate their dominance. The security apparatus and other elites that repressive leaders install to maintain order and their own power acquire vested interests against change, and often become the real powers behind authoritarian government.

There are multiple examples of nonviolent transitions being enabled by the negotiation of exit strategies for authoritarian leaders having to cede power, as in April, 2010 when ousted Kyrgyz president Kurmanbek Bakiyev fled to Minsk in an arrangement brokered with Belarus by the presidents of the US, Russia, and Kazakhstan (although communitarian violence and division remain major challenges).

There is a dual time-frame to democracy development: the short-term challenges and opportunities of winning the right to free elections, and the longer haul of democratic consolidation which requires democratic support to continue long after the first elections are held.

Unfortunately, the attention of too many democratic donor countries tends to flag once sufficiently free and fair elections have been held. There is a “legitimacy moment” when a new democracy needs immediate international support. Yet, it is only at this point that the really hard chore of transparent and accountable self-government begins. The behavioral difficulties of transiting from a totalitarian society to a democratic one became abundantly clear in the republics of the former USSR. Developmental and governance support are interdependent and need to be sustained.

Most fledgling democracies do not need to confront armed counter-revolution that contests the transition to democracy, although as former Mayor of St. Petersburg, the late Anatoly Sobchak said at the time of the attempted Russian *putsch* in 1991, for a while “democracy and dictatorship are living side by side.” In 1996, Sierra Leone managed fair and successful elections despite the efforts by a rebel rejectionist army to block them. However, the development assistance needed to consolidate the fragile democracy was not forthcoming even though resident ambassadors of potential donor democracies tried to persuade their capitals of its importance and urgency. The initial democratic experiment under President Kabbah fell within a few short years to the armed rebels bent on seizing power. (Progress toward democracy has since been restored).

New and fragile democracies need sustained assistance. The establishment of the International Centre for Democratic Transition in Budapest, endorsed by the Community of Democracies at its Biennial Conference in Santiago in 2005, was designed to aggregate 20 years of efforts by the international community to support democratic societies by offering to aspiring democracy activists the experiences of successful transitions, and to help those in transition consolidate their gains. Over those 20 years, errors of foresight and misplaced emphasis abound, but lessons are available.

For the Community of Democracies, what is clear, as Fareed Zakaria has warned, is that the “long, hard slog” of democratic consolidation means that donor and partner democracies must accept “constant engagement, aid, multilateral efforts and a world not of black and white, but of grey.”

The citizens of the new democracies are the ones who will bring clarity and definition to their society. External support plays a secondary role in helping to provide them with the greater capacity and means their development process requires. Of course, again, its design is to support their self-empowerment to choose their own government representatives and policy goals. As President Salvador Allende predicted for Chile, it is the people who make history. It is then up to them to perform what Foreign Minister Sikorski refers to as the “audit function” of elected government, through vibrant participatory and representative democracy, buttressed by free and responsible media. But all this requires mentoring and

support.

We can see that successful democratic transition has been realized on every continent. No people anywhere should be judged as incapable or ineligible for ultimately settling their own destiny, nor judged as “not ready” as has happened in Hong Kong, or has been falsely claimed by some officials in Russia to justify the subtraction of newly-hewn democracy in that country over the last decade.

Ten Features of Successful Democratic Transition.

To sum up, and drawing from the *Handbook's* ongoing consultative process and workshops on how diplomats can best support democracy development, some basic, if somewhat self-evident, conclusions can be adduced about the process of democratic transition.

1. What happens in a country emerges from its own citizens, not from outside. As Freedom House has put it, “The men and women of each country are really the authors of their own democratic development.” Change cannot be imported or exported.
2. There is no single model or template for democratic development. Each trajectory is different, depending on traditions and states of readiness.
3. The building blocks of change are in civil society. Civil society necessarily forms a broad tent that includes citizens organized for any peaceful civil purpose. As Alexis de Tocqueville put it, “civil society makes citizens” and also places a limit on the scope and power of government itself.
4. Organic and durable change is usually bottom-up, rarely elite-driven, and is often generated by functional causes and socially or culturally-oriented groups with practical and non-political aims.
5. Successful transition relies on behavior. It is not a process to be downloaded or transferred.
6. Democracy thus has to be learned and over time. It helps if the new government makes a determined effort to instill a democratic education through education. It is essential for established democracies to keep chronological perspective and humility about comparisons.
7. Free and fair elections constitute only one of many starting points. Equally decisive for representative electoral democracy is the acceptance of the transfer of power, with respect for inclusivity of minorities.
8. Violence is rarely effective as a force for change, as repressive governments have a near-monopoly on instruments of violence, and the risk of violence alienates many citizens from campaigns in favor of change. But nonviolent civil disobedience has historically been an important determinant of the course of events, as well as an essential preparation for post-transition responsibilities.
9. Democracy needs security – and needs to ensure it. In the hierarchy of needs, safety always predominates.
10. To sustain popular acceptance, democracy must deliver beneficial outcomes – transparency, fairness, justice, and adequately-shared economic progress.

COMMITTED DIPLOMATS WORKING TOGETHER

It is also self-evident that the effectiveness of democratic development support is enhanced when democratic partners work together.

Individual and sometimes concerted action – representation on human rights, or activity in support of democratic development – is what the Community of Democracies members’ diplomatic missions can aspire to achieve on the ground. The succeeding Chapter on Toolbox applications is meant to spell out the ways such individual and coordinated efforts have succeeded, or not, in the past.

Chapter 3: The Diplomat's Toolbox

INTRODUCTION – A MULTILATERAL PROJECT FOR BILATERAL REALTIONS

Chapter 3 sets out from three perspectives the sorts of opportunities and constraints diplomats encounter in democracy development support: 1) the resources and assets at a diplomat's disposal; 2) the ways in which diplomats have deployed these assets in support of civil society, democratic development, and human rights in a multitude of situations over the last decades; and 3) their applications in favor of local partners, policy goals, and programs. Clearly, the local context is paramount, including the attitude, sometimes hostile, of local authorities.

It is emphasized that these are tools of “soft power.” As set out earlier, a review of the many narratives of democratic transition of the last decades shows that just as democracy cannot be imposed on a people from outside, nor are democratic activists likely to succeed using violent means from inside.

The context for the presentation which follows is that of **bilateral** diplomatic representation: what embassies and diplomats in dealings with civil society and local authorities can do on their assignments to respond helpfully to requests to support democracy's development.

There is, of course, considerable activity in **multilateral** fora on human rights and democratic development. The *Handbook* project is itself an undertaking of a multilateral organization, the Community of Democracies.

“When the United Nations can truly call itself a community of democracies, the Charter's noble ideals of protecting human rights and promoting social progress in larger freedoms' will have been brought much closer.”

-Secretary-General Kofi Annan, at the founding conference of the Community of Democracies, Warsaw, 2000

Democratic development is now a major theme at the UN, particularly through the United Nations Democracy Fund. The UN provides extensive commitment to free and fair elections through its electoral support unit and the assistance provided by the United Nations Development Program to democracy development.

The UN Human Rights Council is meant to be a central instrument in the search for the advancement of human rights, although its effectiveness remains stymied by the maneuvering of some non-democracies determined to block scrutiny of their human rights abuses. The doctrine of non-interference in internal affairs continues to be invoked as a principle protecting such states for not safeguarding the human rights of their citizens.

Other intergovernmental organizations, such as the OSCE and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OAS, or the Commonwealth of Nations, consider democracy to be interdependent with the imperatives of economic development and human security and commit programs to democracy development support.

There is an important regional dimension. Evidence shows that mentoring of emerging democracies from regional partners is particularly effective because of the shared perspectives of regional and often social adjacency. Strengthening the capacity for democracy assistance within regional organizations is a current multilateral theme, including in Asia, the Americas, and across Europe.

However, this *Handbook* does not attempt to cover conference activity of diplomats associated with the development and guidance of the human rights and democratization agendas of multilateral fora. The *Handbook's* focus is on “in-country” mandates and activity associated with bilateral accreditations.

Scholars in the social sciences we have consulted in the preparation of this *Handbook* have recommended a ranking of “best practices” in an evidence-based analysis from the growing catalogue of examples of democracy development support. Clearly, some support practices will be more effective than others depending on all the circumstances and the mix of contextual issues. But there is reluctance within the Community of Democracies to generalize or theorize with prescriptive recommendations. In this Chapter, the *Handbook* follows methodology that is a) fact-based; b) descriptive rather than prescriptive; but c) which attempts to identify some general principles and approaches by citing specific cases of diplomatic engagement.

FOUR CAVEATS

The *Handbook* assumes that foreign ministries accept a need to adapt their bilateral diplomatic representation to the new paradigms of public diplomacy. But there are four noteworthy caveats:

- a) At any time, a country usually has a range of public and discrete interests engaged in a bilateral relationship. Diplomats in the field need to manage the range of interests simultaneously and effectively. There are many examples of human rights concerns and democracy support being soft-pedaled so as not to undermine security or economic goals in play in a relationship with an authoritarian country. But democracies should not pursue one in the belief that it must be at the expense of the other. The notion that there is a conflict between interests and values is false. They are inter-dependent. Support of democratic values is generally in the national interests of a democracy's diplomacy. A successfully-managed bilateral relationship can in fact usually be deployed to support the case of local NGOs and transparency. The spread of democracy buttresses international security as well as protection for investment and trade. Democratically-elected partners inter-relate in ways which favor predictability and assurance in international relations.
- b) Empowerment by capitals of local diplomatic initiative can be crucial, within a clear understanding of the interests and aims of the overall mission diplomats must represent. Diplomats in the field have to be able to react to swiftly-evolving events. Canadian diplomat Pierre Guimond described democracy support activity in Prague in the 1980s, “Diplomats have to know where the governments want to go in terms of foreign policy and then the ambassador is responsible for delivering the policy. But it's impossible for people in the capital city to decide ‘you should go to all the demonstrations, and you should do this and you should do that’. The foreign ministry knows what we do because we report. It is result-based, not event-based. It's not because we've been to 36 demonstrations that anything will happen. We were there because something is happening.” What “is happening” determines the outcome, and its fate is in the hands of local reformers and activists but with the legitimate support of democratic embassies, representing their democratic citizens at home. They need to feel confidence in their abilities to decide on the ground how to proceed.
- c) Time frames are unpredictable. On one hand, the impact of activity or demarches may not be apparent for some time. It takes consistent and sustained effort contributes to building the self-confidence of civil society and to restraining repressive behavior on the part of non-democratic authorities. Yet in authoritarian societies the gains of democracy can also come swiftly. Repressive regimes tend to implode from within. “Living in any authoritarian country, while you're in the midst of it, it's hard to see that they'll ever cede power or go away. But actually, they cause their own destruction. And their foundations are rotting. It's a question of time.” (Shari Villarosa, former US

- d) Lastly, as our case studies make clear, local conditions vary. Some authoritarian regimes are neuralgic about embassies connecting with civil society and a few are positively hostile about direct financial assistance, especially to advocacy groups. Such host country authorities may try to confine the activity of diplomats to interaction only with designated official channels. They often aim to restrict interaction with local civil society by withholding official access for diplomats they consider straying from these narrow confines. In the longer run these practices lead to international isolation for the authorities in question. There are international norms for ensuring diplomatic practice does not directly interfere with internal affairs, but there are also overriding obligations for governments to respect international norms with respect to human rights, and for democratic governments to persist in representation of these obligations, even though they may calibrate their practices differently to suit different locales.

1. TOOLBOX RESOURCES AND ASSETS

Diplomats can under-estimate their potential impact of the inherent resources and assets at their disposal to contribute to the validation of the activities of civil society. The following are some of the resources and assets diplomats can usually draw from. In the chapter and case studies which follow, the *Handbook* attempts to show how they have been applied in practice.

IMMUNITY; this unique asset of diplomatic immunity can be employed and virtually shared in ways which benefit individuals and groups pursuing democratic development goals and reform.

Nota bene: Host countries cannot withdraw immunity, but several have expelled diplomats for alleged interference in internal affairs. The excuse is often that they had supported specific political or partisan outcomes rather than democracy development in general. Intimidation is a frequent recourse of authoritarian regimes, including against the families of diplomats.

Examples: There is an extensive record of democratic governments’ diplomats preventing punitive state violence by their mere presence at the scene. In Kiev, in 2004, representatives of the French Embassy, the European Commission, and ODIHR arrived at the home of a youth leader as security forces were about to arrest him and other democratic activists present. Unaccustomed to witnesses they couldn’t intimidate, the state security agents retreated. In Nepal, in 2005, threatened dissidents had been granted visas by resident embassies; diplomats of asylum countries accompanied them to the airport and to departure gates to block their seizure by authorities. In Cuba, diplomats from several EU countries and the US have been appearing to support *Las Damas de Blanco*, wives of jailed prisoners of conscience, who have been harassed and intimidated by groups mobilized by the regime.

There is also a record of harsh state counter-reaction to intervention on the ground by diplomats against repression. In 1973, in Chile, diplomats from several democracies made their ways to the stadium and other locales where the military *putschists* had assembled arrested activists, many of whom were subsequently imprisoned, tortured and/or killed. The regime expelled the most prominent of the diplomats, Swedish Ambassador Harald Edelstam.

Expulsions of foreign representatives have since occurred under many repressive regimes, most recently in Sudan, Burma / Myanmar, and Belarus. But the number of times diplomats have deployed physical presence to discourage arbitrary repression of legitimate activity has increased to a larger degree, to considerable effect. Missions also have a record of using their immunity to provide asylum to democrats under threat, providing them shelter as the US Embassy did for Chinese scientist and dissident Fang Lizhi

who spent almost a year there after the Tiananmen protests in 1989.

It often serves the purposes of repressive regimes to attribute peaceful civic protest to outside agitation from foreign countries. The authorities in Iran have recently done so, and have actually placed local employees of the British Embassy on trial as surrogates for Embassy officials who have immunity, in an attempt to discredit the protests in the public mind. In such circumstances, diplomats are mindful of the need not to expose locally-engaged colleagues or others to the risk of arbitrary retribution, without, however, diluting the right and value to be themselves in direct contact with civil society. Ultimately, the actions of host country authorities against foreign embassies will be costly to the country and will deepen diplomatic isolation.

There is a long history of repressive governments warning individual diplomats that their activities threaten to compromise their immunity, and that expulsion could follow. Such warnings are often accompanied by presentation of police photos of diplomats attending demonstrations, or meeting activists, a technique apartheid South Africa copied from police states in Eastern Europe and the USSR itself. Pressure sometimes extended to intimidation and even violence against family members to underscore the warning to diplomats that their immunity is relative. A more pernicious technique is the use of gangs of toughs to harass and try to intimidate diplomats by proxies, such as the disturbances created by the Kremlin-sponsored youth group “Nashi” against the UK Ambassador in Moscow. Old habits of intimidation die hard, even if they seldom succeed.

More complex are cases of authoritarian regimes such as Cuba that withdraw normal access to local authorities to diplomats they allege are supporting local opposition or reform activists and movements. But here too there are costs as reciprocal access will be curtailed against the country’s own diplomats abroad. Most democratic embassies in Cuba have managed to sustain a supportive relationship with representatives of civil society despite the state’s attitude.

Such efforts to intimidate and discourage outreach to civil society have usually been in vain over the long-term. The consequences of reciprocal action to curtail access and mobility abroad for their own diplomats, and the costs in terms of the relationship’s benefits are often enough for authorities to accept ground rules for access for diplomats to civil society that are reasonable.

That being said, there are examples emerging of a genre of isolated and internationally shunned dictatorial regime which is indifferent to or which disdains the benefits of diplomatic interchange altogether, to the costs of local society. Diplomats in Belarus and Burma/Myanmar have been working in such an atmosphere of withdrawal from international reality, as our case-studies on those countries will illustrate. The actions of the government of Iran against diplomatic missions have been similarly harsh from the time that the revolutionary regime authorized the occupation of the US Embassy and the holding of diplomatic personnel hostage in 1979. There is a side to the government that is indifferent to costs to Iran internationally of such conduct. As our case study illustrates, dominant circles in the Cuban political/security apparatus are indifferent to foreign public opinion, international norms, or even the benefits the Cuban people could derive from greater outside contact.

THE SUPPORT OF HOME AUTHORITIES; such support from their own authorities in sending capitals provides diplomats with effective leverage, the ability to link benefits to behavior, and in extremis, the opportunity to recommend the imposition of sanctions.

Nota bene: Diplomatic relations are reciprocal. As benefits are a two-way street, their leverage can work as much in favor of greater freedom of action for diplomats in support of civil society as it can as a weapon against them by local authorities. Diplomats can urge their own capitals to facilitate or discourage

access for visiting host country officials seeking potentially advantageous business or other partners, and home-state cooperation programs and connections. Diplomats also generate crucial support from home authorities when their own nationals come under attack abroad.

Once on an assignment, multi-tasked diplomats are often stressed under the burden of a variety of reporting and representational requirements. Reports indicate a tendency of senior managers to discourage ongoing democracy development activity in favor of more apparently immediate bureaucratic functions. This argues for clear and explicit corporate support from headquarters for human rights and democracy defense as core priorities of the country programs.

Coup and crisis management: Many episodes requiring the support and even intervention of diplomats develop rapidly. It is essential that officers in the field be able to respond to the requirements without worry that their actions will be second-guessed at headquarters, and their careers affected negatively. Otherwise, hesitant embassies may fail to oppose in time arbitrary uses of force by the government, or by perpetrators of a coup against a legitimate government, as was the case of some democratic embassies in Moscow in September 1991. This is a powerful argument for training foreign service officers in democracy support and human rights beforehand. Case study simulation is an increasingly frequent preparatory tool for diplomats.

Examples: The leaders of authoritarian states generally want international prestige and positive reception on international travel, not to mention business partnerships sought by industry and economic interests at home. This enables democratic embassies to condition their support for helping to arrange such media, political, and business contacts on moderation of anti-democratic behavior.

In cases when authorities try to intimidate diplomatic representatives, the support of home authorities is crucial. Canadian diplomats reacted to South African Foreign Ministry warnings of expulsion in the 1980s by pointing out that the South African Embassy in Ottawa would suffer swift retaliation with a corresponding negative impact on South African economic and other interests.

It is now apparent that in 2004, the warning by senior US diplomats that the United States Government would freeze personal off-shore assets of Ukrainian officials in the event of government repression had considerable restraining impact on potentially violent behavior.

Sanctions can be a powerful weapon to moderate repressive behavior, provided they have sufficiently widespread international support. But if they are invoked out of general enmity, they can be counter-productive, enabling an authoritarian regime to claim a role of patriotic defense against outside interference.

Even when regimes feign indifference as Pinochet did when the US cut off all but humanitarian aid to Chile in 1976, the international opprobrium of sanctions stings, as does the economic impact.

Selective targeting of responsible top officials' personal off-shore financial and other transactions, as well as those of their families, is increasingly used against anti-democratic regimes, such as in Zimbabwe and Burma/Myanmar. Diplomats on the ground advise home authorities on timing, targeting, and potential impact overall. For example, the EU's targeted sanctions of travel bans and asset freezes on 31 individuals in Belarus, and 126 in Zimbabwe, were developed in consultation with EU missions. As mentioned earlier, the EU has recently widened and deepened targeted sanctions in Burma/Myanmar on the same basis.

It should be borne in mind, however, that the threatened use of sanctions can sometimes be more influential in promoting behavior modification than the finality of sanctions themselves.

A cautionary note about **megaphone diplomacy** is called for. Taking a public stand to denounce the clear abuse of rights of individuals, or suppression, is important. But if the motivation is more to cater to a domestic public audience by “bashing” an adversary in public, the effect on the ground for embassies and democratic civil society allies can be negative. Very often, private demarches to an authoritarian government and low-key media references will have more concrete outcomes. Diplomats may find they need to discourage home authorities from seeking to reap tempting domestic political dividends from such threats against unpopular regimes. Sanctioning an unpopular regime can have the effect of punishing the most vulnerable in civil society, or curtailing exposure to international visitors and other beneficial contacts with the outside.

International solidarity is very pertinent particularly since the impact of sanctions can be neutralized when there are off-setting flows of material support from non-democracies or opponents of sanctions, as in Zimbabwe, Burma/Myanmar, or Belarus today. Iran receives reinforcement for repressive behavior from its beneficial validation from, for example, Venezuela, which professes to be like-minded.

When nationals who are human rights activists are threatened or arrested, the declaration of support for their positions can be crucial. As James Mawdsley, who was imprisoned in Burma / Myanmar for human rights work, put it, there are “ways in which consular duties were more than consular.” He commented “If the FCO had not said the same thing on the outside, I would have been beaten up. But the regime was too afraid to beat me up over issues where the FCO gave me backing.”

INFLUENCE; in the new paradigm of public diplomacy, diplomats more consciously represent their whole society to the host society, beyond traditional government-to-government communication. The reputation of the society they represent and project locally, its experience, values, and capacities to help, are deployable assets. Democracies which have only recently emerged from repressive conditions have experience that has special value. The effect of public diplomacy is obviously reinforced where the sending country's institutions, achievements, governance and life-styles have appeal locally, adding credibility by the force of example in dialogue with local authorities on democratic development. Additionally, multilateral organizations follow a variety of plans and practices to encourage members in the effort to build democratic and transparent governance.

Examples: Countries in transition tend to identify with the examples of those to which they can readily relate. The most applicable examples can often be those of countries with recent comparable experience in democratization. As a Czech Ambassador expressed his country's interest in democracy support, “We were grateful for the help we received from the West in the 1980s. So it should be a priority in our foreign policy to help.”

The European Union's requirement that applicants for membership fulfill the “*acquis communautaire*” of democratic and effective governance has had a profound influence on building what is an enlarging arc of stability and democracy across Europe.

Outside inducements to undertake a rigorous program of democratization and institution-building also emerge from conditionalities that are increasingly prominent features of multilateral and bilateral relationships on every continent, including from regional organizations, though there is often a yawning gap between theory and practice.

African peer pressure, the efforts of the African Union, and the best practices approach of The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as positive governance conditions from international economic institutions, have had positive effect in several African countries. However, to date, only a few African countries have followed up with the complete self-assessments of governance

and action programs intended by the APRM (African Peer Review Mechanism).

Their work of African democracies should in principle be reinforced by the obligations of membership in the Commonwealth of Nations and l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie both of which state the encouragement of democracy and human rights to be at the core of their activity and purpose. (The relevant Harare, Millbrook, and Bamako Declarations are included in the Annex.) The ability of democratic forces to prevail in such African countries as Ghana, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, and Mali are examples of these shared efforts. The Pan-African Parliament created in 2004 adopted in 2007 the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. However, by mid 2010, it had been ratified by only four states.

The Organization of American States reinforces the strength of democratic development in Latin America, recently taking a strong stand against what was labeled a military *coup d'état* in Honduras. ASEAN is making governance increasingly part of its mandate, as can be seen by its criticism of the regime in Burma/Myanmar. Australia's enhanced regional cooperation programs via the Pacific Islands Forum place governance development assistance at the center of their mandate; both Australia and New Zealand have been strong players in efforts to encourage democratic outcomes in East Timor, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji.

The central point here is that outside support is invaluable in encouraging civil society to perceive that they can succeed in their effort to construct in a nationally-suitable way democratic and effective governance. This outward-looking aspiration provides diplomats geared to the merits of public diplomacy multiple opportunities. By choosing to showcase those aspects and features of their own democratic society which are most admired – for example, the way US diplomats can bond with Lebanese esteem for the high quality of American post-secondary education – diplomats can at least help to compensate for any perception of policy differences between governments, or public resentment of foreign policy stands. The US Fulbright program and the EU's Erasmus Mundi constitute people-to-people tools, which have many counterparts elsewhere, and which can greatly improve the context within which US and European diplomatic representatives operate. But diplomats whose countries have themselves had recent experience in winning and consolidating democratic reform may be able to bring special credibility to bear.

FUNDS; small amounts of post funding can be precious to start-up reform groups and NGOs. While most democracy development financial support is provided through NGOs and institutions, small-grant seed money for grassroots organizations from discretely-administered and easily-disbursed post funds can have swift direct positive effect. However, some authoritarian governments have taken issue with the practice of direct embassy financial support to local civil society and have made it illegal. This calls for selective alternative strategies.

Examples: In 2002/03, the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs established its “Transformation Policy Unit and Fund” to enable embassies to support democratization, human rights, and transition-related projects in countries with repressive regimes. Most of these projects are deliberately small to enable disbursement directly to local civil society actors without the local government's scrutiny and involvement.

There are numerous examples of embassies being empowered in this way. Sweden provides its embassies funding specifically for democracy development support. In South Africa, in the 1980s, the Canadian government created a large embassy-administered fund with a mandate for direct assistance to civil society, and especially assistance to victims of apartheid. The advantage of having the embassy administer the fund directly drew from the perception that diplomatic representatives on the ground are, in liaison with international NGOs, best placed to identify suitable partners and beneficiaries. The funds helped groups to sustain essential activity and often enabled small but identity-building successes, such as the

distribution of t-shirts, or publicity for civil society rallies, and funds were also dispersed in aid of legal support for human rights defenders.

Many embassies from democratic countries in Russia in the early 1990s had also found that such small amounts they could disburse rapidly from post funds directly to soup kitchens, orphanages, women's groups, etc., were having a clearly helpful humanitarian effect and contributing to the rudimentary beginnings of civil society. Diplomats report they also earned a degree of public credit often not available from the heavily-funded large-scale infrastructure programs which characterized transitional assistance in those years. In Ukraine in 2004, embassy funding requiring little if any paperwork was critical to the survival of such youth groups as Pora! that despite a lack of much administrative capacity were able at a decisive time to stand up for the integrity of Ukraine's elections and for democracy itself.

However, there is a down side in several countries where direct financing of advocacy groups is problematic. Some governments, have made outside material support for advocacy or opposition groups a major issue. Most notoriously, Cuba has used embassy financial support as evidence to prosecute and convict activists.

Russian authorities took exception to the role they allege that foreign foundation and embassy funds played in helping to finance the "color" revolutions in Europe. They charged that the funding overstepped the line by supporting specific partisan political outcomes. In fact, outside financing was at the margin. Nonetheless, there were several years of adversarial attitudes from Russian authorities toward Russian NGOs and severe constraints placed on the operational mobility of international NGOs, although President Medvedev has recently been seeking a positive *modus vivendi*.

Non-political organizations that constitute the foundations of civil society are often able still to benefit from well-intended embassy support, as even most repressive regimes still make a differentiation between development NGOs and advocacy groups.

Obviously, diplomats have to be careful not to expose local members of civil society to the risk of political or even legal retribution. NGOs often can fill the role of providing small amounts of funding, but they do not act as surrogates for embassies.

SOLIDARITY is a valued asset at all phases of democratic development. Solidarity in democratic assistance programs among like-minded missions and international NGOs multiplies impact and minimizes duplication. Solidarity also enhances political messaging through witnessing trials, joint demarches on human rights and other issues, and reduces the ability of authoritarian regimes to play the commercial interests of partners off against each other. Within civil society, NGOs and democratic reformers and activists value the solidarity of mentors with prior experience in democratic reform. Diplomats can assist in making the connections.

Examples: Solidarity among diplomats has been especially important in support of human rights defenders and democratic activists on trial for their activities. This conveys to the authorities that the conduct of such proceedings is indeed being monitored by democratic partners, and not only by the country which may be more specifically concerned if there is an issue of dual nationality or some other national tie to defendants. Prominent early examples would include the trial of Nelson Mandela in 1963, and the trials of Vaclav Havel and other human rights activists in Prague in the 1980s, followed by many in recent years, such as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon or Ayman Nour in Cairo.

Solidarity can also extend to the monitoring of prosecution of violence against human rights defenders, when its perpetrators are brought to trial because of international or other pressures -- for example, methodical attendance by resident EU diplomats at the trial of security personnel who had beaten to death

Canadian-Iranian photojournalist Zahra Kazemi-Ahmadabadi in Tehran.

Solidarity in diplomatic representations by joint demarches can also multiply effectiveness. The virtually unprecedented prosecution and trial of locally-engaged employees of the British Embassy in Tehran in 2009 has been met with a joint response from all EU Missions. Joint demarches can also have particular impact when close allies of the demarching democracies are experiencing stressful human rights situations, such as the case in 2005 when the US, the UK, and Canada made a joint demarche to Afghan authorities against curbs on freedom of speech, though less successfully on several occasions over laws circumscribing the status of Afghan women.

Solidarity among donor democracies and with international NGOs has also been instrumental in avoiding duplication or errors of omission in democratic support programs. In Serbia in 2000, democracies and NGOs cooperated via a “donors’ forum” which greatly increased the effectiveness and coverage of such assistance, a technique now in good use among democratic country embassies and NGOs in many locales.

The most effective form of solidarity among donors and democracy supportive-embassies is that which avoids competition and which benefits from comparative advantage: as stated by a Czech Ambassador, “We learned how to plug-in from the Dutch, the Norwegians and the US. We tried to find where we would have the most value-added, and learned quickly that our democratic transition experience was that. So we concentrated on transfer of know-how. Not everything is transferable, of course. But we still had a lot to offer. If they want, they can even learn from our mistakes.”

In the transitional countries of Europe building up to and following the great changes of 1989, mentoring by successive reformers contributed to the self-confidence and effectiveness of catalytic groups in civil society – *Solidarność* had close ties to Czechoslovak and Hungarian dissidents in the late 1980s; Slovakian reformers helped Croatians, Serbs, and Ukrainians in 2000-2004; the Serbian youth movement OTPOR aided Pora! in Ukraine in 2004. Many of these efforts were facilitated or channeled by diplomats from the countries which had undergone the earlier reforms, a pattern which has been apparent in Latin America and which now characterizes the foreign policies of many newer democracies in their relationships throughout the world.

LEGITIMACY; Many democratic activists would agree with Francis Fukuyama that “in today’s world, the only serious form of legitimacy is democracy.” Diplomats can draw for support from a variety of basic international agreements (set out in the Annex). Examples include the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. These put forward the international norms which diplomats of democratic countries can legitimately claim to represent. Repressive jurisdictions may well maintain such texts are not internationally binding on non-signatories and that such activities amount to interference in internal sovereign matters by foreign representatives. But international norms on human rights are increasingly conditioning behavior and limiting the number of countries which insist on the primacy of national sovereignty, in part because specially mandated regional and other transnational authorities monitor performance.

Examples: Even authoritarian non-democracies go to elaborate lengths to buttress their claim to legitimacy through recourse to superficial facets of democratic practice: rigged elections, and the elaborate use of the word “democratic” to describe republics that are anything but democratic.

On one hand, the affirmation of democratic belief provides considerable leverage to democratic governments to try to persuade such governments to open up more to their own civil society in reality.

But on the other, such governments are all too ready to describe as illegitimate the support democratic

embassies and NGOs provide civil society. These objections run counter to a wide body of international and regional agreements calling for open democratic governance. The UN Secretary-General's Special Representatives on Human Rights, and on Torture, the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa, the African Union itself, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the OAS, the OSCE, the Commonwealth of Nations, and "*La Francophonie*" are examples of certifying bodies diplomatic representatives can point to for validation of the legitimacy of their own efforts at democracy development support.

Regional agreements have shown themselves to be particularly effective in conditioning the behavior of an increasing number of countries, although there are regimes which remain hermetically sealed from outside opinion, such as Burma/Myanmar, Uzbekistan, or North Korea. The most prominent example of an effective regional agreement is the Helsinki accords of the CSCE, which in the 1980s provided the benchmark textual references for Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, and for the Sakharov-Bonner campaign in the USSR, and for freeing up information and expression generally. These agreements were effective because they had been signed by the states in question, and provided a platform for citizens to confront them about the contradiction between word and deed.

The signature in 2008 by Cuba of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which means to guarantee the rights to self-determination of citizens, their peaceful assembly, their freedom of worship, and their freedom to leave the country is a potentially similar example. But the Cuban regime has done little since to alter long-standing practice to deny these rights. However, the fact of Cuban signature provides diplomats with a commitment to point to in discussion of human rights with Cuban authorities.

2. FIFTEEN WAYS DIPLOMATS HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE

In putting their assets to work on behalf of supporting civil society's democrats and human rights defenders, diplomats draw from a toolbox of activities and techniques. The tools described below are potentially powerful, especially when deployed using the pro-active and public outreach approach which is the hallmark of modern democratic diplomacy.

Arranged in escalating sequence from more conventional diplomatic activities to more interventionist action, taken together these tools offer diplomats the potential to develop and refine specific professional skill sets in democracy development support. These skills are also integrally related to skills needed for work in support of economic and social development, as well as human security. Democracy, after all, does not sit astride a hierarchy of needs: economic development, human security, and human rights are inter-dependent and equally important to the human condition.

Nor do diplomats themselves sit astride the international community. Just as a vibrant civil society represents the essential foundation of democratic development, so international civil society accounts for much of the content of public-to-public relations today. In this respect, diplomacy is a complement and conduit for broader currents of international democracy development assistance that are occurring continuously.

The Golden Rules

***LISTENING, RESPECTING, AND UNDERSTANDING;** all diplomats make it their task to try to grasp the culture, psychology, and situation of their countries of accreditation. When diplomats include local NGOs and groups on their initial rounds of calls on taking up their postings, it gives a boost to civil society. This is especially true for the introductory calls by incoming heads of missions. It should be mandatory at the outset to seek advice from local civil society on how best to support their efforts.*

Respecting and understanding the different roles and interests of all partners in the democratic development process is a basic requirement for productive relationships and successful support. Outsiders also have to understand and respect the ways in which the local reform process needs to take account of traditional values: social and political practices common in one country can be abrasive in another.

Nota bene: Overall, the first maxim of “respecting” is to listen (ideally in the language of the country). Deference to local culture is essential whenever possible. This includes the need for diplomats to recognize the risks and sacrifices incurred by democratic activists that protest authoritarian regimes, as well as the challenges reformers face in actually running for political office in semi-authoritarian settings. Dissidents need to make and offer the judgment whether contact with diplomats is protective and helpful, or whether it is untimely and risky. But their judgment should prevail. When it is imperative for civil society to demonstrate that their initiatives are undertaken without support from embassies, diplomats could defer to the different and often primary roles played by international NGOs in local activity.

Such as: respecting NGOs - there were demonstrable lifts to civil society groups when newly arrived US Ambassador Harry Barnes made introductory calls to them at the same time as calling on officials of the Pinochet regime in Chile. When the UK was in the Presidency of the EU in 2005, UK diplomats and officials consulted Russian NGOs prior to EU-Russia dialogue meetings, and took pains to debrief them afterward.

But it should always be recognized that in repressive situations democratic activists need space, and often discretion. A Czech Ambassador confides that countries which have themselves “experienced life under a repressive regime are often best placed to understand the situation of dissidents having to face their families and friends’ vulnerability to reprisal – loss of job, imprisonment, worse – for their anti-regime activity.” In Iran, a recent campaign by women’s groups to obtain a million signatures from Iranian women on a petition to improve the status of women would have had its credibility undermined if opponents could show evidence of support from outside. On occasion, democratic activists, human rights defenders, and reformers in Iran, Cuba, or elsewhere have sent the message that they needed for a time to pursue their work without outside support.

International NGOs are frequently closer to the ground than diplomats and often better able to pursue productive working partnerships with civil society. Diplomats need to know when to seek partnerships with them and when to recognize that the integrity of NGO work also needs distance from government connections, even when project funding is provided by government programs in capitals.

Whatever the country, its preoccupations and identity issues are functions of its unique history and diplomats need to show sensitivity to them.

In many traditional societies, local values can collide with the practices of outsiders. It is noteworthy that after the collision of US forces and traditional values in Iraq, cultural anthropologists are increasingly contributing to the training and preparation of personnel to be sent abroad on peacemaking or diplomatic missions.

In traditional Islamic societies, it has been necessary to respect the strength of tradition in supporting democratic transition on such essential but challenging issues as gender equality. Some diplomats such as US Ambassador Barbara Bodine in Yemen have been able to support expanded women’s rights without creating local traditionalist backlash by deferring to the need of local groups to build their bridges to others. However, in Afghanistan, the signing into law in 2009 of provisions reducing the status of women in accordance with Sharia law in order to obtain electoral support from certain tribal areas presented a

considerable dilemma for countries attempting to support at great cost the efforts to build democratic governance there.

SHARING: solidarity among democracies multiplies effectiveness. Like-minded embassies and engaged international NGOs need to share information, and practice project coordination and team play in order to optimize beneficial impacts. Monitoring elections is frequently done as a shared diplomatic project. All these efforts are most effective when local partners are also part of the sharing process and able to assume responsible local “buy-in”. Diplomats in the field can become “cohering agents” of support programs combining democracy and development.

Nota bene: It is generally easier to organize informal cooperation in the field than among capitals, especially among representatives of like-minded countries. Informal cooperation often also includes international NGOs which are well-placed to provide a wider and more authentic picture of grass-roots and technical activity to promote democracy development. An emphasis on “sharing,” however, must respect the differences in role between embassies and NGOs. As embassies diversify activity in democracy assistance, diplomats need to defer to the prior, primary, and often locally preferred engagements of NGOs in the field.

Such as: Missions regularly compare analyses of country situations, specifically regarding human rights in countries such as China, where the issues are complicated and evolving, making assessments difficult. In repressive situations such as in Burma/Myanmar, some democratic embassies work closely together to exchange information and coordinate strategies, and then regularly meet with a broader group of democratic embassies from the region.

The central point is that there should not be a competition among like-minded democratic missions, resident and non-resident, as described by a Czech Ambassador under “Solidarity” above. The best outcomes are when missions work within informal “affinity groups” permitting some to defer to work ongoing already, or to specifically advantageous roles of others, or even to compensate for the handicaps of others due to difficulties in their bilateral relations.

Diplomatic representatives share duties to monitor and verify functions such as court dates and trials of democracy activists or scholars, or when possible, cover such events in force, thereby highlighting the international political stakes for repressive regimes. The practice has been extensive, from South Africa in the 1960s to Burma/Myanmar and Iran today. Joint demarches are also *de rigueur* on human rights and democratic transparency. Of course, in recent trials of prisoners of conscience in China and Iran, diplomats have been excluded from witnessing legal proceedings.

Sometimes, because of specific and long-standing issues in bilateral relations, particular embassies/governments are more “radioactive” than others. This may leave more room for the less controversial to sustain contact and protection. A differentiation of roles which best enables particular countries to play to comparative strengths, credibility, and experience is very useful, without suggesting that such activity is a surrogate for the interests of others.

In Burma/Myanmar, some European democratic representatives plugged into other countries’ programs which were already running, such as the Netherlands’ “foreign policy training” seminars in the region for young refugees from Burmese ethnic groups. Some missions enjoy or have connections to cultural facilities which they share with other embassies, or make available to non-resident diplomats on a visit, as the French cultural organization, the *Alliance Francaise*, has done in Burma/Myanmar.

Sharing information on development issues, including on governance support activity, is becoming

recognized as essential to avoid duplication or omissions. The practice is now more frequent on the local level and here as well includes international NGOs and multilateral agencies active in the country. In rapidly-developing crises, democratic embassies and international NGOs have often set up informal coordinating and clearing-house groups for fast-disbursal of aid to local civil society and the electoral process, such as the “Donors Group” in Belgrade in 2000.

It is most productive when democratic host governments are themselves dynamic partners in the process (though not when more authoritarian regimes insist on control of all development funding, as in Nepal when NGO funds had to be channeled through the Queen).

In Bangladesh there is a “Local Consultative Group” which brings together 32 Bangladesh-based representatives of donor missions and multilateral agencies with key local officials. There are also supplementary groupings such as the “Like-minded Donor Group” comprising local representatives of Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. These groups work in turn with groups of NGOs, such as the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), or the Association for Development Agencies (ADAB), which have track records of enhancing the democratic input by civil society into the development process. The process can go beyond co-ordination into joint programming: In Ghana, with the support of a government and civil society seeking governance development assistance, like-minded donor countries (Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK) have created a collaborative \$8 million program (the Ghana Research and Advocacy Program).

There has been, of course, a contrary narrative of inadequate donor coordination particularly in circumstances of post-conflict reconstruction where the aid flows are very substantial and usually urgent. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the international tendency was initially toward too much humanitarian assistance, not always strategically coordinated, but insufficient development assistance. There was also inadequate coordination of planning and operations for development and security. Later, in Afghanistan, the aid effort began in 2001 with an unprecedented degree of donor coordination that enabled an overall development strategy. But in subsequent years, it fell much more to diplomats, aid officials, and the military of individual missions to try to ensure coordination and effectiveness on the ground. “Coordinating groups” proliferated with only mixed results as far as international coordination is concerned, though UN and NATO representatives are working now to encourage the integration of democracy support, development and defense in a coordinated way.

Truth in Communications

***REPORTING:** confidential assessment to home authorities is at the center of the traditional diplomatic role. Missions’ regular assessments of the local situation, capacity, and psychological, political, or even cultural constraints on the likelihood of a democratic process emerging or being successfully sustained can help the development of a template approach to benchmarks and norms to assist in comparisons and common evaluations by NGOs and centers of excellence. Accurate reporting of human rights situations forms the basis for international scrutiny and whether to initiate official intervention.*

Nota bene: Reporting must be demonstrably comprehensive and also balanced in its sourcing. Diplomatic professionals always heed the question as to whether their confidential and value-added reporting of circumstances and conditions in the host country draws from a wide range of contacts in the society (such as the “township attaches” at the British Embassy in South Africa, early 1990s) and avoids excessive deference to official sources or to over-arching security or other bilateral interests.

Such as: There are multiple examples of regular human rights reporting, since this is a core vocation of diplomatic representation. In high-profile and relatively open crisis situations, Mission reporting is

generally supplementary to that of international media but often plays a crucial role in providing context or important background. But in situations such as Burma/Myanmar today where international media have been basically expelled, the responsibility of missions to report the conditions and prospects for change is enhanced, though rendered more difficult by a regime very suspicious of contacts between citizens and foreign representatives. Diplomats, including ambassadors, have filled a gap caused by the expulsion of foreign journalists in Zimbabwe, embarking on fact-finding missions in the countryside to document beatings and intimidation of MDC supporters, that Zimbabwe security personnel have tried ineffectively to block.

Many examples of misleading diplomatic reporting exist. A failure to do people-level reporting has led to persistent and damaging misreadings of the public mood, assumptions of assured continuity in power, and missing the signs of impending ethnic or communal conflict. Some authoritarian regimes have objected to a strategic ally contacting their domestic opposition, or even reporting confidential adversary political analysis back home, a condition that constrained US official reporting on Iran in the 1970s, leading to an under-estimation of the public groundswell for reform. On the other hand, home country headquarters can themselves become over-reliant on their leaders' relationships with specific authoritarian leaders and discourage or ignore diplomatic reporting that is critical of the regime, as has happened with respect to Pakistan, Egypt, and Indonesia in the past, among many examples. Then, some situations are potentially so unprecedented in the experience of observers that there is a tendency of diplomatic representatives empathetic toward the country to "look away from the dark signs," as occurred in the build-up to unimaginable atrocity in Rwanda in 1994.

INFORMING; in circumstances where the host state attempts to interrupt or circumscribe access to information, providing the public with pertinent objective information is a public service of open diplomacy. Supporting the emergence of local independent media which is an essential companion of democratic governance is a valued contribution by democracies, as is assisting the development of objective public broadcasting in transitional and emerging democracies. From outside, several international support programs exist to enable Internet users in countries shutting down local networks and sites to access alternative servers beyond the regime's control.

Nota bene: The existence of a healthy independent local media sector is an essential component of democratic governance. Independent media support has in consequence become a basic tool of public diplomacy. The value of independent media outlets is commonly associated with enabling a plurality of voices, including responsible political opposition. From both developmental and governance points of view, the existence of sustainable independent media able to monitor and advocate the quality of

governance is an under-recognized but essential audit asset, including, of course, in developed democracies.

In the absence of free information, regular communication of news bulletins and information by Missions can help fill gaps and correct the record on international or other matters, especially as authoritarian regimes are wont to expel foreign correspondents who criticize them. International cooperative software programs can now be downloaded by Internet users in societies where broadcast or online transmissions are jammed in crisis situations to enable access to international news outlets such as BBC World Service, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio-France, Al Jazeera, etc. In such circumstances, diplomats can also, through interviews with international outlets, serve as witnesses of events and developments otherwise hidden from international view. These reports frequently find their way back to the closed society itself by being picked up by border-based local language border services, as exist among the Burmese refugee communities clustered over the border with Thailand.

Defense of journalists in support of such organizations as Reporters without Borders and PEN International is an important part of human rights defense. Iran and China lead the world for imprisonment of journalists reporting factual stories of journalistic merit, practices that will always stand in the way of normal relations with societies that enjoy freedom of the press.

The merits of adversarial broadcasting from outside vary. If broadcasts are essentially adversarial, such as US government sponsored and funded broadcasting into Cuba, they can tend to be discounted as propaganda. When they emphasize instead objectively presented news and non-political magazine content, such as the Farsi language reporting of BBC World Service that is feared by authorities because of its credibility, they can be very effective in enabling a fact-based counter-story to regime propaganda.

The mentality of repressive regimes emerges clearly from the indictments presented by the public prosecutor of Tehran against Iranian citizens in show trial in 2009. Those indicted were variously accused of having colluded with Western governments, foundations, and individuals in “exposing cases of violations of human rights,” training reporters in “gathering information,” and “presenting full information on the 2009 electoral candidates.” The charges suggest that Iranian citizens are meant to believe that abusing human rights, and repressing information, including on candidates for public office, are all in the national interest.

Such as: Helping start-up independent media outlets has been an increasing activity in democratic development support and there are many examples of such support, especially in transitional situations, such as *Ukrainska Pravda*, or *Feral Tribune*, in Croatia, or *Sud* in Senegal. In Senegal in 1985 a journalist/editor sought start-up funding for a desktop-published newspaper. The US Embassy put him in contact with the Ford Foundation and within months the daily newspaper *Sud* was on its way to its current preeminent position as a daily newspaper at the center of a conglomerate, *Sud Communication*. A diplomat there at the time observes, “Through its reporting it has made government more transparent and opened new channels for political dialogue thereby bolstering Senegal’s political system.”

The Portuguese Embassy in Moscow gave seed funding to a fledgling private radio station which became the flagship of a communications “empire.” In Algeria, democratic governments contributed to such start-ups but at the same time supported the improvement and expansion of standards and coverage on the part of state press and broadcasting.

Multiple international programs exist to support the upgrade of journalistic norms. Diplomatic officers scout for candidates for individual journalist support programs particularly suited to the circumstances of the country. In Colombia, for example, the UK Embassy proposed safety training for journalists, and a training program to help them report more effectively on specific issues there, such as child abuse. In some societies with severe limitations on the press, Czech Embassies have provided non-political courses in basic film and media training – how to write an article, work with a camera, and edit.

In post-authoritarian circumstances, state broadcasters in particular benefit from outside journalistic training. In South Africa, a consortium of public broadcasters from Australia, Britain, and Canada aided the conversion of radio and television from being instruments of state propaganda into responsible news and information organs. In all these transitional circumstances, diplomatic missions have useful contributions to make by providing access to content as well as to training.

Helping to use the visits of foreign democratic leaders and their in-country press events is also useful. For example, in Algiers, the robust exchanges between visiting political leaders and their accompanying press corps had an exemplary effect on the normally passive local journalists witnessing the journalistic give-and-take of the visitors.

Access to outside news is crucial in societies deprived of communications normal elsewhere, as in Burma/Myanmar where the cost of cell phones is about \$2,000, and where the regime has proposed to increase license fees for satellite TV sets from \$5 to \$1000, in an attempt to cut off access to outside information. In such circumstances, embassy and consular information offices, libraries, and cultural centers provide precious connections to the outside world. The American Cultural Center, Rangoon, is a survivor of the sorts of information outlets the US maintained decades ago, and plays a vital role in making books, DVDs, internet connections, seminars, and English lessons available to an avidly interested population. Burma/Myanmar's totalitarian regime which has sporadically expelled foreign journalists as during the latest violent repression of demonstrations in 2007, also interrupts Internet access. Embassies are able to provide access to those who are willing to expose themselves to security scrutiny from Burmese police. In the absence of journalists, certain democratic missions – Australia, the US, the UK and others – were able to report publicly to international news outlets what they were able to witness, and these reports were then played back to the Burmese especially via exile news organizations, often in frontier areas, where the state was not able to block incoming transmissions entirely. When all foreign news correspondents were expelled from Burma/Myanmar in 2007-2008, UK Ambassador Mark Canning objectively described to outside journalists the “fearful and angry” mood of the population, and provided analysis of the regime's probable intentions. His words found their way back to the Burmese public.

Diplomatic representatives of Community of Democracies members are in a position to represent to local authorities the position that a freer flow of information is inevitable. A counterintuitive example of outside intervention of this kind occurred when senior Gorbachev adviser Alexander Yakovlev informed communist authorities in Prague in 1989 that their practice of jamming the broadcasts of Voice of America was contrary to obligations undertaken under the Helsinki Convention to which both the USSR and the CSSR had formally subscribed.

Working with the Government

ADVISING; in transitional situations, working with local authorities and civil society in support of their capacity for effective and transparent democratic governance is a core vocation of most diplomatic missions and diplomats from Community of Democracies member states. Clearly, it is easier for democracies to work as partners with governments in transition. But engaging with authoritarian regimes on joint interests can build confidence that permits advice and representation on governance and human rights issues a better hearing.

Nota bene: Wide-spread transitional assistance programs for democracy development and consolidation are often coordinated by diplomatic Missions which also have a role in scouting for opportunities, making contacts, and identifying programs which are not working, as well as helping to ensure that assistance takes account of local conditions, capacities, and needs. Diplomats in the field can also advise how to support groups in civil society most capable of encouraging bottom-up and “middle-out” change essential to the process of democratic transformation.

Such as: Considerable experience has now been accumulated concerning advice to governments managing democratic transitions, especially in Europe post-1989, and in Africa. Initially, emphases were on economic governance, but increasing attention has been paid to reforms aimed at improving machinery of governance and oversight, and deepening democratic accountability, as well as advising on how to encode human rights, legislative and electoral practices, and the role of civil society. Diplomatic representatives have even been able to advise on areas believed to be culturally sensitive by situating the advice carefully, such as the work of many diplomats in counseling on the expansion of the rights of women.

The body of best practices over the years comprises a substantial record of different techniques. Often, regional programs to improve democratic governance have a special resonance as they draw more directly from experience of nearby countries which recently passed by roughly similar phases of democratic development. Diplomatic representatives who were part of that experience have a special credibility and role to play.

Some advice is transferable from direct analogous experience, such as Chile's counsel to South African authorities on the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a technique central to closure to the trauma of conflict that has been used in adapted forms elsewhere, such as Rwanda. As Gillian Slovo, South African writer and human rights activist has noted, there will be some more interested in truth than in reconciliation, but the two correspond to each other to varying degrees.

There is also a long record of ineffective or counter-productive practice, often from over-reliance on outside consultants with little experience with working conditions in the country. The founder of a Russian bank recalls asking outside financial consultants sent by an international financial institution to leave his premises, on the grounds their advice was hewn entirely from optimum conditions available in Western financial centers, but not in Moscow. He agreed to invite them back only if they first observed how local employees needed to relate to local conditions and capacities, and then tried themselves to function in the local circumstances before attempting to work together to upgrade the operation. It is up to donor missions to make the point that there may be an over-reliance on expensive outside consultants with little familiarity with local culture and practice, and to propose experts with more relevant expertise.

A 2009 article in *Foreign Affairs* by Patrice McMahon and Jon Western cites a Bosnian NGO officer: "Bosnians have come to understand the bargain well. Westerners came with money and ideas, wanting to do good. In the end, we waste their money and they waste our time."

As repeated several times in the *Handbook*, strategic partnerships with some authoritarian regimes are essential to international peace and security, and to national interests of the democracy concerned. As the US administration elected in 2008 points out, engagement can enhance the prospects for communicating key points about governance and transparency, and for legitimizing the space occupied by civil society. The key to credibility is consistency.

DIALOGUING; diplomats on the ground take part in, and supplement, regularly scheduled government-to-government human rights and democracy discussion. The aim is to ensure that democracy development and respect for human rights are maintained in balance near the center of the relationship, and that it is accepted by host authorities that cooperation programs are conditional on positive trends of governance. Such regular discussion can also aim to legitimize democracy development support work undertaken by missions in collaboration with local civil society. The promotion of dialogue processes to promote common ground in divided societies is a strong emphasis of such international organizations as International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) which has undertaken several participatory dialogue exercises in support of positive change in such countries as Guatemala, Mauritania, and Nepal.

Nota bene: It is important that such government to government discussions be regular. They need to cover the "end-state" aims in democracy development and not be confined to specific and sporadic human rights violations or outrages. In order to avoid the "fig leaf" effect of going through the motions for the sake of appearances, discussants should ideally not be limited to host country diplomatic authorities but also include authoritative representatives of "power ministries," as well as having the in-country support of security agencies of both sides.

Such as: many Community of Democracies members undertake human rights dialogues with partners under bilateral agreements, such as the “structural dialogues” of the EU, or the EU’s monitoring obligations under the “essential human rights clause” of the Cotonou Agreement between the EU and African, Caribbean, and Pacific area partners.

Several partners of China maintain human rights dialogues with Chinese authorities. The EU and the UK have urged China to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and have discussed how China might meet the requirements of Articles 6 (death penalty), 9 (arbitrary arrest and punishment), and 14 (right to a fair trial). There is interest among NGOs in seeing China also being held to fulfill Article 19 on freedom of information.

While any dialogue is better than none, the dialogues should always aim for some results on the broader picture of democratic governance; the risk is that reluctant regimes will only go through the motions and maintain the status quo in practical terms, and even pretend the dialogue confers a seal of approval. Or self-confident countries feeling the pressure may simply refuse to hold human rights dialogues, as was the case of Iran with the EU.

It is normal that degrees of disunity of purpose may emerge within the governments of transforming countries, between hard-line authoritarians and more outward-looking officials. The hard-line advocates who resist change are reinforced and emboldened if there is discernible a parallel competition of purpose on the part of representatives of democratic countries who are protecting special interests.

Human rights dialogues are without practical effect if the intelligence and security agencies of a repressive regime are absent from discussion of human rights, or worse, can claim the authority of ongoing privileged relationships with the security agencies of the sending democracy. Such a human rights and justice dialogue undertaken by the US Ambassador in Guatemala in 1994 was undermined by a parallel relationship of privilege and confidence between intelligence agencies. In general, the principle of “do no harm” has to be overriding in bilateral relationships across the board. Dictators rely for decisive support on their security services. Getting these to the point where they will not open fire on peaceful demonstrations for human rights is often the key moment in a transition. Military attaches and intelligence officers within embassies can be central assets in the diplomacy of democracy.

Dialogues on human rights and democratic governance reinforce subsequent bilateral demarches by diplomatic representatives on specific cases, as discussed below. They can also serve as the place to establish the legitimacy both of diplomatic contacts with civil society, and indirectly to validate certain activities of civil society, without implying that the civil society groups are acting on anything other than their own domestic behalf.

Ultimately, of course, repressive regimes prefer to present decisions to moderate behavior as being taken in their own interest and not as a result of outside pressure, though outside benefits resulting from positive change can be useful to cite publicly as supportive validation of the regime’s decision. Dialoguing democracies should always publicly defer to that preference, while privately keeping up the pressure.

Civic dialogue is also an increasingly used technique for promoting common ground solutions in divided societies or situations with challenging problems, where debate can often lead to divisive position-taking. For example, in 2004 IDEA (The Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, an intergovernmental organization based in Stockholm) commissioned wide-ranging and broadly inclusive citizens’ surveys in Nepal to determine citizens’ conceptions of good governance, democracy, and human security at a time of constitutional stress. Results were presented by key stakeholders in civil society at “People’s Forums”. The delegation of the European Commission in Nepal took responsibility for hosting the presentation of

the polls and surveys to the international community. The findings ultimately found their way into the constitutional processes, which benefited from the participation of experts with comparative experiences of constitutional processes in India, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Thailand, South Africa and Kenya.

DEMARCHING: using official channels to identify emerging or actual problems involving local authorities, to protest human rights violations, and to seek removal of restrictions and obstacles to reformers and NGOs, remains a classic tool of diplomats and Missions, best exercised as part of the above sustained dialogue on the status of human rights.

Nota bene: The technique of privileged diplomatic contact has also been very important in conveying messages to the host country about future conduct or further developments. Usually, such demarches are private if public stands are judged apt to harden the authorities' positions, or otherwise be counter-productive. High-profile quarrels between an embassy and the host government should not be allowed to undermine the efforts of local democratic reformers which always merit pride of place.

Such as: Diplomats reminding host governments of international obligations had positive effect in many circumstances, most notably with regard to the joint undertakings under the Helsinki Final Act of the CSCE, in Prague and other capitals in the late 1980s. Privately emphasizing to host authorities that they risk offending international public opinion at considerable national cost can also be effective, as was the case when religious authorities sentenced women to corporal or capital punishment in Nigeria and Saudi Arabia. Sometimes, of course, such advice is both ignored and resented, as happened in Zimbabwe in the early 1990s when democratic embassies pointed out deep misgivings over the withdrawal of legal redress for farmers whose property was summarily nationalized, which was a precursor of the deterioration to come in relations between the Zimbabwe government and accredited diplomats.

As a peak form of intervention, direct warnings by accredited ambassadors not to proceed with certain courses of repressive action are vital, such as the US Ambassador's cautioning of Chilean authorities in the late 1980s, or warnings in 2004 to Ukrainian authorities that they would be held accountable for use of force, and to desist from jamming mobile phone networks. Marc S. Ellenbogen who writes "The Atlantic Eye" from Prague, recalls Boris Pankin, "the last Soviet Ambassador to Prague, who was the highest-ranking Soviet diplomat to stand against the *putsch* against Gorbachev in the late 90s, who stood down Czech troops who were preparing to put down the Velvet Revolution in 1989. He not only stood down the troops, he stood down the Czechoslovak (Communist) Government as well."

During presidential elections in Kenya in 2008, democratic missions communicated similar warnings about inciting ethnic violence, when there was evidence of organized text messaging transmitting denigrating and dehumanizing threats about people considered tribal and partisan rivals. The Kenyan telecommunications authorities and mobile phone companies then launched their own campaign of text messaging urging instead national peaceful reconciliation. Today, demarches are being made to the Kenyan government to proceed with Kenyan prosecution of those who committed violent crimes against other ethnic groups in the period, or to accept transfer of prosecution to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

There are multiple examples of diplomatic demarches on the conduct of trials, arbitrary imprisonment, and the treatment of prisoners. International and domestic public opinion often argue for making the fact of such demarches public, but the record shows that with a variety of countries, especially China, diplomats have counseled keeping some initial demarches as private as possible, and have been rewarded on several occasions by positive results. In Cuba too, some democratic ministers visiting Cuba have made public announcements for domestic political purposes of demands to release prisoners of conscience. The public approach has not been productive with Cuban authorities. However, private negotiations prior to

some high-level visits, as outlined in the Cuba case study have had concrete results.

Reaching Out

CONNECTING is related to “informing,” but more in the sense of putting people – academic institutions, researchers, activists, experts, etc. – in contact with each other. Civil society provides democracy’s building blocks. Increasingly, civil society within a country is finding support from international civil society. Much of the content of international relations is now carried through informal transnational networks of working contacts. Bringing local reform groups and individuals into contact with outsiders is at the heart of people-to-people diplomacy, through such activity as visits, conferences, exchanges, and safe public access to the Internet or satellite communications from Mission libraries. Embassies also enable civil society to access international assistance programs. Connecting senior levels of government and members of the democratic opposition and society to contacts in the sending state are important tools. In more closed societies, the message from civil society outside that non-violent change is possible builds confidence and hope among civil society groups inside and even among authorities more inclined to reform.

Nota bene: Civil society is formed by a whole network of groups that are by definition beyond the direct control of the state. Such groups, which take time to develop, are often mobilized around specific purposes, such as women’s and youth issues, human rights, ecological protection, HIV/AIDS, culture, science, professional norms, or even sports. Often, their purpose is non-political, such as the movements in Cuba to create a network of lending libraries, to which embassies contribute books, or the efforts by Catholic diocesan authorities to provide child care for single mothers and social centers for the elderly. Such interest and action groups value contacts with NGOs and others able to help them on questions of material progress. Taken together, they form the continuity of social capital which can form the foundation for democratic development. The experience of citizens’ participation in seeking to advance issues of specific concern can promote a jump from narrow functional objectives to wider ones, especially as their experience and demonstrable achievements earn such groups legitimacy and influence.

Such as: There are eloquent histories of groups of democratic activists and others inside who have connected to supportive groups outside, but none more effective than the connections arranged for the ANC in South Africa and then, for the United Democratic Front after its formation in 1983. Diplomatic representatives in South Africa maintained constant liaison with activists. Their ability to connect activists to supportive groups outside contributed to the preparation of personnel for the eventual responsibilities of government office. Diplomats also assisted with initial informal connections between the ANC and South African authorities or interest groups close to the authorities such as the Broederbund.

Embassies have traditionally been more easily connected to the elites in a society. But experience in many different situations shows that the impulses for political transformation and reform will not succeed if propelled only downward in a society by elites. Support for change is needed across society, from grassroots groups and, increasingly, from the growing numbers of citizens who are fluent with modern communications and are able to compare their situations with others outside. As one ambassador familiar with the incremental changes in governance occurring in several countries in the Middle East put it, “It is not top-down, nor bottom-up, but led in the main by a sort of middle-out.” However, experience has also shown that care must be taken not to ignore those marginalized economically and socially, including victims of destabilizing forces of crime and extremism, and specifically indigenous peoples.

Connecting to democratic opposition activists and leaders is important, so as to help provide skills that enable them to pursue their democratization goals, but that also help prepare a new generation of democratic leaders to assume office in a democratic transformation. Most participating states of the

Community of Democracies are conscious of the need to be consistent in coverage, and note that civil society activity in several authoritarian states in the Middle East is undertaken by the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliates, with which diplomatic representatives maintain contact. In Algiers, in the 1990s, it became the practice for democratic embassies to make sure visiting dignitaries called on opposition leaders, which both connected these leaders to important outside contacts, and enhanced their legitimacy at home. This policy is pretty much *de rigueur* today in authoritarian regimes such as Cuba, as the case study illustrates. Community of Democracies members will undertake sought-after political level visits and engage cooperative programs, but will insist on meeting civil society and democratic opposition figures. Embassies in Ukraine 2003-4 developed travel programs to capitals for opposition leaders for similar reasons. It is also useful to connect to democratic opposition leaders in exile, sometimes through diplomats and programs in third countries. Such programs have been instrumental in preparation from the South African experience to that of Burma/Myanmar today.

In repressive societies, diplomats can use modern communications technologies to circumvent travel restrictions against local human rights defenders or other activists seeking outside connections. In this fashion, Cuban human rights advocate Oswaldo Payá (animator of the Varela Project, a citizens' petition aimed at promoting greater freedoms) was able to communicate by video to an EU NGO forum on freedom of expression after he was denied an exit visa. EU diplomats facilitated his connections by phone to EU ministers, journalists, and NGOs as well.

CONVENING: providing a safe and discreet locale for discussion, including among adversaries, has enabled contacts and exchanges aimed at political conciliation and the resolution of conflicts. Diplomats can also offer a venue for democratic activists to meet safely among themselves, helping them promote a legitimate status.

Nota bene: as mentioned above, diplomats posted to third countries can also play a convening role vis-à-vis locally resident political exiles, as well as supporting visiting oppositionists from inside the country, or organizing confidential third country contacts between adversaries.

Such as: The first mediated and authoritative contacts between the ANC and South African authorities took place outside the country, and were sometimes arranged based on diplomatic liaison with the ANC offices in Lusaka. But embassy locales inside South Africa were often where South Africans of influence, such as the judiciary, first met ANC members informally.

Diplomatic officers can provide neutral ground for roundtable discussion on sensitive topics which would not be allowed in public, or for participants to speak off-the-record. US and Canadian officers frequently hosted such events in South Africa. It is essential, of course, that embassies not be seen as playing political favorites among the various participants. Political choice must be left in the hands of the citizens concerned.

Publicly visible receptions to honor civil society, cultural groups, and political dissidents which were frequent at democratic embassies in Prague and Budapest in the 1980s, help elevate the influence of protest and reform movements. Receptions also can have the merit of putting democracy activists and authorities together, although practice varies. Some embassies, such as the Czech Republic's Embassy in Havana insist on such mingling. Others hold separate national day-type receptions for civil society and authorities. The local authorities attend or not, depending on the company.

In transitional countries, embassies can also play a convening role in helping to bring disparate parties and leaders together prior to democratic elections, as the US Embassy did in Liberia and Ghana, that facilitates their ability to work with one another after elections in a politically pluralist landscape,

countering a post-election tendency in several countries for majority winners to feel entitled to “take all” and penalize losing opponents especially if they represent ethnic minorities.

FACILITATING; *using the good offices of Missions and diplomats to convene parties on ostensibly neutral ground in order to facilitate positive cooperation among democrats, reconciliation of different ethnic or other groups in pluralist societies, or to encourage democrats and local authorities to seek to advance democratic outcomes. Diplomats can legitimately help peace activists with transmission of messages to others, and to the outside. Missions can also play a role in facilitating third-country peaceful abdication or exit strategies for discredited authoritarian figures.*

Such as: At times of crisis, diplomats, especially from neighboring countries, can play an important role in encouraging the mediation of disputes, including in the aftermath of contested elections. However, as was the case initially in Kenya after the integrity of January 2008 election results was challenged, governments protecting their monopoly of power can shy away from mediation efforts. In Kenya’s case, international mediation was ultimately effective, especially through the efforts of fellow African, ex-UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. On the other hand, Robert Mugabe has consistently frustrated diplomatic attempts by South Africa and Nigeria to facilitate reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

Opposition movements often begin as rival factions, or splinter into them. Diplomats in South Africa, Chile, and Serbia helped opposition movements in these countries overcome their factional disarray and build united alliances for democratic reform.

Many of the divisive forces in societies devolve from ancient ethnic or tribal differences which can re-surface even in working democracies with sudden violence, as we have seen in Kenya. Some democracies have pursued a special vocation in public and private diplomacy by attempting to mentor the reconciliation of ethnic division in such locales as the Western Balkans, Northern Ireland, the Middle East, Sri Lanka (especially Norway), Afghanistan, and Iraq by bringing to bear some of their experience with pluralistic societies. Settlement immigration countries such as Canada and Australia have gained specific expertise which they offer regarding public and mediation diplomacy on migration issues in the Middle East and elsewhere. But when ethnic or irredentist issues break down into violence, as in Kenya, it is essential that the democratic international community attempt to intervene. Such efforts in Kenya were accompanied by diplomatic warnings that those responsible for inciting ethnic violence would pay a price by being barred in future from travel to the democratic countries concerned.

In societies where outside contacts are restricted, diplomats can pass messages and legitimately facilitate communications between democratic activists and outside supporters, or contact between ordinary citizens and family members and civil society elsewhere, using embassy communications channels and Internet access.

Another technique of facilitation is “end-game” strategy offering “safe exits” to resolve acute crises. Such an exit for President Marcos of the Philippines, and later for Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, and President Fujimori of Peru defused potential threats of violent resistance to democratic transition. The endgame to the crisis in Kyrgyzstan in 2010 depended on an exile arrangement that was brokered by the US, Russia, Kazakhstan, and with the help of Belarus.

A reverse example would be the strong leadership role of the Japanese diplomats and government in brokering a solution enabling Cambodian political leaders in exile to return to Phnom Penh to contest the first democratic multi-party elections in 1998 without fear of reprisal. Indeed, several diplomats personally visited one such leader in exile in Bangkok, Prince Ranariddh to provide the assurances.

FINANCING; *arms’ length resources to a range of local groups, individuals, and projects can be*

especially valuable to start-up NGOs, independent media, or anti-poverty action groups. Often small projects avoid the sorts of government controls and bureaucratization associated with large-scale aid activity. But embassies have the critical role of “spotting” for more substantial financing for larger projects which can be worthwhile.

Nota bene: This is a notoriously sensitive area. Protests by authorities of “outside financing” are common and lead in many cases to curbs and restrictions. Precious financial assistance will be marred if it can be made to appear motivated by ulterior political considerations.

Such as: There are examples of fast-disbursing grassroots local initiative funds of diplomatic missions wherever there has been a democratic transition. Mission funds should avoid competition with the programs of international NGOs, which have longer-term development of civil society as a central purpose. Embassy-operated donations often go toward very specific and modest cash flow requirements of youth movements, start-up independent media operations, the organization of public events, or serve a humanitarian need in emergencies. Czech, Slovak, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish funding today operates in such a manner in repressive societies. In countries in difficult democratic transition, such as the Congo, the funds can be rapidly directed to pockets of need, best carried out in consultation with other donors to avoid duplication and oversight. In the 1980s, Canadian Embassy funds in South Africa could be deployed immediately to victims of apartheid to cover legal or other court costs. In all cases, even though such funds are often modest, for shoe-string beneficiaries they have the merits of fast-disbursement and being unencumbered by paperwork obligations in emergency situations.

There is a record of allegations by repressive governments that such disbursements engage embassies and diplomats improperly in internal matters of state. Authorities in apartheid South Africa and Pinochet’s Chile threatened expulsions over the practice, and in Russia in 2005, local reform groups and NGOs which accepted such funds were penalized by denial of accreditation and their ability to operate. Both Cuba and Iran have prosecuted opposition groups and human rights activists on the evidence that their acceptance of foreign funds constituted treasonable activity. Embassies adjust practice to ensure that there is no liability to recipients from such small-scale funding, and in some countries refrain from financial support of opposition figures, concentrating on development NGOs. It is important that any embassy funding be demonstrably at arms’ length to specific electoral or partisan political purpose so that embassies can vigorously contest any constraining action by authorities.

SHOWCASING; at the heart of public diplomacy, democratic development showcasing is less a matter of national self-promotion than an effort to present examples, models, or solutions suitable for local application. There is, of course, no more powerful example than the election of an African-American US President. Through their outreach, missions are in a position to highlight via seminars, training, conferences, and even cultural narratives, norms accepted elsewhere, best practices, and successful achievement which can be of instructive or motivational benefit to the public, local authorities, NGOs and reform groups. As mentioned earlier, representatives of democracies which have themselves emerged from repressive regimes have enhanced credibility as mentors for human rights defenders and democratic activists today. Most societies have had to confront the need to correct the abuse of civil liberties in their own histories, and these narratives can be presentational assets in emerging democracies facing the challenges of change and reconciliation.

Nota bene: Sometimes “best practices” in civil behavior are evident in host countries in non-political spheres such as sports, economic and cultural activity that cross ethnic or confessional lines in otherwise divided societies. They merit support for showcasing from within the host country itself. Civic consciousness is especially important for security forces and personnel. Exposing security forces to best practices in human rights and democratic practices via international training can help to prevent harsh

reactions to non-violent protests. Discipline training in non-violent techniques is also valuable for civil society to reduce the risk of counter-productive provocation.

Such as: Democratic societies have had experience in many aspects of governance whose features can be immensely instructive to societies looking toward others' experience as they undergo transition, with the caveat that most applications are not directly transferable but need considerable adaptation to local social and cultural conditions. Some of the demonstration and assistance can be very specific and technical: Canada, for example, promotes guidance to multilingual societies on the practices of simultaneous legislative drafting to enable legal linguistic equivalencies. Especially compelling is training conducted by countries which have themselves emerged from repressive regimes, since the representatives of such newer democracies can more readily relate to the challenges and conditions of dissidents and civil society operating under the strains of repression.

But much public diplomacy is more general, in support of the merits of pluralistic accommodation, the peaceful settlement of disputes, or moderation in the pursuit of political objectives. Such showcasing efforts exposed Chilean opposition groups of the left, for example, which were somewhat doctrinaire, to the advantages of dialogue and pragmatic adaptation evident among successfully elected European social-democrats in the 1980s. Showcasing of exemplary efforts in non-sectarian hiring practices can help lead the way: the coffee growing industry today in Rwanda, for example, or in Northern Ireland where major Canadian employers hired across traditional sectarian lines, or where the professional ice hockey team composed of foreigners refused to reveal members' religious affiliations.

More general still are events presenting the cultural or other achievements of a democratic society to enhance its capacity to serve as a democratic role model. Again, the American Cultural Center in Rangoon deserves recognition as an example of how a facility provided a public with considerable acquired interest in the outside world precious exposure to international culture otherwise denied by the repressive and inward Burmese military regime.

The showcasing of ethics for military and security personnel has only been accorded importance relatively recently, but with demonstrable beneficial effect. The training of Ukraine military officers in democratic governance responsibilities in NATO partnership programs contributed to their restraint in dealing with demonstrations during the electoral crisis of the Orange Revolution. NGO-to-NGO training workshops which showcased the techniques of disciplined non-violent protest contributed to a counterpart restraint on the part of dissident and protest groups in those and other demonstrations.

The training of police, customs officials, and prosecutors to provide an understanding of civic responsibility has been a staple of many democracy support programs of Community of Democracies donor countries.

By way of contrast, during the Cold War, counter-insurgency training in inter-American programs that did not emphasize human rights indirectly contributed to subsequent massive abuses by Latin American militaries against democratic activists and others.

The issue of consistency is paramount. There is little benefit in showcasing positive narratives of civil behavior if there are contrary examples of illegal or abusive treatment of people in the custody of the showcasing state, or if the state coddles relationships with abusive partners for strategic reasons.

“Older” democracies have, of course, experienced large-scale abuses of civil rights in their own pasts, in respect of racial or religious minorities, indigenous people, women, or labor movements, and have also suspended normal civil liberties at times of exceptional stress, in war, or at times of fear. The process of democratic self-correction is endless. But transparent presentation of the lessons of such corrections can

also be a showcase feature for the benefit of emerging democracies struggling with ethnic and other tensions and inequalities, not in the manner of preaching, but in that of empathy for the challenges involved in pursuing change.

Defending Democrats

***DEMONSTRATING** support for human rights defenders, democratic activists, and reformers, by using the prestige and offices of the Head of Mission and other diplomats to show in public respect and even solidarity enables missions to send the message that such citizens and groups have legitimacy and importance in the eyes of outside partners. Diplomats understand that such demonstration needs to stop short of seeming to embrace particular individuals or parties with respect to democratic political outcomes. Care should always be taken to be seen supporting a democratic process and not specific results. Encouraging international humanitarian awards and recognition for human rights defenders also helps legitimize their positions in their own countries.*

Nota bene: Public demonstrations or protests in authoritarian societies require courage and the willingness of citizens to entertain risks in the exercise of freedom of speech. Such courage merits the public support of democratic representatives. The public representation of sympathy by diplomats on specific issues or events can be used in tandem with private demarches to authorities. All diplomats need access to grassroots activity and opinion, and some embassies in non-democratic countries assign primary responsibility for contact with dissidents to specific embassy officers, but in presentation, it is important to demonstrate that the head of mission remains the visibly engaged chief officer for human rights, without making him or her a lightning-rod for the hostility of host country authorities.

Such as: Historically, changes in repressive regimes occur because the people support change as their democratic right, expressed in most instances, in the absence of elections, by public protests or demonstrations, though “street action” is more often less effective than the build-up over time of a civil society capacity to support democratic transition. It is standard practice for repressive regimes to ban such gatherings, but the people often find a way to circumvent peacefully the states of emergency or special laws which authorities decree and erect to protect the undemocratic status quo. In apartheid South Africa, marches to public funerals of fallen activists became a vehicle for protest, and the presence among the people of the representatives of democratic diplomatic missions sent to demonstrators and to authorities a message of support, as well as offering a shield of sorts against violent repression.

The role of diplomats in showing support for the rights to protest by appearing personally at such demonstrations or symbolic marches has been established in such locales as Budapest, Santiago, Manila, Belgrade, Kiev, Havana and Katmandu. Ambassadors such as Mark Palmer in 1980s Budapest made a point of being seen to be personally engaged with opposition and activist groups. In other locales, such as Zimbabwe, ambassadors were especially targeted by security forces and it fell more often to embassy political officers to be present to witness protests, although some ambassadors such as James McGee of the US took a pro-active personal role in going out to show support for intimidated and even abused opposition supporters. Whatever the level of representation, it has been reinforcing for democrats to see the support. Australian diplomat Roland Rich recalls that Indonesian pro-democracy demonstrators said at the time that “having foreigners alongside was like borrowing a little piece of their democracies.” But demonstration of privately-communicated support for the rights of activists can also be very effective in sending a message to authorities monitoring communications. Maintaining regular phone contact with democratic opposition leaders has been a protective recourse in many crisis situations, and especially when it is assumed that local security is listening in.

More publicly visible are diplomats’ home visits to threatened or confined democracy activists, or, as in

Havana in 2009 to the wives of prisoners of conscience, and the monitoring of political trials. Some embassies of democracies in repressive societies make it a habit to invite the families of political prisoners to embassy events with a family theme, such as parties at Christmas or other festivals. Ambassadors in such societies also accompany released political prisoners home from prison at the time of their release.

Again, such gestures, as well as receptions and other hospitality events which make a point of including both dissidents and officials, can reinforce the self-confidence of civil society in the legitimacy of their peaceful work, as well as helping to create sometimes productive initial contacts between authorities and civil society leadership.

VERIFYING and WITNESSING; the verifying of election processes and results is an important and widespread international practice in which diplomatic missions have an ongoing responsibility. The witnessing of trials and hearings by diplomats is also widespread and is now generally accepted internationally as a means of providing or supporting an independent verification of disputes, or the health of detainees. There are, of course, terrible histories of fearful and depraved repression of opponents and activists without any concession to pretense of legal authority, such as the tens of thousands of murders carried out by the Argentine military 1976-83. But today even autocratic regimes prefer to display the trappings of a legal process, however sham. In the Internet age, summary trials of dissidents and activists can rarely be completely hidden from view. "Show trials" meant to distort the truth for public consumption are similarly exposed for what they are. In taking public and private issue with the distortion of the process of justice for repressive political purposes, diplomats are representing the norms and standards of universally applicable human rights and the rule of law, and the arguments by repressive authorities that these matters are strictly internal concerns are without merit.

Nota bene: Enquiries and demarches about detainees and political prisoners need to focus on the illegitimacy of their incarceration, in addition to the conditions and circumstances of prisoners. International and diplomatic scrutiny of elections themselves is also by now widespread; but inadequate attention is paid to prior and ongoing support for the selection, formation, and training of preparatory and supervisory national election commissions able to adjudicate fairness in pre-election publicity as well as the election process itself.

Such as: Diplomatic representatives have been prominent whenever possible at prosecution trials of democratic activists, journalists, and representatives of civil society, for example in Prague, Cairo, and Tashkent. Of course, there are still repressive jurisdictions where such trials are secret and closed, including recent mass sentencing of demonstrators and monks in Burma/Myanmar. The fates of such prisoners remain an enduring *prima facie* concern of missions. The very fact of incarceration is the forefront issue; presentation of "prisoners' lists" to authorities in China and Cuba has been a mainstay of diplomatic representation for years.

The conduct of authorities toward those in custody also matters greatly. Diplomatic representatives in various jurisdictions have insisted on verifying the health of such prisoners, such as after arbitrary arrests of Zimbabwe opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai and colleagues in the opposition MDC.

When violent prisoner abuse becomes public knowledge to the point that authorities are pressured to conduct official inquiries or even trials of security personnel, such as with respect to the killing of Canadian-Iranian photojournalist Mrs. Kazemi in Iranian hands, diplomats have sought to witness these legal proceedings as well, with admirable solidarity.

International verification of elections, especially by regional organizations, is now an almost universal practice. Some democratic groupings have been able to provide such authoritative monitoring that they

attract wide international participation, such as EU-led election monitoring in Lebanon, and the Congo, which included many non-EU observers among the team, or Commonwealth monitoring of elections in member countries.

The OSCE election observation missions (ODIHR) have become integral to the organization's *raison d'être*. Though its bestowal of "failing grades" for elections, in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, or Azerbaijan, deemed not to be "fair and free," is often ignored by authorities at the time, the accumulated challenge to their legitimacy is an important asset for diplomatic representatives in those countries.

The observation exercise does more than legitimize the election returns: as demonstrated in the case of South Africa, the presence of international observers provides encouragement and re-assurance to democracy advocates, and also security, by showing that the eyes of the world are watching. This helps promote restraint on the part of all parties to the process.

Embassies themselves and their personnel have for years taken an active role in the observation process, including significantly in verifying local elections, as was done in Ukraine by the Japanese Mission which in 2004 observed violations in a by-election in Mukacheve that anticipated abuses practiced in the general election shortly after.

In the 1988 presidential elections in Senegal, several democratic embassies agreed to pool their efforts. "Embassy officers who attended rallies shared their impressions with counterparts, and a coordinated election-day schedule was drawn up to avoid overlapping visits to polling stations. The candidates and party campaign leaders knew of and appreciated this careful, coordinated attention to their campaign efforts." Ultimately, "the diplomats agreed that the results reflected the will of the people: the majority of Senegalese voters wanted Abdou Diouf to remain in office. This joint position proved useful in maintaining a common diplomatic position in response to civil disturbances which broke out in poorer sections of Dakar as dissatisfied voters felt their preferred candidate should have been chosen."

Such efforts are sometimes not appreciated by the host country. In the presidential elections in Zimbabwe in 2002, the EU observation team's leader, Swedish politician Pierre Schori was declared unwelcome and the observation team pulled out on the grounds that it could not do its job. But resident EU and other democratic embassies coordinated coverage on their own of the polling booths which while less than adequate, was extremely helpful in reaching the conclusion the election had not been fair and free.

While democracies have increasingly placed governance at the core of development assistance programs and do emphasize aid for the election process, there needs to be more attention paid to the training of local election commissions whose credibility is essential to sustaining belief in the integrity of results and avoidance of post-electoral violence as has occurred only recently in Kenya.

PROTECTING: "We were very active in attending political trials, so that defendants knew that if anything would happen to them, there would be protests" (a diplomat in Prague, 1980s). Visible support for individuals and groups under threat, as well as their families, provides some reassurance for democratic activists and human rights defenders and NGOs. Ultimately, in the event of breakdown and crisis, Missions have performed an essential humanitarian function by giving refuge to asylum-seekers.

Such as: In periods of tension, diplomats can often defuse a crisis. Their presence on the scene may persuade security authorities to back off a violent confrontation with peaceful groups.

Protection can be implicit, communicated by signs of support, by telephone calls to check on the security of targeted activists, and by declarations. The authorities may seek to label such declarations as outside interference. It suits the political narratives of repressive regime to paint protests as being foreign-

inspired. But as the Burmese confrontations illustrated in 2007, or those of Iran in 2009, the people know when their protest and appeals for change are popular and authentically and wholly indigenous, and welcome supportive declarations as statements of solidarity endorsing the legitimacy of their popular cause.

Diplomats can cast a wide protective net. People arbitrarily jailed fear for their families. In Turkmenistan, the British Embassy made it a point to be in visible contact with the families of persons arrested for political reasons.

In more dire circumstances when the force of repression is without brakes, or beyond persuasion, the episodes of diplomats extending protection have been many, going back to the legendary work of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg during World War II, or Varian Fry, US Consul in Marseilles, who, without much support from superiors, saved many artists, Jews, and leftists on Nazi arrest lists. Latin American diplomats in Europe also saved thousands of lives, notably Mexican Consul in Marseilles Gilberto Bosques, Salvadoran Consul in Geneva José Arturo Castellanos and Luis Martins de Souza Dantas of Brazil. It was Australian diplomat Bruce Haig who drove South African democrat and editor Donald Woods to safety out of South Africa. It was New Zealand's Ambassador John McArthur who spirited a trade union official dressed as a woman to the Swedish Embassy and asylum.

Sadly, however, the list of embassies which did not intervene or provide refuge because it was seen to be outside the scope of classically sanctioned diplomatic conduct was for many years a much longer one. But more recent practice has increasingly been to help wherever possible, as in the episodes of humanitarian acceptance of thousands of asylum-seekers in Santiago, Chile, after September 1973, at the Embassy of Peru in Havana in 1980, the events of 1989 in Prague when embassies opened their grounds to East German refugees, the granting of safe shelter for a year to Chinese dissident Fang Lizhi by the US Embassy in Beijing in the aftermath of Tiananmen, the assistance by the embassies of Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia in gaining safe exit for threatened democratic opposition members in Ukraine prior to 2004, or the acceptance by Australia of West Papua self-determination activists, 2006.

3. THE PARTNERS AND APPLICATIONS

In becoming "coherence agents" with specific skill sets, diplomats are usually more likely to be effective in their support of democratic development by a focus on practical applications than by the articulation of lofty aspirations of political theory. The partnerships which matter the most are those with a human face.

A) People-to-People, Democrat-to-Democrat

• Local Groups, Coalitions – Students, Youth, Ecologists, Trade Unions

Coalitions of groups and bodies such as the United Democratic Front in South Africa are often the foundations of an emerging democratic society. In retrospect, they even constituted a form of government-in-waiting, though often, because of the closed circumstances of their society, they have little opportunity to gain the relevant and necessary experience. Nearly every country has such local groupings of NGOs (although they are sparser in number in the Middle East). Their activities and primary interests are often not even political: groups that are trying to fill social services gaps, such as day-care or centers for the elderly are basic components of emerging civil society and merit support on humanitarian and developmental levels. Beyond their specific interests, through informal publications, performances, and public outreach, they can together also spawn a new civic sense of national identity and purpose. In the process they acquire a growing stature of legitimacy, reinforced by the efforts of democratic embassies and NGOs to engage them as partners and provide them support and, as appropriate, training. In this sense, they constitute continuity in transition and adaptation to democratic governance.

- Women's Groups

As underlined in the Introduction, the issue of women's rights is crucial to successful economic and democratic development. Countries that do not accept gender equality as a universal human right condemn themselves dually: they deny the rights of half their citizens, and they hobble their prospects in so doing.

In many societies and situations, groups formed to defend and advocate on behalf of women are often the first experience women may have of personal involvement in public and social issues. Representing home and family perspectives as well as specific workplace or professional interests, women's groups have a central role in the emergence of civil society. A special place in national consciences has been earned by the mothers and widows of those missing or killed under repressive regimes, such as the Mothers of the Disappeared in Argentina, Women in Black in Serbia, or the wives of prisoners of conscience, such as *Las Damas de Blanco* in Cuba.

- Cultural Groups

As Alain Déléroz, Vice-President of the International Crisis Group recently wrote (in homage to a murdered theater director in Tashkent), "art is one of the finest forms of resistance to dictators."

The role of cultural groups in expanding the habit of freedom of expression was essential in many experiences in democratic transformation. Diplomats have a convening capacity that can showcase artists and creators whose work can be politically catalytic. As far back as 1975, Australian diplomat Diane Johnstone invited black artist Michael Muapola to her Pretoria apartment to exhibit his paintings to her guests, which incurred the wrath of the apartheid regime, but contributed mightily to African self-respect. From Minsk to Rangoon, diplomats have hosted performances by artists banned from presenting in public.

Cultural groups and artists have catalytic roles going beyond performance or art. Writing of Prague in the late 1980s, Canadian diplomat Rob McRae spoke of his introduction to Karl Srp, "the head of the so-called Jazz Section.....of the musician's union (which) under Srp had become a hotbed of underground music and video production, as well as samizdat (clandestine) publishing." McRae subsequently observed that through culture, "a new civic society had begun to emerge outside the control of the state, with a whole network of underground publications, performances, exhibitions, videos, newspapers, artistic and literary salons.' These had started to reach beyond the opposition to the grey zone of individuals who were at least inwardly, if not openly, opposed to the regime."

- Human Rights Defenders

The work of human rights defenders in repressive societies is completely central. It is lonely and is always courageous. Their cause is immensely assisted by the solidarity shown by the representatives of democracies, and the international acknowledgement of their efforts, such as the Nobel Peace Prize bestowed on Iranian human rights defender Shirin Ebadi. Chilean human rights lawyer Ignacio Walker (later Foreign Minister) recalls that over four years under the Pinochet regime defending hundreds of unjustly accused and jailed democracy activists, he won few cases in the biased courts, but the demonstrable support he received from embassies and especially the Roman Catholic Church and the international recognition they bestowed, "saved many lives."

- Scholars, Researchers, Academic Institutes, Think Tanks, Centers of Excellence. Conferences on the challenges facing democrats in authoritarian settings are constantly taking place in democracies with the participation of dissidents and scholars in exile, and embassies often facilitate attendance from civil society from within the countries in question.

Connecting scholars to scholars and think tanks to think tanks is a multiple enrichment. For embassies, partnerships and projects undertaken with the scholarly and research community often engage the future leaders of the country, however unlikely it may seem in repressive societies at the time. They also engage a country's construction of objective collective memory, which is important in building a process of reconciliation. One of the most ambitious projects in preparation for the assumption of the responsibilities of government occurred as the result of a request made by Nelson Mandela shortly after his release from prison, to Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, to help the ANC boost its competence in economic matters. The initiative spawned the "Macro-Economic Research Group" (MERG) involving over 100 economic specialists from several developed democracies. Though the MERG report itself was eventually shelved, the exchanges and conferences involving ANC personnel constituted a very sound preparation for the responsibilities of office.

B) Institutional Partnerships and Processes

- *Independent Media* The role of independent media goes beyond the healthy practice of speaking truth to power. Media, including the rapidly growing phenomenon of blogs, have a monitoring role on governance, and catalyze public discussion. Supporting the emergence of independent media outlets has been one of the consistently successful partnership activities of embassies, often conducted in partnership with NGOs and news gatherers from Community of Democracies member countries. Through support for networks of alternative outside servers, democracies can encourage access to international information and websites for Internet users inside repressive and closed societies.

Missions also on occasion directly help local news agencies and outlets with project funding. Examples are given earlier in the *Handbook* of start-up funding for a radio station in Moscow and a desk-top newspaper in Dakar which became the hubs of successful diversified independent communications enterprises. The first principle, of course, has been to separate such assistance from any intention of influencing the news or views reported by the outlet in question.

Support can be threefold. In Algiers, over the last several years, embassies have encouraged the emergence of independent newspapers and outlets, without seeking to influence the news or editorial content of their publications. At the same time, they have encouraged the state-operated newspaper El Moudjahid in its efforts to present balanced reporting of events. Lastly, they have encouraged training for local journalists (who also benefit from the examples shown by traveling press corps accompanying visiting dignitaries of direct and candid questioning in pursuit of transparency and newsworthy information).

The transition to democracy from authoritarian regimes can be particularly challenging for public broadcasters as they transit from a propaganda role to one of objective news-gathering and reporting as well as analysis. Such democratic arm's length public broadcasters as the Australian, Canadian, and British Broadcasting Corporations have mentored transitions, such as with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (with its 15 million daily radio listeners) at the behest originally of their resident embassies, and after an initial grant by the Australian labor organization Apheda.

- *Legal Proceedings* The rule of law and the building of national justice and judicial systems are essential to democracy-building. As former Premier of China Zhao Ziyang (who spent the last sixteen years of his life under house arrest) confided in visiting Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1989, rule of law has to replace rule by men. But as democracy scholar Thomas Carothers has written, "Law is not just the sum of courts, legislatures, police, prosecutors, and other formal institutions with some direct connection to law. Law is also a normative system that resides in the minds of the citizens of a society." It is behavioral, and takes time to evolve in this way.

Some countries, such as China, hold to the “rule by law,” but in a somewhat rigid way. They lack transparency and the appeal systems that in democratic legal cultures invest parliamentary bodies with law-making prerogatives, and the independent judiciary with an ongoing capacity for review and reversal.

In many countries, the legal and judicial communities play important roles in civil society. There are several recent examples of bar associations and even groups of judges taking public stands on issues of governance or corruption, such as in Burma/Myanmar, Lebanon, Pakistan and the Philippines. It can be rewarding therefore to develop embassy partnerships and soundings with local bar associations, law faculties, and NGOs such as the Moscow Helsinki Group in order to support their efforts to improve the functioning of the court system, capacities for legal-aid. Embassies can also help to connect such groups to international norms and to experienced partner institutions in member states of the Community of Democracies.

Corruption issues merit a separate and very important emphasis. The US National Security Strategy (2010) identifies pervasive corruption as a violation of basic human rights. Working with the UN, the OECD, and other international agencies, members of the Community of Democracies do work through their embassies to promote greater transparency in all financial transactions, including those concerning their nationals working for foreign corporations, and especially concerning all flows of development assistance.

- *Security Agencies, Policing*

It is commonplace that security is essential to the building of support for democracy and to development, and international agencies such as the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces play an important developmental and counseling role.

Embassies increasingly pay attention to the opportunities to strengthen police training in transitional democracies via closer relations with local authorities. As Gary Haugen and Victor Boutros have written in *Foreign Affairs*, “the human rights community must focus on building up the political will and capacity of local law enforcement institutions to bring justice to the world’s poor.”

Even in repressive regimes, it has often been important to maintain productive contacts with security and police agencies. Indeed, elements of military and intelligence services have on occasion shown themselves to be among the more moderate components of hard-line governments. Embassies which partner with the police agencies for essential matters of cooperation against trans-national criminal activity, including anti-terrorism, have found these professional contacts could be engaged to lower the temperature at times of internal political confrontation.

- *Political Parties*

Obviously, paying attention to political parties and groupings, or democratic oppositionists, where they are able to function, is a long-standing core activity of embassies. Repressive regimes resent the cultivation of their opponents, and even some close authoritarian allies of democracies, such as Singapore and Iran in the 1970s actively discouraged such contacts, but diplomats can hardly do objective reporting in their absence, nor fail to support the right of beleaguered opposition parties to exist and travel outside the country.

Most definitions of democracy insist on the existence of a multi-party competitive and open electoral system. Embassies should not attempt to influence the electoral success of specific parties. But it is usual for embassies to connect parties or groupings of one democratic tendency or another to similar groupings in their home countries, where parties frequently have formed foundations for the purposes of such outreach. Examples include the German Stiftungen, the Swedish Olaf Palme Foundation, the US NDI or

IRI, or la Fondation Robert Schumann and la Fondation Jean-Jaures in France. Democracies also have multiparty foundation models such as the Westminster Foundation in the UK, the Netherlands' Institute for Multiparty Democracy, the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington, or the Norwegian Center for Democracy Support.

Some of the party-to-party mentoring is technical, and most is developmental without regard to specific policy choices or programs. But some political experiences of democratic parties in donor states have had a profound effect on the development of democratic options elsewhere.

- Parliaments and Government Agencies

Whether democracies are heavily presidential, or primarily parliamentary as far as the exercise of power is concerned, their democratic *bona fides* depend on there being competitive and fair elections to office.

The Handbook of National Legislatures by M. Steven Fish and Matthew Kroenig presents a global survey of parliaments. Direct parliament-to-parliament mentoring between democracies and emerging or transitional democracies has been a feature of democracy support for decades. Agencies such as the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, the Westminster Foundation, or the Canadian Parliamentary Centre or various interparliamentary assemblies, have provided programs for such functions as committee organization, presiding officer responsibilities, or fiscal review. Even in circumstances where there are not obvious democratic *bona fides*, support programs for parliamentary transparency, the audit capacity, and technical issues can be shown to have an impact on developing the beginnings of democratic capacities and reflexes.

There is related capacity-building support activity for such functions as an Ombudsman's Office, Freedom of Information, Privacy, and various watchdog and regulatory offices and agencies that have been brought into being over the years in the public interest in democracies.

- International NGOs and Organizations

Of all local partnerships for diplomats and embassies, international NGOs are among the most valuable in the complementarity they represent to diplomatic activity and their role and purposes merit great deference. Such organizations as Human Rights Watch, the International Crisis Group, members of the World Movement for Democracy, Amnesty International, the San Egedio Foundation, and developmental NGOs of all kinds such as Oxfam, *Médecins Sans Frontières*, CARE, *Action Contre la Faim*, World Vision, and, of course, such intergovernmental organizations as UNHCR, UNICEF, the WFP, or the IOM reach segments of society in their work, and issues close to the ground, often out of reach to accredited diplomats. In several capitals, there are mixed donors' groups involving participation of embassies, NGOs, and international organizations, for the purposes of information exchange and avoidance of duplication.

C) Capacity-building

Democracies are easily distinguishable from tyrannies. But their goal is not a common identity. It is effective action to the benefit of citizens. Successful action relies on hard work over time, and on achieving a mix of the right capacities for building achievement and public confidence. The most obvious characteristic of failed and failing states is their "negative capacity," which almost always negates the chances of democracy until stability and progress are restored.

Building democratic capacity requires sound and transparent governmental institutions, functioning infrastructure, and orderly processes. Assistance and support for democratic governance is pointless without support for economic development and capacities to deliver education, health care and other essential aspects of infrastructure. But many assistance programs over the last decades, in Eastern Europe

as well as in developing countries, invested excessively in process and institutions and not enough in civil society, which must form the building blocks of democratic transformation, particularly via the emergence of action groups which for environmental, economic, or other specific interests challenge the status quo. Microfinance facilities have particular importance because of the contribution they can make to the capacity for acquiring self-reliance. Connecting such groups to international NGO partners is a major part of democracy capacity-building.

Methods are not self-evident. There is no transferable template for democratic transformation, no one size or style of economic or political model that fits all. The necessity of adaptation to local conditions and deference to local civil society rely on the existence of effective civil society partners, and consultation with them. Ultimately, the chances of success will be in their hands, and in their collective abilities to encourage a national governance culture which assumes transparency and accountability and responsiveness to the public.

These capacity-building issues represent the substance of the work of a myriad of partners, governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental, in all phases of international cooperation.

There is attached to the *Handbook* an Annex indicating how Missions might identify and contact NGOs and development organizations pertinent to capacity-building activities, though the list of partners is far from complete. Diplomats in the field will know how to identify local NGOs and potential partners from their own NGO community.

The capacity-building activities and issue areas, all interrelated, include several main emphases:

- *Anti-Poverty and Humanitarian Relief*

Intergovernmental bodies such as the Council of Europe and the OAS, international agencies, NGOs, and research institutes are working constantly on applications and long-term solutions. Development economics increasingly uses “randomization” to determine the validity of courses of action in different circumstances and locales. The impact of small-scale assistance projects and micro-credit initiatives on setting the foundation for start-up economic activity has been promising; but it also benefits the building and spreading of civil society roots and capacity for autonomous self-administration and governance.

The work of such organizations as the World Food Program and the FAO, and NGOs such as *Action Contre la Faim*, on food security is very germane to democratic capacity, as is work on refugees and migration undertaken by the UNHCR, IOM, and many NGOs. Especially important is building the democracy and human rights issues into the development agenda.

“Microfinance recognizes that poor people are remarkable reservoirs of energy and knowledge. And while the lack of financial resources is a sign of poverty, today it is also understood as an untapped opportunity to create markets, bring people in from the margins and give them the tools with which to help themselves.”

- Kofi Annan

- *Elections / Electoral Machinery / Public Education*

The International Fund for Election Systems, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), IDEA, the United Nations, the Commonwealth of Nations, the European Union, and others, team up to provide in many cases one-stop shopping on election preparation and administration issues. Electoral capacity is more than the technical administration of elections that are free and fair. It requires apt electoral laws, governing all aspects of the electoral and political cycles from expenditure through news presentation. Especially important are workable and accepted provisions for adjudicating disputes.

- *Governance, Institution-Building*

Member country programs, activity of the trades union and labor movements, the OECD/UNDP democratic transition program, the International Centre for Democratic Transition in Budapest, the European Union, and others assist in the preparation of institutional reforms. These can often have an emphasis on functions vital for public confidence-building and legitimacy, such as data collection (as in Liberia's 2008 census, conducted in partnership with the UNDP), residential taxation systems which are fair, and functional actuarial services. As mentioned above under Partnerships, the functions of ombudsmen, privacy oversight bodies, freedom of information adjudicators, reliable statistical agencies, auditor-generals, and a host of regulatory agencies that inform and protect the public interest are increasingly the object of government-to-government assistance programs or administered through international NGOs.

- *Environmental* Such issues as deforestation, desertification, extractive industries, and hydro dams become political causes with rapidity. The tens of thousands of environmental action groups which have been formed to mobilize opinion against action inimical to local and specific interests have been responsible for the politicization of millions. International partner NGOs have been part and parcel of the progress toward a more sustainable approach to developmental capacity-building.

- *Gender Equality* Generations of rural and urban women have been introduced to democratization through groups formed to address the situations and specific interests of women, whose capacity to contribute to development is obviously critical to success, but often underdeveloped. The practical goals of many such groups – material concerns such as the cost of living – combine with preoccupations about violence to women, a phenomenon on the increase in many countries.

- *Judiciary* International NGOs on the rule of law and judicial reform, international bar sections and associations on the role of defenders and legal aid, holding offenders accountable, combating corruption, essential for developing capacity for public confidence.

- *Health, Education, Essential Infrastructure* International NGOs, international financial institutions (e.g. the World Bank), humanitarian agencies, think tanks, research centers, and authoritative policy analysts, etc., address these fundamental capacity issues of infrastructure, including sanitation.

- *Local, Sub-Federal, Ethnic, Tribal Groups* Federal member states of the Community of Democracies, the Forum of Federations, and many other organizations and NGOs assist transforming democracies to extend democratic benefits to include more marginal members of society, and indigenous peoples who are often overlooked by elites, as well as addressing the issues of ethnic, tribal, and sectarian conflict which sadly still ravage the population in much of the world.

- *Human Security, including Conflict Prevention* Human security networks, the United Nations, international NGOs and foreign policy and security research centers, etc., address the fundamentally necessary capacities for security and public safety without which neither democracy nor development can survive.

Chapter 4: Conclusions

We have explained that the Community of Democracies is not a political alliance. But its member states are joined by a shared hope for further progress toward democracy in the world. They support the efforts of civil society to create a virtual international community of democrats.

The working ground rules for the *Handbook*'s construction held that there are no hard and fast prescriptions for democracy transformation, apart from the fact that the process and its outcomes best emerge peacefully from civil society itself. But active democrats and human rights defenders expect, and benefit from, the encouragement and support of democrats everywhere.

Democracy development is a function of process, and sound institutions, but very much also one of behavior, which cannot just be transferred, as technique. It requires time, patience, and hard application. Outside support needs to be sustained over time.

The critical resources are those of human capital in the countries concerned. Civil society forms the building blocks of democratization.

The *Handbook* aims to explain how democratic governments have used their embassies, consulates, and diplomatic officers in the past to provide such encouragement and support. Again, each situation is different. There is also a varying mix of factors involved for each of the members of the Community of Democracies in policy emphasis and deployment of personnel.

We underline the extent to which diplomatic representation has itself been undergoing transformation, from being an enterprise consisting of private government-to-government transactions to one in which people-to-people and public diplomacy are central features of the professional skill sets required today.

Of course, the skills involved are used in differing mixtures, depending on whether the host country is a failed, failing, or post-conflict state, a military or theocratic dictatorship, a regime of populist authoritarianism, a fledgling and fragile democracy, or a complex democracy trying to consolidate democratic institutions and purposes. In citing examples from the last decades, we avoided slotting host countries into one category or another. Member states wish to avoid such attempts to judge member countries according to snapshots of their governance. Independent NGOs already analyze relative governance very effectively.

Instead, we chose a number of country case studies which attempt to show a wide variety of situations and challenges. Some of the narratives, such as Chile, South Africa, Poland or Ukraine, are in the past tense -- which is obviously not to suggest that history is over for the countries concerned.

Other narratives are very much in the here and now, such as Belarus, Burma/Myanmar, and Zimbabwe, and the case studies presented in this Second Edition, on China, Cuba, and Egypt. Their next chapters remain to be written by the people themselves.

In these case studies, and in such instructive episodes of transition as Sierra Leone and Tanzania, we expect that practitioners in the field will recognize elements familiar to the situation they are closest to at present, and will be assisted in developing their own approaches and programs for democracy development support on the ground.

In the years to come, we shall update the case studies and continue to add new ones. We constantly modify and expand the *Handbook* itself to take account of comments from readers and users.

To conclude, we hope the *Handbook* serves the helpful concrete purposes intended. In doing so, it serves a higher interest of promoting both greater satisfaction for the aspirations of many millions of individuals, and a more secure and open international environment for all.

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Cuban Exceptionalism

INTRODUCTION

The *Handbook* presents individual country case studies in order to record the practical activity that diplomats from democratic countries have performed there in support of civil society, democracy development, and human rights. Situations can and often do resemble each other in some recognizable respects, and our aim is to enable diplomats and civil society partners in the field to obtain insights and guidance from actions taken elsewhere, without, however, suggesting that the experiences in one country can simply be transposed directly to another, since the trajectory of each country's development is singular.

The case of Cuba is extreme, and in many ways unique. Cuban history since the late 19th Century is intertwined in a relationship with one country, the United States. The mutual enmity between the two governments for much of the last 50 years has had a direct impact on conditions inside Cuba. Anything that diplomats of democratic countries can do in support of Cuban democracy development pales in significance to the potential effect of placing US-Cuba relations on a normal basis, possibly for the first time.

The only country in the western hemisphere that does not practice some form of electoral democracy, Cuba's government remains in principle a Marxist-Leninist throwback and a resolute holdout more than two decades after the abandonment of communism in Europe and adoption of the market economy in China. Expectations that Cuban communism would be merely the last domino to fall failed to recognize a signal difference with Eastern Europe where the regimes were judged to be collaborating with an outside oppressor, the USSR. The Cuban government presents itself as the patriotic defender against an outside threat.

The regime has from the outset been symbiotically identified with its *Comandante en jefe* who led the revolution that propelled it into power on January 1, 1959. Descriptive labels scholars employ to capture its essence range from "extreme paternalism" (Prof. Carollee Berghdorf, Hampshire College, UK) to "charismatic post-totalitarianism" (Prof. Eusebio Mujal-León, Georgetown University, Washington, DC). Exile adversary US Congressman Lincoln Díaz-Balart, has called it "the Fidel Castro regime," pure and simple. Although an orderly succession has obviously occurred as Fidel Castro retired from public office in July, 2006 and ostensibly turned power over to Raúl Castro, the question arises whether anything significant has changed. Fidel Castro's moral influence over the country remains, though he is without direct control of all details as before. Having described himself in 1961 as a "Marxist-Leninist until I die," he recast himself in post-retirement writings as a "utopian socialist," adding that "one must be consistent to the end."

The regime he built over the decades, "is not the German Democratic Republic," as one diplomat in Havana phrased it, but it is an authoritarian one-party state that has used an Orwellian security apparatus to rein in and quash democratic impulses over five decades, often citing the threat from the US as the rationale. Much of the world acknowledges the ability of Castro's Cuba to have stared down and survived determined efforts by successive US governments to end the regime, by invasion, attempted assassination, a CIA program of subversion, and a punitive economic embargo.

But increasingly, democrats rebuke the regime for its invocation of these real threats to Cuba's sovereignty to justify the continued and even tighter suffocation of human and civil rights of Cuban citizens.

The case study that follows attempts to identify activities by diplomats and democracies in support of Cubans' efforts to secure rights at home, including discussion of a more open and democratic system. But the study reports the view that these efforts tend to bounce off a tightly controlled and controlling regime that veers between self-confidence and paranoia, and discounts the pertinence of mutual leverage.

Diplomatic efforts meant to support democracy development are in consequence especially challenged in today's Cuba. Diplomats have to manage seemingly competing professional obligations of non-interference, official engagement, a long-term developmental perspective, and immediate democratic solidarity.

This challenge, familiar to diplomats and international NGOs working in other authoritarian and repressive states, is made especially vexing in Cuba by an authoritarian government that is fearful of change. But some signs of change are present in Cuba. Coming years will engage democrats in support of efforts by the Cuban people to pursue aspirations for more significant change that is theirs alone to accomplish.

CUBAN HISTORY

In few countries are the links between history and the present as evident on the surface as in Cuba, where the struggles and passions of the last 150 years still play out in national psychology and perspectives today.

Christopher Columbus made trans-Atlantic landfall on Cuba on October 27, 1492 on his epic voyage of "discovery." By 1511, Spain had declared the island a Spanish possession and within decades the Taino-Arawak peoples were eliminated by a combination of harsh repression, suicide, European diseases, and assimilation. Except for a brief occupation of Havana by the British, Cuba remained in Spanish hands for almost 500 years, until 1898. During the 19th Century, the island economy prospered from sugar and tobacco production that, however, relied heavily on African slave labor until the abolition of slavery in 1886.

Influenced by European and American revolutions, a vibrant national identity emerged over time, generating a movement for independence whose moral animator was Father Félix Varela (1788-1854), one of the first great protagonists of non-violent civil resistance. Several rebellions that were harshly dealt with preceded the Ten Year War that cost tens of thousands of Cuban lives and even more on the part of the Spaniards, until a negotiated compromise, which led to the abolition of slavery in 1886.

José Martí (1853-95) was since adolescence devoted to the quest for an independent and non-racial Cuba, causing his imprisonment and exile. In 1881, the nationalist writer and poet found his way to the US and began in earnest to mobilize support for an armed incursion of exiled patriots to throw the Spaniards out of Cuba.

The rebellion against Spanish rule that broke out on the island in 1895 (without the exile invasion force whose ships had been impounded) suited the long-standing aversion of the US to European possessions in the Western Hemisphere that was codified as doctrine by President James Monroe in 1823. The annexation of Cuba had been openly espoused by later Presidents Polk and Pierce.

Anxious to pre-empt the impulse toward annexation by expediting national independence as a *fait accompli*, José Martí was killed not long after he had joined the insurgents in 1895. But by the following year, the rebels had succeeded in controlling most of Cuba.

By 1895, a growing set of frictions with Spain added to public sympathy in the US for the Cuban patriots, making the option of war against Spain popular. As future president Theodore Roosevelt wrote, “This country needs a war.”

US Secretary of State Blaine secretly tried in 1896 to buy Cuba from a resistant Spain, but when the US battleship Maine (sent in aid of US citizens fearing for their safety) mysteriously blew up in Havana harbor in 1898, the US used it as a *casus belli*.

The latter stage of the Cuban War of Independence thereby became known in the US only as part of the larger Spanish-American War. US intervention was decisive within the year. Peace negotiations with Spain, from which Cubans were excluded, handed Cuba over to the US who then occupied the country for four years. However, because the joint resolution of Congress authorizing the use of force to help the Cuban rebels had an amendment (the Teller Amendment) that forbade annexation, the US consented to Cuban independence in 1902.

As historian Alfredo José Estrada has written, it was America’s “first experience of nation-building.” President McKinley instructed the military expeditionary chief General Wood to “try to straighten out their courts, (and) put them on their feet as best you can. We want to do all we can for them and get out of the island as soon as we safely can.”

But nation-building went hand-in-hand with a profitable reciprocity treaty that awarded US business and trade a privileged place in the Cuban economy. Moreover, Cuban sovereignty was diluted by the “Platt Amendment” that the US Congress passed in 1901 and had inserted into the Cuban Constitution giving the US the right to intervene if US citizens or property were endangered. Indeed, US troops occupied Cuba on the occasion of various uprisings thereafter, between 1906 and 1909, in 1912, and between 1917 and 1920. The amendment was abrogated in 1934.

The 20th Century until 1959

Cuba’s enjoyment of independence was repeatedly spoiled by dictatorship and corruption. In 1925, modernizer Gerardo Machado was elected president, but soon gave in to the temptations of dictatorship. His rule was ended by violent opposition (“The *Abecedarios*”) and after a brief, idealistic, but chaotic socialist period, the army seized power in 1933. Authority, initially from behind the throne, was in the hands of ex-Sergeant Fulgencio Batista.

Batista, however, did initiate a democratic process and the adoption of a progressive constitution in 1940, following which he was fairly elected president, signaling the debut of Cuba’s only 12 years of democracy, recalled later as the “politics of disappointment.” The 1944 election was won by progressive Ramón Grau San Martín who presided over a rising economy but also much corruption and gangsterism. His successor in 1948, Carlos Prío, brought little positive change.

Before scheduled elections in 1952, Batista seized power, suspended the Constitution he had helped design, and began a darker chapter of dictatorial violence and widespread corruption.

Middle and upper classes prospered, but poorer people languished as disparities widened. The Batista regime’s staunch anti-communism appealed to the Cold War outlook of US authorities at the expense of Cuban human rights. In 1953, a group of rebels led by young lawyer Fidel Castro attacked the Moncada barracks. Released from prison, Castro organized in Mexico a rebel force that in 1956 landed and launched a disciplined mountain-based guerrilla campaign, under *comandantes* Che Guevara, Raúl

Castro, and Camilo Cienfuegos that drew decisive support from peasants, sugar workers, students, and their own persistence.

The Castro Victory and its Aftermath

The hundred thousand or so refugees that followed Batista's flight from Cuba on December 31, 1958 in the inaugural wave to Miami were mostly embittered by what they had lost to the new regime.

The prevalent initial international reaction to the Castro victory was that despotism had been turfed out by an idealistic cause. Fidel Castro tried at first to showcase an inclusive social-democratic coalition of a wide variety of opponents to Batista. After these attempts were shelved, disillusioned democrats began to join professionals and small businessmen to abandon what seemed to be rapidly becoming a militant ideological monolith.

As part of the process of "draining the swamp," several hundred executions took place at Havana's *La Cabaña* fortress, after summary trials. But as John Lee Anderson reported in "Che," "There was little public opposition to the wave of revolutionary justice at the time. On the contrary: Batista's thugs had committed some sickening crimes, (and) the Cuban public was in a lynching mood."

But Anderson added, "Whatever the 'necessity' of the revolutionary tribunals, they did much to polarize the political climate between Havana and Washington." The gap widened as Fidel Castro's anti-Washington rhetoric escalated and his plans to nationalize American assets in Cuba clarified. Che Guevara upped the ante by urging violent revolution throughout the hemisphere, which Anderson calls "a siren call to would-be revolutionaries and an implicit declaration of war against the interests of the United States." So began a half-century of mutual enmity.

The Castro Years, 1959-

This is not the place for detailed analysis of the dramatic history of Cuba over the last half-century. The regime was from almost the outset in a psychological and real state of siege: the failed US-financed Bay of Pigs invasion in February, 1961, was the only military attack, but there were repeated attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro over the years, most notoriously as part of "Operation Mongoose," one of the biggest CIA covert operations ever undertaken. Diplomatic relations with the US were severed in 1961. Subsequent events, from the fateful Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 that brought the world perilously close to nuclear war, through the passage by the US Congress of the Helms-Burton Act in 1996 that tightened the devastating economic embargo on Cuba, perpetuated the state of militant readiness that the Cuban leadership has invoked to justify the necessity of strict authoritarian control.

There is no question that the revolution of 1959 had wide popular support, having overthrown what was widely held to be a tyrannical regime. Most citizens took patriotic pride in Cuba's stature in the eyes of the world.

There was also initial enthusiasm about exporting the Cuban revolution throughout Latin America but it waned, and died in Bolivia in 1967 with Che Guevara who had become by then a revolutionary freelancer without much active Cuban government input. Cuba did take up arms in support of liberation causes, most prominently in Angola where a Cuban expeditionary army numbering as many as 55,000 fought for years to support the leftist MPLA against South African proxies with costs so huge to the apartheid regime that South Africans today credit Cuba with having done more to bring down white minority rule than anyone else from outside. (More than 2000 Cubans died in the Angola fighting).

In recent years, Cuba's international "brand" has been identified with the export of health services: 36,000 Cuban doctors are in service in over 70 countries, providing poor neighborhoods medical facilities for the first time, such as the "*Barrio Adentro*" project in Caracas. South Africa pays Cuba to supply doctors to replace the many who have emigrated in the post-apartheid era. Cuba provides medical services in Venezuela in return for oil, but Cuban emergency relief teams were among the first to support relief efforts after the tsunami in Indonesia in 2004, a major earthquake in Pakistan in 2006, and were prominent closer to home more recently in earthquake-devastated Haiti. The *Misión Milagros* has brought hundreds of thousands of poor Latin Americans to Cuba for eye surgery and sent teams of Cuban eye doctors abroad.

In those fifty-plus years, the Cuban government achieved important social goals. Diplomats in Cuba caution that whoever follows will have to accept that these achievements will need to be built-upon, not dismantled.

Cubans have never been as healthy, educated, or more or less equal. The Cuban government states that a population that was only 60% literate in 1959, is 100% literate; 94% of Cubans finish secondary school. Today, there are 80,000 doctors, compared to 6,000 at the time of the revolution (3,000 of whom emigrated). Life expectancy and infant mortality data rival those in Canada and the US, and are the best in Latin America. Latin American diplomats report that people struggling against criminal gangs in their region envy Cuba's relative absence of street violence.

However, the political attempt to re-engineer society along Marxist lines had far-reaching social and economic consequence, which combined with increasing ideological militancy and police control, has taken some toll on popular support, though there is no reliable way of estimating approval ratings apart from the enduring efforts Cubans make to emigrate. The number of Cuban emigrants and families in the US today is well over a million.

Following nationalizations of private enterprise and the confiscation of US businesses, the re-engineered socialist economy became mired in centralized control and leaden bureaucracy. Social gains that also had to struggle against the effects of US sanctions were slowed. The withdrawal of Soviet "fraternal" subsidies (amounting to 21% of the Cuban GDP) after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 essentially ended the radical Cuban social experiment. Having been over-reliant on the Soviet bloc, to the extent of 80% of trade, Cuba faced a grave economic crisis. The government responded by suspending its economic orthodoxy to accommodate pragmatic measures under "the special period in times of peace" that introduced limited private small enterprise (self-employment or *trabajo de cuenta propia*) and permitted the use of foreign hard currency.

Yet, recovery was staggered, further hindered by devastating hurricanes in recent years. The collapsed sugar market has never recovered. Some reforms initiated in the "special period" that authorized the emergence of semi-autonomous enterprises and research centers were rolled back a decade later. A senior economic minister told an ambassador at the time that the state's position as employer had dropped from 98% to 97% but was now back at 98%. Diplomats report that officials who had launched new ventures and centers with government favor found themselves in sudden disfavor and relegated to a limbo of obscurity.

CUBA TODAY: SOCIO-ECONOMIC ATROPHY

The RAND Corporation writes today of "a vast array of dysfunctional legacies from the *fidelistas* past." In general, public grievances are less related to human rights than to improving the material conditions of day-to-day living.

There is a consensus among observers that the population is idle, underemployed, and apathetic, worn down by the struggle to feed families from meager personal food rations that the half of the population with no access to the convertible currency economy has to rely on.

70% of Cubans were born after 1959 and relate less to the revolutionary enthusiasm of early years. Cuban youth in the main wants what youth everywhere seeks, free access to popular outside cultural goods, life styles, and freedom to travel.

The regime under Raúl Castro appears committed to trying to improve the economy and has taken some modest steps to lighten bureaucratic controls that he repeatedly criticizes, and to decentralize, but structures are so ossified that the practical effect is hardly visible. About 60% of the economy is under the direct control of the self-financed FAR, the Revolutionary Armed Forces that constitute a powerful state-within-the-state with separate infrastructure for food, energy, and transport for its members' benefit.

In 2009, Raúl Castro enabled small private land-holdings to try to improve food production, as Cuba is now massively dependent on food imports (the US is the main supplier, food products having been excepted from the US embargo under strict terms of cash pre-payment).

Such steps reflect to some extent a pragmatic current among political elites. Raúl Castro's own political appointees tend to be older military intimates. They are described as status quo-oriented but not necessarily hard-line ideologically. They seem mindful, however, of potential resistance from more ideological loyalists, and pay heed to the destabilizing effects of "shock therapy" in Russia and elsewhere, that would in any case be anathema to a population fearful of weakening entitlement programs that at least keep everybody afloat. Nonetheless, even the most orthodox socialists are reported to see the merits of permitting the safety valves of some economic reforms, provided egalitarian principles remain paramount. However, the differences between those who have access to the convertible currency economy and those who don't are already corrosive enough.

Political

From the outset, the regime has maintained pervasive supervision of the population, making ample use of the *Comités de Defensa de la Revolución*, that engage citizens as watchdogs in every block and workplace. The consensus among observers is that despite piecemeal concessions, Cubans are unlikely to see any significant weakening of doctrinaire political control as long as Fidel Castro is alive. Most acknowledge it has proven to be wishful thinking to believe that pragmatic specific reforms lead inevitably to wholesale political change, as a kind of Cuban *perestroika*.

"Elections" to local councils and state organs remain resolutely single-party.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the regime in 2000, Human Rights Watch wrote of the "highly effective machine of repression." Only a few years later, in March 2003, police arrested 75 democracy proponents. The 52 remaining in prison seven years later are now slated for release, after the intervention of Cardinal Jaime Ortega. This leaves well over 100 prisoners of conscience still in Cuban jails. A good number were prosecuted mostly as recipients of US financial aid. (Internal security operatives who had infiltrated NGOs appeared as state witnesses). The propaganda machine remorselessly attacked civil society representatives as a mercenary fifth column serving Cuba's enemies.

Civil Society and the Opposition

The notion of civil society acting independently of government that is at the core of democratic development was by definition abhorrent to old-line Soviet-style Marxists. From the start, the regime appropriated Cuban patriotism as the central theme of the revolution's narrative, ultimately incarnated by the government. The external threats produced national security laws that declare the acceptance of foreign funds to support change to the Cuban system to be seditious. The views of those who advocate change are represented as being inherently anti-Cuban.

Yet, Fidel Castro himself referred to civil society in positive terms internationally in 1992. The partial withdrawal of the state in the "special period" opened up spaces that were filled by informal arrangements among people that laid the beginnings of civil society. But a backlash in official opinion once the economy began an uneven recovery in the mid 1990s caused Cuban authorities by 1996 to label notions of civil society and democracy as being part and parcel of aggressive campaigns from the US for regime change.

A pattern emerged that once an advocacy organization became prominent or effective beyond a certain point, it was shut down.

An early example was the CCPDH (the Cuban Committee for Human Rights) that in the 1970s formed among imprisoned socialists and supporters of the 1959 revolution disillusioned by monolithic political control. In 1997, members of the "Working Group of the Internal Dissidence" were jailed, followed by more arrests in succeeding years.

The most high-profile advocacy initiative was the Varela Project, winner of the Sakharov prize and lauded publicly by Pope John Paul II and former president Jimmy Carter on visits to Cuba. Animated by Oswaldo Payá who had founded the Christian liberation movement in 1988, the Varela project took advantage of a provision of the 1992 Cuban Constitution to collect the requisite 10,000 signatures to petition the right to a popular referendum on basic freedoms of association and the press and free elections, and the right to operate a private business. It also called for an amnesty on political prisoners. The government crushed the initiative by organizing its own referendum in which 8 million Cuban citizens were herded into voting for a constitutional amendment making socialism permanent. Then, it seized 22 of the most prominent supporters of the Varela Project in its mass arrests in March 2002.

Oswaldo Payá was not among them, perhaps because of his international prominence. He has continued his efforts through the Christian Liberation Movement, starting the Cuban Forum, which encourages discussion meetings in peoples' homes. Some observers comment that the regime's tolerance of this activity, though it is subject to considerable surveillance, shows a post-Fidel measure of acceptance that the population increasingly needs and expects a debate about the country's political future. Overall, there is public fatigue over official propaganda and intrusion into personal lives, and Raul Castro has dialed down the propaganda volume.

But analytical opinion is that the discouraging material conditions mean that achieving a multiparty political system is not top in the list of Cubans' priorities. People do want less economic control. They accept the social and egalitarian values that animate the Cuban revolution, but deplore inefficient and demeaning delivery of social and other services.

Despite the hard line that has persisted since 1996, civil society has continued to expand in a piecemeal fashion, including in rural areas, especially to fill space created by inadequate social delivery by the government faced with an overcrowded agenda. While not presenting themselves as advocates of political

change, such civil society groups obtain pertinent experience in local and personal initiative from handling the functional issues at hand, laying foundations for building what the China case study refers to as the “ecology” of pluralism.

In the 1990s, the *Consilio Cubano* emerged as an umbrella group of 135 small organizations, including professional associations and independent journalists. It was blocked from meeting in 1996 and not revived. But over 2,000 NGOs with specific functional objectives are inscribed officially.

The Independent Library Movement addressed a gap in access to books in Spanish, and built a network of over 100 libraries with over 250,000 users. Though non-political in practical purpose, its founder, human rights activist Ramon Colas, was forced into exile in 2001.

The labor movement is dominated by the official CTC that is an instrument of regime control, but two more independent labor groups have emerged: the CUTC (the United Council of Cuban Workers); and the CUNIC (the Christian International Labor Movement).

The Federation of Latin American Rural Women (FLAMUR) founded in 1996 has collected over 100,000 signatures to a petition protesting the inequity of a dual-currency economy they maintain is unfair to poorer Cubans without access to convertible pesos.

Having been identified as a supporter of Spain and then of Batista and other dictators, the Roman Catholic Church is greatly diminished institutionally in Cuba, reduced to only 300 priests (half are Cuban). But religious faith is by no means extinguished.

In 1992 the Cuban government dropped the formally atheistic character of the country and returned the right to worship without official stigma. By the 1990s the Catholic Church was giving thought to its social role and began a non-political program of small projects for citizens such as day-care centers for single mothers and facilities for the elderly. It did not become a conduit for open political challenge as in Poland in the 1980s, but it has created a space for open discussion, and the Church is supported by congregants across the country. Raúl Castro held an unprecedented four-hour meeting in May 2010 with Cardinal Jaime Ortega and the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, Dionisio Garcia. This has led to further discussion between Church and State resulting in a set of concessions regarding jail sentences of prisoners of conscience, including the announced release, probably into exile of the remaining 52 prisoners arrested in March, 2003.

A variety of congregational and religious assemblies are able to draw resources from corresponding religious communities in the US and elsewhere. The Afro-Cuban traditional popular practice of *Santería* remains part of Cuban national culture.

A plethora of associations and cooperatives emerged for developmental purposes, working on alternative energy, agriculture, and restoration of local buildings, sometimes involving wholesale community development such as the *El Condado* movement aimed at remodeling the city of Santa Clara.

Artistic, intellectual, and research circles have banded into informal groups. Rock music has attracted a strong following on the part of young people that authorities have belatedly and without much credibility tried to align with.

All in all, diplomats and other observers judge that the foundations of civil society, while rudimentary, are taking root, providing foreign democratic partners with a growing variety of non-state partners.

Cuba's Relationships with Community of Democracies Member States

Cuba's foreign relationships have varying degrees of intensity.

As described above, the **relationship with the US** is overwhelmingly the most important from every point of view. There is scarcely a family without relatives in the US, and US policies on permissible remittances from family members, as well as on visits, are of primary importance on the island. The Obama administration has relaxed the regulations that had been considerably hardened by the preceding administration. In 2010, US visas were again being provided Cuban artists and performers to tour in the US, such as the emblematic poet-singer Silvio Rodríguez.

The Helms-Burton Act, however, is rooted in law and many of the provisions of the US embargo cannot be changed by executive order. Yet, as time goes by, the ability of the harder-line exile community in South Florida to dictate terms of the relationship between the two countries diminishes. A growing number of US voters would share the consensus among non-US democratic representatives in Cuba that the US embargo and US policies have been counter-productive, enabling the regime to justify strengthening its control over the population. A recent article by Human Rights Watch monitors Nik Steinberg and Daniel Wilkinson judged that "It is hard to think of a US policy with a longer track record of failure."

Professor Lopez-Levy has observed that the fault with US policy is that it "wants to start at the end." The Helms-Burton Act indeed rooted its embargo provisions not only in Cuba adopting a multiparty democracy, but on the Castros being no longer in office.

Fidel Castro has always turned US policy to his advantage and has mobilized Cuban fears the Cuban American community aimed at restoring economic as well as political control over the island. Cuban citizens are generally reported to be bitter about the hard line from either side: the Cuban authorities who care more about ideology than the plight of Cubans; and US authorities and lawmakers who chose to tighten sanctions and the embargo at the moment of greatest economic hardship for Cubans. By all accounts, ordinary Cubans hope the Obama administration will succeed in inducing flexibility, a relaxation of enmity and also of Cuban controls.

The Obama Administration has initiated talks with Cuban authorities over immigration and overflights as well as preliminary talks on the prospects for improving the relationship. Though Fidel Castro has never accepted the premise of "normalization" in exchange for democratization, it is implicit that both sanctions and Cuba's continuing to imprison prisoners of conscience must ultimately be bargaining tools in a larger picture.

The Cuban government has recognized the need to diversify relationships, having learned a harsh lesson from over-dependence on the USSR. There has been something of a revival of relations with **Russia**, and **China** has become Cuba's second largest trading partner.

Cuba's other relationships have in some ways been strengthened in recent years. Virtually all **Latin American countries** now have diplomatic representation in Cuba, especially since Cuba stopped supporting leftist uprisings in Central America in the early 1990s. Indeed, Cuba is seen by Latin Americans to have played a constructive role in mediation of conflicts in the region.

A wave of electoral victories of the left and center-left in Latin America in recent years translated into cooperative relationships with Cuba. While most reject Cuba's political model, the Castros' anti-democratic policies and practices have seemingly been applauded by the likes of Venezuela's Hugo

Chavez. Generally, in line with historic Latin American neuralgia toward outside interference in domestic affairs, Latin Americans take a hands-off attitude toward Cuban governance.

Worker-based and left of center Latin American political movements and parties long enjoyed close relations with Cuban political elites, and once in office, several leaders such as President Luiz Inácio ‘Lula’ da Silva of Brazil, President Evo Morales of Bolivia, or ex-President Michelle Bachelet of Chile, reciprocated for past Cuban support.

Cuba has been admitted to the Rio Group devoted to economic cooperation among Latin American and Caribbean countries. Though the US has continued to resist the idea (advanced by Canada) of inviting Cuba to Summits of the Americas, Fidel Castro was enthusiastically welcomed at the first Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Development hosted by Brazil (that excluded the US).

Venezuela is a high-profile ally of the Castro regime and is a major financial benefactor. Mexico has recently restored a productive political level dialogue after the tensions with ex-President Fox, strengthening economic relations and consulting on other issues of mutual importance such as illegal migration. President Lula da Silva who visited Cuba several times during his tenure as president, paid a state visit to Raúl Castro in 2008 featuring a major economic assistance and development package that situates Brazil as a central partner, particularly in the energy development field.

Dr. Julia Sweig points out that Cuba’s emphases on social justice resonate in Latin American public opinion. This may explain the paradox that while many have only recently overcome the abuse of human rights at the hands of military regimes, they nonetheless fail to criticize Cuban human rights abuses. Dr. Sweig assesses that “Latin American governments today generally see gradual reform under Raúl Castro as the path most likely to bring about a more plural, open society on the island,” a judgment corresponding more to the dispiriting material conditions in Cuba than to the reawakened aspirations of the people.

Canada and the European Union countries have always maintained relations with Cuba and have opposed Helms-Burton both for its negative impact on developments regarding Cuba and for its extra-territorial projections of US law that foreign partners judge to be unacceptable. But “western” democracies have also been firm about the unacceptability of Cuba’s disregard for human rights and for the holding of prisoners of conscience.

After the arrests of 75 democracy activists in March, 2003, the EU and its diplomatic missions in Cuba placed a severe downgrade on relations, which was only removed in 2009. There are varying degrees of warmth or lack of it among EU countries individually. Spain is the most active, including fast-track access to Spanish citizenship for Cubans with at least one Spanish grandparent, and productive partnerships in such areas as the environment, disaster preparedness and relief, and science and technology. The Czech Republic probably represents the other end of the EU scale, reflecting the priority that the former communist country places on democratic transition, and also the convictions on human rights of former president Vaclav Havel, who founded the International Committee for Democracy in Cuba. (The Fidel Castro government had supported the 1968 USSR invasion to crush Czech political reform). Individually, other EU countries have tried to engage the Cuban government in the last year, while also keeping a focus on prisoners’ lists. The European Commission has become a development partner of Cuba, but has done so in tandem with a high-level EU-Cuba dialogue on human rights.

Canada has maintained political engagement with Cuban authorities while arguing with them “nose-to-nose” for the space to continue contacts with civil society. Although Cuba normally discounts economic

leverage, the Cubans do care about their image in a country such as Canada that sends so many tourists to Cuba and continues to be an economic partner.

There are indications that Cuba knows it needs to reach out to major democracies to balance what will likely be a wave of activity from the US if and when relations do become more normal. Cuban leaders have told European partners they would like to think that Europe's greater emphasis on social democracy will enable Cuba to cement some of the social principles of the revolution amid inevitable change.

RESOURCES AND ASSETS OF DEMOCRATIC DIPLOMATS IN CUBA

The Cuban government is not isolated from the representatives of foreign democratic governments as is Burma/Myanmar, nor is it indifferent to foreign views – the foreign press section of the Foreign Ministry is its biggest. But authorities can and do turn access for foreign diplomats on and off, depending on behavior.

The regime rarely goes so far as to request withdrawal of diplomatic representatives. Democratic diplomats do exercise their **immunity** in order to meet with civil society, speak freely, and even demonstrate solidarity with the victims of human rights abuse.

On the other side of the coin, there have been ample reports in the past of diplomatic **immunity** being violated by random if systemic acts of harassment and intimidation against mainly US diplomats, their dependents, and even their pets.

Diplomats have been able to count on the **support of home authorities** for diplomatic activity corresponding to the policies of the sending government at a given time. The most protagonistic approach was assigned to James Cason, the Bush administration's Head of the US Interests Section (a fully-staffed diplomatic mission located within the Swiss Embassy) from 2002 to 2005. Mr. Cason recalled he was told, "You are not at a mission. You are on a mission... The mission is to support the democracy movement." In doing so, Mr. Cason antagonized Cuban authorities. It was an outcome that would not have been considered productive by other countries whose relationships were less officially hostile, but it was one that Washington (and Miami) at the time seemed to want. Writer Daniel Erikson explained that "Castro and his top ministers despised Cason (who 'could not have cared less what Cuban officials thought' of him, his focus (being) wholly on supporting Cuba's nascent opposition movement). But they also found his overt support for Cuban dissidents to be politically useful, because it helped them to make the argument that opposition to the regime depended on overseas sponsors. Many Cubans in the system with reformist instincts found that the US Interests Section had become such a hot potato that they were forced to give it a wide berth." On the other hand, Mr. Cason's support for Cuban would-be democrats may well be remembered long after tit-for-tat antagonisms between the governments are forsaken.

The remarks of current UK Ambassador Dianna Melrose to a UK website on Cuban issues typify the dualistic approach most home authorities expect of their democratic diplomats. She spoke of her commitment to constructive engagement with the Cuban government. But she underlined that they cannot demand "mutual respect" to fend off criticism of the suppression of human rights in Cuba where "people are locked up for criticising the government" without "mutual respect also by the Cuban government for the European Union and the values important to us, including commitment to full civil and political rights, democratic freedoms, freedom of expression: all the rights that are fundamental to our society." On this basis, EU diplomats have continued their contacts with a range of opposition and other figures in civil society as detailed in the next chapter on applications, confident they will have support at home for activities that demonstrate solidarity with those persecuted for their principles.

Former Canadian Ambassador Michael Small records he was always clear with Cuban authorities that his mandate was “to talk with the whole range of the country,” and he was not curbed in making contacts with civil society.

Most diplomats interested in civil society contacts on a trip also met conscientiously with Cuban official contacts. The Cuban authorities respected a certain balance. If the emphasis became swollen toward dissidents, the official contacts were cut off and diplomats were left with only dissidents to meet.

Diplomats committed to maintaining contact with civil society and offering solidarity with human rights defenders come from the missions of several democratic countries in Cuba. The recent “Awards to Committed Diplomacy in Cuba” offered by CADAL (*Centro Para la Apertura y el Desarrollo de América Latina*) for “showing solidarity towards democrats in the island and for taking committed actions” on “human rights violations” honor three diplomats from Germany, two from the US, and one each from Poland, the Czech Republic, and Norway.

Diplomats recognize the reality that they have limited direct **influence** on any top-down regime whose political priorities are wholly internal. That being said, Cuba has specific development needs and not a lot of strategic leverage over countries able to address them. For decades, outside the US, Cuba enjoyed a generally sentimentally sympathetic international image and press, but the clampdown on free speech and political opposition, especially the arrests in 2003, have given the regime a black eye in democracies. A resolution adopted by the European Parliament in March, 2010 condemning Cuba directly addresses the responsibilities of Cuban authorities.

Raúl Castro has acknowledged that Cuba has to modernize, and to do this Cuba needs partners. This situation creates some political capital that embassies can deploy.

Financial assistance is a resource of diplomatic missions that ought to correspond to a dire shortage of resources on the part of Cuban NGOs. US agencies have very large amounts of money to disperse from funds authorized by Congress. The vast majority is spent on programs and NGOs outside Cuba, though the Cuban Democracy Act (1992) authorized direct US funding of NGOs seeking non-violent change. The direct funding by embassies of civil society groups, especially advocacy NGOs, has been vigorously objected to by authorities. In practice, because it was controversial, such funding often became divisive, and as mentioned, placed some Cuban recipients in a position of vulnerability. Apart from the US, diplomatic missions in Havana generally do not provide funds to support political dissidents. But they pursue the opportunity to fund developmental activities in Cuba, often preferring projects undertaken at the municipal level by local authorities or coops.

That some US funds are channeled via NGOs in newer democracies such as the Czech Republic and Poland is an example of **solidarity** among democracies, though most embassies of democratic countries in Cuba confide it would have been counter-productive in recent years to be closely associated on political issues with the US Interests Section that in the words of a US diplomat, seemed “radioactive” because of the US regime change agenda. EU countries struggled to work out a common EU position, but there were until recently few formal demarches together with non-EU partners. Over the last two decades, “like-minded” embassies, including Sweden, the Netherlands, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Spain and Britain have regularly compared notes on the ground in Havana, though they do not coordinate activity in any organized way.

The election of a new US administration in 2008 has made the working relationships among embassies in Havana more productive, and mutually reinforcing acts of human rights support are more frequent, as

detailed in the next chapter. Of course, EU embassies and those of other democracies have been consulting on development assistance issues.

Diplomats from Community of Democracies countries have consistently maintained the **legitimacy** of their solidarity with those seeking freedom of assembly and speech, and human rights defense. Cuba signed the Santiago Declaration in 1991 containing the “commitment to democracy, the strengthening of the rule of law, and access to effective justice and human rights.” In 2008, Cuba signed the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (see Annex) that guarantees such rights as well as the freedom to leave the country. There has been little apparent follow-up in concrete rights made available, but the fact that Cuba claims to be a democracy further legitimizes the right to support Cubans who seek debate about democratic norms.

APPLICATIONS

The Golden Rules

Listening, respecting and understanding: Understanding Cuba and its nuances is a challenge for any foreign observer. There are angles and complexities at every turn. Diplomats are reminded constantly of the need to respect the Cubans’ sense of their history, both to understand the present, and to grasp the fundamentals of national psychology. Many of the structures of Cuban social organization in Cuba are unique to that society.

Diplomats from democracies balance ambivalence and nuance against the need to contest the categorical denial of fundamental human rights inherent in such official acts as the harsh sentences meted out to dissidents and reformers arrested in March, 2003, and the public cynicism over the crude propaganda with which the regime characterizes activists of conscience.

They register their deep respect for the courage of dissidents described by Mario Vargas Llosa as “those who resist the dictatorship in difficult, even heroic, conditions,” who continue to protest violations of human rights, and who pay a high price for taking a stand, often extended to their families. But the imperative for democratic diplomats to support those raising a democratic voice in opposition has in practice taken account of the greater vulnerability direct contact and especially direct financial support can trigger. In April, 2007, Oswaldo Payá and Marta Beatriz Roque (founder of the Assembly for the Promotion of Civil Society, who had been jailed in 2003 on trumped-up charges of “acts against the independence or territorial integrity of the state”) joined other democrats in stating that “achieving changes in our society is a task corresponding to Cubans and only Cubans, to define and decide freely and democratically the future of Cuba without foreign intervention.” In short, supportive diplomats report a need to know when to keep their distance from those engaged in a struggle with authorities who monitor events closely, and especially contacts with foreign embassies in Cuba.

This applies to officials as well as to civil society activists. Diplomats observe that members of the political elite, even very senior figures such as deposed former Secretary of the Council of Ministers and Vice-President Dr. Carlos Lage, back off from what had been effective mutually beneficial contacts because of a need to avoid any accusation from security personnel of dangerous associations. In periods of thaw, such as the mid-to-late 1990s, younger officials were able to enjoy foreign contacts that in periods of retrenchment were then held against them with a cost to their careers.

Sharing among embassies is routine practice, though some are more like-minded than others. The EU, of course, shares systematically among member-state embassies and keeps balance and absence of duplication in development assistance efforts. On political/human rights issues, as mentioned above, some

embassies, possibly those with fewer concrete interests at stake in Cuba, take stronger declaratory positions. There is acknowledgment of the potential for an informal division of labor and differentiation of role among democratic embassies, especially in the EU. As detailed later, EU diplomats have teamed up to support victims of political persecution and their families, and to demonstrate public solidarity with peaceful demonstrators.

Truth in Communications

Reporting

Analysis of the situation in Cuba has been an ongoing duty of diplomats for many years; a local form of “Kremlinology” has grown out of the need to decipher opaque relationships in the FAR and in upper reaches of the Communist Party.

There have been major episodes of wishful thinking and cases of telling authorities at home what they wished to hear. Morris Morley (in *The Cuba Reader*) cites CIA field officers on how, prior to January 1, 1959, “Ambassadors Smith and Gardner were both absolutely convinced that Castro wasn’t going to come out of the hills. They believed what Batista told them and didn’t see that changes were going to come.”

Contemporary diplomats do not accept, obviously, the assessments of the Cuban regime at face value. They anticipate that the current repressive system will founder once Fidel Castro disappears from the scene. But they acknowledge that there is a risk of reporting isolated reforms, gestures, or contacts as heralding already the beginnings of more important structural change that has never yet emerged in any fundamental rights-altering way.

Informing

Cuba remains a closed society as far as information is concerned. There is no access to foreign news outlets (though bureaus of foreign media are in place). There had been a short-lived growth in the late 1990s of autonomous media but following a crackdown, none of the periodicals then published still exists (with the exception of the official *Gazeta* of the Union of Writers and Artists).

The Internet is basically not available to citizens, though recently it has become possible to acquire computers (at costs prohibitive for the vast majority). The regime seems to recognize that Cuban youth will access foreign websites and social networks through bootleg connections, and observers report a debate in Cuban political circles as to the inevitability of greater openness and its implications. A blogging community operates out of Cuba (the most prominent example being Yoani Sánchez of “Generation Y”), working through cut-out servers off the island where most of their readers are. There is an Internet freedom campaign channeled through RSF (Reporters Without Borders).

Journalists have been jailed for accepting financial aid from the US. The harsh fact is that there is no independent alternative in Cuba to state-owned TV and to the propagandistic Cuban news service *Granma*. The online newspaper *Candonga* in Holguín has been blocked and its director Yosvani Anzardo Hernández was detained by police for two weeks and threatened with prosecution because he was acting as a correspondent for a Miami news site. Contact with foreign press is punishable in Cuba with sentences of up to 20 years. The Writers in Prison Committee of PEN International urges democratic governments to pursue the release of journalists among the prisoners of conscience in Cuban jails.

The US, whose resident Cuban exile community argues that Cubans are brainwashed by absence of alternative and objective views, inaugurated in 1982 Radio Martí which broadcasts to the island much as Radio Free Europe did to communist countries during the Cold War. The Cuban Government eventually jammed the broadcasts that are estimated to have had little credibility among the population in any case because of distrust of the US agenda, and the tone of hostility to the Revolution about which Cubans are conflicted.

The US Interests Section and embassies of other democratic countries have always made available news and information bulletins about world events and bilateral relations. Some welcome Cuban Internet users to embassy facilities.

The US Interests section has organized meetings and workshops, and distributed publications and information material at every opportunity, making the information program the Section's central activity. In 2006, the Interests Section ratcheted the campaign for freer information upward by installing an electronic news ticker along the top of its Havana building that attempted to rebut Cuban government claims and views. The authorities countered with a massive protest and the construction of a plaza for popular demonstrations against the US adjacent to the building whose electronic ticker they attempted to block from view by masses of black flags.

The tit-for-tat campaign spurred on by Fidel Castro and the Bush Administration has since been deescalated and the US administration pulled the plug of the electronic ticker in July, 2009.

Despite the crackdown a decade ago that reversed short-lived tolerance of independent commentators and outlets, Cuban scholars and intellectuals continue to value access to outside contacts and materials. A semi-autonomous magazine of social commentary, *Temas*, is printed in and distributed from Colombia and has sustained a fair measure of free-wheeling debate, mirrored by *Temas'* regular monthly public discussions of current social and economic issues. Some embassies help start-up magazines by providing access to newsprint.

Working with the Government

The prevailing approach of democracies represented diplomatically in Cuba toward working with the government is to do so without forfeiting the need to dialogue on the human rights situation and demarche the Cuban authorities when the situation calls for it.

A dominant theme of foreign analysis expects that significant political reform in Cuba is more likely to emerge from circles and developments within government than from fragmented political opponents of government who are not well known to a public immersed in state propaganda and in any case preoccupied by bread-and-butter issues. But if so, few Cuban officials allow themselves to be perceived by foreigners as potential agents of democratic change. Still, the functional value of developing a wide range of confidence-building contacts among government officials, including in the FAR, is undoubted. US and Cuban military authorities have cooperated on issues arising from the US presence at Guantánamo, and on maritime patrolling against drug trafficking. Canadian federal police work with the Cubans on trafficking issues. Several intelligence agencies from democracies have working relationships with Cuban counterparts at the Ministry of the Interior on concrete issues where notes can usefully be compared.

The Cuban regime projects an air of supreme self-confidence that narrows opportunities for diplomats to advise the government. But confidence-building activities addressing Cuban concerns are possible. The challenges of delivering large amounts of humanitarian aid in the aftermath of devastating hurricanes

costing 20% of GDP, engaged the Cuban authorities for the first time in working partnerships with foreign agencies and NGOs, prominent among them, Catholic Relief Services.

Several embassies work on a variety of infrastructure and social issues with municipal levels of government and local co-ops, such as projects for restoration of historic monuments, buildings, and whole neighborhoods, partnered by agencies of EU member states.

US authorities have worked effectively with Cuban authorities over hostage and other emergencies even at the height of tension in relations. Under the Obama administration there is an increase in contacts, though diplomats report disappointment among Cubans that controls persist over scholarly and cultural exchanges. Cuban authorities allowed US military overflights for emergency relief operation after the Haiti earthquake. Cuban medical teams participated in the international effort there which represented a change from earlier international humanitarian operations in Haiti when the Canadian Prime Minister's suggestion Cuban cooperation be engaged ran into political complications.

Dialoguing with Cuban authorities takes place at the political level with possibly increasing degrees of frankness, with ministers and senior officials from Europe, Latin America, and North America. Diplomats report that senior Cuban officials take non-polemical dialogue seriously. Several ambassadors report that it is productive not to work human rights into every discussion. This may have the effect of adding force to specific demarches on human rights. But declarations made by western ministers for the benefit of their domestic audience tend to undermine the credibility of such demarches in Cuban eyes. Publicly-announced exercises in passing prisoners' lists generally remain without outcome, deflected with the answers, "We'll check", or "It's on Fidel's desk." But private communications in 2008 by Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, and Pope John Paul II during his own visit in 1998, did have a more productive effect, as have the discussions undertaken by Cardinal Ortega leading to release of the 52 remaining prisoners arrested in March, 2003. Carefully pre-negotiated outcomes for specific head of government visits have obtained exit permits for designated Cuban activists accepted for asylum in the country concerned. This was done without publicity.

Reaching Out

Connecting to civil society is essential to most democratic missions, though how it is done is carefully considered. It is obvious that civil society in Cuba is underdeveloped, and not well networked, and could benefit from international contacts and non-political support. But the benefits to members of civil society have to be weighed against the risks of their being accused of being subject to foreign influence.

British Ambassador Melrose echoed the position of several ambassadors of Community of Democracies countries when she stated that "We don't accept any government can tell us who we can or can't speak to. There are British and other EU Ministers who would very much like to come to Cuba. But they insist on being able to have meetings with both their Cuban government counterparts and with whoever they choose from the peaceful opposition."

US diplomats from Washington recently met privately with opposition figures after concluding a round of re-launched immigration talks. (These talks had been broken off by the US in 2003). Cuban spokesmen initially reacted wildly to the meetings, accusing the American officials of "plotting subversion" with "dozens of their mercenaries." Assistant Secretary Crowley responded that "meeting with representatives of civil society who simply want a voice in the future of their country is not 'subversive.'" On February 23, Ricardo Alarcón, the President of the Parliament, lowered the tone of Cuban reaction, observing that such meetings with civil society are not apt to "rupture the dialogue."

Democratic embassies follow different practices for purposes of connecting to specific figures of the peaceful opposition. Many designate officers within the embassy as the prime focus of contact, without diminishing the ambassador's political commitment. Some missions, and notably US personnel, stress the symbolic importance of the head of mission being seen personally in acts of personal solidarity and outreach.

Some ambassadors make a point of not hosting political opposition figures at their official residences, but receive them privately in the embassy chancery. To meet opposition figures outside, heads of mission tend to join events that include political activists hosted by other embassy officers. As pointed out above by Ambassador Melrose, visiting ministers and senior officials of Community of Democracies countries often insist on including in their programs meetings with opposition figures, and they generally also often do so privately at their embassy's chancery.

Embassies play an essential role in brokering and encouraging people-to-people exchanges with groups in their own countries. Cubans are deeply committed to high performance in culture and sports, and avidly welcome connections with partners and to events abroad. The Cuban authorities are wary, and of course the hardening of US rules on exchanges limited interchange with America in recent years, though it is now showing signs of revival.

Convening opposition or civil society members invites friction with the government but several democratic embassies have offered embassy venues for workshops or discussions on a good offices basis without specific political goals on issues that Cubans need to resolve among themselves.

Over recent years, different democratic embassies have taken a variety of approaches to inviting civil society representatives and political activists to official receptions. In that Cuban authorities object to their presence, some embassies give two distinct receptions on National Days, while others continue to mix them together, accepting that there will in consequence be fewer if any higher level representatives from government. Cuban authorities can be volatile when embassies alter practice in favor of greater presence of democracy activists: one year, the authorities withheld an embassy's permit to clear liquor and wine through customs until after the reception (to which dissidents had been prominently invited) had taken place.

The fragmentation of Cuban democratic opposition poses the question of whether democratic embassies could facilitate greater cooperation by offering their neutral good offices to groups seeking to work together more effectively, as has been done in authoritarian settings elsewhere, such as Chile or South Africa. In Cuba, that would be difficult to do except very indirectly.

Embassies do facilitate contacts between Cuban citizens and family members outside Cuba, with several making Internet available for the purpose.

Cuba has succeeded in exporting into exile much of its opposition. Several democracies facilitate refugee status for those seeking or having to leave Cuba, especially the US, Spain, Canada, Mexico, France, and Chile, occasionally, as mentioned above, as negotiated outcomes of high-level official visits.

There has been a long tradition of the Cuban exile diaspora seeking harmony of purpose with activists inside Cuba (Jose Martí's sojourn in the US prior to the 1895 rebellion comes to mind). Democratic governments and institutions abroad frequently sponsor workshops and colloquia on Cuban human rights issues. However, because of the state control of media, these events have minimal direct resonance within Cuba, insulated by barriers to information from outside. Writer Raúl Rivero who had been sentenced to 20 years in prison in 2003 but released in 2004 on health grounds expressed appreciation for his refuge in

Spain, where he acknowledged to Daniel Erikson, “The community has been very welcoming... The journalistic community has embraced me.” But the harshness of conditions in Cuba provided him with little opportunity for re-connecting. Yet while the direct connections between dissidents outside and civil society inside may not be robust, the knowledge inside that such mobilization of democrats outside occurs provides moral reinforcement for Cuban democrats.

Financing civil society and NGOs is controversial and subject to close official scrutiny. Direct financial support for opposition groups has resulted in accusations that they are “mercenaries,” and embassies avoid those situations. But fast-disbursing small amounts of support from mission funds of democratic embassies can be of great value to groups working on development and social issues. Embassies value the opportunities that emerge at local levels for small projects where there is less likelihood the partnerships can be misconstrued as having a political rather than developmental, or even humanitarian, agenda. Sometimes, they make contributions anonymously.

Showcasing experience and creative cultural performance is central to public diplomacy in Cuba. Cuban artistic and cultural life has always been vibrant. Though constrained on issues of self-expression with any political implication, graphic art, music, and dance are among art forms where Cuban performance has created an audience avid for connections to performance from outside.

Cuban youth are keen to have the opportunities to consume international popular culture. The rock music scene has emerged in strength and after an extended critical attitude, the regime has bowed to the inevitable strength of popular culture.

Embassies are able to invite from capitals experts in a range of activities where the Cuban system needs development, or where the delivery of services falls short, as well as scholars to engage with Cuban researchers and academia. Canadian cooperation for some years was typical in lending the benefits of Canadian experience to institution building that is not overtly political but that contributes to the habits of transparency and accountability: the development of effective committees in Parliament, systemically greater accountability of Ministers, and an Ombudsman’s office in government. Another notable emphasis has been on decentralized partnership activity working with Cuban unions and housing, food production, or micro-financing coops in the provinces.

Showcasing political examples can also be effective. The Cuban ambivalence about US involvement in Cuban affairs has always had at one pole the “America of Abraham Lincoln” whose Emancipation Proclamation had enormous impact on an island where at the time about half the population was composed of slaves and freed slaves originally from Africa. There are differing views as to the extent to which race relations are vexed in Cuba today. Ostensibly Cuban society is non-racial, but interest is high in others’ experiences in managing pluralistic societies, though this is a difficult topic for Cuba’s monolithic socialist model.

Defending Democrats

Demonstrating solidarity with persecuted peaceful democracy activists is part and parcel of embassy support for the rights of freedom of assembly and speech that democratic countries represent. Embassy personnel can often provide a local focus to recognition extended by their governments and parliaments to local democrats, such as the resolution of the European Parliament March 10 criticizing Cuban human rights violations.

In bestowing an international profile along with its annual Andrei Sakharov Award, the Parliament may also have enabled in the case of recipient Oswaldo Payá a degree of insulation from direct persecution.

But this was not the case for the *Damas de Blanco*, who also received the Sakharov Award. The several Ladies in White are wives of prisoners of conscience arrested in March 2003 and still jailed. To express their silent protest, the women attend mass on Sunday in Santa Rita Church in Havana's *quinta avenida* before proceeding on a short walk in public. Clearly, the dignity and moral force of their protest irked authorities to the point of retaliation. In April, 2010, pro-government groups harassed the *Damas de Blanco* (a frequent act of organized intimidation called an *acto de repudio*), at one point confining them under harsh abuse for several hours.

Diplomats responded in support. US diplomat Lowell Dale Lawton attended a recent mass with the women. German and Czech Embassy officers Volker Pellet and Frantisek Fleisman accompanied them on their walk.

Verifying and witnessing is an important embassy function in regard to such acts of intimidation. Chris Stimpson of the UK Embassy described his presence as a witness at the confrontation with the organized counter-protestors as constituting observation "to monitor human rights and freedom of expression."

There are also efforts to verify the health of prisoners of conscience. Cuban authorities do not grant human rights monitors access to their prisons. Recently, some prisoners of conscience have undertaken hunger strikes. One of the 75 arrested in March 2003, Orlando Zapata Tamayo, died as a result on February 23, 2010. Foreign leaders such as US Secretary of State Clinton and Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero condemned the act that Amnesty International called "a terrible illustration of the despair facing prisoners of conscience who see no hope of being freed from their unfair and prolonged incarceration." The Mexican and Chilean parliaments adopted similar declarations. President Raúl Castro unusually expressed public regret for Zapata's death, though the authorities then arrested dozens of his supporters to prevent them from attending the funeral that was, however, attended by diplomats from several countries. There have been concessions since, worked out in a meeting in May, 2010 between Raúl Castro and Cardinal Ortega, to ensure adequate hospital treatment for sick prisoners and to move prisoners to their home provinces to facilitate family contacts and then, the announcement in July 2010 that all 52 remaining prisoners from March, 2003, would be released.

In August 2009, five EU diplomats from Sweden, the UK, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic brought food and clothing to the wife of Darsi Ferrer, imprisoned without charge in July the day before he was to lead a demonstration for human rights. The Cuban Foreign Ministry protested that "the EU is putting in danger the political dialogue begun with Cuba." But as an EU Mission spokesman in Havana (Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff) restated the EU's policy on the occasion of re-launching the dialogue, "there is no reason to lack trust in our desire to do both things at the same time – improve dialogue with the government, and with civil society, including the peaceful opposition."

Such acts by diplomats of demonstrating solidarity, and witnessing events, do have the effect of offering some protection to activists and human rights defenders who have already courageously crossed the line of protest so that gestures of moral support for their rights do not expose them particularly to greater danger.

Direct acts of protection have also been performed by embassies in Havana over the years. Dr. Julia Sweig records the most prominent of these: "By March of 1980 a handful of Cuban citizens had already smuggled themselves into foreign embassies in search of asylum. The Peruvian embassy was one target, and the Peruvian government was not at the time disposed to return the intruders to Cuban authorities. Later that month, when several Cubans crashed a bus into the gate of the Peruvian complex and provoked a violent incident with Cuban soldiers, Fidel responded by removing all police protection from embassy grounds. Within 48 hours, over 10,000 citizens had taken refuge inside the gates."

The episode led to the Mariel boatlift, once US President Carter said he would open America's doors to Cubans wishing to leave. Fidel Castro took up the offer and within months 125,000 Cubans so emigrated.

SUMMING UP/LOOKING FORWARD

Cuba represents a complex challenge for democratic diplomats today. Pressing the regime to drop its absolutist doctrines in favor of a full-blown democracy is unrewarding in practical terms. And yet, a relativist approach that concedes that the denial of essential and universal human rights can be overlooked is not one most members of the Community of Democracies can accept.

Clearly, in Cuba, a transition is anticipated if not actually already underway. The outcome is unpredictable though it is clear that the Cuban population, especially younger Cubans, want to be part of their open hemispheric world and the wider world. Diplomats in Cuba from democracies represent links to that aspiration and are its witnesses on behalf of democrats everywhere, all the while trying to engage the Cuban authorities in activity and contact that will help improve the situation of Cubans today.

When Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos recently visited Cuba, he was quoted as telling Cuban officials that Spain would use its period in the rotating EU presidency to “elevate relations” between the EU and Havana, though it is unclear if EU members form a consensus around this objective.

The US administration is also working for more normal relations. There is an irreducible quid quo pro the EU and other democratic partners and their embassies keep in mind. Perhaps President Obama's words of advice for Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero best sum up the prognosis, “Have the Foreign Minister tell the Cuban authorities we understand that change can't happen overnight, but down the road, when we both look at this time, it should be clear that now is when those changes began.”

At the Community of Democracies tenth anniversary ministerial meeting held July 2 – 3, 2001 in Kraków, Poland, Father Jose Conrado of Santa Teresita de Jesus parish, Santiago de Cuba, received the Bronislaw Geremek Award for his longstanding and courageous dedication to the defense of civil and human rights in Cuba.

Egypt: Will Democracy Succeed the Pharaoh?

INTRODUCTION

Egypt, a proud nation with an ancient history, lies at the heart of the Arab world and is often viewed as a bellwether for broader trends in the region. With a population of around 80 million – more than twice that of any other Arab state – and its location bridging both Africa to the Middle East and the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, Egypt has long played a pivotal role in the region. And in a region that has seen more than its share of internal political crises – military coups, civil wars, and revolutions – Egypt stands out as having experienced remarkable continuity in its domestic political scene. Since the early 1920s, Egypt's political system has undergone fundamental change just once, from a constitutional monarchy under tacit British control to an independent, authoritarian state in the 1950s.

Historical Background

Since the early 19th Century, Egypt's history has been marked by Western colonial intervention, beginning with the arrival of French troops in 1798. Throughout the first half of the 1800s, Egypt was governed by Muhammed Ali Pasha, a governor in the declining Ottoman Empire who instituted far-reaching military, economic, and cultural reforms, turning Egypt into one of the most modern, developed states outside of Europe at that time. But such efforts at modernization by Muhammed Ali and his successors, culminating in the Suez Canal project, drove Egypt into severe debt, facilitating the colonial penetration of Britain, who maintained control of Egypt through World War I. After the war, the British nominally declared Egypt's independence in 1922 and instituted a constitutional, parliamentary monarchy, which would remain in place until 1952. The nationalist *Wafd* ("delegation") party, which had led the domestic movement for Egyptian independence, dominated parliamentary elections throughout this period. In July 1952, British-backed King Farouk was overthrown by a group of Egyptian army officers, the Free Officers' Movement, led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, who became President of Egypt and would rule the country until his death in 1970.

Upon seizing power, Nasser began to gradually establish authoritarian control over the Egyptian state, banning all political parties in 1952. Two years later, he also banned the Muslim Brotherhood organization, and then following an October 1954 assassination attempt by a Muslim Brotherhood member, the Nasser regime jailed thousands of Brotherhood activists. Furthermore, Nasser eventually nationalized banks, private commercial enterprises, and the Suez Canal, consolidating the authority of the Egyptian state over both the political and economic spheres. In 1962, Nasser established the Arab Socialist Union as the dominant ruling political party, representing Egypt's ruling elite.

With the death of Nasser in 1970, Vice President Anwar Sadat, another of the "Free Officers" of the 1952 coup, became President of Egypt. Early in his rule, President Sadat oversaw the establishment of a new constitution for Egypt. This 1971 constitution legally consolidated power in the hands of the president and rendered ostensibly democratic institutions such as the parliament as weak and inconsequential. Sadat soon undertook dramatic steps toward shifting Egypt's external orientation, as he expelled Soviet advisors in 1972, and changed the dynamics with Israel by initiating the October War in 1973. Following the 1973 war, the US became deeply engaged in promoting dialogue between Egypt and Israel and eventual negotiations toward a peace settlement. This culminated in Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem in 1977, followed by the Camp David Accords of 1978 and the Israel-Egypt peace treaty in 1979. This solidified Egypt's standing as a uniquely powerful Arab ally to the West and particularly to the United States, while marginalizing Egypt in the Arab and Muslim world, symbolized by the Arab League

expelling Egypt and moving its headquarters to Tunis. During this period, Sadat also reinstated nominal political pluralism, creating “loyal opposition” parties representing various political orientations, allowing the Wafd Party to re-emerge, and allowing limited political and organizational activity by the Muslim Brotherhood.

Following the assassination of Sadat in 1981 by Islamists opposed to Camp David, his Vice President (and Air Force commander) Mohammed Hosni Mubarak, succeeded him. Egypt experienced a short-lived period of tempered liberalization under Mubarak during the 1980s. The parliamentary elections of 1987, for example, created an assembly with 22% opposition representation. However, this trend was abruptly curtailed in the 1990s, as the resurgence of domestic terrorism spurred the regime to crack down on political opposition and close the narrow openings that had emerged in the political landscape.

After 2000, the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) began to show signs of internal reform. The NDP was embarrassed by its initial showing in the 2000 parliamentary elections, in which independent candidates (most of whom later allied themselves to the NDP) won a majority of seats. This spurred the emergence of a new wave of younger-generation, Western-educated reformers within the NDP. This group was led by President Hosni Mubarak’s son Gamal, who was appointed Chairman of the newly instituted Policy Secretariat – the third-ranking position in the NDP - in 2002. Gamal Mubarak and his allies from the Policy Secretariat led the effort to transform the NDP into a modern institution modeled after Western political parties.

Era of Hope (2004-2005)

By 2004, there were a number of signs of momentum for real political reform. In July 2004, a new cabinet was appointed featuring Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif and 14 new ministers, most of whom were Gamal Mubarak’s allies from the Policy Secretariat and were widely perceived to be economic reformers. And the Egyptian political opposition also showed signs of emerging pluralism and dynamism at this time. In late 2004 and early 2005, a new, loosely knit coalition of reformers known as *Kifaya* (“Enough”) emerged, organizing an unprecedented series of regular protests calling for political reform and openly criticizing the Mubarak regime. 2004 also saw the licensing of the new secular, liberal *al-Ghad* party, founded by Ayman Nour, a younger generation Member of Parliament who had broken ranks with the *Wafd* party in 2001. In addition, the leading Islamist movement in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, showed signs of modernizing and embracing reform at this time, issuing a pro-democracy reform initiative in March 2004. In February 2005 President Mubarak proposed a constitutional amendment to allow for Egypt’s first multi-candidate presidential election. Moreover the Muslim Brotherhood, though it remained banned and could only run candidates for parliamentary elections as independents, was nonetheless allowed to campaign openly and given much greater access to the media. In addition, the 2005 elections saw the first widespread election monitoring by independent NGOs. Although the elections were marred by irregularities, the presence of thousands of monitors in polling stations trained by Egyptian NGOs was widely viewed as an important step forward, establishing the legitimacy of independent election monitors.

Disillusionment and Regression on Reform

Despite the many signs of progress on democratic development by mid-2005, the late 2005 elections did not meet expectations, and by 2006, the trends toward reform had sharply reversed themselves. Following the presidential election, Ayman Nour – the only candidate who ran a serious campaign in opposition to President Mubarak – was convicted and sentenced to five years in prison for dubious charges of forging signatures during the formation of his *al-Ghad* party, and served more than three. Following the better-than-expected performance of the Muslim Brotherhood in the first round of

parliamentary elections in November 2005, the second and third rounds were marred by increasingly blatant interference, with neighborhoods sympathetic to the Brotherhood seeing polling centers closed down and widespread violence used to prevent voting. Since those elections, Brotherhood members have been targeted in a series of campaigns with arrests and seizure of financial assets.

In April 2006, the Mubarak government extended the emergency law, despite 2005 campaign promises to eliminate it and replace it with a narrower set of anti-terrorism laws. Efforts to stifle public discourse through targeted jailing, intimidation, and prosecution of dissenting voices, including bloggers and editors of independent newspapers, increased considerably beginning in 2006. In early 2007, the Egyptian government passed in a single vote in parliament a set of constitutional amendments described by Amnesty International as the “greatest erosion of human rights (in Egypt) in 26 years.” These included measures that expanded the authority of military courts over civilians, weakened the authority of the Egyptian judiciary to supervise elections, and legally prohibited the formation of political parties or any political activity with “any religious frame of reference” (clearly intended to block the main opposition group, the Muslim Brotherhood). Nearly all opposition candidates aiming to run for seats in the *Shura* Council (the upper house of parliament) in 2007 and municipal councils in 2008 were denied registration by the authorities.

International Policy Responses

Contrary to popular belief, Egypt’s relations with its Western allies, and particularly with the United States, have long included a partnership on behalf of Egyptian development. Throughout the 1980s, Egypt partnered with the US on a series of economic reforms and modest steps toward political liberalization. In the 1990s, Vice President Gore established a unique framework of direct partnership with President Mubarak, including regular meetings between the two to address opportunities for reform. The EU’s collective approach in the 1990s was largely subsumed under the 1995 Barcelona process, with a relationship being drawn between the southern Mediterranean’s economic prosperity and political stability, and security questions such as counter-terrorism and migration control.

While such partnerships focused more on economic reform and development than political opening, this began to change by the late 1990s. Increasingly, analysts and government officials in the US and in Europe came to believe that Egypt’s lack of progress on economic development was due, at least in part, to its clear lack of political development. This growing Western interest in supporting political reform in Egypt was accelerated by the attacks of September 11, 2001, as support for reforming the repressive political climates across the Arab world became seen as a key component of counter-radicalization efforts and the quest for sustainable security in the region.

On the American side, this manifested itself in the “freedom agenda” of President George W. Bush, which included the use of various diplomatic techniques to spur political reform in Egypt. These appeared to contribute to some tangible steps toward reform in 2004 and 2005, such as the institution of direct popular election of the president, the organization of a large-scale electoral monitoring effort by civil society organizations, a loosening of restrictions on the media and freer campaigning by the opposition groups. EU support for these aggressive democracy promotion policies was muted, and in private European diplomats expressed skepticism that the policies would be effective. This was particularly the case for Mediterranean countries such as France or Italy, where political elites had good relations with the Mubarak regime and the countries have considerable business interests.

After 9/11, the European approach was packaged alongside the promotion of trade ties and economic reform in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Although the EU approach has tended to favor an incremental approach to democracy promotion compared to the more robust American approach, there is

wide divergence between EU member states on this issue throughout the Middle East and with regards to Egypt in particular. Generally speaking European countries on the southern Mediterranean, which have both stronger trade and security ties with Egypt, have been increasingly reluctant to focus on democracy and human rights issues in their bilateral relations. Scandinavian and other northern European countries, on the other hand, have fewer economic interests in Egypt and manifest the strongest interest on issues of democracy and human rights, as is evident from their greater focus on these issues at the embassy level and when coordinating EU policy in Brussels, as well as a greater proportion of their aid funding being earmarked for civil society support. Nonetheless, EU interest in supporting democratic development and respect for human rights has generally been less pronounced in the Middle East than, for instance, in parts of sub-Saharan Africa. A number of factors play into this stance, including a fear of success by Islamist political movements in a more democratic environment, senior officials' desire to have easy access to their Egyptian counterparts involved in the Middle East peace process, and to remove obstacles to negotiations on trade agreements and bilateral issues.

By early 2006, however, the US administration's support for democracy in Egypt tapered off. Following the better-than-anticipated success of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt's parliamentary elections in late 2005, the United States became more apprehensive about the prospect of Egyptian democracy. This was then exacerbated by the Hamas victory in the January 2006 Palestinian elections (aggressively pressed by the US), viewed by some as a warning of what could happen if Egypt were pushed to democratize. In addition, the effort to isolate the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority became a focus of U.S. policy in the region, drawing energy and resources away from other priorities, including support for Egyptian reform. In the summer of 2006, the administration's focus was further diverted by escalating Fatah vs. Hamas conflict in Gaza and the eruption of war in Lebanon. By January 2008, the Bush administration began to look toward the renewal of the Arab-Israeli peace process through the Annapolis conference, and around the same time, the administration also began to focus more on aligning its Arab allies against the threat of Iran's growing regional influence and nuclear program. Both of these issues contributed to a shift toward viewing Arab allies such as Egypt primarily as regimes needed for strategic purposes, further decreasing the emphasis on issues of internal reform.

President Obama decided to reboot US relations with the Muslim world by giving an address at Cairo University on June 6, 2009. The speech was received in much of the region, notably for its respectful approach to Islam and recognition of Palestinian suffering. It also included sections related to human rights and political reform. President Obama raised the issue of democracy almost apologetically, recognizing that it had been tarred by association with the invasion of Iraq, and adding "no system of government can or should be imposed upon one nation by any other." But he also reiterated US commitment to freedom of speech, rule of law, good governance and transparency. He also added a thinly veiled reference to Islamists, echoing Bush administration concerns after Hamas' electoral victory in 2006:

"There are some who advocate for democracy only when they are out of power; once in power, they are ruthless in suppressing the rights of others. No matter where it takes hold, government of the people and by the people sets a single standard for all who hold power: you must maintain your power through consent, not coercion; you must respect the rights of minorities, and participate with a spirit of tolerance and compromise; you must place the interests of your people and the legitimate workings of the political process above your party. Without these ingredients, elections alone do not make true democracy."

This signaled a move away from focus on elections in US democracy promotion that has since been confirmed in statements by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the focus on some US democracy-promotion efforts. Although the point that elections alone do not a democracy make is certainly a valid

one, within the Egyptian context it is tantamount to a pro-government position. For the three years prior to the speech, the Egyptian regime engaged in a campaign of arrests against the Muslim Brotherhood not seen since the late 1960s, blocking them for participating in elections and amending the constitution to block their ambitions to launch a political party. Overall, the speech not only contained little of substance on human rights, but was also criticized by some for having taken place in Cairo at all, since it boosted a close US ally that, between 2006 and 2009, saw major reverses for democratization and continues to be a serial abuser of human rights. Indeed, focus in the speech (and, as a result, in US funding) was given to women's and minority rights, and away from political reform issues.

Under the Obama administration, the previous administration's policy continued throughout 2009 in part because the relevant senior officials in the State Department were not appointed until December, but also because concern had shifted from pressuring Egypt to reform to supporting what is seen as an increasingly weak state ahead of an uncertain presidential succession process. It was perceived in 2009 that Ambassador to Egypt Margaret Scobey's chief mission was to repair the bilateral relationship that had been strained (outside of security issues) by the Bush administration, and she had considerable room to maneuver to achieve this in the absence of clear leadership in the State Department and US focus on other issues, most notably the global economic crisis.

With President Mubarak's three-week hospitalization in Munich for gall bladder surgery in March 2010, the question of succession is now the primary interest of American civilian and military policymakers, with a first priority being ensuring minimum political turmoil during a transition period. While democracy promotion appeared to be making a comeback in 2010 — notably with the appointment of Michael Posner as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor — it remains a muted issue. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in particular is said to be in favor of a downgrade in the importance of reform issues in the bilateral relationship, focusing instead on strengthening Egypt's role in the Middle East peace process and assuring a smooth presidential transition.

Many European countries were relieved by this change in the American approach, and from 2007 onwards the European Commission for all intents and purposes downgraded the question of support for democratization and human rights to the minimum level in terms of public support. Advocates for greater focus on political reform issues were told over this period not to expect any EU engagement, with a conciliatory attitude towards the government of Egypt the general rule.

While progress on political development in Egypt has until now been limited, uneven, and not sustained, there are nonetheless lessons that can be drawn from the international community's engagement with Egypt on these issues, and the resulting ups and downs of democratic reform.

RESOURCES AND ASSETS OF DIPLOMATS IN EGYPT

Egypt has consistently received *funds* from the West on a large scale. In conjunction with the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978 and the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty in 1979, The US agreed to give billions in foreign assistance to each of the two countries, with overall assistance to Israel and Egypt remaining in a fixed 3 to 2 ratio until 2008. From 1979 until 2008, Egypt remained the second-largest recipient of US foreign assistance each year, after Israel (in Fiscal Year 2009, Egypt was surpassed by Afghanistan in this regard, and it appears that Afghanistan and Pakistan will each receive more foreign aid than Egypt in 2010). Egypt has received \$1.3 billion in military assistance each year since 1987. It also has received large, but varying, levels of economic assistance, which has decreased from more than \$800 million annually in the late 1990s to around \$400 million in 2008 and roughly \$250 million in 2009 and 2010. Since 2000, this economic aid has included substantial funding for democracy and governance programming, which peaked at approximately \$55 million in fiscal year 2008. The Obama administration

has sharply reduced bilateral funding for democracy and governance programs in Egypt for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 to around \$20 million annually.

Perhaps more importantly, it returned to a practice that had been stopped in 2002: only granting USAID funding to civil society groups that were registered as such under the Egyptian NGO law, a notoriously restrictive and much-criticized legislation. Although additional democracy and governance funding was available without strings through the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), activists said that the funding cuts were not as important as the political message the change in practice sent, i.e., that the US government considered the NGO law adequate. In April 2010, Egyptian newspapers leaked a new, even more restrictive draft NGO law — which some activists saw as an attempt at tightening regulations on civil society funding after what the Egyptian government would have interpreted as a tacit green light from the US. The new law would have closed loopholes that have allowed many of the most active and well-regarded NGOs to register a law firms, private clinics, or non-profit corporations to evade financing restrictions.

The European Union has also provided large-scale funding for Egypt, including €594 million during the period from 2000 to 2006. Only a very small portion of this funding was allocated to support democracy and human rights in that period – approximately €5 million (less than 1%), within the framework of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. Similarly, in March 2007, the Egyptian government was allocated €558 million through the European Neighborhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) for the period from 2007 till 2013, of which only €13 million were allocated to democracy and good governance programs and an additional €16 million for human rights, with the Egyptian government having wide authority in supervising the implementation of such funds. Yet, neither the European Commission nor individual member states consider NGOs' registration status under Egyptian law when awarding grants.

Yet because of restrictions within Egypt, and political considerations on the donor and consumer side, funds spent often do not have significant effect. The US, in particular, has occasionally had difficulties finding competent recipients; many NGOs coming from a leftist perspective refused any dealings with the Bush administration, for example. This may have contributed to much of the funding available to USAID and MEPI being misspent, with NGOs created for the sole purpose of channeling such funding. There is a great degree of clientelism in the local NGO market, with projects being designed to meet donor criteria rather than based on local needs.

On issues of democratic development, diplomats in Egypt have seen fluctuating *support of home authorities* over time. On the American side, such support peaked from 2002 to 2005, when reform in Egypt was a high priority of the Bush administration's freedom agenda. After 2006, while support through funding for democracy programming continued to increase, support for addressing reform issues through diplomatic engagement was largely withdrawn, although President Bush continued to raise the issue in remarks given in Egypt and elsewhere. As noted, the Obama administration has sharply reduced support for democracy and governance programming, and there is as of yet little evidence that supporting democratic reform in Egypt through diplomacy is a priority for the new administration. Obama administration officials have claimed that concern and pressure on democracy and human rights issues is continuing in private, with public admonitions considered ineffective. There is no way to verify the impact of these pressures on Egyptian positions. In 2009, the Obama administration made no pronouncement on developments in Egypt, and has only expressed concern on two occasions in 2010 — sectarian murders of Coptic Christians in Naga Hammadi in January 2010 (which coincided with a visit to Cairo of Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Michael Posner) and the renewal of the Emergency Law in May 2010.

During the Bush administration, several members of the US Congress supported reform efforts in Egypt and aimed to apply pressure on the Egyptian regime, particularly through attempts to condition US military aid to Egypt on progress on reform. The post-2008 Congress has similar reduced its previous emphasis on reform, in part due to satisfaction with greater Egyptian efforts to stem smuggling to the Hamas-governed Gaza Strip, but also because a distancing from democracy promotion by the Democratic Party in particular, because it is seen as a signature Bush-era policy. In December 2009, Republican Senator Judd Gregg of New Hampshire added an amendment to an appropriations bill authorizing an Egypt endowment to start at \$50 million, with the State Department continuing negotiations with the government of Egypt to set a final amount. Gregg, a rare Egypt supporter in Congress, had been lobbying for a \$500 million endowment since 2007. The Egyptian government favors an endowment as it would bypass Congress altogether, avoiding any further earmarking of civilian aid and eliminating debate on Capitol Hill of policy towards Egypt altogether. It is not clear which direction the endowment will take, but the State Department is currently considering using part of it to finance an educational reform fund. The Egyptians would like the endowment to be free of any benchmarking and supplemented by Egyptian debt repayments to the US. Should it go through, the endowment will negatively impact Congress' ability to monitor bilateral ties (and hence public scrutiny), but it does offer an opportunity for clear benchmarking and positive conditionalities being attached to civilian aid spending.

Similarly, support from the EU and individual European governments for democratic reform in Egypt has also waxed and waned over the past several years. Generally speaking, the EU's approach has been to support reform through dialogue and to largely depend on the political will of the host government, with Brussels being generally reluctant to apply political pressure for the sake of democratic reform. As noted earlier, there are wide (and possibly widening) differences in the manner in which different members of the EU have approached this issue in Egypt. The post-2007 period appears to have been a nadir in bureaucratic and political support within the European Commission and among member states for vocally supporting reform. By way of example, a May 2010 statement by EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Catherine Ashton on Egypt's renewal of the Emergency Law shocked Egyptian activists by not condemning the move, and merely "encouraging" the government of Egypt "to speed up the steps needed for the adoption of an antiterrorism law compliant with international human rights standards as soon as possible, noting the government's commitment to this goal in the EU/Egypt Action plan and in other forums." Since the EU is on record supporting the abrogation of the Emergency Law and this aim has been a component of bilateral talks, the timid language was surprising, and probably a reflection of the more indulgent attitudes of Mediterranean members of the EU. The US, in contrast, had condemned the renewal.

As the 10th anniversary of the 1995 Barcelona Declaration neared, the EU undertook steps toward evaluating the progress in the decade since that declaration. This included a document issued in December 2003 on foreign relations with Arab countries and a March 2004 progress report on the EU partnership with southern Mediterranean and Middle East countries. Both reports emphasized issues of political, social and economic reform, and the importance of developing diplomatic dialogue with Arab countries to support democracy. Support for Egyptian reform from European governments has declined since that time, however, and European diplomats in Egypt have often felt that they have lacked needed support on reform issues.

Support from Europe has most often come from the European Parliament, which notably passed a resolution in January 2008 criticizing the human rights conditions in Egypt. This sparked an angry uproar from the Egyptian government, which demanded an apology, canceled the scheduled meeting of the Egyptian-European Sub-Commission on Human Rights, and temporarily withdrew the Egyptian Parliament from the Euro-Mediterranean parliamentary programs. The President of the European Parliament visited Egypt in May 2008 and delivered a speech to the Egyptian parliament in an effort to

repair relations, but he did not offer an apology or withdraw the resolution. Following this visit, relations essentially returned to normal, and the Egyptian-European Sub-Commission on Human Rights met for the first time in May 2008. In April 2009, the European Parliament again angered the Egyptian government, as the liberal bloc of parliament invited Ayman Nour to Europe for meetings following his release from prison. This time, Egyptian government pressure led many European politicians to cancel their meetings with Nour to avoid a repetition of the political crisis of early 2008.

Aside from these two actions of the European Parliament, the period since early 2007 has been widely viewed as characterized by the pragmatic, realist approach of President Nicolas Sarkozy of France. This has been evident in the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean in July 2008. Despite European assurances that this new initiative would be an extension of the Barcelona Process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership rather than a replacement for them, it is clear that security and trade relations are taking precedence, while the focus on political reform has been abandoned. The first two-year co-Presidency of the new Union for the Mediterranean was awarded to France and Egypt, with both governments embracing the shift away from political reform.

The Egyptian government certainly values its relationships with Western governments, most of all with the United States, which has given the Western, and American in particular, *influence* with the Egyptian government. However, the historical legacy of colonialism and Western intervention in Egypt has had a limited effect on this influence, and the government of Egypt has at times cleverly manipulated this legacy to diminish the effects of Western diplomatic pressures when they were implied. The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs — particularly under the leadership of Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit — has made rejection of “interference in Egypt’s internal affairs” systematically part of the Egyptian discourse on human rights and political reform, arguing that Egypt would reform at its own pace. While this has had some resonance among the Egyptian public and political elites, between 2005 and 2010 opposition groups moved noticeably away from supporting the government’s rejection of international engagement on political reform. Mohamed ElBaradei, the former IAEA director who returned to Egypt in February 2010 to lead a campaign for political reform, for instance urged Western pressure on political reform and called for the presence of international election observers in polls in 2010 and 2011. Previously these had been rejected by most of the opposition, in part because of a widespread rejection of US efforts at democracy promotion in the context of the invasion of Iraq. ElBaradei’s potential intent to run for the presidency has been the subject of much speculation, but he has stated he would only consider doing so if the elections could be assured free and fair.

As discussed below, US and European governments, especially the US Congress and the European Parliament, have shown *solidarity* with some prominent Egyptian activists, most notably Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Ayman Nour. More recently such governments have extended support to a number of younger generation bloggers targeted by the Egyptian regime. Many Egyptians view such solidarity, however, as selective, as it rarely extends to many other political activists, notably the hundreds of members of the Muslim Brotherhood who have been jailed in repeated crackdowns on the organization.

A variety of regional issues – the Iraq war, the post-September 11 war on terrorism, the perceived willingness of Western governments to overlook Israeli violations of international human rights law in the Palestinian territories, and the discounting of one of the Arab Middle East’s two democratic elections in the Palestinian Territories in 2006 – have seriously undermined the *legitimacy* of Western countries with the Egyptian public. The Egyptian government has exploited this lack of legitimacy to call into question Western objections to human rights violations in Egypt, and it has exploited the need for antiterrorism measures to crack down on political opposition and excuse human rights violations under the pretense of antiterrorism. Western countries have generally had stronger relationships with Egypt’s government than with its people, due to large-scale foreign assistance and valued military and trade relationships. Post 9/11

developments have also given new ammunition to the Egyptian government in deflecting pressure. Officials for instance frequently compared the Emergency Law to the US Patriot Act or Britain's Terrorism Act when criticized over the former's renewal — with Western diplomats rarely engaging in rebuttals to point out the vast differences between these legislations. Criticism of some of the worst aspects of Egypt's human rights practices, such as torture and prolonged administrative detention, has also been undermined by the rendition of terrorism suspect to Egypt by the US, often with the cooperation of European states.

WAYS DIPLOMATIC ASSETS HAVE BEEN APPLIED IN EGYPT

The Golden Rules

Western diplomats described *listening* as a fundamental part of their diplomacy with Egypt. This includes listening to a wide variety of actors within the Egyptian government – within the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Commerce and Energy, and the Ministry of International Cooperation, among others. During the Bush administration, there was an effort to identify the genuine reformers within the government, and listen to their needs. Such listening takes place through regular, formal meetings in Cairo, as well as in some private, closed-door meetings abroad.

Diplomats do also meet regularly with civil society activists, but a few diplomats noted that they had not interacted with a broad enough coalition of Egyptian nongovernmental actors, limiting their *understanding* of internal reform issues. On the US side, such meetings did increase during the Bush administration, and were continued as a way of demonstrating support for Egyptian reform after diplomatic pressure waned in 2006. European diplomats have been committed to engaging civil society and nongovernmental actors, and Egyptian civil society organizations played an active role in developing the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan.

Demonstrating *respect* for Egypt's government is a regular component of diplomats' engagement with Egypt. However, there were a number of occasions when the US government aimed to pressure Egypt on reform issues, and the Egyptian government responded by accusing the US of showing insufficient respect for Egypt's independence and sovereignty. This was the case when the US raised the issue of reexamining the foreign assistance relationship, as well as when the US offered proposals for a draft Memorandum of Understanding, which aimed to offer additional assistance to Egypt in exchange for the Egyptian regime fulfilling promises made during the 2005 presidential campaign. On the other hand, Egyptian activists often see the Western countries as excessively deferential in their dealings with the Egyptian government, and insufficiently respectful of the rights of Egypt's citizens.

There has been some degree of *sharing* of information and tasks among Western governments on democracy and reform issues in Egypt, but seemingly less than in other countries, and this is an area which could use improvement. Such coordination has varied considerably over time as the approach and priorities of Western governments have shifted and the personalities involved have changed. Such efforts have included planning to jointly attend trials of political activists or visit such activists in jail. Diplomats commented that coordinating such moves increased the impact of such gestures. Most coordination and information sharing has taken place among political officers on the ground in Cairo, although at some moments higher-level meetings of Western foreign ministers have been useful in coordinating efforts on Egypt. Western diplomats have also coordinated democracy and governance assistance programs to some degree, mostly through a monthly meeting of diplomats tasked with monitoring domestic politics and human rights. However, diplomats voiced concern that such efforts should be institutionalized. There is also a wide discrepancy in the resources different embassies allocate to this task: in some smaller embassies, such as Austria or New Zealand, a political officer will monitor not only several issues in-

country (with the focus being on economic relations) but also issues in neighboring countries. Embassies with dedicated staff that are well-informed about the political and human rights situation and are able to attend trials, protests and other events can have much influence in informing other countries' perspective. These include diplomats from large embassies such as those of the US, Canada, the UK, and France, but also those from smaller embassies that have prioritized human rights in their relationship with Egypt, such as Sweden, the Netherlands and Ireland. Egyptian activists noted that greater awareness of the situation in Egypt can bolster their case in international platforms. For instance, in 2010 the UN Human Rights Committee conducted the Universal Periodic Review of Egypt, an occasion for the progress on human rights and political reform to be assessed in an international forum, for the government of Egypt to explain its position and other countries to offer recommendations. Activists noted that the intervention of Ireland in the UPR was particularly detailed and well-informed, in part because the diplomat representing Dublin at the UPR meeting had recently been in Egypt. Clearly, better communications from embassies to their colleagues at the UN and elsewhere can help harmonize positions and bolster the positions of domestic activists in such fora.

As noted previously, the level of engagement of individual countries differs widely. The US has officially committed to promoting democracy, and has long-running programs to fund NGOs and government reform efforts. In theory, so does the European Union through its MEDA program, which can be supplemented by embassy-level funding of individual member states. But the practice shows a natural division of labor often occurs according to each country's approach to Egypt. The European Union Delegation handles a large amount of funds, but these are mostly targeted towards economic and institutional reform efforts, with human rights and political reform playing a comparatively insignificant role in the big picture of its approach. Furthermore, reflecting disinterest in democracy promotion in Brussels and the bureaucracy of aid spending, EU Delegation officials have a strong incentive to minimize any source of friction with the Egyptian government and ensure that funds are disbursed quickly rather than efficiently (because a failure to disburse funds, even if there is no adequate recipient, can negatively impacts diplomats' careers as disbursement is seen as a criteria for success in Brussels.) Likewise, within the EU Delegation there have been reports of pressure on funding officers to stay away from potentially controversial programs such as funding civil society election monitoring efforts for fear of slowing down negotiations on trade relations should the Egyptian government take umbrage.

Egyptian civil society holds widely varying views as to the postures and approaches of individual EU members. Generally speaking, France, Italy and Spain are seen as most likely to support the Egyptian government's position and scale down pressure. They rarely make condemnations of the government's practice or stress issues of human rights or political reform in public statements. While France conducts extensive monitoring of the domestic situation, neither Italy nor Spain appears to attach much importance to these issues. While all these countries fund reform measures, they tend to favor institutional reform, and programs involving administrative training rather than direct civil society funding. While this has had limited impact over the past decade, the Egyptian government itself is keen to encourage such programs and they are appreciated by the Egyptian staff that benefits from them — particularly in the case of training missions that involve travel abroad, such as France's underwriting of courses at the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration*. In some cases, a poor understanding of the nature of the beneficiary institutions has resulted in wasted funds, as Spain learned when a multi-year budget support program for the government-run National Council of Human Rights led to a full audit and the dispatching of consultants from Madrid (twice) to understand how funds had been spent. Funding might have been better spent on civil society organizations with a proven track record. The best of these often prefer securing funding from foundations such as the Ford Foundation or the Open Society Institute rather than from governments. NGOs taking funding from the US, UK or other countries involved in regional affairs can be open to media attacks seeking to represent them as spies, a fifth column, or sell-outs to foreign powers.

The regime has occasionally deployed this tactic against NGOs to discredit them in the public eye, although this is becoming less common as Egyptian media has greatly diversified since 2004.

The experiences of European countries with fewer vested strategic interests in Egypt may be a better model. Sweden and the Netherlands are generally considered to be the best examples of Western engagement on human rights and democracy promotion, both in the quality of their approach and knowledge of terrain as well as the proportionally large part of their aid earmarked for those issues. The Netherlands and Denmark have for instance focused on the issue of torture — an increasingly urgent issue in Egypt, where it is considered to be endemic and having become a normalized in police work — and collaborated with the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims and well-regarded local NGOs such as the Nadeem Center for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture to develop an Egypt-specific program. Some medium and small embassies, such as Canada and Ireland, have also chosen to use their discretionary funding to focus on issues that others ignored, such as gay rights. In general however, funding allocation has taken place more organically than as a result of consultations between embassies, leaving room for enhanced cooperation and greater visibility in overall foreign efforts in this area.

On a broader scale, there have been a number of joint, cooperative initiatives among the US and European governments addressing political reform in the Middle East. These included the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative (BMENA) announced at the G8 Sea Island Summit in 2004. BMENA was designed to include annual Forum for the Future meetings of foreign ministers from the G8 and the Arab world. Such meetings have taken place each year except in 2007, but the future of the initiative is unclear, and outcomes, if any, are intangible. Other smaller-scale joint initiatives were launched at the EU-U.S. Summit held in Dublin in June 2004.

Truth in Communications

Diplomats in Egypt have regularly *reported* back to their home governments on issues of concern regarding democracy and human rights. In addition, diplomats have been involved in *informing* not only their own governments, but also the public and the media at home and in Egypt alike. This has occurred not only through official annual reports on the state of human rights, but also through testimony in U.S. Congressional committee hearings, and through sporadic public statements or responses to press inquiries. This has been fueled by important openings to the media climate in Egypt - with the emergence of independent newspapers, satellite television, and the internet and new media, issues of political reform and human rights are now addressed publicly in Egypt in ways not possible ten years ago.

In addition, important foreign news outlets such as *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* developed a keen interest in the state of democratic development in Egypt not held for other countries in the region. This appears to have been heightened by the post-September 11 interest in democracy as an antidote to extremism, along with the arrests of high-profile dissidents such as Saad Eddin Ibrahim, whose case the Western media followed closely.

Working with the Government

The Egyptian government has worked irregularly with Western governments on economic reform issues since the 1970s, and at times there has been significant tension over such reforms. In a general sense, however, the regime has been more receptive to economic reforms and willing to cooperate on economic development issues than on political issues. The Egyptian government has been receptive to external *advising* on certain economic reform issues, including financial sector reform and efforts to increase the independence of the Egyptian Central Bank. And even in some politically sensitive areas that the

Egyptian regime was reluctant to reform, progress was eventually made, particularly since 2004. For example, in 2004, the United States identified some assistance given in cash via the Ministry of International Cooperation as a source of petty corruption, and although the ministry initially resisted giving up this funding, it agreed to discontinue the cash assistance by 2006.

Cooperation on political reform has generally been much more difficult. There has been some success in the area of political *institution-building*. This has included productive cooperation by the Egyptian regime on programs to improve the quality of educational, judicial, and legislative institutions. However, critics note that while such programs may improve the internal capacity and performance of institutions such as the Egyptian courts and parliament, they do not address the fundamental need for such institutions to have increased power to act independently of the regime. Nor do such programs have a benchmarked track record of having improved the situation on the ground. There has also been a general lack of engagement, particularly among Europeans, with the Ministry of Interior and other security institutions when it comes to discussing human rights issues. Most diplomats generally raise these issues with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and sometimes with the Ministry of Justice. However, the Ministry of Interior is typically the chief source of such problems, and human rights activists have recommended engaging it directly on such issues rather than going through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is believed to be a poor relay for such messages. As the Ministry of Interior is an interlocutor on other issues, such as counter-terrorism, channels often already exist, and directly addressing human rights could at least help make it more responsive and create channels to act quickly on specific cases, when possible. The US has the best relationship with the Egyptian security services, and has on occasion intervened to get Ministry of Interior officials to meet with US rights groups such as Human Rights Watch. Europeans — especially the French, British, Dutch, Belgians, Italians, and Germans — have counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization ties with the security services, but not on the same level.

On the European side, one institutional framework for cooperation was established by the Egyptian-European Partnership Agreement, which entered into force in 2004. According to this Agreement, the association council holds an annual meeting at the level of foreign ministers to discuss and evaluate Egyptian-European relations. Following each meeting, the EU issues press releases on the state of relations, including comments on democracy and human rights in Egypt. Since the signing of the agreement in 2004, five such meetings have been held. In the fourth meeting in 2008 the Egyptian delegation presented an ambitious vision for the development of trade and economic relations with the EU, similar to the EU's existing relations with Israel and with Morocco. NGOs monitoring these developments urged the EU to take this opportunity to condition the development of relations on actual progress in the field of human rights, but the EU has apparently decided not to do so. More generally speaking, while the EU negotiation process with Egypt includes discussion of human rights and political reform by treaty, this appears to have become perfunctory in practice. Aware of the Egyptian government's resistance to foreign pressure, diplomats have often preferred to minimize clashes and only tangentially address these issues in the negotiations agenda. The same issues exist in the US-Egypt Strategic Dialogue launched in 2006: although there are provisions for such issues to be discussed, little or no oversight exists. The suggestion that civil society representatives of both countries take part in the relevant Strategic Dialogue meetings, as suggested by a group of Egyptian and American civic society representatives, was raised by the US government and may still be under consideration as one remedy to this issue. The EU could pursue a similar approach.

Reaching Out

During the Bush administration, US diplomats regularly sought to foster dialogue on reform issues by *convening* a group of key Egyptian elites whom they believed shared a commitment to genuine reform. In 2002 and 2003, as support for Egyptian reform first emerged on the Bush administration's agenda, US

officials convened a series of closed-door meetings outside the country with Egyptian government officials, including cabinet-level ministers, who were perceived to be reformers. The United States intended such meetings to provide a safe forum for discussion and to identify steps that the US government could take to support reform efforts, including demands that they could make of the Egyptian government as a whole (i.e. beyond the small group of reform-minded Egyptian government officials). While such meetings produced serious dialogue, US diplomats came away with the lesson that the agenda for reform should be based on interactions with a broader coalition if possible, as progress through such meetings was limited and the influence of the participating reformers within the Egyptian government waned over time.

Diplomats have also provided support to democratic development in Egypt through *financing* for democracy and governance projects, which increased significantly after 2002. From 2004 to 2009, \$250 million was distributed by USAID in bilateral funding for democracy and governance programs in Egypt. But the impact of such programs has been extremely limited, as described in an October 2009 audit by the USAID Office of the Inspector General. USAID democracy and governance programming has included: assisting the Egyptian Press Syndicate in large-scale training programs for journalists; developing plans for dozens of villages and building four local citizen service centers in pilot governorates to more efficiently address citizens' concerns with corruption and local governance; funding NGOs to provide legal aid, psychological counseling, and other support to families of those imprisoned for political reasons.

From 2000 to 2008, foreign financing for democracy and governance included steadily increasing levels of funding being distributed directly by agencies such as USAID to Egyptian NGOs working on behalf of democracy and reform. The Egyptian government opposed such funding, which caused persistent tensions with Western governments, particularly the United States. In June 2002, the Egyptian parliament passed a new NGO law, giving the Egyptian government the power to dissolve NGOs without a court order. The law also renewed existing provisions prohibiting NGOs from working in politics and requiring any NGO to receive the approval of the Egyptian government before accessing any funding from foreign agency or government. Egypt was at this time the only country in the world to exercise such authority over groups wishing to receive US foreign assistance funding designated for democracy and governance.

An amendment to the US appropriations bill for foreign operations, offered by Senator Sam Brownback (Republican-KS) and passed in December 2004, reversed this by asserting that, "with respect to the provision of assistance for Egypt for democracy and governance activities, the organizations implementing such assistance and the specific nature of that assistance shall not be subject to the prior approval by the Government of Egypt." After passage in late 2004, such language remained in each annual US appropriations act for foreign assistance through 2008. In Fiscal Year 2009, this language was amended to explicitly assert the authority of USAID to determine the distribution of funds in *all* countries that receive US assistance for democracy and governance, rather than specifically focusing on Egypt. Nonetheless, in 2009, in contradiction to this amendment, the Obama administration appeared to have reached a working arrangement whereby no USAID funds would be given to organizations not registered and approved by the Egyptian government.

The controversy and tension surrounding US funding for democracy and governance in Egypt has not been limited to funding for domestic Egyptian organizations. In 2005, a number of democracy-oriented international NGOs, including the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), opened offices and operations in Egypt. These organizations aimed to *connect* Egyptian political activists, judges, and reformers with foreign democracy experts and trainers, and also to connect members of the various opposition parties and groups within Egypt. However, in June 2006, NDI and IRI were

asked by the Egyptian Foreign Ministry to halt their operations in Egypt until they were properly licensed by the ministry. As of yet, the Egyptian government has failed to properly license such democracy-oriented international organizations, which therefore find their activities severely restricted.

These organizations – as well as others such as Freedom House, which does not maintain regular offices in Egypt – are sought after by Egyptian civil society and democracy advocates for their support in professional development, international expertise, small grants, and international solidarity. International diplomatic support of their work and presence in Egypt – in the face of Egyptian obstructions – can be a valuable way of supporting democratic development in the country. Such organizations also allow donor funds to go further and be directed by those with intimate situational awareness.

This appears to be borne-out in the US government's own reporting. In October 2009, the USAID Office of the Inspector General released a report, "Audit of USAID/Egypt's Democracy and Governance Programs," with a number of interesting observations and conclusions. First, it described USAID's democracy and governance programming in Egypt as having achieved only extremely limited impact, and concluded that "A major contributing factor to the limited achievements for some of these programs resulted from a lack of support from the Government of Egypt." While the report was generally critical of the effectiveness of USAID's democracy and governance assistance programs in Egypt, it did note that "USAID/Egypt's Office of Democracy and Governance achieved its greatest success in its civil society direct grants program, which provided grants and cooperative agreements valued from \$192,000 to \$1.4 million during FY 2008." Ironically, this assessment comes seven months after the Obama administration, in conjunction with Congress, cut funding for Egyptian civil society by more than 77 percent.

The support for indigenous civil society is perhaps the single-most effective tool of the international community in Egypt. Such a reduction in aid by one donor can be met with invigorated involvement by other missions and a frank assessment of the impact of reduction of US support.

Defending Democrats

American and European diplomats have clearly *demonstrated* their support for selected prominent democrats who were arrested and persecuted in Egypt. Two such cases that drew much international attention were Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Ayman Nour.

Saad Eddin Ibrahim, Egyptian-American sociology professor, author, and democracy activist, was arrested in June 2000 on charges of defaming Egypt's image abroad and embezzling funds received from the EU. The arrest followed a public statement and newspaper column by Ibrahim that raised concerns that President Hosni Mubarak was grooming his son Gamal to succeed him as president. Initially, the US Embassy made a conscious decision to respond to the case through private discussions, contacting the Egyptian foreign ministry, advisors to President Mubarak, and even raising the issue directly in a meeting with Mubarak. Gradually, the US Embassy increased pressures on the Egyptian government in private, while at the same time steadily increasing the level of public criticism. This gradual, sequential, multifaceted approach seems to have worked, as Ibrahim was released after 45 days in prison.

Upon release, however, Ibrahim returned to activism and questioning the Egyptian government, and was soon arrested again. This time, the US Ambassador was not as directly involved in negotiations, but other officials at the US Embassy continued to engage extensively with Egyptian officials, including President Mubarak, on the case and were repeatedly reassured that if the United States would let the Egyptian justice system work, Ibrahim would ultimately be released. Ibrahim was tried and convicted of all charges in May 2001, however, and then lost an appeal in July 2002, confirming his sentence of seven

years in prison with hard labor. His health deteriorated sharply due to a series of strokes in prison, leaving him partially paralyzed (he now walks with a cane). In August 2002, President Bush informed President Mubarak in a letter that the United States would withhold \$133 million in planned supplemental economic assistance because of the case. This was the first time that the US had publicly linked foreign aid to an Arab country with that government's record on human rights issues.

This clearly angered the Egyptian government, and many in the US government were alarmed by the anger and tension and potential consequences for the US-Egypt bilateral relationship. US diplomats attest that during this period, however, Egypt's cooperation with the US on key strategic issues – counterterrorism, Israel, military overflight privileges, Suez Canal rights – remained undiminished. On the contrary, it appears that the Egyptian government may have made more of an effort to cooperate on strategic issues in the hope of lessening pressure on the reform front. Moreover, this application of clear conditionality was apparently successful, as Ibrahim was eventually referred to a higher court, which cleared him of all charges in March 2003.

Ibrahim continued his strong criticism of the Egyptian regime, however, and in 2007 private attorneys affiliated with Egypt's ruling parties brought several suits against him while he was abroad, effectively preventing Ibrahim from returning to Egypt for fear of immediate arrest.

Foreign diplomats have also defended opposition politician Ayman Nour, another high-profile figure. In January 2005, authorities arrested Nour, charging him with forging signatures filed in forming the *Ghad* Party. Having learned the lesson from the Saad Eddin Ibrahim case, the US government responded immediately to Nour's arrest in a more assertive manner than they had done with Ibrahim. In February 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice abruptly cancelled a visit to Cairo in a sign of protest against Nour's arrest. At around the same time, a group of members of the European Parliament, led by the British Conservative Vice President of the Parliament Edward McMillan-Scott, threatened to raise the profile of the Nour case by paying a visit to him in prison as a group. Nour was released in March 2005 and was allowed to run in Egypt's presidential election in September 2005. He finished a distant second to President Mubarak with just under 8% of the vote. While this was the first time Mubarak campaigned in a competitive election, the deck was stacked against opposition candidates.

Soon after the election, Nour was arrested again, convicted, and sentenced to five years in prison in December 2005. On the day of Nour's conviction, the White House released a public statement calling on "the Egyptian government to act under the laws of Egypt in the spirit of its professed desire for increased political openness and dialogue within Egyptian society, and out of "humanitarian concern", to release Mr. Nour from detention." As in the case of Ibrahim, the White House also expressed its displeasure through a tangible act, in this case canceling negotiations on a free trade agreement that were scheduled to begin in January 2006. Although the international community continued to raise concerns about Ayman Nour's imprisonment, he remained in jail for more than three years until his release in February 2009, when Mubarak wanted to re-set his relationship with the US under the Obama administration.

Diplomats involved with both the Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Ayman Nour cases noted that the US government in particular seemed to have considerably more leverage in the Ibrahim case than in the case of Nour. Ibrahim's dual US and Egyptian citizenships and his extensive ties to the United States (he has taught at numerous US universities and his wife is American) made it much more difficult for the Egyptian government to dismiss US government efforts on his behalf as illegitimate interference in Egyptian affairs. On the other hand, such claims were frequently made regarding the Nour case by many actors in the Egyptian government, including several officials generally perceived to be reformers.

In addition to these two high-profile cases, Western diplomats have provided support for a number of other imprisoned political reformers and activists in Egypt. Of the dozens of bloggers in Egyptian prisons, Abdel Karim Nabil Soliman (known on his blog as Kareem Amer) – the first person imprisoned in Egypt purely for the content of his online blog - has attracted particular attention, including in separate letters to President Mubarak and to President Bush written by numerous members of the US Congress. Incidents such as sectarian clashes or human rights abuses involving religious discrimination by the state also draw a higher profile in North America and Europe, in part due to the political weight that churches and Christian interest groups can play as lobby groups, in influencing media coverage or through elected representatives. Both focus on discrimination against Christians and politically motivated attacks on liberal reformers show the narrow base of support that exists in the West for a more thorough and approach on human rights and political freedoms. Such cases remain in the spotlight because they have a supportive and vocal constituency in Western countries. These may be émigré Coptic groups and Christian solidarity networks, or in the case of Ibrahim and Nour, these individuals' contacts among political and media elites in Europe and the US. The *Washington Post* for instance campaigned continuously for both men, as well as greater US pressure on Egypt in general, in good part because its editorial page editor, Jackson Diehl, is personally committed to reform in Egypt and has good contacts with Egyptian reformists.

The response by Western diplomats to the arrest of hundreds of other political activists, however, has not drawn this kind of assertive response. This includes the numerous members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt who have been jailed in recent years. While the State Department's annual Country Report on Human Rights in Egypt has regularly noted the use of closed military tribunals and emergency courts to detain and convict members of the Brotherhood, they have clearly not received the same kind of support from the West as the celebrated cases described above.

CONCLUSION

Outside governments have had mixed, uneven success in using diplomatic assets to support democratic development in Egypt. Periods of progress on reform issues have been followed by periods of stagnation or regression. Most recently, pressure from the United States, accompanied by a renewed interest in Egyptian reform by the EU and European governments, peaked in 2004 and 2005. Not coincidentally, this was the last period during which the Egyptian government undertook a series of positive steps toward reform. Western countries seemed to lack a longer-term strategy for supporting Egyptian democracy, however, and numerous measures undertaken during this period to spur the government in the direction of reform have since been reversed. Also, due to Egypt's unique strategic importance as a critical Western ally, support for Egyptian democracy has tended to come directly from Western capitals, and has often been the purview of higher ranking diplomats and government officials than is the case in most other countries. In fact, when human rights and democracy has been the purview of lower-ranking diplomats alone, the issue is more easily side-stepped by Egyptian counterparts.

It is clear that strategies for supporting democratic development in Egypt cannot rely on the political will of the Egyptian regime. While some diplomats advocate following the relatively successful model of engaging Egypt on economic reform issues, others note that the regime's genuine desire for economic reform is not present on the political side and caution that other strategies must be employed. And the Egyptian government is quite adept at manipulating and undermining attempts to encourage reform. In addition, it appears that no single diplomatic tool or approach has succeeded in spurring progress on democratic reform in Egypt.

Rather, a multifaceted approach, in which private dialogue and selective public criticism are complemented by leveraging assets like foreign assistance, seems to show the greatest promise. Direct

engagement with civil society actors in Egypt is productive and should be continued, but must be complemented by direct engagement and pressure upon the Egyptian regime. In applying such pressure, foreign governments should not be afraid to condition economic benefits such as trade agreements and foreign assistance on positive steps toward reform. Support for civil society should include increases in funding for civil society organizations through direct grants, with an emphasis on reaching groups that are truly independent. In addition, a more consistent policy of protesting human rights violations against all peaceful activists, including Islamists, would have greater credibility with the Egyptian public. And whenever possible, US, EU, and other diplomats from democracies should coordinate closely and express united support for such victims of human rights violations.

Applying pressure through private, behind-closed-doors dialogue has been effective at times, but when the Egyptian government resists such pressure, it seems that a willingness to apply increasing leverage in private, while accompanied by public criticisms and conditioning of benefits such as foreign aid and trade benefits, may be more effective to spur desired reforms. Another lesson from the past several years has been the need for foreign governments to engage a broad coalition of actors on reform issues and not to rely on narrow groups of apparently reform-minded elites. In addition, diplomats should be wary of Egyptian government officials who may speak on behalf of reform but may lack the power or authority to deliver such reforms. Several Western diplomats noted the need to directly engage Egyptian government officials at the very highest levels on issues of democratic development.

Many observers note that the next couple of years could present a real opportunity for renewing democratic reform in Egypt. Parliamentary elections are scheduled for November 2010, with presidential elections scheduled for the fall of 2011. It is possible that President Mubarak will step down at the time of these presidential elections, if not before, and that Egypt will undergo its first presidential transition in 30 years. While these elections and the potential transition provide an opportunity for opening a new era of reform in Egypt, the regression on political issues that has marked the period since 2006 could also continue.

The coming post-Mubarak period offers intriguing possibilities. The new president, whoever he is, will be considerably weaker than Mubarak and thus more susceptible to foreign pressure. Western engagement on political reform as a legitimizing factor for the new regime (domestically and internationally) could be one approach. Another would be to make it clear that what was tolerated under Mubarak will no longer be acceptable. Unfortunately, the behavior of the US and some European states in the last few years suggests more importance will be given to ensuring a stable Egypt than a democratic Egypt. Reform advocates can prepare the argument that the two are one and the same: i.e., that a truly stable Egypt necessarily needs to be more democratic. Yet another approach would be to prepare a clear agenda that various stakeholders could endorse for gradual reform, one that could for instance start with the right to political association and tackling the problem of torture, administrative arrests, the Emergency Law and other practices that have undermined the rule of law and the quality of police work in the country.

Finally, governments such as the US, but also major donors like the EU, can accompany an Egyptian government genuinely interested in reform by providing incentives. Models for this already exist: the US has the Millennium Challenge Account, which provides funding for countries that meet certain benchmarks and/or are working towards meeting them. The US also has the carrot of a Free Trade Agreement with Egypt.

The EU has the experience of the criteria for reform used for Eastern European countries that became full members. Richard Youngs, a scholar of European democracy promotion efforts at FRIDE, has suggested that this — the Copenhagen Criteria — should be adopted towards Mediterranean countries that working towards Advanced Status with the EU — the “everything but membership” status that offers economic

integration but not political union. Other countries can model their own approach based on the same principle of conditionality and explicit benchmarking.

It is extremely unlikely that the Egyptian government will possess the political will to make progress on democratic development without clear international support for government reform and for independent Egyptian civil society actors. Ultimately, it is up to the Egyptian people to bring reform and work for the transition to a genuinely democratic Egypt in the years ahead, rather than merely the transition to a new autocratic president. But if international actors learn the lessons of the past decade and are committed to supporting political reform through a patient, persistent strategy that does not fold in the face of obstacles or setbacks, then the international community can become a strong ally of the Egyptian people in their struggle for improved human and political rights.

China's Fifth Modernization: the Enduring Hope for Democratic Governance

The Diplomat's Handbook case study on China was undertaken with great respect for Chinese history and accomplishments. China is important as a partner for all members of the Community of Democracies, and, of course, plays a central role in world affairs. The activities of diplomats and other citizens of Community of Democracies members to support civil society in China are not pursued with the ambition of exporting to China a political system from outside. But they do reflect a solidarity with the Chinese people who agree that human rights are universal and who wish political rights of assembly and expression to be respected in their country.

INTRODUCTION

“Economic development and political development are like the two legs of a person: if one moves forward and the other one doesn't follow, then the person might lose balance and fall.”

– Cao Siyuan, prominent Chinese economist

China's recent period of rapid economic development dates from its “Reform and Opening” initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1979. This development has been described as an “economic miracle,” but political development has not followed.

China remains a one-party authoritarian state. The government continues to exercise strict controls on the media and freedom of expression and association. The judiciary remains politically directed, and is often required to impose sentences dictated by the Communist Party of China.

It is on these – and other – challenges that the international democratic community focuses when lamenting what it perceives to be the slow pace of political reform in China. However, every challenge presents opportunity, and China's wealth of challenges also provide the opportunities to work with its government and civil society in a spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit.

Taking a long-term view, there can be no doubt that progress has been made in the realm of political development in China. Such progress cannot, however, be described as political reform. It has been less linear, and - in an environment sometimes described as “two steps forward, one step back” – the backward steps often gain greater attention than the incremental steps forward.

In 1978, China emerged from the Cultural Revolution in tatters, especially as it had come on the heels of the Great Leap Forward, when millions died of famine: many of China's intellectual, political and cultural elite had died during, or immediately following, these years of turmoil. Countless survivors had been stripped of position and possessions, and suffered from failing health. It was from this standing start that China commenced its remarkable economic transformation.

CHINA TODAY

Now, more than 30 years after the end of the Cultural Revolution, China has not only reopened to the rest of the world, but it has again become the major economic and political power it was 200 years ago. At the end of 2009, its foreign currency reserves were estimated at over USD \$2.2 trillion. China is the world's second largest economy (based on Purchasing Power Parity GDP), having achieved unprecedented rates of growth in the last few decades. China is becoming the principal trading partner of

every region. China's large – and growing – development and infrastructure aid to Africa and Central Asia are seen as both a boon and a challenge to the international status quo.

China today is essential to virtually any important international concert, on economics, trade, and transnational issues of peace and security. However, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China has, since its admission to the United Nations in 1971, consistently abstained on resolutions perceived by Beijing as interfering in a country's domestic affairs. But as China's economic and political clout grows, it is under increasing international pressure to cease playing the 'sovereignty card,' move away from its traditional non-interventionist stance, and accept its international responsibilities. While its support for the 2007 UN Resolution 1769 on Darfur and the 2010 Resolution on Iran sanctions are a break from its traditional approach, it remains to be seen whether these signal a decisive shift toward a more activist foreign policy – and if so, what that break portends.

Indeed, concerns that China is taking a less than active role with the constructs of the existing system are matched in some quarters by a growing concern that it is steadily working to develop a different paradigm that rejects the current system - which China sees as being based on traditional Western values - in favor of one based on the primacy of state sovereignty, non-interference, and state-driven development. This is borne out in its increasing involvement and influence in Central Asia (and its cooperation with these countries and Russia in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization) and Africa, where its stake in trade and natural resource development has risen sharply throughout the continent and is now dominant in many quarters.

Despite China's great – and increasing – clout on the world stage, it remains itself a developing country. While it has succeeded in bringing over 200 million people out of abject poverty, the great majority of its people still live in very basic conditions. Though China has made giant strides toward universal primary education, many children still do not have access to schools. Access to affordable medical care is similarly difficult; a serious injury or illness can bankrupt an entire extended family.

The standard of living for the great majority of Chinese people has increased since 1979, and even more significantly in the past ten years. However, the gap between rich and poor is more pronounced now than it has ever been in China's history. A spate of suicides in an electronics factory, and the May 2010 strike in Honda's car manufacturing plants have brought to the fore the low wages and poor working conditions in many of China's manufacturing sectors. China has one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Doubts have been expressed about the sustainability of China's economic progress. In the words of Yang Lixiong of Beijing's Renmin University, "Our country is in a race to the bottom because our only advantage is cheap labor, and therefore our development is built on a mountain of sweatshops." China's economic model is extremely energy intense, and at the moment energy inefficient. Addressing how to continue economic development while dealing with its huge environmental problems and energy needs will be one of the greatest problems in the coming decade.

LOOKING AT THE PAST TO UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT

Diplomats wishing to fully seize the many opportunities that exist to work with Chinese government and society to support democratic development must first recognize that peaceful political change in China will be in the context of its historical experience. It will follow its own path, and will take its own form, just as is the case in other countries. Most importantly, it will be driven from within, and not as a result of external factors.

Rather than presume to summarize China's rich and complex history, this case study will instead look at key elements of China's recent history through the lens of two overweening preoccupations of China's

leadership: fear of chaos, and fear of weakness. Much of China's domestic and foreign policy can find its roots in the counterparts to these two fears: the need to preserve stability, and the need to insulate itself from dependence upon, unequal obligations to, or influence from foreign nations.

Weakness, Foreign Influence, and Unequal Treaties

At the end of the 18th Century, China was a trading hub, with the international balance of trade in its favor. However, by the end of the Opium War, not 50 years later, it had suffered what is still seen as both a humiliating defeat at the hands of foreigners, and the first of many unequal international treaties that would steadily weaken the country over the next century.

The 1842 treaty ending the Opium War granted concessions to foreigners residing in China, forced China to cede control of its key ports to foreign powers, and required the payment of crippling reparations. A similar result following the first Sino-Japanese War (1894 – 95) left China further weakened at the hands of external actors.

Just a few years later, in 1900, an international force of British, French, Russian, American, German, and Japanese troops crushed the Boxer Uprising. These nations – all of whom already had concessions in China – agreed not to further partition the country. The cost of this loss, though, was still very high – payment of a huge indemnity, amendment of commercial treaties to the advantage of the foreign powers, and consent to stationing of foreign troops in Beijing. China found itself at the receiving end of 'gunboat diplomacy,' as foreign gunboats patrolled the Yangtze and made their presence known in China's many ports in order to preserve significant foreign interests.

Following Germany's defeat in the First World War, the Chinese were exuberant, anticipating the return of Germany's concessions in return for China's contribution to the war effort. Hopes were dashed, however, when their delegation to the Versailles post-war treaty negotiations learned of the 1917 secret treaty of Great Britain, France and Italy with Japan ensuring support of Japan's claims in China in return for Japan's naval support during the war. News of this triggered mass protests in China. Commencing on May 4, 1919, the protests lasted for over a month. The extension of the protests to Paris prevented the Chinese delegation from signing the Versailles treaty.

What became known as the "May 4th Movement" had more popular support than events leading to the formation of the Republic, eight years earlier. This is also believed to be the point at which many of China's political activists and intellectuals turned from the study of Western science, democracy, and schools of thought to Marxism as the most effective road to ensure China's strength and independence.

Chaos and Dissent as Threats to Stability

Concerns of China's leadership regarding any form of organized religion, as well as the tendency to immediately quell any form of domestic unrest may well find their roots in the turbulent 19th Century. Four separate uprisings were quashed in this period. All of them started with charismatic religious leaders able to gain huge followings in relatively short periods of time drawn from rootless and disaffected groups intent on the overthrow of the current regime. The best known – and most successful – of these leaders was Hong Xiuquan, leader of the Taiping Rebellion. Claiming spiritual powers, and advocating the creation of a Christian community, he was able to muster an army of 20,000 that, in 1853, took Nanjing (the Southern Capital). He ruled from there for 11 years.

Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance advocated the use of armed force for the overthrow of China's Qing leaders. His revolutionary ideas had a deep influence on the officers and soldiers of the New Army,

established in 1900 as part of Qing modernization efforts. The combination of a bomb-making accident and resulting coup by revolutionaries within the New Army resulted in declaration of the Republic of China in 1912 – less than three months following the unplanned coup.

The years of 1912 to 1928 were characterized by political tension, instability, and warlordism. In these years alone, Beijing saw 43 separate cabinets. In 1921, the Communist Party was founded. But it was soon outlawed by Nationalist leader and the successor to Sun, who died in 1925, Chiang Kai-shek.

In 1928, Chiang Kai Shek unified China through military means. The resulting one-party rule led to corruption and economic mismanagement, plummeting China into both civil and international (largely against the Japanese) war, which continued for over 20 years.

China has been an authoritarian state under the control of the Communist Party since 1949. The communists in effect consolidated the authoritarian practice that had prevailed in China for centuries. Despite periods of experimentation with Western models of government in the early 20th Century, none ever took root.

With the founding of the People's Republic of China, the country entered a new era of serial revolution and chaos which at least rivaled that which had come before. These revolutions, however, differed from earlier ones in one critical respect: they were instigated by the Party, or caused by rifts within the Party.

Campaigns in the first few years aimed at rural landlords, foreigners, Chinese citizens suspected of supporting the Nationalists, private business, corruption within the Party, and the urban bourgeoisie resulted in purges, and thousands of executions. The use of group pressure tactics developed in these campaigns continued, and became institutionalized. Some vestiges of them can still be seen today.

The Party's continuing uneasy relationship with intellectuals dates back even further than the start of Communist Party rule, and has remained constant since 1949. A recognition that intellectuals, scientists and engineers would be necessary to move China forward led – in the early days of the first Five Year Plan from 1953 - to encouragement of intellectuals to express their views. However, it quickly became evident that such expression must stop short of criticizing the Party.

Writings by a literary critic Hu Feng incurred the ire of senior Party officials, and led to a brutal campaign to root out “Hu Fengism.” Hu Feng was imprisoned for counter-revolutionary activities from 1956 to 1979. His victimization further alienated China's intellectual population. It also led to divisions within the Party between those advocating cooperation with intellectuals and those maintaining that the Party was paramount and could not be criticized – a rift that exists even today.

This pattern repeated itself in 1957 with the short-lived and ill-fated Hundred Flowers Movement. Again encouraged to speak out against abuses, the intellectual community responded with an outpouring of criticism against the Party, and the first Democracy Wall spontaneously came into existence at Peking University.

As had been the case in the past, the new policy of openness was quickly reversed. This time, the price for five weeks of intellectual freedom was paid by over 300,000 individuals who were labeled “rightists” and sent to jail, labor camps, or to the countryside. It would not be until the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1978 that China's intellectual community would again – briefly - come into the open.

Rifts within the Party further contributed to domestic instability, and began to surface in the early days of communist rule. With several purges already behind them, the genesis of the 1966 Cultural Revolution

was also to be found in the intra-Party struggle for power, and can best be understood as an attempt by Mao Zedong to accrue almost absolute control in his own hands and to attack the very Party that he had been so instrumental in bringing to power. The impact on the people of China was almost unimaginable – particularly coming, as it did, on the heels of the disastrous Great Leap Forward which had led to the deaths of an estimated 20 – 35 million people.

Although Mao officially declared an end to the Cultural Revolution in 1968, the radicalism that had been launched continued until his death in 1976, and the subsequent trial of the “Gang of Four,” his wife and other close officials who were ultimately held responsible for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution.

1977 brought the Beijing Spring – a brief period of political liberalization during which the public was permitted to criticize the government. While, at least in the beginning, most of the criticism focused on actions of the government during the Cultural Revolution, it also led to calls for political change, and the spontaneous establishment of the Democracy Wall in 1978. Wei Jingsheng’s poster calling for a ‘fifth modernization’¹ of freedom was the first post for individual freedoms, and eventually – together with other similar actions – earned him almost two decades in prison before being exiled to the United States in 1997.

Almost 30 years following the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, its people had experienced countless political campaigns and purges, collectivization, and starvation. Under Communist rule, they had not only failed to develop, but had suffered extreme hardship. If the Party was to survive, it would need to regain the confidence of the people, and ensure that the chaos and instability of the past would not be given a foothold in the future.

China’s ‘New’ Political Activists in the Age of Reform and Opening

Designed to make China an economic power by the early 21st Century, the Four Modernizations stressed economic self-reliance. China opened up its markets, purchased more modern machinery, encouraged foreign investment, and improved technologies. Thirty years on, the success of the Four Modernizations – popularly known as **Reform and Opening** – is clear. Despite its myriad problems, China is one of the world’s greatest economic powers.

But what of Wei Jingsheng’s Fifth Modernization, and its call for democratic freedoms?

There was a time when it was believed that China’s economic transformation would inevitably bring political reform in its wake. While there has certainly been political change, it would be difficult to argue that any meaningful political reform has taken place in the more than thirty years since Reform and Opening.

Implementation of economic reforms has resulted in a huge amount of new legislation since 1979. China’s accession to the World Trade Organization required it to strengthen legal institutions, particularly its system of commercial law. Efforts to combat corruption have led to even more regulations and laws. Despite – or perhaps in part because of this – China has become a country that many claim to be one of rule-by-law, rather than rule-of-law.

¹ First introduced in 1963, Deng Xiaoping’s proposal to modernize agriculture, national defence, industry, and science and technology did not become official policy until late 1978 – officially marking the commencement of economic reform in China.

China was made a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council during the Cultural Revolution and has become increasingly involved on the world stage. It has signed, ratified, or acceded to a number of important international human rights instruments, including the Convention Against Torture, the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights (signed only), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. However, implementation of these international human rights treaties within China is imperfect, just as its implementation of its own domestic laws is imperfect.

Perhaps the most high profile call for full implementation of China's supreme law – its Constitution – came in the form of Charter '08. This call for China to become a liberal democracy in every respect was drafted by prominent activist Liu Xiaobo, together with a number of other academics and activists. Liu's call for change earned him a Nobel Peace Prize nomination. However, from the Chinese system, it earned him 11 years in prison. Following Liu's sentencing, hundreds of the original Charter signatories publicized an open letter stating, in effect, that "if Liu is guilty, then we are too." Initially signed by 303 individuals, the Charter boasts over 8,000 signatures of Chinese citizens as of July, 2010.

Liu is far from alone. He is carrying on a long tradition of activism in China; one that is gaining increased momentum largely thanks to modern technologies, including cell phones, Twitter, and the Internet. Such activism, however, remains underground as government efforts to quash dissent continue and even increase. New technologies are spawning a far more nuanced and complex activism.

As happened in the time of the Hundred Flowers Movement and the Beijing Spring, the mid-to-late 1980s, under the leadership of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Secretary Hu Yaobang, saw some loosening of restrictions, and optimism about the possibility of political reform. In December 1986, students in Shanghai took to the streets with demands for science and democracy – the same demands as the May 4th Movement almost 70 years earlier. The protests – sometimes involving as many as 200,000 people at one time, spread to Peking University and Nanjing University before reaching Tiananmen Square on New Year's Eve of that year. As with similar movements in the past, these protests were quashed, eventually leading to the forced resignation of Hu Yaobang, who was believed to have been sympathetic to the cause. He was replaced by Zhao Ziyang, but in fact Deng Xiaoping still remained in ultimate control. However, these protests were different in at least one significant respect: they were not born of a policy within the Party, but were spontaneous events with broad popular support – precisely the sort of demonstration that history had proved to be most dangerous.

On April 16, 1989, the day following Hu Yaobang's death, several hundred students laid a wreath for Hu at the Monument for Peoples' Heroes in Tiananmen Square: a spontaneous repeat of the response to Zhou Enlai's death almost exactly 13 years earlier.

The following day, thousands of students gathered, staging a vigil through the night. Groups of workers also began to gather. On April 18, the students staged a sit-in, petitioning the National Peoples' Congress (NPC). They called for a reversal of the verdict against Hu Yaobang, elimination of corruption and nepotism, and an end to the campaigns against "spiritual pollution" and "bourgeois liberalization." Their demands also included free press and freedom of speech, and increased democratic participation in decision-making. After initially being rebuffed by the students, workers also began to gather outside the Square. The numbers of protesting students and workers continued to grow steadily, though under different leadership, and with different messages, the workers being more concerned with the effects of economic mismanagement.

The novelty of events on Tiananmen Square dominated the world's news cycles for a few days, but attention soon turned to other world events. In China, however, protests spread outside Beijing, even as people began pouring into Beijing from all over the country. By May 17, the demonstration of workers and students had swollen to over a million people. Zhao Ziyang, the second Party General Secretary in a row to indicate sympathy with the students and for political reform, was dismissed by the Party's 'Elders,' who then imposed martial law.

Efforts by the military to enter central Beijing on May 21 were blocked by over a million protestors. However, on June 3, they successfully occupied Tiananmen Square prior to clearing it in the early morning hours of June 4 in the bloody attack known to all Chinese as '*Liù-Sì*' (six-four), and to the rest of the world as the Tiananmen Massacre. Over 500 people were imprisoned in the aftermath of June 4, and it remains unknown how many hundreds or thousands were killed.

With the dismissal of Zhao Ziyang, leadership of the Party went to Jiang Zemin, who was then the Party Secretary in Shanghai. Concerns about the impact of reform led to a period of economic retrenchment until Deng's famous 1992 Southern Tour. Deng called for intensification of reform, urging more focus on economic development, and less on ideological correctness. The tour succeeded in getting the economic changes going again. From then, they advanced at a breakneck pace, the 'iron rice bowl'² was broken, unemployment increased, and the gap between rich and poor in China increased dramatically.

While the standard of living for the majority of Chinese people improved significantly as a result of these reforms, the closure of thousands of state-owned enterprises left millions unemployed, homeless, and without any social safety net. Protests and social unrest in northeast China's 'rust belt' have led to concerted efforts to rejuvenate the area. Contrary to expectations, they have not yet led to the development of an independent organized labor movement.

Political Activism and the New Media

Today, advances in communications, an exponential rise in Chinese Internet users to almost 400 million people by 2010, an increasing space for public intellectuals, and an increasingly professional media are all contributing to faster, more, and better information being available to the Chinese people.

China's media is becoming increasingly activist, with more and more investigative reporters, and an increasing number of editors that are willing to push boundaries in pursuit of increased readership. Some of China's academics are increasing their calls for "democratic reforms," though most call for such reforms within the context of the one-party system. NGOs working in the area of political reform tend to operate in a far more unstable – and sometimes dangerous – environment than those focused on environment or health related issues. However, despite a continuing difficult – sometimes increasingly so – operating environment, the number and professionalism of grassroots civil society is increasing.

Virtually every Chinese person has a mobile phone, and a growing number of citizens use them to record and communicate violations of human rights. Blogs and tweets are flying in the millions. Efforts to restrict the Internet through the use of "the Great Firewall" cannot keep up with the volume and ingenuity of China's next generation of technology-savvy citizens. Individuals calling for political change and reform are sharing their experiences, and discovering that they are not alone. This is giving them

² The provision by the state of subsidized housing, medical care, and other benefits was referred to as "the iron rice bowl." While its beneficiaries had steadily reduced with the dismantling of state owned enterprises, it was finally 'broken' as a result of economic changes arising from China's accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001.

increasing confidence, and some profess growing optimism at the prospect of bringing about democratic change.

But they are few. In a country of over 1.3 billion people, these few thousand activists are but a tiny – if growing – voice. And despite the wonders of modern technology and communications, they remain vulnerable to arrest and imprisonment – most often for charges of ‘inciting subversion of state power’ – an opaque and nebulous charge that may lead to up to 15 years in prison. The majority of China’s population remains preoccupied with simply eking out a living or – in the case of the rapidly growing middle class – preserving their standard of living in an environment of rising costs and soaring housing prices.

However, this new middle class is discovering a sort of activism through protection of their property rights. While the Party is intent upon keeping this large group content, and therefore quiet, the activist community sees them as a potential source of future activists as they determine that the cost they are paying in personal freedoms is too high for the benefit of preserving the status quo.

The Communist Party of China, the Government of China, and Inner Party Democracy – a Primer

China’s government and Party structures mirror each other. The Communist Party now includes approximately 76 million members, and it is – almost exclusively – from this cohort that leaders are selected.

China is governed by a system of Peoples’ Congresses, with the lowest being village (indeed, so low as to be classified as autonomous, and therefore not officially part of the formal government structure), moving up to township, county, prefecture or municipal, provincial, and national. The representatives in these Congresses are referred to as Deputies. The National Peoples’ Congress (NPC) consists of just under 3,000 Deputies, selected by peoples’ congresses at lower levels, and is sometimes likened to a Parliament. Although it is the body that might most closely resemble Parliament, it is clearly not a democratic body. The vast majority of deputies at all levels are Communist Party members, although there are a few independent Deputies. The NPC meets once per year, for a period of 10 – 14 days, at which time they produce the Report on the Work of the Government (similar to a Throne Speech), ratify work reports, work plans, and pass legislation. Meetings are largely held behind closed doors. Rarely does this body – often referred to as the “rubber stamp” of the Party – provide any surprises, though in recent years it has started to become more vociferous over environmental and legal issues (it was, for instance, one of the most vocal opponents of the Three Gorges Dam project of the 1990s).

The NPC’s counterpart – sometimes referred to as China’s Senate, though not resembling the Senate of a Western democratic model – is the Chinese Peoples’ Political Consultative Congress. Retired ambassadors, members of China’s eight registered minor parties (which do not pose any opposition to the Communist Party), representatives of Macao, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, and others are composed within this body. The Chinese public generally refers to this body as a “flower vase,” in that it is seen as purely decorative, without useful function. Its stated purpose is as a forum for political consultation, democratic supervision, and participating in the administration and discussion of state affairs, but in reality it has no decision-making clout and very little – if any - influence.

Elections - China’s meaningful experience with elections is minimal. Although experimentation has been taking place for decades in the sphere of direct village-level elections (to the tune of almost 1 million elections) as well as several rounds of elections for village chiefs, problems with vote-buying, intimidation, and corruption have been rife. Despite some optimism several years ago that direct elections

might extend to the more significant township level, they have not done so. Experts believe that, despite experimentation in some areas, expansion is unlikely in the near future.

The level directly below elects deputies to the various levels of Peoples' Congresses. While Communist Party members hold the majority of these seats, non-Party members may put themselves forward upon nomination by any ten individuals. The first successful independent candidate was Wu Qing, who became a Deputy in Haidian District (part of Beijing) in 1984. These independent candidates have, in the past, experienced extreme pressure – even arrest – in the lead-up to elections. Despite this, the number of independent candidates is increasing in each election. The next elections will be held in 2011, at which time the number of independent candidates competing in Beijing is expected to more than triple since the last round of elections: from 30,000 to over 100,000.

Every five years since 1982, China has held a **Communist Party Congress**. At the 2002 Congress, Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang Zemin as head of the Communist Party, and at the 2003 annual meeting of the NPC, he succeeded him as China's President. This was considered the **first orderly transition of power** since 1949 – before that, the Party was fraught with frequent purges and internecine conflict. While the internal conflict hasn't ended, it is now being handled mostly out of view, and the stakes are no longer so deadly. Hints of these struggles can be found in departures by some leaders from their usual well-choreographed and closely scripted appearances, but these are rare, and do not result in the purges of the past.

Hu's mandate was renewed at the 2007 Congress, but a two-term limit for office holders requires that he step down in 2012 from his Party post, and in 2013 as head of state. An age limit on senior Party officials dictates that the majority of the nine-member Politburo Standing Committee – the inner circle of power in the Party – will also step down in 2012. Although there are always possibilities of last minute shake-ups, it would appear that the key members of the starting line-up for 2012 are already selected, with Xi Jinping being groomed to take over from President Hu Jintao, and Li Keqiang from Premier Wen Jiabao. The cast of supporting – but still very powerful – players on the Standing Committee remains more subject to change, with 7 of the current 9 members due to step down.

Once a party of revolutionaries and ideologues, the Communist Party is now, at least at the top, a meritocracy. But factionalism remains rampant, and ascension to the highest levels is not possible without powerful patrons. While necessary to improve the Party's legitimacy in the eyes of the people, there remains tremendous skepticism about the merits of many officials – particularly in an environment where the people have no voice regarding who is to be appointed to leadership positions, and where examples of corruption and abuse of power are rampant.

Factionalism within the Party, combined with loss of the peoples' confidence in the Party, have led to efforts for its internal revitalization. The efforts underway fall under the umbrella of "Inner Party Democracy," and in theory consist of a number of positive elements, including increased transparency, multi-candidate elections, and a system of improved supervision.

But the ingrained current system rewards compliance with orders from above, rather than responding to demands of those being governed. Inner Party Democracy is therefore viewed by many as a cynical effort primarily to strengthen the Party, and thus one-party rule. However, there is another camp which views Inner Party Democracy as a possible interim step toward democratic reform that should not be dismissed out-of-hand.

INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

China faces a number of institutional challenges presenting both difficulties and opportunities for cooperation with China. An understanding of these challenges is a key to the toolbox for any diplomats or NGOs working with China in the area of institutional reform.

There is a tendency to think of the Communist Party of China as monolithic, but this could not be further from the truth. *The Party is not unified, and is more and more prey to internal debate and friction.* Although the details of such friction are not made known to the public, there exist two broad camps: the “princelings,” or those who come from a line of powerful parents, and the “*tuanpai*” – those who rose to power through the ranks of the Communist Youth League (Hu Jintao’s power base).

Efforts to manage this internal friction in an orderly manner are part of the controversial reforms referred to as ‘inner party democracy’ (see above). Although not democracy, this internal competition does mean that there are an increasing number of checks on the power of the inner circle, known as the Political Bureau (Politburo). Many in China’s new power elite have risen on the basis of perceived competence, as well as loyalty. Contrary to past practice, the majority of its leadership at the central and provincial levels now possess university degrees, though few have studied abroad. Also in contrast to the past, where the majority of university-educated leaders were engineers, the current political elite is more diverse, including members trained in economics, politics, law, business, journalism, and a variety of other areas.

There is a deep-seated belief within the power elite that the stability of the country depends upon strong leadership from within the Party, and draws from the fact that the Party is the only entity that currently has influence across China’s diverse society and regions. This analysis claims that low points in the country’s recent history tend to coincide with – or have been caused by – divisions within the Party. Therefore, much energy is being expended upon revamping the Party from within. However, as such “reforms” take place behind closed doors, it is simply not possible to evaluate their extent or eventual impact.

Just as the Party is not monolithic, *the pace of development and the degree of implementation of laws and policies differ dramatically from one province to another; even from one county to another.* An old saying – “The mountains are high, and the emperor is far away” – underscores a fundamental challenge faced by the central government: many laws and policies promulgated by the center are ignored, or not even known at the local level. While over the past 30 years, China has gone from having just two laws on their books to hundreds, the resources and capacity for implementation of its laws – including the Constitution – often do not exist.

There exists another complicating factor. Local Party officials are held responsible for any failures of central government policy in their district. But there is a wide variance in how they operate. Some have instituted public consultations on such issues as budgetary expenditure. Others are apt to imprison petitioners, to ensure that they cannot take their complaints to Beijing and avoid blame.

Public resentment of endemic corruption at all levels is an increasing preoccupation of the authorities. Efforts to address this through measures such as the 2008 Open Government Information Regulations, whistleblower regulations (Basic Standard for Enterprise Internal Control), and petitioners’ regulations have met with limited success – partly due to reasons cited in the above paragraph, and partly because where corrupt individuals are in power, they also have at their fingertips the power of the police to silence protest, and the ability to ignore – or selectively implement – laws promulgated from the center.

“*Suzhe*” is a Chinese concept that encompasses both the quality and capability of individuals, in both professional and personal senses. China suffers from a lack of “*suzhe*” on the part of many of its lower level peoples’ deputies. While efforts are being undertaken to address this issue, there are millions of peoples’ deputies at all levels, many of whom have little or no education, and most of whom have had little or no training with respect to how to carry out their responsibilities. Despite their title, these peoples’ deputies are answerable only to the level above them in the political hierarchy. With the exception of elections that take place at only the very lowest level, the public is given no opportunity to choose their representatives. Indeed, the concept of serving the electorate is a novel one for the majority of China’s peoples’ deputies. It should be recognized, though, that while many peoples’ deputies are indeed corrupt, many simply do not have the tools necessary to carry out their responsibilities, while many others do wish to improve the situation in their “constituencies,” but lack the financial resources or ability to do so.

Maintaining stability is of paramount concern to China’s leadership.

The issue of separatism (“splittism”) in Tibet and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions is a special concern for Beijing authorities. In the eyes of most foreign observers, they have over-reacted with what appears to be cultural and religious intolerance for Uighur Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists, as well as the heavy-handed persecution of the personal empowerment movement, Falun Gong. Tibet and Xinjiang are rich in natural resources, occupy key strategic areas, and account for almost a third of China’s landmass.

Internally, the regime’s fervent view is that the best – the only – means of maintaining stability is through the continued leadership of the Party. However, as stated earlier, the Party is not monolithic, and there are differing views from within with respect to how stability should be maintained. Some favor continued – or increased – controls, while others recognize the need for a ‘pressure valve’ that can be provided through selective loosening of controls.

An estimated 80,000 to 100,000 “mass incidents” or protests, including everything from peaceful demonstrations to violent riots (based on a combination of official announcements and extrapolation), take place annually. Moreover, their numbers are increasing every year. Also apparent is that most of these incidents are protests against a breach of rights – most often, property rights.

Some experimentation by the authorities in areas such as public participation, cooperation with NGOs, or selective loosening of media controls is taking place in order to address these issues, but on an *ad hoc* basis. In many cases, unless innovations are institutionalized, they are lost when a forward-thinking local leader is promoted away from the district. With the exception of powerful leaders such as those of Guangdong Province, Shanghai, or Chongqing, most leaders are unwilling to take on the risk of significant experimentation. Intimately familiar with their own Party’s history of purges and shifting allegiances, they remain cognizant of the consequences of failed endeavors – or even successful ones that may later fall out of favor.

Also contributing to the ferment is what is seen as an impossible situation for many of China’s young people. In a society where a university degree was, in the past, virtually a guarantee of a good job and everyone had work allocated to them, many graduates are now finding themselves unemployed or seriously underemployed.

It is estimated that China’s rural population is approximately 800 million. Low wages and difficult living conditions are forcing more and more of them to migrate to the cities in search of better wages. China is experiencing the largest internal migration in history, with estimates of between 100 – 200 million people on the move. Many rural villages have all but disappeared, housing only the very old and the very young

– all dependent on remittances from those who have moved to the cities. For these families, traditional social structure has broken down. The days of the iron rice bowl are but a distant memory; the old social safety net is gone, and the government is struggling to replace it.

Low wages also contribute to instability. An extremely low minimum wage [frozen at between RMB 850 – 1,000 per month (less than USD \$150) – an income not even supporting subsistence in the increasingly expensive cities] combined with rapidly escalating property prices make ownership of even a modest home an unrealistic goal for the vast majority of the population. This lies behind the spate of protests taking place in the summer of 2010.

The Chinese leadership's preoccupation with stability has made the notion of "color revolution" a real concern: study teams sent abroad in 2005 to examine the conditions leading to the Rose, Orange, and Tulip Revolutions are, by many, credited with a sense of 'clamping-down' experienced since 2008. The Internet Manifesto published by exiled dissident Wang Dan and others in February 2010 can only contribute to concerns of the leadership:

"This is an Internet Revolution, a color revolution with Chinese characteristics. Four hundred million Netizens are the fresh troops of China's Internet revolution. This revolution will not be won overnight, but if we persevere night and day, day in and day out, we will ultimately shake the very foundations of CCP rule."

The Party has weathered numerous crises since its inception. The past decade, in particular, has seen an increased focus on inner-party strengthening. However, the huge social issues discussed above show no indications of abating; just as one problem is addressed, another raises its head. Many question whether the use of on the spot solutions on regional issues combined with continuing strong-arm tactics to silence dissent can continue to keep the lid on growing discontent.

Yu Jianrong, a scholar at the prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Science, gained international stature for his work relating to social stability and the increasing frequency and violence of 'mass incidents' in recent years. In a 2009 speech to the Beijing Lawyers' Association, he relates how discussions with current and retired senior government cadres has shifted his earlier optimism regarding China's continued stability to growing concern: these cadres have frankly expressed the view that upheaval is unavoidable.

Following an exhaustive analysis of mass incidents and the precarious nature of China's present social stability, Yu concludes that China's political power must be reformed through judicial checks and balances from the local level – to do so from a higher level is simply not feasible in the current climate. He advocates "laying ideologies aside, and just defending the Constitution."

The confluence of the leadership's need to maintain stability, and the demands of the people for defense of their rights finds a common ground in the constitution: more and more scholars and activists are advocating enforcement of the constitution as a means of moving forward both protection of human rights and democratic development in China.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Non-Governmental Organizations

China's regulations for NGOs are not easy to decipher or comply with: an NGO must be both sponsored by a government organization, and then registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Many NGOs unable to secure a sponsor are forced, instead, to register as corporations – a very expensive and cumbersome

process which also denies them access to government funding, and does not permit the raising of funds from the public. Such NGOs therefore largely rely on foreign funding for their activities.

The difficult registration process leads to the majority of NGOs eschewing this requirement and operating without official sanction. This, however, can leave them vulnerable to action by the state authorities should they run afoul of local officials in the course of their work. At the same time, legally registered organizations are by no means immune from such action; the NGO Open Constitution Initiative was closed down in 2009 and two of its lawyers arrested. Historically, advocacy organizations – particularly those advocating political change – are far more vulnerable than those working on issues of environment, health, or public participation.

China's network of NGOs includes international NGOs, GONGOs (government organized non-governmental organizations), as well as various forms of grassroots civil society. In 1988, China had 4,500 officially registered NGOs (including GONGOs). By the end of last year, according to Tsinghua University's Deng Guosheng, there were 425,000 registered NGOs.

The growth of unregistered NGOs in China is even greater: China's first activist environmental NGO (Friends of Nature) was formed in 1994. Scholars now estimate that there are between 1 and 3 million unregistered NGOs operating in China.

New regulations introduced in March 2010 require legally notarized grant agreements before an NGO can receive money from foreign foundations. Although some NGOs registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs have been able to do so, most others have been unsuccessful. As a result, the majority of NGOs are no longer able to legally receive the overseas funding upon which they depend and face the prospect of closing their doors.

Experts point to this as an example of further tightening of the environment for NGOs. Others, however, stress the importance of looking at the longer-term picture, bearing in mind that NGOs while a relatively new phenomenon in China, have nonetheless grown exponentially.

Indeed, NGOs are increasingly filling the gap – particularly with respect to social and environmental issues – that local governments are unwilling or unable to fill. Following the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, billions of RMB flowed into the disaster zone, and the government was not equipped to disburse all the funds that were flowing in. YouChange, a Beijing based non-profit charitable organization, partnered with the city of Mianzhu's government to integrate resources to help with earthquake relief. The initial experience of YouChange, however, is indicative of the deep government mistrust of NGOs: no government agency was willing to work with YouChange, and the project was in danger of ending before it started. This was attributed to the fear that some NGOs use aid as a pretext for anti-state and antigovernment activities, and the career of any official associated with such activities would immediately end. However, a local official eventually stepped forward, stating that 'one shouldn't stop eating for fear of choking.'

The success of this project, which has managed to directly and indirectly disseminate over 2.1 billion RMB of aid in the past two years, has dramatically changed the attitude of local officials toward NGOs. However, there are also concerns that this same model may bring NGOs too much into the orbit of government, turning them into GONGOS (Government Organized NGOs), and hampering their ability to play an advocacy role.

The relationship between China's NGO community and its government is conflicted: On the one hand, the Party, before it came into power, gained support by providing community services and teaching

people how to defend their rights against the corrupt one-party government, the Nationalists. So the Party recognizes the benefit of civil society organizations, but also recognizes their potential threat. But most experts agree that the services provided by the NGO community are too great, and that the hole that would be left by their abolition would be too large. It is probable that they will remain an element of China's development, and continue to grow in response to China's needs.

DIPLOMATIC RESOURCES AND ASSETS

The diplomatic community resident in China is a large one. While most countries have a presence in Beijing, many also have consulates in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Chongqing or Chengdu, providing resources and opportunities for research and interaction with Chinese government and civil society over a broad geographic area. Representation outside the capital permits reporting and analysis from outside the rarified environment of the capital, as well as beneficial contact with provincial and local officials and civil society.

Hong Kong is unique in its status as part of China, but different³ – this difference is immediately evident when alighting from Hong Kong's iconic Star Ferry, where Falun Gong protestors have a semi-permanent presence. The abundance of research facilities, NGOs, and individuals studying China from Hong Kong makes it an ideal source of information, or location for convening meetings in a more open environment.

Diplomatic **immunity** can also cast a protective cloak around others, foreign nationals and even Chinese. In 2005, Sharon Hom – executive director of the international NGO Human Rights in China, and a US citizen – was in Beijing as part of the EU Delegation for the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue Seminar. Returning to her hotel room one evening, she was accosted by two plainclothes security personnel who attempted to get her to go to a waiting car “for a chat.” She refused, and was able to contact the EU diplomats in her delegation. With their assistance, and that of US diplomats who were also called to the scene, she was able to resist this attempt to intimidate her. But she and her organization were pointedly not invited to future sessions of the Dialogue, either in China or in Europe. Pressure, intimidation, and outright arrest of Chinese citizens by security organs occur regularly. The shield of diplomatic immunity enables diplomats to protest and this may have had a protective effect in some cases. Ultimately, Chinese activists can seek asylum in foreign embassies, or claim refugee status – this case-study records several such examples. But often these useful interventions are not followed by sustained support to such independent voices, for fear of upsetting the Chinese Government.

In an environment where individuals are not able to leave the country, it can also be difficult to transport their possessions – including writings or films – to the outside if they are not digitized. There is no formal restriction on taking personal papers out of the country, but opaque and far-reaching designations of ‘state secrets’ can be invoked to authorize confiscation from Chinese citizens or foreigners without diplomatic immunity. When Lu Decheng left China, he left behind not only his wife and children, but also five volumes containing the notes documenting his 10 years in prison for defacing the portrait of Mao in Tiananmen Square during the 1989 protests. These notes filled five volumes; without them it would have been near impossible to complete his memoirs. A diplomat heading home for summer holidays carried the material out of China. A similar action enabled delivery of a young filmmaker's feature film about corruption in China to the Montreal International Film Festival, where it won an award.

³ Since its return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, Hong Kong has been permitted a high degree of autonomy with its own executive and laws, currency, etc., while leaving Beijing in charge of its defense and foreign affairs.

In 1998, Canada launched the first embassy-disbursed fund providing support for non-governmental initiatives aimed at improving democratic practices, social services, public education, legal reform, and respect for human rights in China. As of March 2008, the project had contributed to support for the creation of 35 new NGOs, and directly helped strengthen 160 existing NGOs. This program subsequently served as a model for other embassy-based funds, and has also had significant knock-on effects, including a legal aid pilot project that spread nation-wide.

The international community spends millions of dollars every year on rule of law and governance cooperation with China. Some of this **funding** is carried out by international NGOs in connection with Chinese academic institutions, NGOs, or the Chinese government. Some of it is government-to-government, and some of it is NGO-to-NGO. Ironically, the sheer volume of work and the geographic spread of projects taking place in China makes coordination in order to avoid duplication of effort problematic. In addition, donors may find themselves returning to the same recipient time after time, as familiarity with the grant application process and reporting requirements lies with a relatively small core of NGOs and academic institutions. In an effort to expand expertise in this area, some embassies are providing training to grassroots NGOs, and at least one has hired a consultant charged with assisting applicants with the sometimes cumbersome application process.

Coordination of political officers focused on human rights is, on the other hand, well developed. Some of the larger embassies have officers focused just on human rights, while others have officers working on human rights and domestic politics – it often being difficult to analyze one without an understanding of the other. An informal group of about 10 missions of Community of Democracies members gathers on a regular basis to share information and analysis. The group can also serve as a catalyst for coordinating joint demarches or demonstrative action – such as the joint effort to attend the sentencing hearing of democracy activist Liu Xiaobo for inciting subversion of state power on December 25, 2009.

China is party to a number of international human rights instruments, including the Convention against Torture, and the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. China signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in 1998, but ratification seems still not on the horizon despite the efforts of domestic academics and the international community. However, its signature reinforces the legitimacy of efforts aimed at the improvement of China's performance on political rights. It also supports activity aimed at improving the infrastructure so as to pave the way for its ratification. Justice reform and amendment of China's Criminal Procedure Law – seen as necessary before China can ratify the ICCPR - are key areas of ongoing international cooperation. China's own 1982 Constitution (Article 35) is unequivocal about rights that are every day denied: "Citizens of China enjoy freedom of speech, the press, of assembly, of association, of procession, and of demonstration." The 2004 Constitutional amendment stipulating that "the State respects and safeguards human rights" has not, in the absence of a constitutional court, had any visible impact.

WAYS THESE ASSETS HAVE BEEN APPLIED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE⁴

The Golden Rules

Diplomats posted to China routinely undergo extensive language training in advance of their move. While such training is, of course, pragmatic –allowing diplomats to interact directly with the Chinese people – another significant benefit is the recognition of willingness to invest the time and resources necessary to learn a language as challenging as Mandarin as a sign of **respect**. The lengthy and arduous language training process also doubles as an intensive course in Chinese history, culture, economics, and politics, better equipping diplomats to function in China’s environment upon arrival.

The UK’s Strategic Engagement Policy with China issued in early 2008 is another effective demonstration of **respect**. By clearly setting out its foreign policy objectives in China, it has introduced greater transparency into the relationship, laying out a roadmap for future cooperation, and clearly flagging issues of importance. This demonstration of transparency also lends an additional layer of legitimacy to cooperation in support of China’s efforts to improve transparency and accountability in its own governance.

Diplomats functioning in China must be adept at listening not only to what their Chinese interlocutors are saying, but also to the choice of words used by other representatives of their government (Ministers, experts), and the choice of words used by interpreters in meetings. Many concepts relating to human rights and democracy do not translate well into Chinese or correspond to Chinese official thinking. (Article 1 of the 1982 Constitution affirms the “people’s democratic dictatorship”). In order to convey the intended tone and nuance, use of the appropriate word can be critical. It is not unusual for a Chinese official – many of whom are fluent in English – to correct their interpreters in the course of meetings: their command of both languages used in meetings provides a distinct advantage.

Understanding sensitivities is critical in determining in which areas foreign governments and NGOs can be overtly involved, and where their involvement is best kept under wraps. One domestic NGO figure focused exclusively on democratic development is now focused on the upcoming round of elections, where he expects a significant upsurge in the number of independent candidates: In the 2006-07 election cycle, Beijing alone put forward about 30,000 independent candidates. This time, the figure is expected to more than treble. While he acknowledges that there is considerable foreign interest in this area, he advises that foreign involvement is likely to be counter-productive because of the high level of ‘nervousness’ in the leadership.

Such nervousness is linked to concerns regarding allegations of foreign involvement in recent “color revolutions.” At the same time, however, this institute’s pilot projects in the area of public participation have come to the – largely favorable – attention of the highest levels in the central government. Articles

⁴ Nota Bene - Many of the tools in the Diplomats’ toolbox apply equally well to the NGO sector. Due to the sensitivity of many of the projects that are currently underway, as well as the high level of cooperation between the NGO and the diplomatic sectors, examples provided of application of the tools have been drawn from both international NGO and diplomatic representatives.

In addition, the sensitive nature of many of the projects involving foreign governments – even in the case of cooperation with various levels of the Chinese government – result in a reluctance to specifically name either the country or the Chinese government department involved. For this reason, many of the examples given below relating to recent or ongoing activities are – of necessity – vague and unattributed.

about these pilots are attracting a great deal of domestic media attention in the country's increasingly privately owned (though still strictly controlled) press. And in an environment where experimentation rarely takes place in the absence of senior level approval, and where such approval is rarely – if ever – explicit, tacit government support for such pilots is often discerned by tracking commentary in the *Peoples' Daily* (the official media organ of the Party), where favorable reports can signal an opportunity for greater openness in a field.

Similarly, many countries have experienced a greater degree of success in cooperative projects – particularly in sensitive areas – if embassies step back from direct involvement in support activity. Proposals to local governments put forward by academics, rather than a foreign government, are more apt to be accepted. In the case of one seminal conference relating to NGO development, the sponsoring government left all reference to its involvement off conference materials, and did not actively participate in the conference. Absence of the foreign presence allowed officials and NGOs to speak freely and establish contacts that some Chinese participants would not have pursued in the presence of foreigners, especially from embassies. Additionally, China's rigid system of protocol requires the presence of certain senior officials (or individuals holding a certain position) at conferences involving foreigners that can have a dampening effect on candor and outcomes.

One diplomat reported cancellation of a poverty alleviation project in a remote province. The reason given for cancellation of such a seemingly uncontroversial project was that local officials did not wish the fact of foreign involvement to be known. The diplomat asked not to be named, as they hoped to restart the project in the future with a different approach.

In some cases, the challenge in reaching agreement is with the language proposed, rather than the concept. **Understanding** the constraints and priorities of various government ministries has assisted in framing projects that are “win-win.” The US – China Rule of Law Initiative is a classic example of this: its official title is “Cooperation in the Field of Law.”

One country that wished to cooperate with China in a certain area of justice reform is having success by taking a practical approach. After **listening** to China's greatest concern in the area, for example prison reform, the foreign partner presents a business case approach that links a human rights emphasis in international research to China's desired outcome. This approach has delivered additional dividends: an improved relationship with a generally inaccessible government ministry, and improved access to prisons.

Canadian Ambassador Joseph Caron was never afraid to push boundaries in the course of his meetings with senior government or Party officials. He recalls lively discussions with Pan Yue – then Vice Minister of China's State Environment Protection Administration – arguing the necessity of freedom of the media in order to enable the government to better do its work and root-out corruption. Indeed it was one of the first areas of both increased NGO involvement, and increased journalistic activism. Pan not only used the media himself to bring environmental problems to the attention of the public, but during his tenure, journalists enjoyed a greater freedom in their ability to report on environmental issues. While Ambassador Caron was unlikely to have been the only foreign diplomat stressing the economic benefits of a freer media to Pan, the recognition by diplomats of opportunities where there may be both a business case to be made, and the space to move forward (here, in the form of a forward-thinking and risk-taking leader) can support efforts to pave the path to change.

Understanding an opaque environment: In an environment where ‘tea leaf reading’⁵ is both a hobby and a professional necessity, certain developments may be assigned a significance they may not merit. Understanding the broader political environment can enable diplomats to avoid the ‘loosening and tightening’ flavor of reporting which can be misinterpreted in capitals, and lead to an ill-supported sense of the often volatile situation on the ground.

For example, according to David Bandurski, a Hong Kong-based academic working with China’s growing professional journalist community, frequent references to “another press crackdown” in China are misleading: the “crackdown” has been ongoing since 1989. While control remains constant, he maintains that the type of manipulation shifts in response to the changing reality on the ground. This changing reality is also strongly influenced by the Internet. For example, a story regarding local corruption will be picked up by the web, and so can’t be completely silenced. Rather than banning all reporting, as would have happened several years ago, the news cycle is now used: coverage by independent media is restricted, but Xinhua (China’s official news agency) is permitted to cover it. Xinhua then “exposes” the story, points the finger at local corrupt officials, and “gets to play the good guy.” This may be interpreted as “loosening,” just as a subsequent removal of an editor for publishing an investigative analysis may be interpreted as a “crackdown.” Understanding the underlying and somewhat obscure cycle of “control, change, and chaos” can help better target cooperation with China’s nascent domestic journalism community

The Beijing diplomatic community focused on human rights issues is closely knit. This group **shares** information on a regular basis, and on a variety of issues, including recent developments and new initiatives. It coordinates joint demarches, exchanges translations of key documents or articles, and compares notes in analyzing the constantly changing face of China’s human rights situation.

Many diplomats are also part of international, informal networks of China-watchers: academics, businesspeople, journalists, and others with an ongoing interest in, or involvement with China. Such groups are invaluable resources for the real-time exchange of information and interpretation of events in China, including detention or release of activists, updates on recent policy changes, or interpretation of the actions of China’s leadership. Multiple open online sources, such as *China Digital Times* also contribute to the worldwide sharing of information about China, as well as translations of Chinese documents and articles.

Truth in Communications

Despite the existence of China’s infamous Great Firewall (GFW), information is flowing to and from China’s human rights defenders, some of whom have thousands following their tweets and blogs. With almost 400 million Internet users, it is simply not possible for authorities to monitor all e-mails, tweets, blogs, and posts that these users generate. The state incentives of the “50 cent party”⁶ are having little, if any, effect on the increasingly savvy Internet population, gaining more derisory comments than converts.

Han-Han, a prominent Chinese blogger, was voted the second most influential person in the world in Time Magazine’s 2010 list. His acerbic, political jabs at government policy and restrictions of the media

⁵ ‘Tea leaf reading’ refers to the tendency of all China watchers – in the absence of media or government transparency and in an environment where little happens without a reason – to interpret new policies or actions by the leadership as having significance. However, the interpretation is not always correct, and there is not always an underlying agenda.

⁶ Individuals paid ½ RMB for every pro-government post that they submit to chat-rooms.

have gained him millions of followers. Internationally acclaimed artist Ai Weiwei and “the Butcher” are also well known members of this growing cohort of Internet crusaders, using the Internet as their 21st Century Democracy Wall.

One thing many of these bloggers and activists have in common is the occurrence of a single event that triggered their Internet activism. Although the events differ, they generally relate to discovery of a specific injustice or cover-up, such as over the tainted milk scandal, or the number of children who perished in the Sichuan earthquake, or the arrest of Liu Xiaobo. The number of signatures to Charter ‘08 continued to grow, undeterred by Mr. Liu’s sentencing. Sharon Hom reports that many well-known writers that had been using pseudonyms for some of their more controversial work have ceased to do so since the sentencing of Liu Xiaobo. The Internet is encouraging a different type of activism.

Google’s move of redirecting users in mainland China to its Hong Kong site, google.com.hk, in March 2010, following its decision to no longer comply with China’s monitoring policies, has been hailed by many Chinese democracy activists as a great victory. While many activists are able to sidestep the GFW through the use of a series of different and increasingly sophisticated measures, Google’s move to Hong Kong is better **informing** the average user by now allowing them to see just how many sites are blocked - even though access to these sites remains censored.

In July 2010, the government of China renewed Google’s license to operate its website in mainland China without changing its censorship rules. While some have criticized Google’s decision, users in mainland China will have the option to click a link to switch over to Google’s Hong Kong site. Xiao Qiang, director of the China Internet Project at UC Berkeley, cautiously points out that this decision breaks new ground, stating, “It is unprecedented for a private company to challenge Chinese Internet censorship... In the past, there would have been no doubt that the Chinese government would have punished Google.” The government’s decision, Xiao adds, is “a very calculated position that is good for China’s long-term development and openness.”

Many embassies make use of the Internet and blogs to reach the Chinese public. For example, one British Embassy blog providing an account of a day spent with a migrant worker had, after being translated into Chinese, 30,000 hits in its first five hours. This account had the effect of both informing the local population about the plight of individuals literally in their own back yard, and of providing this same population with a different view of the foreign community that they have been taught to fear.⁷

While the Internet revolution has shifted much focus from shortwave radio broadcasts such as Voice of America or Radio Free Asia, the important role they have played in the past – and continue to play – in **providing information** to populations behind the GFW should not be discounted. Lu Decheng, imprisoned for 10 years after throwing ink at Mao’s portrait in Tiananmen Square, recounts⁸ how he and others relied on such broadcasts to learn about events in China, including commentaries by astrophysicist and democracy proponent Fang Lizhi, well before the 1989 Tiananmen protests. Such broadcasts are still of importance for those who either do not have access to a computer, or who have access, but are unable to scale “the Great Firewall.”

⁷ A number of Chinese activists and academics have referred to the continuing fear and antipathy that exists toward ‘the west’, resulting from an anti-foreign bias in the education system. They have stressed the importance of increasing people-to-people ties as a means of dissipating such perceptions.

⁸ In the memoir *Egg on Mao*, by Denise Chong – an account of the events leading up to the author’s throwing ink at the portrait of Mao during the 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations, and the resulting 16 year imprisonment.

Liu Xiaobo, the activist imprisoned in 2009 for 11 years for his role in drafting Charter '08, underscored the importance of international media in giving voice to those who no longer can speak in China:

“I, who had been drawn into the path of dissidence by the passions of June Fourth, after leaving the Qincheng Prison in 1991, lost in the right to speak openly in my own country, and could only do so through overseas media, and hence was monitored for many years; placed under surveillance (May 1995- January 1996); educated through labor (October 1996 – October 1999), and now once again am thrust into the dock by enemies in the regime.”

Diplomats' efforts to provide balanced **reporting** to capitals can be challenged by inaccurate or biased media reports in the home country media, or by inaccurate views held by individuals in capitals who still hold outdated pre-conceptions of Chinese society and the extent of modernization and sophistication in its cities.

A diplomat's efforts at reporting are only as useful as the willingness of the recipients to read and assess this reporting. Many diplomats based in Beijing (as elsewhere) complain about the 'black hole' into which their reports often fall. However, those targeting their reports on long term, strategic issues, and who identify specific links to issues of national interest report increased readership in capitals.

As the above makes clear, reporting has its limitations – there is no substitute for actual travel to other countries to promote understanding. Approximately 2.2 million Chinese citizens have travelled abroad to study since 1979. These numbers include academics, government officials, private citizens, judges, and any other imaginable category of citizen. Diplomats working on cooperative development projects have found that those officials with overseas experience are far more open to incorporation of human rights elements in the development of projects.

While informing capitals of important development in China through reporting is an opportunity, it is also a responsibility. Activists are willing – even eager – to meet with foreign diplomats and journalists. In contrast to the situation 10 years ago, they are very frank and open in their comments. However, these same activists are still taking a risk; the diplomats with whom they meet have a corresponding responsibility to interpret and report such contacts judiciously as well as the way they use their networks to share this information. Such sharing of information can provide these risk-takers with some semblance of protection.

David Bandurski, of Hong Kong University's China Media Project, states that although the government's effort to control the media has not changed since the aftermath of Tiananmen Square, there has been a significant social change. Now, papers are market-based, so public demand is having a greater impact on what is found in the news. This is leading to watchdog journalism. He believes that a new pluralism is emerging, and leading to gaps where professionals can fill the space.

Working with the Government

The international community has by now an established history of **cooperation with the Chinese government** in a broad range of areas, from village elections to open government, accountability, human rights in prisons, procuratorate⁹ reform, and judges' training. This cooperation takes place with all levels of government, and may have an impact that is felt, though not yet seen. For example, a lawyer

⁹ The Supreme Peoples' Procuratorate is responsible for prosecuting criminal cases, investigating corruption, and overseeing the criminal justice system.

representing several well-known human rights defenders advised that he has seen a positive change in judges over the years – a change that he attributes to ongoing judges’ training that has been undertaken by a number of nations. Some of these judges have advised, unofficially, that they agree with the arguments of the defense, despite having no flexibility regarding the verdict they must deliver. For lawyers working within this system, such recognition by judges of the illegitimacy of the process, together with a willingness to communicate such sentiments is a small but significant step forward.

China’s cooperation with other countries can, however, be held hostage to changes in policy from the center, or at the local level. In cases where long-term programming is anticipated, making at least the principle of cooperation a part of a summit process, and incorporating the agreement to cooperate in the Summit document, has been a means of preserving the nature of the project, and – in some cases – assuring its very existence. The US Rule of Law Initiative is an example: its inclusion in the 1997 Clinton-Jiang summit document ensured its continuing legitimacy (though it went dormant for a time due to lack of funding). Such government-to-government agreements also provide legitimacy for NGOs working in the same field. In cases where NGOs run into trouble with local authorities, it is possible to point to the high-level agreement as an indication of an area where cooperation has the blessing of the central authorities.

Sometimes the most unlikely circumstances can lead to working with the government – or at least dissemination of central policy to local areas. In advance of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, restrictions on foreign media were relaxed, allowing reporters to interview anyone they wished, as long as that person provided consent. Initially, local authorities were not aware of these regulations, and would not permit journalists to enter their districts. The journalists had laminated cards printed, containing the text of the regulations, together with contact names and numbers in Beijing for further information. This relatively simple solution both informed local authorities and allowed the journalists to get on with their work.

The Human Rights **Dialogues** established between a number of countries and China have consistently come under fire from the international NGO community for their failure to achieve concrete results. Nonetheless, there is consensus among diplomats that they can serve as a springboard for a number of less visible but more effective efforts. The dialogues have been used to bring together Chinese government and NGO representatives, or high-level Chinese officials from various government departments. Some dialogues also provide an opportunity for high-level (vice-ministerial) meetings and demarches. This is particularly important in the current environment where China is increasingly resistant to accepting demarches.

The EU dialogue on the death penalty has taken a practical, incremental approach. In the five years since the dialogue started, China’s attitude has gone from “the Chinese people want the death penalty” to “it will eventually be abolished.” Although it has not been abolished, regulatory changes over the past five years are believed to have had an effect of reducing the number of executions. However, because these numbers are shrouded in secrecy, it is not possible to be certain.

Dialogue can take many other forms, as well: the US is credited with having a positive impact on treatment of persons with hepatitis as a result of raising the issue with the Ministry of Health. In 2008, hundreds – mainly children – were poisoned (many fatally) by milk and infant formula cut with melamine as a cost-saving measure. New Zealand is credited with breaking the scandal as a result of its officials in Beijing – on the instructions of their Prime Minister – notifying relevant ministries in Beijing of the problem, and the failure of local authorities to institute a recall. This latter case has led to new legislation relating to food safety, though – as with much of China’s legislation – enforcement remains problematic.

Most countries when working with China on human rights issues use a combination of closed-door and public declaratory diplomacy. A number of Chinese activists, while stressing the importance of demarching, also stress the importance of determining which form of diplomacy is most likely to be effective. Says one: “Reduce the room for human rights violators to abuse the comments made, and make sure you can afford to make the statement, and are not going to be forced to back down at a later point.” A recent case involving a foreign national where public protest failed because of inadequate information was former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s threat of possible economic consequences in the case of Stern Hu, a Rio Tinto executive. After he confessed to corruption charges, he was sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment in China.

Regarding protests on apparent human rights violations on dual nationals, foreign governments need to cope with the policy of China to disregard the legitimacy of the foreign citizenship claim. Public pledges by foreign leaders to extract their citizens from their Chinese difficulties need to be carefully calibrated with the private messaging to the Chinese authorities.

When a democratic head of government has concerns over the jailing in China of a national, a dual national (a status the Chinese do not recognize), or even a Chinese citizen, the manner in which the matter is raised can influence the outcome. The Chinese do recognize that the jailing of an activist as prominent as Liu Xiaobo will oblige democratic representatives to protest in public, and they generally give their side of the argument publicly. There is not apt to be a change favoring the prisoner but moral support is of some value to his ongoing cause. Practical outcomes are more likely to emerge from private demarches situated in the context of the bilateral relationship. Making it known in advance that such a matter will be raised is not in itself counter-productive. But if public statements imply that a Summit meeting with the Chinese leadership is being sought specifically to take up a case, and especially if the statement is litigious, contentious, and critical of the Chinese legal process, experience shows that the meeting is unlikely even to take place, much less help the prisoner.

There is broad agreement regarding the value of **demarching** in China, although tangible results have become less clear in recent years. Chinese authorities have responded positively to several private top-level demarches to permit the release of jailed activists and their travel to asylum abroad, but rarely respond positively to public campaigns especially if these seem directed to a foreign country’s domestic political constituency. As for everything in China, the best results emerge when they can be shown to have been in Chinese self-interest and not foreign pressure.

Demarches at high levels, or in advance of high level visits, have succeeded in securing the release of a number of high visibility individuals, including Rebiya Khadeer, Jiang Weiping, and Wei Jingsheng – to name just a few. However, this particular element of success is seen as mixed – those who do not immediately leave China may, such as in the cases of Gao Zhisheng or Hu Jia, again disappear or be arrested in very short order.

Reaching Out

Former US Ambassador Winston Lord (1985 – 1989) took advantage of a period of relative openness to meet with a wide range of academics, artists, students and others. His appearance, together with his wife Bette Bao Lord, at Beijing University’s Democracy Salon in June 1988 caused a sensation – both for the hundreds of students present, but also for the Chinese leadership. Ambassador Lord was subsequently advised that he should have obtained the government’s permission to speak to the students – and that this advice came directly from Deng Xiaoping. Ambassador Lord’s reaction was swift and vehement, stating that no-one would be expected to obtain advance clearance to meet with students at Yale or Harvard, and that he had the right to do the same at Beijing University. Nothing more was heard on the matter.

Ambassador Lord first opened his residence to Chinese visitors on his arrival in 1985. He and his wife, well-known author Bette Bao Lord, opened the Embassy's July 4th celebrations to Chinese civil society and worked on a daily basis to increase their people-to-people ties. One means used was through a series of discussion evenings. They would invite political and economic reformers to their home, together with officials, academics, or other diplomats for informal discussion on a variety of topics ranging from culture to science to more overtly political topics.

Such access to the diplomatic community and to Chinese officials was rare for the academic and activist community, particularly in 1986. It not only provided the US Embassy with valuable insights into the views of some key members of the academic and cultural community in the years between the 1986 Shanghai democracy protests and the Tiananmen Square protests, but it also provided what was then a rare opportunity for different elements of China's stratified society to meet and share views with each other, representing a **convening** function.

Many individuals doing advocacy work in the area of human rights have stressed the importance of making such contacts. They have advised that instances of diplomats using embassy or their own homes as places to meet and discuss issues – be it one-on-one, or as a networking opportunity – is invaluable. They have stressed the value of this in breaking down the antipathy and fear that many Chinese people have been taught to feel for westerners, stating that people-to-people connections are the best means of increasing understanding, and breaking down barriers, as demonstrated by the myriad of exchange programs that have been instituted in recent decades, often administered or facilitated by embassy personnel.

Convening NGOs and government officials can have valuable knock-on effects in a society where NGOs not only rarely have access to government officials, but are often mistrusted by them. One prominent independent Peoples' Deputy¹⁰ and vocal women's rights advocate advised that one of her most valuable government contacts was met during a conference convened by Canada's CIDA. This contact has since become instrumental in her gender equality and training work.

The Beijing International Women's Conference has been described as a watershed for the development of China's then-nascent NGO community. Although many aspects of the conference – such as confining the NGO element to a separate venue and requiring protest to take place within defined zones – came under fire from the international community, it provided a valuable and unprecedented opportunity for Chinese NGOs to witness protest, to establish connections with the international NGO community, and also to participate in an international human rights conference. One Canadian diplomat recalls racing to the protest site upon receiving information that some Canadians were preparing to unfurl a 'Remember Tiananmen' banner in the designated "demonstration zone." Instead of having to deal with the feared consular case, he vividly recalls watching both private citizens and local police standing by watching the Canadians demonstrate.

A three-day conference on international law in Hong Kong for a group of China's public interest lawyers was instrumental in providing them with additional tools for the protection of their clients. In particular, many of these lawyers were not aware that China is a party to the United Nations Convention Against Torture (CAT). They were given training on the provisions of the CAT, suggestions on how to use the

¹⁰ While the vast majority of Peoples' Deputies are Party members, there is a slowly growing number of independent representatives, although this is only at the lowest levels. Contrary to those Deputies who are Party members, and thus see themselves as answerable to the levels above them in order to advance their careers, independent representatives have no opportunity of career advancement within the system, and so work for the rights of their constituents.

provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights to fight both for their own, and their clients' rights. These same lawyers were also provided training on how to draw up detailed and well-reasoned defense statements. Although the courts rarely permit submission of such statements, the lawyers continue to prepare them, and are now posting them on the Internet as a means of publicizing their clients' arguments, and as a resource for others. At the time of writing, none of these lawyers have been 'invited to tea'¹¹ by local police.

An initiative of the British Embassy relating to implementation of the new Lawyers' Law would not have taken place without foreign involvement: they brought lawyers, judges, and other officials together in one room to discuss necessary steps for implementation.

Over the past 30 years, the international community has invested considerable money and effort into a broad range of collaborative efforts with both government and civil society in support of China's democratic development. Justice reform, village elections, judicial training, and accountability are all areas that have benefitted from direct government-to-government cooperation.

In addition to the large-scale, primarily government-to-government cooperation, there are countless examples where a relatively small amount of funding, capacity building, or networking opportunities provided grassroots civil society organizations with either the push to expand their operations, or the tools and encouragement necessary to continue their work.

Little Bird is a grassroots organization started by a migrant worker in Beijing. In the beginning, he didn't even know he was starting a civil society organization – he was just connecting migrant workers with each other. However, in 2003, he was given the opportunity to grow. An Embassy-administered civil society fund provided him with a small sum to set up a hotline for migrant workers. He is now partnered with local governments, has been approached to mediate labor disputes, and has started similar NGOs in two other cities. Although he continues to need some foreign funding he has also established effective partnerships with local government agencies – an occurrence that is still rare, but would have been unthinkable 10 years ago.

Until recently, all social programming in China was undertaken by the state. In recent years, NGOs have been filling in gaps where the state has been unable or unwilling to respond to increasing demand for services. Work by China's nascent civil society – particularly in the areas of environment, migrant workers, and disabilities – is providing valuable experience to the Chinese public in lobbying government, organization, and capacity building. A wide range of embassy-based programs and international NGO cooperation is providing support to these NGOs to develop their capacity and networks.

However, as one diplomat based in Beijing is quick to point out, the 'ecology of China's civil society is still in its early stages.' He cautions that until civil society is better established, the international community should not have the institutional expectations it might have of other, better developed civil societies. And until there is a critical mass of civil society organizations, they will not be able to move decisively forward with reform.

¹¹ Persons who have come to the attention of authorities, but who haven't broken any laws, are being 'invited to tea' with local police. Such invitations are often issued to activists, and were offered with particular frequency to individuals who signed Charter '08. It has now become a topic of several blogs, where invitees share their experiences.

China's civil society has been developing in fits and starts, characterized by rapid expansion and sudden restrictions. Independent NGOs lead an uncertain existence in China. Recent regulations relating to foreign funding of NGOs have led many to conclude that these new regulations are aimed at shutting down NGOs that receive foreign funding. The head of a Hong Kong based NGO (who has personally suffered the consequences of past campaigns to silence dissent) stresses the need to first look at new policies from the perspective of a legitimate government (increasing tax revenue from funds coming into the country), rather than that of a human rights violator (stifling the environment for NGOs). He believes that this is precisely where government-to-government reasonable discussion may succeed in finding a solution. If China is immediately accused of making regulatory changes in order to further control NGOs, the door to reasonable discussion is closed, regardless of whether or not this was indeed the original intent. If, through efforts to work cooperatively, it becomes evident that measures are indeed intended to restrict the environment for NGOs, that becomes the time to move to other means of expressing concern – through private, and then perhaps more public statements.

Both he and the head of another think-tank that have suffered a negative impact from these new regulations counsel creative solutions and flexibility in order to minimize the negative impact: one organization has studied the regulations and identified what must be done in order to continue receiving foreign funds. It is cumbersome, but possible. Another organization has identified a legal means to receive funds without going through the prescribed hoops – but it is an unorthodox means that many foreign governments are unwilling to follow.

Challenges

China's stature as a world power is such that fear of arousing its wrath is leading to widespread self-censorship of businesspeople, academics, and public officials outside China, as well as within the country's borders. It is a phenomenon described by eminent China scholar Perry Link as 'the anaconda in the chandelier.' It is never clear where the boundaries between allowed and illegal, or innocuous and offensive comment may be, but the anaconda remains coiled in the chandelier above your head, waiting to descend if that invisible line is crossed. So, rather than risk inciting the anaconda's wrath, it tends to be the safe road that is taken.

Beijing diplomats expressed a concern that groups with the loudest voices often drive priorities from capitals, possibly sending an inconsistent message to Beijing. The most obvious example was with respect to support for the situation of ethnic Tibetans or Uighurs – countries with a large or vocal ethnic Tibetan population may advocate the interests of Tibetans – or vice versa.

Defending Democrats

During the protests on Tiananmen Square in April, May and June 1989, representatives of the international diplomatic community could often be seen on Tiananmen Square, speaking with demonstrators, and subsequently reporting back to capitals. Frequent peaceful demonstrations in Beijing also provide opportunities to both speak with petitioners, and to provide these petitioners with access – albeit fleeting – to a foreign diplomat. One diplomat recalls being mobbed by petitioners who had travelled to Beijing from the countryside, and were marching toward the United Nations offices. Thrusting copies of their petitions and supporting documents at her, they begged that their plight be made known to foreign governments. In this case, the diplomat was physically restrained by undercover police while the papers were wrenched from her grasp. While this particular incident may not have yielded concrete results, it is indicative of both a concern on the part of the authorities that details of internal conflict not be made known, as well as the desperation of citizens to have their stories heard.

More recently, the diplomatic community has provided valuable support to democracy activists through their visible and high-level presence at the sentencing hearing of democracy activist Liu Xiaobo on Christmas Day 2009. Several members of the activist community have commented on the value of this **demonstration** of international support to the supporters of Liu – whether they were at the courthouse, under house arrest, or observing events from a distance – stating that it has given many others the courage to protest. Indeed, the signatures of Charter '08 increased steadily following Liu's sentencing, and many prominent authors and academics who had previously used pseudonyms are now "coming into the open" with their calls for change.

While not a diplomatic act, the nomination of Liu Xiaobo and other Chinese human rights defenders for the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize is seen as a valuable recognition of what has been described as the 'lonely struggle' of the activist.

In 2002, after the AIDS activist organization *Aizhixing* drew attention to China's tainted blood banks, Wan Yanhai was arrested on suspicion of "leaking state secrets" for publishing online a government report documenting the transfusion-borne spread of AIDS. Wan, who was jailed for a month, but never formally charged, credited his release to the political pressure generated by an international media campaign. In 2010, Wan – citing increasing official harassment, and fears of imminent arrest, moved to the US. He has, however, expressed the hope that he will be permitted to safely return to China in the future.

The case of Fang Lizhi is perhaps one of the best-known examples of a foreign embassy providing **protection** in China. Fang, an astrophysicist, had become well known as a democracy activist as early as 1956, during the 100 Flowers Movement. He was purged as a result of his writings at that time, but again rose to prominence in activist circles in 1985, gaining even greater prominence in the months leading up to June 4, 1989. On June 5, Fang and his wife sought refuge at the US Embassy in Beijing, where they remained for over a year before being sent by military transport to England. Fang had had frequent interaction with the previous American Ambassador and his wife, and had visited their residence on several previous occasions.

Less dramatic, but also effective, is the work of advocating for prisoners through letters and – where possible – prison visits. It has been established through information received from family members, and interviews with prisoners, that communication from embassies or foreign governments regarding persons in prison – particularly "Reeducation through Labor" (RTL) facilities – can have a valuable **protective** result. Almost always resulting in better treatment of the prisoner, it has been – in some cases – the difference between life and death. This protection can be particularly effective in the case of lesser-known prisoners who might not have other advocates from outside China.

Conversely, however, extremely harsh sentences in cases such as those of Zhao Yan or Chen Guangcheng – where the international community had been actively demarching - led to concerns at the time of a possible backlash against such actions. However, activists are quick to stress the importance of continuing demarches, together with continued efforts to attend trials and sentencing. Although efforts to do so, in an environment where even the lawyer and family of the accused are often not permitted to attend the trial, have been consistently unsuccessful, the moral support to the activist community of such efforts is critical.

Autonomy/Empowerment at Post

Democratic development is an incremental process, and because it involves so many elements, determining benchmarks – or evaluating progress – can be problematic. Diplomats in Beijing report the temptation of home authorities to link benchmark progress to their own electoral calendars, a shallow

impulse that can lead to a lack of interest in projects that may not include an imminent ‘deliverable.’ Although it can be possible to measure results in an anecdotal way, it is not always possible to pinpoint in a measurable manner concrete results of projects. It is therefore necessary to maintain a long-term view.

In order to meet with academics or think-tanks in their offices, it is necessary to go through a sometimes cumbersome process, and obtain the concurrence of the host institution. However, in cases where diplomats have already developed connections with their interlocutor, it is possible to meet outside the office environment, and engage in a more open discussion, skirting the official process.

Restrictions on civil society remain prevalent, but consequences of defying such restrictions can be mixed. Although often told not to meet with diplomats, journalists, or foreign officials, many Chinese defy such instructions, with little or no consequence. In fact, such meetings – especially at high levels – are believed to provide some degree of protection, but can also lead to problems. For example, one week after the Swedish Foreign Minister met with a number of academics, one of them was moved to Xinjiang. However, it cannot be proven there was linkage.

CONCLUSION

China’s democratic transition has commenced, but the form that this democracy will take in the end remains uncertain, even to its leadership and its people.

Future updates of this case study, particularly following the change in leadership in 2012/13, could be of even greater interest than this one. This study can really only provide a starting-point on the question of China’s democratic development. Changes are taking place at such a pace as to be impossible to track on a comprehensive level. Indeed, in the months since commencement of this project there have been a number of significant events that have occurred, and which are documented in the current version.

The Internet, with almost 400 million users, is playing a critical role in this transition. Text messaging, tweets, and other uses of new technologies are also critical tools for dissemination of information and bringing people together. Demands for rights enforcement and simmering discontent in rural areas are also pushing the need for reform and to establish a dialogue on the nature of modern economies, societies and polities.

China’s leadership is not monolithic. Struggling with China’s myriad challenges, it is also struggling with internal conflict with respect to how to best address these challenges in order to maintain – or resuscitate – its legitimacy.

China’s leadership is also very pragmatic. There are indeed hardliners within the leadership, but there are also reformers who need ammunition to push forward with reform. Where a business case can be made, there will be opportunities to work toward pragmatic reforms. A large-scale leadership change is coming in 2012. Many of the new leaders are still in the provinces, or ministerial level jobs. By building relationships now – when diplomats have better access to them – it will be possible to enhance opportunities for cooperation at the most senior level in the future.

In an increasingly globalized world, China’s continued stability is critical to international stability, but – contrary to the belief of some of its leadership – its political development is not a threat to its stability. Indeed, more and more Chinese scholars are pointing to the need for change in order to preserve stability. And, contrary to the past, when scholars were regularly purged for advocating change, there is now an uneasy truce between the leadership and academics, with the leadership increasingly seeking the counsel

of think-tanks and universities. But the memory of past purges is still raw, and even suggesting a move to a multi-party system remains potentially dangerous.

The pace and direction of China's development – including democratic development - will be determined by its people. China's leadership has been borrowing from a variety of international models, while steadfastly rejecting any suggestion of 'Western-style' democracy. Calls are increasing from within China for enforcement of its own laws, including its Constitution, as a means of moving forward with political change. The international community has a wealth of experience to share with China's ever-pragmatic leadership, and the leadership at all levels is willing to learn from the international community – on its own terms. Just one generation ago, the entire country was closed. Now, some doors are open, while others remain resolutely closed. The role of diplomats is to use the open doors in hopeful expectation that Chinese citizens will open others in their own interest.

“I want to emphasize that if China cannot have democracy and constitutionalism, this will be a problem not just for the Chinese themselves, but the entire world. People outside China have to understand that what happens in China and the political situation here directly impacts the situation elsewhere. I want to thank the American government and all Western people who have been concerned, and continue to show their concern, because they are our only hope. The support of the foreign media, governments and people has given us confidence and courage and made it easier for us to bear the solitude of our activism. There is one thing that I've never doubted, and that's that China will eventually have democracy and constitutionalism. Our only concern is when they will arrive.”

- Gao Zhisheng,¹² in an interview to *South China Morning Post*¹³

N.B. On October 7, 2010, the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese democracy activist and dissident Liu Xiaobo, The full statement from the Nobel Committee may be read [here](#).

¹² In 2001, Gao Zhisheng was recognized by China's Ministry of Justice as one of the 10 best lawyers in the country. In 2006, after taking on a number of controversial cases relating to human rights issues, he was convicted of “inciting subversion of state power,” sentenced to three years' imprisonment with a five year suspension, and one year deprivation of political rights. His license to practice law was also revoked. The suspension of his sentence meant that Gao was not imprisoned. He was politically outspoken, and as a result was taken from his home in 2007 and detained for two months, during which time he was tortured. He was again taken from his home in 2009, briefly reappeared in March 2010, and then disappeared again one month later.

¹³ South China Morning Post., 15 June 2010 “Lawyer Gao Zhisheng Suffers Beijing's Mafia Justice” by Paul Mooney

South Africa: “The Long Road to Freedom”

INTRODUCTION

The struggle for democracy in South Africa penetrated global consciousness as no other, engaging generations of international humanists, persons of conscience, and democratic governments the world over. The uniquely pernicious racial assertions of apartheid conveyed an almost universal sense of offense. Because of its inherent immorality and what Nelson Mandela described as “the ruthlessness of the state in protecting it,” the South African apartheid regime was singular in the extent to which it was regarded as illegitimate.

But the struggle to overturn it was borne by South Africans themselves.

Ending apartheid peacefully and establishing democracy in a unitary state would be only part of their battle. The challenges of governance and development for a majority whose skills levels had been deliberately suppressed were formidable.

Africans knew this. Mandela has written that the Freedom Charter of 1955, setting out the requirements of a free and democratic country, anticipated that “changes envisioned would not be achieved without radically altering the economic and political structure of South Africa..”

That the non-white majority acceded to power 40 years later in a country with established institutions was not in itself an advantage. As Nelson Mandela wrote, “Working as a lawyer in South Africa meant operating under a debased system of justice, a code of law that did not enshrine equality, but its opposite.”

A successful revolution occurred. But it is widely judged to have been a “negotiated revolution,” essentially nonviolent.

The victory belonged to the people who had been protesting the apartheid laws since the Defiance Campaign of 1952. During the 1970s, a wide array of more or less organized groups and initiatives emerged in support of the construction of a popular civil society and in opposition to the apartheid state. By 1983, these groups had become fairly coherently allied in the United Democratic Front (UDF), a working coalition of trade unions, student and youth groups, women’s groups, cultural organizations, and professionals, whose members, taken as a body, acquired increasing credibility and legitimacy as the civil alternative to the apartheid regime.

During those hard years, there had been many historic junctions on the “long road to freedom..” Several of these are associated with cruel violence, such as the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, or the Soweto uprising in 1976.

Faced with the regime’s ruthlessness, the ANC had decided in 1962 to desert 50 years’ belief in non-violence to accept the option of organized violence. But as Allister Sparks later wrote, Mandela “never had any illusions it could win a military victory.”

He was firmly “in the negotiation camp.” In eventual negotiations, beginning in the late 1980s, the government side sought to oblige the ANC to renounce having opted for organized violence. The ANC committed to a future peaceful process but would not renounce its history.

In a sense this became the pattern for the negotiated outcome. The National Peace Accord of 1991 aimed at a vast conflict resolution. With memories inhabited by an almost unendurable history, it was necessary to exorcize the past. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission would provide amnesty for deeds

committed under apartheid in exchange for truth about them. This negotiated solution did not propose that apartheid's victims forget the past, but did enable all South Africans to go forward according to a formula in which blacks had to give up the pursuit of justice for crimes against them, and whites had to give up their monopoly on power.

Violence between black Africans, and notably Inkatha and the ANC, subsided with difficulty, taking the lives of as many as 25,000 in the 1990s, and criminal violence continues in South Africa to this day at unacceptable levels. But the "South African bloodbath" so widely feared and predicted was held at bay, at least as far as violence between whites and blacks was concerned.

The 1994 elections produced majority rule in a unitary state, but without the domination of the white minority by the majority in any punitive sense.

The successfully negotiated peaceful transfer of power was a mighty outcome to the struggle of South Africans over more than 50 years.

But looking back at the Wembley Stadium concert in celebration of Nelson Mandela and his people's struggle in April 1990, when he thanked the world's anti-apartheid forces for the "support and solidarity they had shown the oppressed people of South Africa," Susan Collin Marks reflected on "how easy it had been to cheer Mandela and how hard it would be to remake the nation."

That struggle endures. But South Africa's gifts to the world, through its history of a successfully negotiated revolution to effect a multiracial and pluralistic democratic society, also endure, as a model and a hope for many.

THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Once South African governments adopted institutionalized apartheid in the years following the Second World War, it was obvious that there would be a collision with the rest of a changing world.

From the time Ghana received its independence in 1957, the white regime in South Africa would find itself increasingly isolated by the "winds of change" sweeping over the continent, with reinforcement only from Rhodesia and the still-enduring Portuguese colonies.

Foreign support for the anti-apartheid struggle came from civil society -- trade unions, church organizations, parliaments, and a multitude of nongovernmental organizations -- in many democracies, and, it should be acknowledged, support came from socialist countries allied with the Soviet Union as well. Outside South Africa, universities, research centers, nongovernmental organizations and supportive citizens helped to sustain and train South African peace activists in exile, until they could return to participate freely in the process of democratic change.

International Diplomatic Activity

Diplomatic pressure over decades may have had only an uneven effect on the insulated apartheid regime's repressive laws but it undoubtedly helped to support the credibility of the ANC as an indispensable ingredient of any South African solution by the time ANC leader Oliver Tambo met with US Secretary of State Shultz in 1987.

The international diplomatic community began to pronounce on the South African situation as early as 1960, when the United Nations Security Council condemned the killing of 69 demonstrators at Sharpeville. South African issues were always on United Nations agendas thereafter.

That same year African solidarity was extended to the ANC when Nelson Mandela visited and won the support of the great African figures of that time, including Haile Selassie, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Habib Bourguiba, Ahmed Ben Bella, Sékou Touré, and Léopold Sédar Senghor.

Such core African support was instrumental in persuading the Commonwealth of Nations to take activist positions against the apartheid regime, whose exit as a member of the Commonwealth had been steered shortly after the whites voted to declare South Africa a republic in the 1950s. By the 1985 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Nassau, the members of the Commonwealth were able to adopt a program of sanctions against South Africa, despite long-standing reservations on the part of Prime Minister Thatcher of the UK.

The Appeal for Sanctions and Boycotts

The ANC urged governments to ally together to introduce sanctions against South Africa whose purpose was to induce behavior change by imposing on the apartheid regime the psychological and economic costs of isolation. International sports and cultural groups halted South African tours and excluded South African teams. Universities disinvested South African holdings from portfolios for moral reasons, while multinational corporations re-located from South Africa for reasons of corporate strategy. Financial institutions re-considered lending practices to the South African state and its institutions. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches suspended the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa.

The imposition of sanctions was not without controversy. Apart from the impact on the economic interests of investors in South Africa, there was concern that sanctions would primarily hurt the economic livelihood of the black and colored population, a warning endorsed by such a democratic activist as South African opposition Member of Parliament Helen Suzman. But the fact that targeted sanctions had the full support of the ANC, which believed they were essential to the struggle, was judged to be decisive.

The South African state authorities estimated that the economic sanctions were “hurting but survivable.” Perhaps, taken alone, they were, though the growing isolation of South African whites from the rest of the world added a psychological toll which did erode their willingness to support the extremist state authorities to the bitter end. That there would be a certain end was overwhelmingly due to the brave perseverance of non-white South Africans and their allies among the white population who over generations worked to obtain the justice of a democratic outcome.

International Popular Opinion and Support

Public opinion around the world grew to be massively supportive, stimulated in part by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1960 to Albert Luthuli who led the ANC at the time it was first “banned.” In 1984, Archbishop Tutu who was a major force in forming the UDF won the Nobel Peace Prize again in the name of the South African struggle for justice.

During the intervening years, tens of thousands ANC, PAC, and other democracy activists had been banned and imprisoned but would not be abandoned by the world’s attention. Night-long church vigils and “Free Mandela” events were frequent, often directed at fund-raising for the ANC, and for NGOs operating in South Africa. Funding for South African democracy activists and NGOs had begun as early as the 1960s when Danish, Norwegian and Swedish trade unions and church groups launched the first programs in support of those involved in the struggle. Before long, they were joined by foundations and governments from many democracies in funding NGOs and reformers in South Africa, often with an emphasis on preparing for governance.

External funding was important to the ability of political organizations to finance the sorts of identity-

cementing activities such as newspapers and events on which the struggle depended to sustain popular support over successive generations.

By 1983, this popular support pulled together under the loose grouping of the UDF, collecting under one roof trade unions, church and youth groups, cultural organizations, and a variety of locally-based civic bodies. The UDF was able in the circumstances when the ANC had been banned to become the main instrument for organizing popular protests and boycotts meant to counter the increasingly hard-line series of repressive laws and crackdowns associated with frequent states of emergency suspending rights and leading to mass arrests.

Change at Last

The position of the apartheid regime gradually unraveled as any remaining support from the international environment deteriorated. Zimbabwe had emerged in place of the racist allied regime of Rhodesia, and along with other front-line states, the newly independent Angola and Mozambique, and Botswana became locales for training camps for the ANC, and a platform for cross-border raids. The retaliatory effectiveness of the South African Defense Forces was increasingly handicapped by re-equipment difficulties because of sanctions, and the conflict's costs began to drain South Africa's Treasury and the population's support.

Once glasnost had transformed the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev, it became much more difficult for the South African regime to continue to convince the white public the ANC was part of a communist conspiracy to take over South Africa, which the authorities had been alleging since the Rivonia trials of ANC leaders in the early 1960s.

Something had to give, and by the mid-1980s contacts encouraged by outside mediators were taking place in Mells Park in the UK. With funding from the Friedrich Neumann Foundation, the Institute for a Democratic South Africa organized discussions in 1987 in Dakar between the ANC under Thabo Mbeki and groups of white South Africans convinced of the need of a negotiated settlement, including the once hard-line Broederbond.

Negotiating Democracy

By 1989, the writing on the wall was clear for most to see. New South African government leadership under F.W. De Klerk accelerated the process and South Africa entered the phase of negotiation and preparation of majority rule.

The world's democracies played a significant role in helping to prepare ANC and other South Africans for positions of governance, through conferences, courses, and other forms of training for jurists through the Aspen Institute, economists via the Macro-Economic Research Group set up after Nelson Mandela visited Canada shortly after his release in 1990, and journalists via Harvard's Nieman fellowships. A major program undertaken at Australian initiative with the help of public broadcasters of Commonwealth countries was the cultural and organizational transformation of the propagandistic South African Broadcasting Corporation.

Foreign experts also converged on South Africa to provide support for the preparation and observation of the democratic elections which would bring majority rule. As conflict mediator Susan Collin Marks has observed, they and other committed international helpers "gave an increased sense of security" to democracy activists "confirming the eyes of the world were on their plight." They also "gave some real security as the police and army behaved with restraint in their presence."

In the end, after a successful election and peaceful handover of power, it was the turn of South Africa to show the world what a negotiated revolution looked like, in the South African form of a multi-ethnic, multiracial, and multicultural society which could serve as a partial model for the bridging challenges faced in the Balkans, the Middle East, or elsewhere in Africa.

DIPLOMATIC RESOURCES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THEIR APPLICATIONS IN SUPPORT OF DEMOCRACY

Assets

The diplomatic community resident in South Africa was not large, in part because the newly independent African countries did not have relations with the apartheid regime. Of the democratic countries present, those working informally and pro-actively together to support democratic activists and human rights defenders were relatively few in the 1960s and 70s but their numbers increased in the 1980s and were especially reinforced in the later 1980s when the United States became decisively committed to a democratic solution for South Africa.

South African authorities fairly regularly complained about diplomats' activities and Foreign Minister Pik Botha made a widely publicized speech in 1987 warning diplomats "not to meddle" in what he judged were South African internal affairs, and threatening curbs on diplomats' movements. He complained specifically about foreign funding (see above) for a trip by South African anti-apartheid activists to meet ANC personnel in Dakar.

The authorities tried to intimidate diplomats, sometimes with rather brutal methods. The Counselor of the US Embassy, Robert Frasure (later killed on duty in Bosnia) tracked cross-border military movements of the South African Defense Force. Ex-UK Ambassador Renwick recalls that the SADF retaliated by "terrorizing his wife and children during his absences from home, to such an extent Frasure had to be withdrawn."

More classically, a senior Canadian was shown in the Foreign Ministry photos taken of him at rallies and antiapartheid events not just observing, but actively participating including joining in praying and marching. He was threatened with expulsion but countered that the only result would be to reduce the numbers at the South African Embassy in Ottawa, and to damage South Africa's image abroad.

The diplomat, John Schram, was able to do this effectively because it was clear the Embassy enjoyed the great asset of complete backing from his Minister and Government at home. He was also able to play to the interest South African authorities had in diminishing if possible the international shunning which was solidifying around the world.

The fact that internationally, the world community was organizing its leverage against the apartheid regime was a helpful frame of reference for diplomats on the ground in reinforcing the legitimacy of their activity. The declarations of Commonwealth Heads of Government Conferences, Summits of the European Community, the G-7, or resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, General Assembly, and its subsidiary bodies helped to cohere a common sense of purpose among affected diplomats in South Africa.

They represented often countries whose own histories had been propelled by democracy activists to which ANC members and others looked to for encouragement and examples: Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and later Lech Walesa, and democracy activists in the Philippines, were inspirations for the struggle, as were anti-colonialist leaders from Africa and leftist liberationists from Latin America.

Unquestionably, the funds which embassies had at their disposal for small, fast-disbursing local grants, were important assets, especially as many of the beneficiaries had no funds of their own.

APPLICATIONS

The Golden Rules

Though there was world-wide dismay over the repression of the struggle for democracy in South Africa, it was most important to **respect** that it was indeed a struggle conducted often at personal risk by South Africans on behalf of their country's future, however universal the themes. As Ambassador Renwick phrased it, "The most that any Embassy could do was to try to help as a **facilitator** – and then let South Africans get on with a process in which too much foreign involvement was positively undesirable."

Of course, some embassies leant considerably farther forward than others in such facilitation, no doubt reflecting the clear support they had at home, but it was always a problem for local diplomats when outside trainers in negotiation or mediation skills lost sight of why they were there to help. As Susan Collin Marks wrote, "Suspicion grew that many (foreign trainers) were driven by personal agendas, so that they were in it for what they could get out of it, not for what they could give... training in South Africa, a conflict hot spot, gave credibility that enhanced their image elsewhere. Many of them would come into the country, give the training, and leave." It was up to embassies to try to steer outside assistance to support continuity, but in cooperation with and in deference to the international NGO community which was closer to the ground and to the grief of the struggle.

Sharing among embassies was fundamental, especially the most like-minded such as the Australian, Dutch, Canadian and Swedish who met frequently, in part to ensure their respective funding was not at cross-purposes, and that funds were distributed across a variety of needy organizations. Sharing of tasks also helped to ensure that there was usually present at trials, funerals, and demonstrations an array of representatives, effectively communicating the opprobrium of the wider world for the apartheid doctrine and regime, and encouragement for the non-violent struggle for justice.

Getting to the Truth

Most democratic embassies ensured that **reporting** of the situation was candid and precise, and benefited from the contacts of what one Ambassador called his "township attaches." The South African situation had achieved by 1985 a profile which meant that reporting from embassies was avidly followed in capitals.

Of course, the situation was also covered by the foreign press, whose investigative reporting annoyed the authorities who, in a two-year period in the 1980s, expelled 12 correspondents from democratic countries' news outlets, including the New York Times, the BBC, ITN, and CBS. This placed a greater onus on diplomats to play an **informing** role with their own home country news media to ensure the real story was getting out, as well as issuing information bulletins within South Africa, particularly to counter government-inspired slander. Former US ambassador Princeton Lyman described how a predecessor, Edward Perkins, had "utilized the press to get his message across to the white population that the government of South Africa would never again have the opportunity to deal with people of the quality of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Thabo Mbeki."

A vital embassy service was support for independent media. A number of embassies such as Canada had a specific fund ("the anti-censorship fund") to help finance independent media such as the Daily Mail, including subsidizing subscriptions and advertising, as well as editorial and operating expenditures.

The South African Broadcasting Corporation had long served as a propaganda arm of the apartheid regime by the time that the negotiation of a constitution got underway in 1992. (The SABC helped over the years to account for such polling results as a 1982 poll which revealed that 80% of whites believed that communism was at the root of a struggle waged against the interests of a basically contented black population). Yet, the SABC radio audience numbered at least 15 million and the transformation of the corporation into an objective news and information service became identified as a top priority by embassies, achieved with the help of public broadcasting services from Australia, Britain and Canada. Upgrading the skills of South African journalists also became a priority through the work of the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism founded by Allister Sparks, and the creation of many exchanges and fellowships.

Working with the Government

There was little sincere opportunity for working with the South African government on human rights issues prior to 1989, though some countries professed support for ‘constructive dialogue,’ and it could be argued that it did help to bring about a negotiated independence for Namibia. Embassies played an **advising** role in steering democracies to the means for helping a democratizing South Africa after 1989 to strengthen its capacities in the area of judicial training, constitutional advice, economic policy preparation, particularly via the Macro-Economic Research Group and also in supporting assistance to South Africa in disabling its emerging capability for nuclear weapons.

A particular contribution was made by Chile which was able to advise the new South Africa on the Chilean experience in creating a Truth and Reconciliation Commission once democracy had been restored.

Several ambassadors and missions sustained **dialogues** with South African authorities. The Ambassadors of the UK and the US believed their governments’ reticence about sanctions served as carrots in moderating behavior. Ambassadors of the major democracies also claimed an “invisible mediation” role with the South African government once internal negotiations began, privately counseling the authorities as to where the “red lines” were for the international community’s expectations.

But the most effective **demarches** to the South African authorities were often those which ensured that they knew their activities were being closely scrutinized internationally, especially in the anticipation of responses to demonstration and popular protest. Demarches were frequently made on behalf of democracy activists charged under the state with political and other crimes, including conveying the pleas for clemency for the lives of Nelson Mandela and fellow defendants in the “Rivonia” trials in 1964, by the leaders of the USSR and the United States, among others.

Reaching Out

Connecting to civil society in South Africa and assisting its connections to NGOs and supportive institutions abroad was a critical ongoing responsibility of diplomats. Scanning for opportunities to connect African jurists to such as the Aspen seminars, or journalists to such as the Nieman fellowships, benefited from the close contacts democratic embassies maintained with lawyers’ associations, and journalists. The Canadian Government had exceptionally created an autonomous embassy-administered fund called the “Dialogue Fund” meant to promote connections with anti-apartheid groups of all sorts inside South Africa, and funded a variety of legal and independent media defense organizations in particular.

Such connections were put to use by embassies and diplomats to **convene** activists and reformers together under a safe roof and then activists and opponents together. Jurist Richard Goldstone recalled his first

meeting with representatives of the ANC at a critical turning point for South Africa when he had been appointed Chairperson of the Commission on Public Violence and Intimidation occurred at the Canadian Embassy. Black and colored entrepreneurs and economists were introduced to visiting business people around embassy tables. Connections were also made by embassy personnel to South African security organizations.

Facilitating contacts was an essential service of democratic embassies. But helping with communications within South Africa and to the outside was another way they could help, as certain diplomats noted of their experience.

Targeted connections enabled embassies to pinpoint **financing** assistance, such as USAID funds which paid for the defense costs of democracy activists and human rights defenders placed on trial. The value to South African NGOs of even small but instant embassy grants able to finance the costs of publicity for demonstrations and such identity-reinforcing tools as newsletters, t-shirts, and the like, was very high.

Diplomats **showcased** applicable models of social and economic policy from home, and embassy assistance programs tried to create public events which enabled democracy activists and representatives of civil society to participate as visible counterparts. Some aspects of governance from democracies had to be re-considered in light of internal debate in South Africa, such as federal solutions, and multiculturalism, both of which were seen as ways in which the ascent to democratic power by the black majority would be diluted.

Showcasing could also occur in an inverse direction. As long ago as 1975, Australian diplomat Diane Johnstone invited black artist Michael Muapola to her apartment to enable him to show his drawings to her guests and help publicize and validate the strength of local culture. Within days, vengeful forces of apartheid had her evicted from her apartment which had first been ransacked. Mr. Muapola was harassed by authorities for years. But the episode was widely appreciated by the black population.

Defending Democrats

Demonstrating such solidarity with the struggle was at the core of the new public diplomacy for democratic Embassies, engaging embassies in field visits and visits to the offices of human rights defenders. John Schram recounts, “the importance of putting across the message to those in the struggle that they had essential international support.” As US Ambassador Lyman wrote of his predecessor Edward Perkins, the first African American ambassador to South Africa, “he stood out in the crowd attending the all too frequent funerals of activists slain during the state of emergency in the late 1980s.” He was not, of course, alone. Describing the funeral for 17 activists killed in 1986, Alan Cowell of the New York Times noted several “diplomats from the US, Britain, Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, West Germany, and France.”

It had its honorable risks. After PW Botha announced the banning of the UDF in 1998, a peaceful protest march on Parliament was broken up violently by riot police who arrested among many, many Africans, Bishop Tutu, Allan Boesak, a BBC crew, and the wife of Canadian Ambassador Ron McLean.

Verifying trials of anti-apartheid activists had been a duty of democratic embassies from the time that Nelson Mandela observed that his 1963 “Rivonia” trial was attended by “dozens of representatives of foreign governments.” Countless trials were witnessed, both as a caution to the authorities and as a form of **protection** to the defendants. Embassies made numerous demands of the government for independent investigations of the use of force against anti-apartheid protestors.

“Anti-apartheid organization members sometimes asked representatives to be present at police sites to

witness and/or prevent violence.” Protecting democrats from the ruthless power of the state was sadly not possible for the thousands who were abused, but diplomats were able in demonstrations and protests to “put themselves between the police and the protestors, and may have helped to mitigate some of the violence and prevent violence against demonstrators.”

CONCLUSION

The words of President Mandela at his inauguration on 10 May, 1994 remain an ideal for all:

“We enter into a covenant that we shall build a society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity.”

That diplomats were able to participate in support for the South Africans’ struggle for democracy is a record and precedent of great merit for their profession. The South African struggle continues today, for development, security, and opportunity, and the need of South Africans for the support of democratic friends is undiminished.

From Independence to Real Democracy – Ukraine’s Orange Revolution

INTRODUCTION

Advocacy for fundamental human and civic rights, as articulated in the Helsinki Final Act, increased considerably in the 1980s in the USSR. Residents of the then-Soviet republic of Ukraine were especially and deeply affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986 and the subsequent cover-up. The loosening of strictures on fundamental human freedoms promoted under glasnost allowed these concerns to be articulated, and a growing crop of democratic activists came to the fore. The erstwhile communist leadership of Ukraine declared its independence in 1991, realized following the final dissolution of the USSR in late December of that year. Ukraine was recognized as a new “emerging democracy,” though the simultaneous transition from a totalitarian model to a newly independent democracy would be a massive challenge. Ukraine’s new leadership, new political parties, and civil society all requested assistance in their democratic and market transformations, and this help was forthcoming from early on from the democratic world. Ukraine also proved a willing partner in the efforts to ensure nuclear stability by giving up its nuclear weapons by 1994.

Also in 1994, Ukraine held its first democratic presidential elections, won by eastern rocket scientist and industrial manager Leonid Kuchma after a hard fought campaign against incumbent – and former communist-era boss – Leonid Kravchuk. Throughout this period, Ukraine continued to receive external support for reform processes, including backing for all manner of civic engagement in public life. It also included technical support for and observation of democratic elections, consistent with Ukraine’s obligations as a member of the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE – the post-Cold War institutional product of the Helsinki Final Act) and the Council of Europe to improve, ensure, and promote public confidence in the process.

Yet the connection between political and economic power, with the dominance of competing regional industrial “clans” became more apparent, with attendant allegations of senior corruption. Ukraine’s star began to fall with much of the democratic world, a trend accelerated by the murder of Georgiy Gongadze, a prominent journalist for the independent internet publication *Ukrainska Pravda*, who had been investigating official corruption. Soon thereafter, opposition leaders released recordings they said implicated Kuchma and others in his inner circle in the murder, serving to galvanize a large segment of public opinion against the government.

The 2002 parliamentary elections gave the opposition unprecedented representation. There was relative transparency due to civic efforts to track the vote through exit polls, and the results greatly boosted the democratic opposition. The polarization of the political landscape intensified, with presidential proxy attempts to amend the constitution and flawed by-elections in the western district of Carpathia in April 2004.

The still-unsolved dioxin poisoning of opposition presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko deepened the polarization of Ukrainian politics. The 2004 presidential election campaign, according to international observers of the OSCE, exhibited numerous instances of bias and abuse by the authorities. A second round characterized by blatant and systemic fraud galvanized public protest. Demonstrations began on election night in Kyiv and grew exponentially, drawing large numbers unforeseen by the Ukrainian activists who had anticipated fraud and planned the protests. These demonstrations soon snowballed into the Orange Revolution.

The democratic world recognized the importance of helping Ukrainians ensure that the 2004 presidential elections were free and fair. In full view of the Ukrainian authorities, diplomats assisted Ukrainian citizens in monitoring and upholding the democratic process. The cooperation among embassies in this effort was unprecedented. Ukraine's case involves the full array of assets that democratic diplomats have at their disposal, as well as the numerous ways that these can be applied to support civil society and the democratic process.

RESOURCES AND ASSETS OF DIPLOMATS IN UKRAINE, 2004

The G-7 democracies began close cooperation to support Ukrainian civil society and the electoral process in 2001, prior to the 2002 parliamentary elections. In 2003, this was formalized in a G-7 EU-Canadian American- Japanese process through their ambassadors in Kyiv, focused on information-sharing and coordination in support of free and fair elections, and in alerting home authorities to trends and developments.

These diplomats had considerable **influence** in Ukraine, due to their countries' support for Ukrainian statehood and state-building, reinforced by the expressed desire of most of the Ukrainian political spectrum – including the Kuchma administration – to shift Ukraine's orientation toward the West, to the EU and NATO, and even eventually to apply for membership status, all of which elevated the importance of the democracy and governance standards.

Diplomats' ability to marshal **funds** proved an essential asset in their effort to support a transparent and fair electoral process. This included any post funds they could disburse to Ukrainian civil society actors, and also their role in advocating programming by international NGOs and donors, adapted to the flexibility required to operate in a fast-changing environment.

Democratic embassies expressed **solidarity** by working together and supporting projects financially and operationally that connected democratic activists from countries that had recent civil society-driven democratic breakthroughs, including Slovakia, Serbia, and Georgia, as well as an effort to bring election observers from other countries in transition.

Finally, diplomats had a strong platform of **legitimacy** to draw upon in Ukraine, given the country's obligations to observe clear human rights and democratic standards as a member of the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The OSCE's Copenhagen Criteria provided a regular talking point for democratic diplomats in Ukraine before and during the Orange Revolution. In conjunction with subsequent OSCE statements that threats to stability were not just internal affairs, these provided western Ambassadors a ready riposte to Ukrainian MFA complaints of interference.

WAYS THESE ASSETS WERE APPLIED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN UKRAINE

The above Assets were creatively and effectively applied in all the methods categorized in the preceding Toolbox chapter. Examples of each will be discussed in turn, some of which involve two or even more ways of deploying these Assets.

The Golden Rules

Listening, Respecting, and Understanding: Diplomats recognized the differing roles and capabilities of partners in the effort to ensure the fairness and transparency of the 2004 election, and, over time, seemed to develop a process that allowed each to play to its institutional strength. The mechanisms developed in the working-group process (see sharing below) actually seemed to be designed around these realities.

According to a seasoned civil society advocate and former funder, “People need to work together while maintaining their autonomy.” One Ambassador told a civil society roundtable when it was launched in early 2004, “You do what you intend to do. Let me know if you come under pressure – I’ll help.”

In disbursement of assistance, the relatively small sums managed at post allowed embassies to dispense with procedures that might impede quick reaction. Rather than simply finance trainings and workshops, diplomats made, facilitated or encouraged grants that enabled civic activists to act within their remit. This is not necessarily common.

Sharing: As mentioned above, efforts to share information and coordinate policy approaches on Ukrainian democratic development began in 2001 among G-7 members. The Italian and then Dutch EU presidencies took an energetic role in bringing all the EU members into the process. The monthly meetings were chaired by Canadian Ambassador Andrew Robinson, with the US and EU as co-chairs. Japan remained engaged (and also had observer status at the OSCE). Different members came to the process emphasizing different goals for the group: the Americans stressed more coordination while Canadians and others were more interested in information exchange. According to Ambassador Robinson, these approaches complemented each other.

Truth in Communications

Reporting: Democratic embassies had established relationships with relevant political actors, media, and civil society organizations, as well as among themselves. This broad proactive information collection allowed them to inform and help direct their countries’ policies. Canada’s diplomats in Kyiv at the time felt that they were able to wield significant influence because of their reporting. Information sources later included election observers in the field, especially the European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO) long-term observers, who remained in the field during the revolution, when it was unclear whether there would be a continuation to the electoral process.

Informing: In this area, diplomats coordinated their activity to ensure that independent media, such as internet daily *Ukrainska Pravda* received sufficient funding to continue its important work of providing uncensored news, including from embassies’ own post funds. The U.S. embassy made one such grant to editor Yulia Mostova to finance *Dzerkalo Tyzhnia* (“weekly mirror”), an internet publication with serious analytical and investigative pieces, many of which were (and remain) translated into English for an international audience. USAID and the Open Media Fund also supported media monitoring of television content, the prime news source for most Ukrainians. The OSCE-ODIHR Election Observation Mission publicized its own independent media analysis, showing the strong slant on almost all television networks for the incumbent Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych and against the opposition candidate Yushchenko, both in quantitative (relative air time) and qualitative (tone) terms.

Working with the Government

Advising: From the advent of Ukrainian independence and democracy, diplomats were engaged in advising both Ukrainian government institutions and civil society actors in democratic governance and economic reform. Much of this engagement was direct, both with governmental actors and with Ukraine’s civil society. But it required an even greater mobilization of home authority resources to fund programs.

Dialoguing: On election and governance issues, the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine office served as a focal point for regular discussions among the civic sector, Ukrainian government, and diplomatic actors. No embassy or government funding or assistance was undeclared; the government could in no way

claim to have been uninformed about diplomatic and international donor activity prior to and during the electoral cycle.

Demarching: “The position of the diplomatic corps was taken very seriously by the authorities,” according to a prominent opposition figure, and their statements influenced the authorities on numerous occasions throughout the electoral process on the need to adhere to democratic norms to which Ukraine was a party. Two examples stand out.

The first was a reaction to the widely held fear that the mobile phone network would be shut down for the election night vote count, effectively atomizing civic and opposition efforts to coordinate verification and post-election activities. Opposition figures warned the democratic embassies of the threat, and these diplomats played a key role in summoning official reaction from their capitals. European Union High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and high-level State Department officials called President Kuchma directly to warn against an engineered communications blackout on election night. The phone networks remained active throughout the election and post-election crisis.

In another instance, taking their cues from their embassies and the OSCE-ODIHR Preliminary Statement on November 22, the democratic world coordinated its expression of lack of faith in the second round election results. US Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that the US “cannot accept the... result as legitimate,” and called for an investigation into electoral fraud, with consequences for the Washington-Kyiv relationship if this did not occur.

Reaching Out

Connecting: Democratic ambassadors and diplomats were a crucial link between Ukrainian civil society and the full political spectrum in their home countries. Senior opposition campaign staff credited the Polish, US, French and German embassies with helping them connect with NGOs and political figures in their capitals. Such connections proved especially important during the post-election crisis that became the Orange Revolution. According to another senior opposition figure, diplomats also used “their connections with different camps to deliver messages.” The embassies facilitated similar links with their home authorities and civic sectors, including with *Verkhovna Rada* (parliament) speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn, who played an important role in the post-election crisis roundtable mediation led by Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, and EU Common Foreign and Security High Representative Javier Solana.

Opposition figures credit democratic embassies for facilitating an early 2004 conference in Kyiv, which drew from the full Ukrainian political spectrum and many senior external actors; later in the year former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright adopted and promoted the idea of visa bans and asset freezes on Ukrainians responsible for impeding a fair electoral process. Indeed, a prominent Kyiv oligarch and MP, Hrihoriy Surkis was denied entry to the US. A longtime Yushchenko advisor summed up the significance of this message to others not yet affected – “you will lose your honestly stolen money” if you try to steal the election. This had “the most effect... even on Kuchma himself.”

Convening: Most Western ambassadors hosted dinners at which political actors from across the entire political spectrum met, along with civic leaders, in “open and informal” discussions with political opponents that would not have occurred otherwise.

Facilitating: The opposition attributes the most significant facilitation by external actors in Ukraine not directly to democratic diplomats, but rather to an international NGO, the National Democratic Institute (NDI). NDI actively helped to mediate and broker the coalition among Our Ukraine presidential candidate

Viktor Yushchenko, the bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko, and Socialist Party leader Oleksandr Moroz. Moroz was the third-place finisher in the first round of the election and possessed valuable party infrastructure in northern and central Ukraine that the Yushchenko team needed for the second round.

US Ambassador Carlos Pascual encouraged NDI and IRI party assistance programs to be open to the full political spectrum. Their popularity even with “parties of power” helped ensure that they could continue activity despite post-2002 government efforts to prevent their registration.

Financing: Democratic embassies engaged in some direct financing of civil society activities related to the electoral process, but the lion’s share of external funding for Ukrainian civil society came from development agencies, international NGOs, and foundations. Development agencies like Sweden’s International Development Agency (SIDA), Canada’s International Development Agency (CIDA), and USAID, had been fixtures on the donor scene since Ukraine became independent. But local civil society actors note that there appeared to be a lack of strategy and local knowledge in the international donor approach for some time. The Gongadze murder galvanized the political atmosphere. Democratic embassies feared for the integrity of the 2002 parliamentary elections, so the need for greater strategic coordination of donors and policy in support of electoral process was apparent. With training and funding to conduct exit polls for the 2002 elections, “the international community set the bar” for electoral transparency, according to a former ambassador serving at the time.

The diplomatic and donor community put together an array of programs designed to facilitate professional conduct, civic participation and verification of the 2004 presidential elections. According to a key diplomat involved, the level of coordination was “absolutely fantastic.” The system functioned as a clearing house, allowing donors to know what others were doing, identify gaps, and enabled them to volunteer resources to fill those gaps. The resulting breadth of civil society programs was considerable, including funding for domestic and international election observers, voter education and mobilization, independent media (thereby *informing* the Ukrainian public), exit polls and parallel vote counts. Eight western embassies and four NGOs mounted a modestly-priced effort to fund exit polls in both original rounds of the election: “money extremely well spent” according to Ukraine specialist Andrew Wilson.

In light of the circumstances, donors demonstrated great flexibility in order to get the job done. Civil society actors remarked that quality project ideas could get funded without inordinate difficulty, though donors shied away from more “sensitive” activities that might be perceived as partisan. Diplomats and civil society figures interviewed consistently stated that funding was granted to support the electoral process, and not given to parties or partisan projects. A western ambassador and a senior Ukrainian civil society figure agree that civic groups not explicitly political – such as business development and environmental groups – were as relevant as those with a political focus. The government “didn’t get that this was a broad question of civic engagement in public life,” according to the diplomat.

In addition, there were considerable efforts to work with the authorities to assist their capacity to conduct a proper electoral process. The Central Election Commission, lower-level electoral administrators, and judiciary all received technical advisory assistance and training.

Showcasing: According to a Ukrainian think-tank veteran now working to reform government administration, diplomats are especially well situated to impart the “lessons of democracy,” such as the function of coalitions, cohabitation, conflict of interest, and legal accountability. “The success of western assistance was the sharing of knowledge and skills of how democracy works,” in her view. Discussion of basic democratic and rule-of-law mechanics can be very instructive. Diplomats have engaged in roundtables on such issues to great effect. Democratic activists from Slovakia, Serbia and Georgia – sponsored by grants from the diplomatic corps and foundations – reinforced a conclusion most Ukrainian

democrats had drawn from their own earlier failed protests – that nonviolence is essential to succeed in mass civic mobilization.

Defending Democrats

Demonstrating: Diplomats at all levels demonstrated their solidarity with Ukrainian citizens exercising their right to peaceably assemble by visiting the *Maidan* (Kyiv's Independence Square) throughout the crisis. "I could see the representatives of all diplomatic missions... this was at the ambassadorial and staff level," recalls a senior opposition logistician on the *Maidan*. "I saw (embassy) staff taking coffee and sandwiches to demonstrators." In a less visible way, one democratic ambassador called an opposition campaign figure multiple times daily, telling him he did so in the knowledge his calls were monitored. He wanted the authorities to know they were in regular contact.

Protecting: Diplomats were among the international observers who monitored the mayoral election in April 2004 in the western town of Mukachevo, and witnessed serious intimidation and violence. The OSCE, Council of Europe, European Union and the US criticized these violations. The opposition credits the Czech, Slovak, Polish and Hungarian embassies with ensuring that the family of opposition candidate Viktor Baloha, could escape to safety.

On the night of November 28, US Ambassador John Herbst heard from both the opposition and from government sources that Interior Ministry troops were being sent to clear the *Maidan* by force. There was serious potential for violence. Herbst called Washington, and Secretary of State Colin Powell attempted to reach President Kuchma, to communicate the message that he would be accountable for any violence that might ensue, while Ambassador Herbst himself passed the same message to Kuchma's son-in-law Viktor Pinchuk and Chief of Presidential Administration Viktor Medvedchuk, regarded by many as the chief advocate of a crackdown. It is impossible to know what factors, in what proportion, tipped the balance in getting the troops to stand-down – there were also flurries of messages from Ukrainian Army and secret service officials warning against a crackdown, as well as opposition figure Yulia Tymoshenko meeting with the Army commander. A senior diplomat believes that "perhaps the Army was more important." But these messages no doubt made an impression. "This was a moment when the international community showed solidarity," according to one senior opposition figure.

Witnessing/Verifying: Diplomats not only engaged in their normal observation and reporting duties (including following the proceedings of the *Rada* and Supreme Court), but also traveled to observe distant campaign events and to investigate alleged abuses of state authority. They observed elections throughout the country, many as part of the International Election Observation Mission, built around the OSCE-ODIHR mission, and led by a representative of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. But such witnessing was not restricted to high-profile events: Japanese embassy personnel were among the observers in a municipal election in the central city of Poltava, and Canadian embassy personnel observed a by-election to the *Rada* in Odesa prior to the 2004 presidential poll.

One current presidential advisor recalls a bus trip he organized for a cross-section of the diplomatic community to the eastern city of Donetsk, the center of Prime Minister and "party of power" presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovych, enabling them to learn firsthand of the difficulties the opposition had in holding events in the east.

In the tense last two weeks before the first round, the government began a new tactic: raiding civil society group offices, planting then "discovering" explosives, and charging these groups with planning terrorist acts. Civic campaign *PORA* ("It's Time") offices were raided on October 15 in the first iteration of this approach. On the morning of October 23, security service officers appeared at the home of (Yellow)

PORA leader Vladyslav Kaskiv, demanding to be let in to search for weapons. In the case of Mr. Kaskiv, two opposition MPs blocked the door and prevented a violent entry by using their parliamentary immunity. Three diplomats from the French Embassy and other international representatives from the OSCE, OSCE-ODIHR, and European Commission arrived to reinforce the MPs and forestall a violent break-in by the security personnel. Their presence had the desired effect: after a number of hours, the authorities withdrew.

EPILOGUE

The 17-day Orange Revolution, after many tense moments, succeeded. Mass popular discontent changed the equation, leading state institutions to reassess their roles and responsibilities. The Supreme Court and then *Rada* determined that the people would have another chance to express their will with minimal interference. Despite the deep-seated tensions in a divided society, and concerted efforts to inflame them for political advantage, Ukrainian society as a whole showed remarkable restraint in avoiding violence throughout the crisis. As historian of Ukraine and its revolution Andrew Wilson succinctly put it, “it takes two sides to avoid an argument.”

The Orange Years

From 2005 on, Ukraine underwent another challenging period. The political infighting and inability of the “Orange forces” to deliver on the promise taxed the sense of many citizens that politics offered avenues for meaningful change. The political situation in Ukraine was often marred by political strife, confrontation and gridlock, most visibly manifest in the open confrontation between two major erstwhile allies and protagonists of the Orange Revolution, Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko, leading to a succession of unstable governments during Yushchenko’s term in office. Arguments between them began on economic policy, but also included the constitutional distribution of powers between the president and prime minister. While some democratic advances of the Orange Revolution have been consolidated, other important reform opportunities were lost.

Yet despite all this, under Viktor Yushchenko’s presidency Ukraine’s society enjoyed almost unrestricted freedom of speech and press, freedom of association, and respect for civil and political rights. This was a durable gain for Ukraine’s citizens, despite the disappointing and shambolic nature of governance, and has often been underappreciated both by external observers and Ukrainians themselves in light of the disappointment felt over the failure of the “Orange” governments to meet the high expectations set in 2004-5. This new political and social climate stood in a sharp contrast to the era under President Leonid Kuchma, which was marked by increasing censorship, media manipulation, and other restrictions on civil freedoms. Yet, although a pluralistic media environment offered Ukrainians a variety of sources of information, major media outlets still remained under the influence of their private owners, and efforts to create professional and nonpartisan public television came to naught.

Entangled in political squabbling, Ukraine’s political leaders failed to undertake fundamental economic reforms that were long overdue. Hit by a decline in demand for its industrial exports, Ukraine’s economy shrank by between 14 and 15 % in 2009, the largest drop in GDP of any country in the post-Soviet region. In 2008, Ukraine’s 22.8 % inflation rate was the highest in Europe, and the Ukrainian currency, the *hryvnia*, lost around 60% of its value against the dollar in 2008.

The struggle against deep-seated corruption failed to gain traction – Ukraine was downgraded from 134th in 2008 to 146th in 2009 in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index rankings: at roughly the level of Russia, Zimbabwe and Kenya and even worse than Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

Ukraine has intensified its cooperation with the European Union. However, a clear membership perspective has not been on the table given the EU's need to consolidate previous rounds of enlargement prior to committing to new entrants. Many disappointed Ukrainians believe that the lack of the clear potential for membership negatively affected the impetus for and pace of reforms. Negotiations on an Association Agreement began in September 2008 as part of the European Neighborhood Policy that has been described as an "everything but membership" approach. Additionally, in May 2009, Ukraine together with Belarus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and Moldova, has also become a member of a new EU initiative spearheaded by new member states, the "Eastern Partnership." Though the Eastern Partnership boosts EU-Ukraine cooperation and opens the prospects for visa-free regime and a free trade zone, it lacks the transformative potential on Ukraine's political process that a membership perspective might carry.

In May 2008, Ukraine joined the World Trade Organization, a boon to its trade-dependent economy. Membership was also an essential step to the creation of a free trade area with Ukraine's largest trading partner – the European Union. The establishment of a Deep and Comprehensive Free-Trade Area (DCFTA) that is being currently negotiated is an integral part of the future Association Agreement.

The prospect of NATO membership was much more contentious, both within Ukraine and outside. The idea of NATO membership never captured a majority of the Ukrainian electorate, despite it being one of the issues the "Orange" leaders could all (at least rhetorically) agree about being in the national interest. In January 2008, President Yushchenko, Prime Minister Tymoshenko and Parliamentary Speaker, Arseniy Yatseniuk, sent a joint letter to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, declaring Ukraine's readiness to advance on a Membership Action Plan (MAP) with NATO. However, at the NATO Bucharest Summit in April 2008, NATO did not grant further MAPs. Following the war between Georgia and Russia in the summer of 2008, the willingness of many NATO members to allow in members from the former Soviet space cooled even more.

Since the Orange Revolution, Ukraine had three major election campaigns. These included elections to Ukraine's parliament, the *Verkhovna Rada*, and local self-government bodies on March 26, 2006, early parliamentary elections on September 30, 2007, and presidential elections on January 17 and February 7, 2010. A historic legacy of the Orange revolution is that the conduct of all these elections was recognized as competitive, free and fair by international observation missions.

At the first round of presidential elections on January 17, 2010, the incumbent President, Viktor Yushchenko, received the support of only 5% of voters. His dismal election performance can be ascribed to the failure to deliver on fundamental reforms. In the run-off on February 7, 2010, Party of Regions leader Viktor Yanukovich winning by more than a four-point margin over with then-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

The European Union and its members, the United States, and other Western countries applauded the free and fair election and extended congratulations to the winner, Viktor Yanukovich. In addition to their senior representatives, Russian President Dmitriy Medvedev also attended the inauguration ceremony.

Post Post-Revolution

President Yanukovich has quickly consolidated his power over the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. On March 11, 2010, the new government headed by long-time Yanukovich ally Mykola Azarov was endorsed by a parliamentary coalition. However, its constitutionality was initially uncertain.

Indeed, Western diplomats reportedly played some role in legitimizing the government's formation. According to local press reports, a day before the confirmation of the Azarov government in the Verkhovna Rada on March 11, President Yanukovich consulted the ambassadors of the G8 countries (i.e. including Russia's envoy) about whether their countries would accept a government elected by individual MPs, i.e. including deserters from opposed camps, and not by whole factions. Observers report that while concerns were debated, the Ambassadors gave Yanukovich the advice that he seek to legitimize the arrangement by asking the Constitutional Court to rule on its constitutionality. The ambassadors reportedly also urged the Party of Regions to cooperate with other political forces. While such cooperation has been less than apparent since, President Yanukovich indeed submitted a request concerning the legitimacy of the Azarov government to the Constitutional Court, according to Andreas Umland.

The issue is that Ukraine's Constitution ascribes a decisive role in the formation of a governmental coalition to parliament's factions rather than to individual members of parliament, and the three factions that formed the coalition – the Party of Regions, the Communist Party, and the Lytvyn Bloc – did not have a majority, with only 219 of the 450 deputies. A majority was attained by attracting individual deputies from opposition parties, the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and the Our Ukraine – People's Self-Defense coalition, to the government coalition. On March 9, Ukraine's legislature amended the law on the parliament's regulations, removing the imperative mandate that had banned MPs from leaving their factions and allowing deputies to join the coalition individually. On April 8, 2010, the Constitutional Court gave legitimacy to those new provisions, having ruled that a coalition could also be formed with deputies not belonging to the coalescing factions.

Observers point out that this ruling reverses an earlier resolution of the same Constitutional Court in September 2008, where it stated that “only those people's deputies of Ukraine who are members of the deputies factions that form a coalition can enter the ranks of that coalition,” and accused the Court of having made a political decision that some believe results in an excessive concentration of power. “The concentration of power in the hands of one person and the weakening of the opposition now endanger the pluralist nature” of Ukraine's politics, is how FRIDE analysts Balazs Jarabik and Natalia Shapovalova phrased it in their June 2010 policy brief on the new administration, “100 Days of President Yanukovich: Ukrainian Democracy on Hold?” “(T)he price of government effectiveness and political stability seems to be the rule of law and democratic governance.”

Contrary to some speculation, President Yanukovich has not renounced Ukraine's EU aspirations – he made a point of making his first presidential visit to Brussels. Some see the new administration as more serious than its predecessor about meeting EU reform standards. The FRIDE analysts believe that “Yanukovich is living up to his promise on EU integration: less airy pro-European talk, more action,” in contrast to what some diplomatic observers saw as a sense of entitlement by the Yushchenko administration. But cooperation with Russia, until recently a fraught relationship, has risen to a post-independence high. During Yushchenko's presidency, Russian-Ukrainian relations were so tense that during the final months of Yushchenko's term, Medvedev refused to send a Russian ambassador to Kyiv. On May 17-18, 2010, Russian President Medvedev paid the first official visit to Ukraine since his election to the post. In a controversial deal signed on April 21, 2010 between the Ukrainian and Russian Presidents in Kharkiv, Ukraine agreed to extend the lease of naval facilities in its Black Sea port of Sevastopol to Russia until 2042 in exchange for 30% discount on natural gas until 2019. The Russian Black Sea Fleet was due to leave Sevastopol in 2017. While delivering immediate economic benefits to a deeply depressed economy, including paving the way for the IMF credit, this agreement has also raised political, security, and constitutional concerns among many Ukrainians – particularly centered on the potential for separatism in ethnic Russian majority Crimea. In another pronounced policy turnaround, in June 2010 the parliament approved in a first reading a bill cementing Ukraine's new status as a nonaligned state. The

previous government included NATO membership among its primary goals, though – unlike EU membership – membership in the alliance had thin public support. Despite the political “honeymoon” between Russia and Ukraine, Yanukovych refused the invitation for Ukraine to join the Customs Union with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan due to country’s WTO commitments. Some analysts, including FRIDE’s, see the new administration focus on “quick, easy ‘wins’ with the EU...(and) Russia,” but they question how durable progress can be built without wider popular consultation or broader political buy-in.

Yet concerns have been raised within and outside Ukraine that some gains of the Orange Revolution might be under threat. In February, the Parliament cancelled regular elections to local councils scheduled for May 30, 2010, ostensibly due to the state budget not yet having been adopted. However, elections were not rescheduled even after the budget’s approval. In April, Reporters without Borders issued a statement on the deterioration of press freedom in Ukraine, and journalists of leading private TV channels 1+1 and STB spoke about renewed official censorship.

CONCLUSION

Five years since its democratic breakthrough, Ukraine remains a fragile democracy with a competitive, free and fair electoral process and respect for human rights and freedoms. But its political institutions and political comportment often remain mired in a lack of transparency on the part of political parties and corruptible courts. According to one Ukrainian policy and administration analyst, “Once dictators are out, democracy doesn’t just flourish... Here democracy is only regulated in elections...After elections, we’re flying blind.” The situation is aggravated by a faltering economy hard hit by the economic crisis due to structural weaknesses that were not addressed by previous governments.

While there are recently worrying signs in terms of adherence to rule of law and civic freedoms, Ukraine’s vibrant civil society and civic activism would pose strong challenges to any attempts to pull the country back into authoritarianism. Continued engagement on the part of the democratic diplomatic community is needed to support Ukrainian efforts to complete the democratic advances that they have made and to build the enduring institutions stable democracies need. The full diplomatic toolbox now needs to be available to assist Ukrainians – especially the agents of civil society – to consolidate and develop further adherence to democratic norms.

The Fall and Rise of Chilean Democracy: 1973-1989

INTRODUCTION

Chile's Drift into the Abyss

Chile historically prided itself on its long democratic and constitutional practice, as well as its relative moderation in politics. Unlike many of its neighbors, it experienced military rule for only brief intervals. The armed services maintained a solid professional distance from politics, and even public life.

But Chilean politics became increasingly rancorous and polarized in the 1960s. A division into left, center, and right permeated Chile's civil society. One Chilean, looking back on the era observed that by that point "moderation was always interpreted as a sign of weakness. Anyone who was moderate was presumed to have a sort of complex."

In 1970, Socialist Salvador Allende, the candidate of the left-wing Popular Unity coalition, won the Presidency in 1970 with a 36% plurality, and was confirmed in the parliament. His victory raised political polarization to new heights. When the economy became rattled in 1971 by investor and market reaction to government intervention, tension between the government's supporters and its critics increased until the parliament, in which Popular Unity did not hold a majority, adopted in 1973 a resolution accusing Allende of regularly violating the constitution and attempting to institute a totalitarian system. It was openly speculated that a coup d'état could follow.

Coup d' État and Repression

On September 11, 1973, the armed forces of Chile forcefully took over, bombing and storming *La Moneda*, the presidential palace in Santiago, against armed resistance, to find President Allende dead by his own hand.

Army General Augusto Pinochet led the armed forces commanders' junta, declaring that Chile was in a "State of War."

The repression against supporters of the Allende government and anyone deemed threatening was immediate and overwhelming: roughly 7,000 persons were detained, brutally interrogated and tortured at the National Stadium, and scores summarily executed. Thousands ran to foreign embassies for protection. Violent repression also struck in rural areas, where it was more difficult to find refuge. Thousands were arrested and many simply "disappeared."

The judiciary, overwhelmingly partial to the coup, did not resist the blatant illegalities being perpetrated, nor did they seek to exercise their prerogatives when civilians were being brought before military tribunals and often executed. Almost no petitions for *habeas corpus* were accepted.

While many Chileans welcomed the putsch, most believed that the armed forces would return to barracks and allow a return to civilian and democratic rule. They soon learned this was a false hope. Pinochet banned leftist political parties outright, suspended others, and in 1974 ordered the electoral rolls destroyed.

Church vs. State – Defending Human Rights

The Catholic Church was the only institution capable of resisting the junta's repression. Chilean civil society and any political actors remaining in Chile hunkered down in the aftermath of the coup, concerned

with mere survival. “The myriad institutions of civil society, including neighborhood organizations, sports clubs and professional associations, were prohibited from meeting or tightly controlled,” according to the then-Ford Foundation representative in Santiago.

Fortunately, Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez gave support to those threatened by the junta. The ecumenical Pro-Peace Committee defended victims of human rights abuses, but was closed by Pinochet’s order in 1975. The (Catholic) Vicariate of Solidarity succeeded it, helping an estimated 700,000 Chileans with legal, health, occupational and nutritional services between 1975 and 1979. International civil society was instrumental in financially sustaining these efforts.

The Church also supported the legal and evidentiary work to defend human rights, before a judiciary nearly totally sympathetic to Pinochet. According to Jaime Castillo, a pre-Allende justice minister who represented hundreds of prisoners and missing leftists, “judges almost always reacted negatively to us; they were servile and afraid, and so bitter against the Popular Unity (Allende’s government).” Ignacio Walker, later to serve as foreign minister after the return to democracy, recalled, “As a human rights lawyer, I lost all my cases... But winning wasn’t the point. We could still protect people by making their cases publicly known. The cost was higher” for the regime to do them further harm. The World Council of Churches in Geneva played a pivotal role in publicizing such cases. While this activity was nettlesome to the regime, it was tolerated. Confronting the Church would spur social resistance in predominantly Catholic Chile. The voluminous documentation collected throughout the post-coup years on arrests and locations of detention became instrumental in establishing the truth of what happened to thousands of Chileans deemed “enemies” of the regime.

What was preserved and accomplished in these especially harsh years provided the building blocks for Chile’s democratic revival.

Authoritarian “Institutionalization”

While in theory the first among equals in the junta, Pinochet proved more politically skilled at infighting than his rivals. He rapidly personalized and consolidated power, pressuring the junta to confer upon him the title “President of the Republic.” Pinochet claimed it was his destiny to rule, and set out to remake Chile with a “protected” political order that would preserve his role far into the future.

Following the UN General Assembly’s condemnation of the regime’s human rights abuses in December 1977, Pinochet called a “consultation” at the beginning of 1978, in which citizens were to vote on whether to “support President Pinochet in his defense of the dignity of Chile” against “international aggression” and to legitimize “the process of institutionalization.” A “yes” was represented by a Chilean flag; a “no” by a black one. The process, marred by inherent fraud (there was no voter register) and intimidation, led to a 75% “yes” vote.

In 1980, Pinochet promulgated a constitution that retained firm military control of government. Yet Pinochet consented to having a plebiscite in eight years’ time from the adoption of the constitution and his simultaneous “election” as president – he was the sole candidate – on September 11, 1980. He assumed his “re-election” in 1988 would be a foregone conclusion. Yet the stipulation for a plebiscite in 1988 led to Pinochet’s undoing as Chile’s dictator.

Part of Pinochet’s “institutionalization” included radical economic reform, spearheaded by free marketeers educated abroad, dubbed “the Chicago Boys.” Central to their effort to reform the Chilean economy was privatization of state assets, often at knockdown prices. Global financial markets initially responded enthusiastically, dulling the impact of denial of credits from international financial institutions.

The new policies spurred an economic boom in the late 1970s and early 1980s. But the growth came to an abrupt end with a set of banking failures that led to state intervention to prop them up. The downward spiral accelerated, leading to a serious economic crisis.

Fighting the Brain Drain and Building Intellectual Capital for Change

Support to think-tanks and policy research groups served to keep talented Chileans from joining the mass brain drain and engaged in investigating avenues to promote a return to democratic rule. Since their activities were academic in nature or packaging, there was some more leeway granted to them by the regime. “Some of the finest social science research in Latin America came to be associated with the Chilean informal academic sector,” according to Chile expert Oxford Professor Alan Angell – and it relied almost entirely on foreign funding.

Exile’s Silver Lining

The period in exile, following the catastrophic failure of Chile’s democratic institutions, was one of deep soul-searching and analysis of what could have brought on the crisis and coup. A common recognition slowly crystallized among them that functioning democracy provided the only protection for human rights, and this required a will to compromise.

While all Chilean democrats subjected themselves and their ideologies to rigorous self-criticism, the Socialists, the most numerous component of Allende’s Popular Unity government, were affected the most profoundly. According to future President Ricardo Lagos, “Never in the history of Chile have so many Chilean women and men with varied degrees of cultural exposure – social leaders, politicians, heads of local associations, and many more – move(d) into the world... exile left its imprint, leading us to recognize the value of democracy, the higher value of human rights...abandoning the classical tools of the left in the 1960s and ‘70s, to be replaced by a revalorization of democracy, of human rights, of the place of the market.” Chilean leftists developed an appreciation for European social democracy, which they once scorned.

Christian Democrats, inflexible prior to the coup, were also affected. Some left for Venezuela where they found their sister party had a different approach, valuing the virtues of compromise.

Economic Shock and Popular Reaction – Civil Society Stands Up

Protests and demonstrations began in 1983, sparked by a 14% contraction in GDP. Copper miners union leader Rodolfo Seguel organized the Workers’ National Command, and called for a National Day of Protest, which successfully conveyed public discontent to the regime for the first time since the coup. This popular discontent from below began opening society and revived political parties, which remained illegal.

Pinochet appointed rightist National Party leader Sergio Onofre Jarpa Interior Minister and authorized him to initiate an opening (“*apertura*”) for dialogue with right and centrist opposition parties.

The Catholic Church’s Cardinal Francisco Fresno convened democratic opposition in the mid-1980s to forge unity. Attempts to bind the opposition together began in 1983 with the Democratic Alliance of centrist and rightist parties. This was followed by the National Accord (*Acuerdo*) for Transition to Full Democracy in 1985, which allied the moderate wing of the split Socialists with Christian Democrats for the first time. The Accord demanded an immediate return to democracy with free elections, and continued to reject the 1980 Constitution, with its scheduled 1988 plebiscite.

Chile's society remained divided through this period between those who saw the regime as a shield against chaos – a perception Pinochet did his best to promote, and those who saw dictatorial rule as the country's fundamental problem. According to Christian Democrat Genaro Arriagada, "There were really two worlds, two Chiles superimposed."

Demonstrations had no apparent impact. A daring 1986 attempt by leftist militants to assassinate Pinochet while leaving his country residence gave the dictator a needed pretext to violently re-impose a State of Siege, and tap into latent "middle Chilean" fears of chaos. One Chilean noted "we sank into total depression at the end of '86 because everything had failed – the communist strategy (of direct confrontation in street fights and raids) and the non-communist strategy (of demanding open elections)." There was still no strategy to end Pinochet's one-man rule.

If at First You Don't Succeed...Take Stock

In the next two years Chile's civil society and political opposition reflected, studied and debated, and developed a consensus strategy to never again allow the radical polarization that allowed military dictatorship to take hold. Chile's research institutes and think-tanks were pivotal.

Non-communist parties were legalized in 1987. Late that fall, Chilean social scientists met outside Santiago to review survey data they had collected, showing ambient fear pervasive in Chile's traumatized society. A divisive competitive electoral campaign would redound to Pinochet's advantage; he could all too easily portray it as the "chaos" he had long warned against. But a strategy of embracing the plebiscite and engaging the full democratic spectrum to generate votes for the "No" held promise: it could breach the fear barrier that kept Pinochet in power, allowing truly free elections to follow.

This was initially a hard sell with many politicians who felt this would be a capitulation to Pinochet and an acceptance of his illegal constitution. However, they were eventually convinced and devoted themselves to drumming-up support for the "No."

Think-Tanks, Civil Society and Opposition Work Together for the "NO"

Civil society, policy think-tanks, and political parties aligned in a coordinated coalition to generate support for a "No" vote. This involved a massive nationwide grassroots effort to register citizens to vote, undertaken by the Crusade for Citizen Participation (Civic Crusade), which undertook in particular to register disaffected urban youth who doubted political change could be attained without violence. The Command for the No established itself in offices around the country to generate support for a "No" vote in the plebiscite. The political opposition aligned itself for the effort in a wider spectrum than ever before – eventually 17 parties – in the *Concertación*. The plebiscite was promoted as a referendum on the hated dictatorship.

Getting citizens to register, encouraging them to overcome fear to vote, and building confidence and hope that victory and a brighter future was possible were all critical to success. Innovation and creativity were also in abundant supply. The Civic Crusade held free rock concerts with bands kept off the airwaves – 18-30 year olds needed only show their voter ID cards for entry. The free TV campaign spots were set at an hour which the regime thought would limit viewership – 23:15-23:30 nightly for the month before the vote. But these creative promotional spots were built around the Command for the No's upbeat theme: "Joy is Coming!" and were viewed *en masse*. "We managed to register 7 million of 8 million potential voters," reminisced Ignacio Walker. "We spread the 'good news' that this plebiscite was a unique chance."

The NOs Have It!

In the plebiscite on October 5, 1988, the “No” won a decisive 55%-43% victory, drawing massive turnout of over 90%. Those within the junta who resented Pinochet’s dominance welcomed the result. The air force chief acknowledged the defeat with a smile on his way in to meet his colleagues, before the official media announced the result. Pinochet had to accept the victory of the “No” which by the Constitution would require free elections for president the following year.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY TOWARD THE PINOCHET REGIME

In 1973, international reaction to the coup against Allende had been swift and almost uniformly negative; Swedish Premier Olaf Palme spoke for most of the democratic world when he bluntly described the junta as “despicable crooks.”

Many democracies, and a number of non-democracies, acted immediately through their embassies to protect persons seeking asylum from persecution. Over the coming months and years, thousands of Chileans were resettled all over the globe. The fact that there were so many Chilean exiles elsewhere in Latin America (particularly in Venezuela, Mexico, and Argentina – until its 1976 coup), in Europe, and in North America (mostly Canada) gave Chilean democracy advocates a wide network in academia and civil society, as well as high visibility. The Soviet bloc took in many leftist refugees through its diplomatic missions and secondary routes. Many Marxists gravitated to the Soviet Union, East Germany, and even Romania, where Ceausescu had just become enamored of Mao’s Cultural Revolution. But even convinced Marxists found the atmosphere in the socialist bloc stifling and later opted to relocate.

Estimates of the number exiled vary widely, but it easily ran into the tens of thousands, and likely much higher. As of 1982, an estimated 44% of Chilean expatriates were in Venezuela and Mexico, with another 3% in other Latin American countries. Democratic Europe collectively was host to another nearly 40%, with the largest groups living in Spain, France, Italy, and Sweden. Canada hosted a further nearly 7%, and Australia nearly 6%. By this stage, less than 3% were living in the Soviet bloc. Paris and Rome were especially popular destinations, seen as cultural oases linguistically and politically close to home.

“European governments and parties felt a special affinity with Chile. The Chilean opposition had a concept of democracy that was clearly similar to that of most European political movements, based on a combination of fair elections, social justice, and the observance of basic human rights.” German party foundations – *Stiftungen* – were very involved in the 1980s in Chile, with the Christian Democratic *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* estimated to have spent about 25 million Deutschmarks in Chile from 1983-1988, and its Socialist counterpart the *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung* spending almost 10 million DM.

Chile’s enviably strong network with foreign academia, politics, and civic life was sustained with openness and generosity to political refugees. Chilean Andrés Zaldivar was leader of the Christian Democratic International in Spain. The Institute for the New Chile was founded in Rotterdam. Rome-based *Chile Democratico*, the collaborative effort of two Christian Democrats and two Popular Unity members, published *Chile-América* from 1974-1984. It gained a worldwide readership, with informed policy debates and analysis along with human rights reporting from Chile. External funding from Western European governments kept these initiatives afloat.

Most democracies maintained consistent anti-Pinochet policies, decrying human rights abuses in international fora and supporting through various channels Chilean civil society, but some influential democracies’ policies fluctuated considerably between 1973 and 1988. In addition, arms sales continued from a number of European countries. Britain’s Labour governments in the 1970s curtailed arms sales and withdrew their ambassador from Santiago after abuse of a British dual national, but full representation –

and an end to an embargo – returned with the Conservative Thatcher Government. France’s policy toward Chile took a markedly more critical turn with the arrival of Socialist President Mitterrand in 1981, and new arms deals were not signed. As Portugal and Spain underwent democratic transitions after the coup, the favor Caetano and Franco had showered on Pinochet turned to hostility.

Democracies also put their money where their mouths were. “In per capita terms, amongst the most generous of the aid donors was the Netherlands,” according to Oxford Professor Alan Angell, who notes that the Dutch government established and funded a number of policy institutes that were incubators for Chilean exiles and experts. The Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries and Canadian IDRC were also generous.

Perhaps the most influential shifts in policy came from Washington. US President Nixon and his Secretary of State Kissinger did little to hide their relief at the ouster of a government that they asserted was turning Chile into “another Cuba.” The brief Ford administration continued this, but reacted harshly to the 1976 car bombing assassination of Allende’s foreign minister Orlando Letelier in downtown Washington, which killed an American citizen. The Carter administration was much harder on the Pinochet regime, co-sponsoring resolutions on human rights in the UN and applying financial levers. The Reagan administration disavowed Carter’s human rights oriented policies, and welcomed a positive relationship with Pinochet. The US Ambassador, political appointee and ideologue James Theberge, even attended the 11th anniversary of the coup, when other ambassadors stayed away. But this shifted definitively early in Reagan’s second term, with Secretary of State George Shultz’s decision in early 1985 to replace Theberge with career diplomat Harry Barnes, Jr. Among arguments for this policy shift was the rank inconsistency of arguing for democracy in Sandinista Nicaragua while backing a blatant military dictatorship in Chile. Congress, in contrast to the White House, was consistently vocal against Pinochet, the most active and vocal of all being Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, who initiated a cutoff of military aid to Chile in 1976, and generated Congressional demands for human rights assessments on recipients of American aid.

RESOURCES AND ASSETS OF DIPLOMATS IN CHILE

In Chile, especially in the weeks after the coup, diplomats employed their immunity to protect human life, evidenced by Swedish Ambassador Harald Edelstam, whom Pinochet expelled, and many others. Much later, US Ambassador Harry Barnes was so assertive in his efforts to help Chileans restore their democracy that Pinochet considered declaring him *persona non grata*.

Most diplomats in Santiago were able to count on the public support of their home authorities in opposing the regime. Ambassador Barnes lined up comprehensive backing with the executive branch, but also major figures in Congress and NGOs. The visible backing of the higher reaches of government encourages NGOs and donors to take notice and devote more resources, confident that their efforts will be effective. This was the case in Chile.

Pinochet wanted to appear immune to influence by external actors, but was vulnerable to political conditionality on IFI credits. This leverage was employed repeatedly. The assertive Ambassador Barnes, backed by the full US government, may have lost a lot of his influence with Pinochet, but correspondingly gained it with the opposition and civil society, which had felt abandoned by the regime-focused “quiet diplomacy” of the Reagan Administration’s early years. Many countries had strong moral and cultural influence on Chilean civil society, such as Venezuela with its two-party democracy and Germany’s support through the *Stiftungen*. Spanish Socialist Prime Minister Felipe González was highly regarded.

In most cases, funds to assist civil society and political opposition did not go through embassies, but direct channels, mostly private and quasi-public (such as the German *Stiftungen*). Ambassadors on the

ground had a role in helping these donors and programmatic organizations in their targeting, and in suggesting new funding efforts – especially before the plebiscite.

The democratic states' diplomats had a rich vein of legitimacy to mine in Chile – namely the full array of international human rights treaties and guarantees to which Chile had been party, enthusiastically, in its democratic and multilateralist pre-Pinochet days. The French and Dutch ambassadors referred to Chile's obligations under the Universal Declaration on Human Rights when opposition leftists were seized in 1984. Diplomats regularly invoked them when taken to task by the regime for appearances

with victims of human rights abuses, demanding information about those disappeared, and demarching the government for its transgressions of international norms.

WAYS THESE ASSETS WERE APPLIED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CHILE

Golden Rules

Embassies understood the significance of Chile's democratic tradition, well-developed civic sector, and intelligentsia, and assisted individuals at risk by providing asylum and economic assistance, as well as direct assistance to those attempting to keep the embers of freedom alive in the smothering first years of dictatorship, though there was too little space for progress for almost a decade after the coup. The Church was the main protector and non-state actor, through the Pro-Peace Committee and its successor, the Vicariate of Solidarity.

Chile's strong cadre of academics, professionals and intellectuals had studied abroad and had wide networks well before the coup. Many suffered persecution, including expulsion from their positions in academia and administration, and consequently left Chile for positions overseas, leaving Chilean academia decimated. The international community recognized the necessity of maintaining this human resource in Chile, and numerous donors, some public and many private, helped maintain a lifeline for them by financing academic policy research institutes. In addition, diplomats such as Ambassador Barnes respected Chilean civil society by publicly engaging them upon his arrival. Barnes met publicly with Christian Democrat leader Gabriel Valdés soon after presenting his credentials to Pinochet, and with civil society figures in advance of introductions to Pinochet's officialdom which riled Pinochet greatly. The optics and reality of an ambassador listening to civil society were important in rebuilding civic self-confidence and optimism. Valdés noted at the time, "The embassy has changed completely for us."

Though there was little systematic information sharing among diplomatic missions, there were *ad hoc* examples of collaboration in protecting threatened Chileans, especially in the immediate aftermath of the 1973 coup. Diplomatic missions certainly interacted and compared notes regularly with the other international actors on the Chilean scene: political party foundations, international labor union representatives, the international press corps, etc. Later, Ambassador Barnes created and headed a "Western Hemisphere Democracy Group" including the Argentine, Brazilian, and Costa Rican Ambassadors. According to Barnes, "We exchanged information and discussed how we (and our governments) might be more effective in promoting greater respect for human rights and democracy." The French Ambassador, Leon Bouvier, was also a strong advocate for human rights and democracy.

Truth in Communications

Immediately after the coup, embassy reporting was vital to convey the severity of violence and repression. With access to information utterly closed at the outset, and still restrictive even at the most liberal stage of the Pinochet regime, this transmission mechanism was important. Evidence of the massive human rights abuses endemic to Pinochet's regime often reached the international public – and Chileans – through this

channel.

Informing the Chilean public of their solidarity and policies was nearly impossible with the self-censorship of non-government vetted media, though publications by expatriates, such as *Chile-America* out of Rome, received assistance.

The diplomatic pouch was among many tools Chilean human rights activists could rely upon to convey details of human rights abuses to the international community. Once safely outside and reported, this information could circulate back to Chilean society at large through foreign broadcast media and expatriate publications, conveying the truth about the regimes dark practices.

As space for independent media opened in the 1980s, diplomats directed assistance to independent media, such as *Analisis*, *La Epoca*, and CIEPLAN's popular economic review.

Working with the Government

From the beginning of his 16 years in power in 1973 to the end in 1989, Pinochet was an international pariah, rarely leaving the country. Few invitations were forthcoming. In 1980, Filipino dictator Ferdinand Marcos disinvited Pinochet from a planned state visit while Pinochet was en route to Manila. Pinochet was once again humiliated in 1983, when his government announced it was invited to the inauguration of Argentina's democratic president, Raúl Alfonsín, only to have the Argentine Foreign Ministry disavow the invitation, which Pinochet extracted from Argentina's outgoing junta. Sweden made a point of not inviting any Chilean representative to assassinated Premier Olaf Palme's funeral in 1986.

Following the coup, Italy withdrew its ambassador, maintaining a chargé in Santiago until after Pinochet was defeated in the plebiscite. Sweden never replaced its ambassador, expelled in December 1973 for his active defense of human rights. Mexico abandoned relations altogether from 1974 on, after taking in a great number of refugees, including President Allende's widow. Britain withdrew its ambassador in 1975; he was not replaced for over four years.

While relations remained open with a number of democracies represented in Santiago, there was precious little advising of the Pinochet government. Nor were there noteworthy examples of government-to-government dialoguing on human rights and democratic practices, though there were protests from democracies.

Most of the state-to-state communications in the Pinochet dictatorship period are more properly considered demarching, such as demands for explanations of actions, pressure to release prisoners or explain "disappearances." French Ambassador Leon Bouvier demanded explanation of the killing of a French priest by police in a poor Santiago barrio. The previous year he was recalled for consultations by Foreign Minister Cheysson, who called Pinochet a "curse on his people," to protest human rights violations. Ambassador Barnes warned the Pinochet regime not to interfere with the 1988 plebiscite.

Reaching Out

Diplomats forged connections between Chilean civil society and opposition political figures and counterparts in their home countries as a matter of course, recognizing that creating and maintaining linkages to the outside world was essential. The web connecting Chile to the democratic world developed into an incredibly strong and resilient one. Diplomats interacted consistently with Chilean civil society and complimented the efforts of their own societies to remain engaged.

Democratic embassies – particularly those of Canada and a number of European countries – regularly

invited opposition and civic figures to convene for free discussions amongst themselves and the diplomatic corps (which, of course, would tap into this resource for reporting on the situation). This circuit, together with connections which were forged among refugees abroad, developed into a network which proved very important later in planning the return to democracy.

As the repression loosened somewhat in the early and mid-1980s, the diplomatic corps worked to facilitate greater cooperation among the democratic opposition parties. In May 1985, Chilean official media reported the West German Ambassador stating that his country, along with Britain and the US, was willing to mediate between Pinochet's government and the opposition, which had become emboldened by public discontent. Soon thereafter, Ambassador Barnes arrived and pressed opposition politicians to come together behind a common approach to press for an end to dictatorship. But despite progress in building constructive relationships among parties, there was no clear strategy until late 1987 and early 1988.

Post-disbursed funds were not a major feature of international engagement, but financing by governments, quasi-governmental organization and private foundations was indispensable for the survival and development of Chilean civil society.

Embassies ensured that worthy efforts got noticed, and this lifeline gave Chilean civil society the ability to develop their winning strategy of contesting the plebiscite.

In just one example, the US government had hitherto been far less engaged in financially supporting civil society than its European counterparts, mostly operating through development agencies and quasi-governmental institutes. The US Agency for International Development funded the Civic Crusade, and the National Endowment for Democracy and National Democratic Institute both assisted the Command for the No.

The most effective showcasing of democratic practices and norms was done outside Chile. Chile's tens of thousands of political and intellectual exiles experienced free democratic societies themselves, some after having had the opportunity to see firsthand the "advanced socialism" of the Soviet bloc. The honeymoon in the socialist paradise was brief for most. The Secretary General of the Socialist Party, Carlos Altamirano, who like many socialists originally fled to East Germany, later said "I jumped the wall," and was attracted to Paris by France's socialist government under President Francois Mitterrand. Mitterrand and Italian Communist Party leader Enrico Berlinguer, progenitor of democratic "Eurocommunism," were attractive poles for the exiled Chilean left. Embassies held regular cultural events that displayed the fruits of an open, democratic society.

Defending Democrats

Democratic diplomats regularly and creatively demonstrated their support for democratic principles, fundamental freedoms, and human rights in Chile throughout the Pinochet era. Initially, this was accomplished most urgently through providing humanitarian protection to those threatened with death or torture by the regime (see below). Later, diplomats like Carter-era US Ambassador George Landau made clear on his arrival in 1977 that "We can't tell a government what it can do, but we can tell it what will happen if it doesn't do certain things." Recalls of ambassadors were legion in Chile: Mexico severed relations, Sweden never replaced Ambassador Edelstam after he was expelled, Italy didn't reinstitute full ties until after Pinochet was shown the door by voters in 1988, and Britain and France recalled their ambassadors in protests during Pinochet's reign.

Other notable examples were the appearance of a host of democracies' diplomats, including those of France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, and the US, at the funeral of a young man burned to death by police in 1986. The young woman who was with him was also severely burned, but survived, and was given

asylum and treated in Montreal, Canada.

Attending events by the opposition, even when it remained illegal, showed the regime that the democratic world recognized these activities as inherently legitimate, not only affording Chilean democrats some insulation from repression, but also showing the democratic world was with them. The same principle applied to human rights events, at which democratic ambassadors and other diplomats made a point to be visible. The political use of forced exile by the regime was also publicly derided, even as Pinochet tried to earn points by incrementally allowing some exiles to return from the mid-1980s on. As one western diplomat stated “exile is not a question of numbers, it is a question of principle. Even one exile is too many.”

Diplomats also encouraged Chilean democrats in their conviction that victory in the plebiscite was not only possible, but likely if the regime did not interfere. “I think the ‘No’ will win, if the process doesn’t get interrupted,” said Ambassador Barnes two days before the vote.

Democracies were very active in protecting Chileans (and other Latin Americans) threatened by the regime. The most vivid examples of this activity should be viewed through a primarily humanitarian lens. In the period immediately following the coup,, the National Refugee Commission (CONAR) was set-up by leading church figures to get threatened persons to foreign embassies where they could be protected. The stories are quite harrowing and vivid.

Ambassador Edelstam said at the time that “the role of the Swedish Embassy is to save the lives of people who are in danger. We know there are lists of people who supported the former regime and who are considered by the new military authorities (to be) criminals and therefore could be executed.” Edelstam took the entire Cuban Embassy staff under his protection, and escorted them to an Aeroflot flight out of Chile. New Zealand’s Ambassador, John McArthur, spirited a trade union leader disguised as a woman to the residence before arranging for the Swedish Embassy to arrange for his asylum. While later protecting a Uruguayan woman who had just undergone surgery, Edelstam got in a confrontation with police and was expelled. Mexican Ambassador Gonzalo Martínez Corbalá gave refuge to more than 500 at the embassy and residence. In later testimony to Spanish prosecutors who indicted Pinochet, he noted many of those he sheltered bore signs of torture inflicted at the National Stadium. Two attempted asylum-seekers were shot in the back by police at the embassy door.

Immediately after the coup, roughly 50 terrorized Chileans and foreign nationals likely to be persecuted by the regime came to the door of the Canadian Embassy seeking asylum. Without instructions the young diplomats admitted the Chileans, who remained in the chancery of the embassy until the Canadian government could evacuate them and their families two months later. Venezuela dispatched a plane to get Allende-era foreign minister Orlando Letelier after his release in 1974.

Diplomats continued to act throughout the dictatorship to protect Chileans. Though the massive wave of refugees naturally followed the coup and immediate repression, as late as December 1987 there were more than 500 requests for asylum per month, mostly to Sweden, with large numbers also to Canada and neighboring (and by then democratic) Argentina.

Through holding public meetings with human rights defenders and other threatened Chileans, diplomats granted an element of protection to them.

The Chilean Catholic Church, and the Church-backed Vicariate of Solidarity and those operating under its protection performed the most important acts of witnessing, verifying, investigating and documenting the crimes and human rights violations of the Pinochet regime, in addition to the courageous work undertaken

by many members of the clergy in protecting and defending human rights activists in danger or in prison.

Diplomats performed this role as well in the immediate aftermath of the coup, availing themselves of their immunity to find some of the missing and protect a great number of Chileans and foreign nationals who were sought by the regime in its “State of War.” Their reports not only went back to their governments, but frequently to the world at large through the media, generating international outrage.

Chileans planning the “No” campaign determined early on that election observation during the plebiscite would be essential. Many felt the regime was fully capable of killing to maintain power. Foreign observers “helped (Chileans) feel they could vote with impunity.” Genaro Arriagada, a Christian Democrat scholar who headed the Technical Committee for the No believed that international observers were the “best guarantee” against fraud, or worse – against a move by the regime to maintain power through “disappearing” electoral workers and voters. “Their mere presence in the country is a guarantee,...an insurance. That function is invaluable.” Ambassador Barnes and his colleagues, especially from Latin America, ensured that the observers came – roughly 400 of them, officially as “tourists.” High-profile international observers included US Senators Edward Kennedy and Richard Lugar, as well as former Presidents Carter and Ford. “Had the eyes of the world not been on Chile and had there not been international observers for the plebiscite, than I think that Pinochet in any number of ways would have gotten away with it,” thought the US DCM, George Jones. And so the democratic world kept the pressure on Pinochet to ensure that the 1989 elections were held.

CONCLUSION

Diplomats joined the whole wider community of international NGOs and intergovernmental organizations – and their complex open societies back home – to support Chile’s democratic revival. But the success of the “No” campaign by Chile’s civil society, intellectuals, and democratic opposition to Pinochet was owed to domestic initiative, strategy, and pragmatism.

The latter element had been a traditional feature of Chile’s democratic practice, but was effaced by doctrinaire ideologies in the 1960s. Most Chileans attribute the democratic breakdown in 1973 to domestic factors, despite foreign influence in the 1960s and 1970s. But the experience of losing democracy and its mechanisms to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for nearly two decades has informed Chilean society. Former President Ricardo Lagos states that “there is one consensus today shared by everyone: ‘never again.’ Never again can Chile repeat it...that rupture in Chile’s soul. Never again.”

Belarus: Europe's Last Dictator?

INTRODUCTION

Unlike its neighbors to the West, Belarus relapsed into authoritarianism soon after its transition to democracy began and it became an independent state. While a number of post-socialist countries have had troubled transitions after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the breakup of the USSR in 1991, Belarus remains a special case; deserves the oft-heard appellation “the last dictatorship in Europe.”

Belarus lies on the edge of the former Soviet Union's western frontier, and is predominantly populated by Belarusians – an Eastern Slavic people (along with Russians, Ukrainians and Ruthenians). Situated in the flat “shatter belt” of Eastern Europe, the country has been dominated by stronger regional powers for much of its existence, though it was an integral, even dominant, element of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. While Belarusians are a distinct people, national identity remains an issue.

Soviet Era

Incorporated into the Soviet Union after a brief window of independence after Soviet Russia's separate peace with Germany in 1918, Belarus was split between Poland and the Soviet Union in 1921. Heavy repression and deportations were the norm in the interwar period. In 1939, with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-Aggression Pact, Belarus grew to incorporate ethnically mixed areas (Belarusian/Polish) of what had been eastern Poland.

As a “front line republic,” Byelorussian SSR became in the following decades a center of the Soviet military-industrial complex, as a prosperous showcase center of Soviet heavy industry and high technology engineering.

The explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor just over the southern border in the Ukrainian SSR in April 1986 had a devastating impact on Belarus, where 70% of the fallout fell, particularly in the southern agricultural regions around Homel'. Up to 20% of the country is unsuitable for residence or agriculture. The health effects on millions of Belarusians are being assessed and debated to this day.

When Gorbachev launched into his *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring) policies in an attempt to reinvigorate the moribund Soviet system, increasing the space for social and political discussion, Belarus' own national reawakening was hobbled more than that of other republics by social dislocation, Sovietization and Russification, although the discovery of mass graves from the Stalin era at Kurapaty in 1988 accelerated these stirrings.

While the electoral law favored the communists (who won 84% of the seats), the March 1990 elections for the Supreme Soviet of Belarus were relatively free. The republic declared sovereignty that July. But it was only after the failed August 1991 coup, and a meeting of Byelorussian SSR Supreme Chair Stanislav Shushkevich with the Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin and Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk in December 1991 that dissolved the USSR that Belarus became independent.

Post-Independence Democratic Window – and its Closure

The country faced all the difficulties a “Newly Independent State” might expect: institutions that now had to govern but had been facades for real party power, mis-developed economies, public distrust of government and lack of social capital, etc. Belarus' economy took a heavy hit as producer of finished products for the now nonexistent Soviet market.

The learning curve was steep at the time for all involved – including the democratic countries and international institutions that aimed to assist a democratic transition they had not expected. The international community tended to focus mainly on existing state institutions, large scale economic assistance, Chernobyl relief, and – understandably – getting the nuclear weaponry stationed in Belarus (and Ukraine and Kazakhstan) under central control of Moscow.

Enter Lukashenka...

Belarus' parliament adopted a new constitution with a presidential system in March 1994. In the elections that followed that July, relatively unknown former collective farm director Aliaksandr Lukashenka was elected by a whopping 80% of the vote, winning on a populist platform. He also enjoyed the backing of numerous established and moneyed interests, who assumed he would do their bidding. He constituted a “project” for them.

The following year, independent Belarus elected its first parliament, the 13th Supreme Soviet. Lukashenka did not have a working majority, being able to count on less than a third of the votes. All the same, he began to exhibit the paranoia and bizarre behavior for which he would later earn renown, along with a drive to centralize his control. In September 1995, his armed forces shot down a hot air balloon crossing Belarusian airspace in an international race, killing the American pilot and co-pilot. Pressure also increased on the use of the Belarusian language in this period, following the adoption of Russian as a second state language and the reversal of the state bureaucracy's post-independence transition from Russian to Belarusian.

... Exit Democracy: Lukashenka's Authoritarian Consolidation

Lukashenka moved to systematically marginalize democratic opposition to his rule. His increasingly evident authoritarian bent brought together a strange partnership in the parliament of the Party of Communists of Belarus and economic liberals. Working to head-off impeachment, he developed a clone party, the Communist Party of Belarus, and two others, to siphon support from his adversaries. He held a referendum in November 1996 and then dissolved the parliament, confident that his clone parties, and those he co-opted or divided from within, would allow him to govern comfortably in his new super-presidential system – and not surprisingly succeeded in getting it approved. “By replacing the 13th Supreme Soviet by a Parliamentary Assembly composed of the pro-Lukashenka members of the 13th Supreme Soviet he eliminated the opposition from all state institutions (parliament, Constitutional Court, government, vertical state structure, state-controlled media) and reduced substantially the operational breathing space for the political and social opposition.” “Lukashenka had set up a system more akin to the ‘regime parties’ of the old East Germany.” His use of “administrative resources” – the machinery of state, including the security services (the KGB retains its title to this day), enforced the consolidation of power. Public institutions merely became fronts for essentially unlimited executive power, and elections were fixed to a point that was Soviet in the method of shameless execution. According to Wilson, by “denying any normal space for meaningful contest...public politics since 1996 has often been little more than shadow-boxing.”

Pressure on independent factors of public life – independent broadcasters and publications, academic freedom in educational institutions, civic associations, minority religious congregations, etc. – became increasingly acute in the late 1990s. Opposition figures began to fear assassination or being “disappeared” – a fate that met some former regime officials, former Interior Minister Yury Zahkharanka and Vice Speaker of the Parliament Viktor Hanchar who began to develop plans to oust Lukashenka. One opposition leader, Hienadz Karpenka, died in April 1999 “when a brain hemorrhage was apparently

provoked by coffee-drinking,” according to the official version. Russian ORT network journalist Dzmitry Zavadsky was also “disappeared.”

Helmut Frick, Germany’s Ambassador who arrived in 2001, “expected to see the agony of the old Soviet system. I was somewhat surprised to find how this microcosm was still working. It was quite familiar that all these systems created a façade of an ‘independent press, human rights,’ etc.” Practically speaking, information was rigidly controlled. The same Potemkin freedoms held true for civil society, according to Frick. “Some NGOs could exist, but they were unable to meet. Their contracts to rent venues were not allowed. Print houses wouldn’t accept their commissions.” Lukashenka’s was a “softer regime than the GDR or Romania, but (it was) as efficient in suppressing human rights and the opposition tendency.”

Beginning in 1995, Lukashenka began to pursue a union with Russia. His deluded assumption at the time was that he could assume leadership of the Russia-Belarus Union and become the *vozhd* (leader) of the entire territory through direct elections. The succession of Yeltsin by Vladimir Putin soon robbed him of this delusion. But the union ensured continued preferential economic treatment, most importantly on oil and gas, but also in terms of markets for Belarusian goods. As the isolation of Belarus deepened, Lukashenka in turn deepened his relationships with other dictatorships: Milošević’s Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Iraq, and China. The union was not without its conveniences for well-connected Russian arms dealers, providing a conduit for illicit arms sales, for which Belarus soon became legendary.

Lukashenka’s authoritarian grip tightened through this decade, with a series of faux elections: parliamentary in 2000 and 2004 (along with a referendum to allow a third presidential term), and presidential in 2001 and 2006. He ensured his victories in each with the application of his media dominance (which by now is nearly total, save the Internet, which he aims to control soon), intimidation and harassment of the opposition, and the always useful organs of the state – the so-called “administrative resources.”

By the presidential elections of March 19, 2006, the opposition applied lessons learned from other cases, particularly the Orange Revolution that had occurred next door in Ukraine just over a year before – and which was witnessed in person by many in the Belarusian opposition. These were opposition unity, non-violent discipline, and popular concentration in visible public space while awaiting electoral results, among others. Two opposition challengers, Dr. Aliaksandr Milinkevich and Professor Aliaksandr Kazulin, ran against Lukashenka. But the regime was closing the remaining public space by deregistering and harassing NGOs, for example, and criminalizing assistance to them from abroad. Meanwhile, a crowd of opposition supporters numbering in the thousands assembled in downtown Minsk and prepared to camp out to protest the unfair election results. But the square was ultimately cleared after four days with 400 arrests on the night of camp’s dispersal. Overall, about 1,000 activists were imprisoned during the presidential campaign 2006. A later march to a prison to demand the release of political prisoners, led by Aliaksandr Kazulin, led to the violent assault on him and a number of others. He was imprisoned for “hooliganism” until August 2008. Scores of peaceful demonstrators were violently assaulted and arrested by the regime at a demonstration to mark the 90th anniversary of the short-lived Belarusian People’s Republic. In June 2008, the parliament passed a media law that restricts online reporting. The civil society remains under tight grip of the regime since the criminal code imposes heavy penalties for running nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) without official registration.

Since mid-2008, Belarusian civic advocates both in the country and outside have noted a reduction of pressure by the Lukashenka regime. In August 2008, former presidential candidate Aliaksandr Kazulin, along with two other dissidents, Andrej Kim and Sergei Parsyukevich, was released from jail. The removal of some of the most repressive figures of the regime’s power bloc, such as Security Council Head, Viktor Sheiman, and the commander of the riot police, Dzmitry Paulichenka, a mastermind of

violent crackdowns on civil protests, together with the release of political prisoners and the registration of the opposition movement “For Freedom!” signaled the softening of Lukashenka’s regime and the willingness to abandon some hard-line practices. In an unprecedented move, the three independent media outlets – *Narodnaya Volya*, *Nasha Niva* and *Uzgorak* – were allowed to be published in Belarus and were included in the state distribution network.

The September 2008 parliamentary elections, not surprisingly, resulted in a sweep by government candidates. All 110 seats in the House of Representatives were occupied by pro-government candidates. While the OSCE-ODIHR Election Observation Mission stated that the process “ultimately fell short of OSCE commitments for democratic elections,” but that “there were some minor improvements, which could indicate a step forward.” Despite lack of significant improvement in the electoral process, the European Union (EU) maintained its policy of normalizing relations with Belarus. Many European officials called for continuing the dialogue with Minsk, a policy illustrated by the visit of then EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, to Minsk and his meeting with President Lukashenka in February 2009.

On April 25, 2010, Belarus failed another test for democratization. On that day, voters went to the polls to elect members of local councils. Although more than 21,000 seats on local councils were contested, only roughly 360 opposition candidates competed, and only a handful won seats. Opposition leaders claimed that elections were marred by numerous falsifications, and condemned the local elections campaign as undemocratic. “As before, there are no elections in the Republic of Belarus,” – they said in a joint statement on April 5. International observers, except diplomats already working at foreign embassies in Minsk, were not invited, which was criticized by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in a resolution at the end of April.

Overall, in the first half of 2010, the situation with human rights and democratic freedoms in Belarus has again deteriorated, which can be ascribed to the forthcoming presidential campaign. The latest possible date of the presidential election is February 6, 2011. In May, mass raids were conducted in the offices of the “Tell the Truth” civic campaign and in apartments belonging to representatives from democratic forces not only in Minsk, but across Belarus. On May 6, Vawkavysk entrepreneurs Mikalay Awtukhowich and his associate Uladzimir Asipenka, were given prison sentences of several years by the Supreme Court of Belarus for the illegal handling of weapons. Since the Supreme Court of the Republic of Belarus is the court of the first instance and its verdicts take effect on their announcement, as provided by the Criminal Process Code, the accused were deprived of their right to appeal. The trial appears politically motivated, as Awtukhowich is known for speaking publicly about alleged corruption in government bodies and promoting the rights of entrepreneurs and of Afghan war veterans (the Belarusian SSR suffered the highest number of casualties per capita of any Soviet republic).

In February, the Union of Poles of Belarus (UPB), an ethnic Polish cultural organization (ethnic Poles constitute about 4% of Belarus's 9.7 million people) headed by Andželika Borys, an unrecognized by the Belarusian authorities, came under legal assault. The UPB was denied registration. The so-called “official” Union of Belarusian Poles led by Stanislaw Syamashka, a splinter group from the UPB formed in 2005, is fully backed and recognized by authorities. Since 2005, members of the UPB led by Andželika Borys have been subject to regular harassment and persecution. In February 2010, police seized the Polish House in Iryanets, a small city some 30 miles west of Minsk, forcibly evicting all the UPB activists from the building in favor of the official UPB. In addition, Borys and other activists have been fined, and up to 40 activists have received brief jail sentences in the weeks following the incident. Despite its having been a champion of the Eastern Partnership initiative (see below), Poland lobbied other EU member states to review the EU’s current policy of engagement towards Belarus following this attack on minority rights.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY RESPONSES

The international community's democracies, particularly in Europe and the US, undertook efforts to assist Belarus' independence and democracy in the early 1990s, a period of heady optimism on the part of the established democracies. Much assistance to Belarus at this time focused on securing the nuclear weapons on the country's territory left by the Soviet armed forces and ensuring their shipment to Russia, as well as on treating the health and environmental legacy of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. Democracy assistance focused heavily on state institutions, and economic assistance was channeled through the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. There was not much of a civil society to support. International organizations themselves were adapting, with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe being formed and NATO constructing the North Atlantic Cooperation Council as an anteroom to enlargement.

Lukashenka's election in mid-1994 did not impede the country's entry into NATO's Partnership for Peace program, open to all post-socialist Eurasian states, in January 1995. This arrangement was not strictly security focused: it also included political undertakings in the same vein as the OSCE's Copenhagen commitments. The policies of the international community began to shift in the mid-1990s, when the Belarusian government veered away from its commitments to democratic practice, observance of human rights and rule of law – particularly the 1996 presidential coup. The EU's institutions and the Council of Europe adopted a number of sanctions as a result: freezing contacts and suspending the ratification procedure for the EU-Belarus Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and PACE Special Guest status for Lukashenka's hand-picked parliament.

In response to the government's undercutting of democracy, the OSCE dispatched in 1997, with the full approval of the Belarusian authorities, an Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) headed by German Ambassador Hans Georg Wiewick. The mission had a very broad mandate to provide advice to both governmental and non-governmental actors in Belarus, and to endeavor to get the government to bring its practices into conformity with the international norms to which it subscribed as an OSCE member – including rule of law and freedom of the media. The AMG was a new tool for democratic states to work directly in a country for the implementation of internationally accepted democratic norms, and it was reaffirmed at the Istanbul OSCE Summit in 1999 by the leaders of all OSCE members, including Belarus' Lukashenka Government.

Yet in the same period, there was a bizarre confrontation between the Belarusian government and the diplomatic community over diplomatic residences at Drazdy in Minsk, in an area that also includes the presidential residence. Officially, the eviction of western diplomats from their residences was for "necessary repairs," and many were physically prevented from reentering, with doors welded shut. There are competing theories of why Lukashenka insisted on it. According to one later serving ambassador, it was simply because "Luka is one of those guys who wants to show you who's boss." Another noted that with his Stalinist mentality, Lukashenka didn't *need* a justification, but it was probably that he didn't want foreign diplomats so close to his home. These former residences are now part of a park around President Lukashenka's residence, "guarded like the East-West frontier – with barbed wire." This crisis led to the withdrawal of these ambassadors from the country – in the case of the European countries for some months, in the case of the US, for well over a year. Eventually a "ridiculous[ly small] sum" was paid in compensation to the German government; the US received some compensation but no official approval for a permanent diplomatic residence.

International pressure for a return to democracy and support for civil society and activist NGOs increased in the run up to the September 9, 2001 presidential elections, as did support for civil society actions like election monitoring, get-out-the-vote campaigns, and assistance to independent media. But just as the

international community began to react to the elections, the attacks in New York and Washington, DC occurred, diverting all international attention and allowing Lukashenka greater breathing space for further repression. During this period, the Belarusian, Russian, and some other CIS governments succeeded in forcing the OSCE to accept that OSCE projects had to be approved by the government. The reduced freedom of action of this “legally installed bridgehead needed to coordinate support for the political and social opposition and...free and fair elections,” meant the end of this unique policy tool.

But assistance to Belarus’ growing civil society continued. In 2004, the US Congress adopted the Belarus Democracy Act, authorizing assistance for democratic forces; in essence augmenting resources for assistance that had already been taking place. The EU published a “non-paper” entitled “What the European Union could bring to Belarus” in November 2006, listing the benefits on offer to the country if the government changed its policies on a host of human rights issues. Today, the Lukashenka government continues to rail against what it claims are unfair western conditions, threatening to play a geopolitical card and draw closer to Russia as a result. In an unprecedented collaboration, domestic and international NGOs mobilized against Belarus’ candidacy for a seat on the new UN Human Rights Council in 2007, leading to the UN General Assembly rejection of its bid in favor of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia for the two European seats.

In May 2008, the Belarusian authorities expelled US Ambassador Karen Stewart and a large complement of diplomats in an effort to cripple democracy support activities, though ostensibly in retaliation for sanctions against the Belneftekhim energy concern. Yet, despite the diplomatic row between Minsk and Washington, the US lifted some sanctions in response to the release of political prisoners.

In May 2009, during the Czech EU Presidency, the EU launched its “Eastern Partnership” initiative with six former Soviet republics, including Belarus (the others being Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). The Partnership aims to “accelerate political association and further economic integration” between the EU and these countries. While membership is not a clear prospect, the Partnership is to “facilitat(e) approximation toward the European Union.” In June 2009, then-EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner visited Minsk, promising cooperation on “a wide range of areas of mutual interest.” In a probable reference to Russia, Lukashenka said Belarus was intent on improving relations “no matter whom that displeases.”

The European Parliament urged in its December 2009 resolution on Belarus to give a new impetus to the dialogue between Belarus and the EU through inter-parliamentary cooperation within EURONEST, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Eastern Partnership. The resolution also called on Belarusian authorities to abolish the Criminal Code’s Article 193-1 that criminalizes acting on behalf of an unregistered organization, stop the practice of denying registration to political parties and non-governmental organizations, and create favorable conditions for the operation of NGOs and private media outlets.

The thaw in relations between Minsk and Western democracies is new, and comes at a time when the divide has grown between Minsk and Moscow. Belarus needs foreign investment and loans, as the economy, long a selling point for Lukashenka, is in trouble. The US and EU have made their overtures to the Belarusian government in the hope that these will assist the country’s transition to genuine democracy. It is too early to say whether the easing of pressure on Belarusian civil society is a sign of serious policy shift. Civic activists noted in 2009 that there is “more freedom in the air” and “definitely less repression,” but caution that only the release of the political prisoners is concrete.

In contrast to the hope generated at that time, a recent new wave of repression against civil society in spring 2010 gives little ground for optimism. The regime’s talk of liberalization primarily concerns the economic, not political, sphere. Despite high-level visits like that of former EU foreign policy chief Javier

Solana, pressure is mounting on civil society and any elements of opposition, often through the courts. Though the EU is still willing to make overtures toward Belarus, on May 19, European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek called on Belarusian authorities to immediately desist in its persecution of civil society. Belarusian activists doubt any political opening prior to upcoming presidential elections.

RESOURCES AND ASSETS OF DIPLOMATS IN BELARUS

The democratic diplomatic community in Minsk includes EU members, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria and Romania. The United States also has an Embassy, as do Serbia, Turkey, Georgia, Ukraine, Japan, South Korea, India and Israel. Other democracies cover Belarus from embassies in Moscow, Warsaw, Vilnius, or Kyiv. The European Commission opened in April 2008 its representative office in Minsk (now the Delegation of the EU to Belarus), finally giving it a direct presence on the ground, though thus far it is seen by Belarusians as having had a limited impact. The Delegation's mandate allows it only to assist the government in promoting institution building and developing relations with civil society and to monitor the overall situation. On June 8, 2009, the Council of Europe opened its Information Point in the Belarusian capital, intended to inform Belarusians about Council of Europe activities and convey European values and standards, particularly in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Diplomats on the ground in Minsk use the resources at their disposal, sometimes quite creatively, to assist civic and democratic activists. A wide cross-section of diplomats have employed their diplomatic **immunity** on behalf of dissidents, through visits to them in prisons and other detention facilities.

Minsk-based diplomats could count on the strong **support of home authorities** – more than most diplomats can count on. This backing was manifest in public statements by senior officials. For example, US Ambassador Karen Stewart was able to arrange for an audience with President Bush for a broad group of Belarusian civil society and opposition representatives. The French Ambassador arranged similar high-level meetings with Aliaksandr Milinkevich when he was the main opposition candidate for the 2006 presidential elections, as have the Czechs, Poles and others.

The **influence** of diplomatic missions in Belarus on Lukashenka's policies varies, so coordination among these missions is crucial to maximize their collective access and leverage. Most recently, missions have collaborated to attain the unconditional release of political prisoners, achieving some success — by August 2008 all political prisoners were released, including Aliaksandr Kazulin, though at least 10 activists continued to serve "restricted freedom" sentences that permit them to leave their homes only for work. Diplomats on the ground also convey to their governments whom to target in personal sanctions, for example, to build leverage on the government. These lists have expanded over time to include figures involved in repression, undermining the electoral process, and regime-connected business leaders.

Many embassies and other diplomatic missions also have dedicated embassy **funds** to assist civil society actors in Belarus and Belarusians outside toward promoting democratic values. Most of these funds are channeled through projects that do not require governmental approval, such as scholarships and other support for students who left Belarus fleeing repression or who remain in Belarus but have been expelled for political activism.

Solidarity with Belarusians seeking a freer political system has been a consistent point for the diplomatic community. For example, the OSCE AMG "established a fund for support to families of victims of prosecution, which included legal advice and or legal defense in court." Belarusian civic and opposition activists note solidarity is best displayed by diplomatic visibility at events.

The international and domestic **legitimacy** of diplomats' efforts to assist those trying to instill democratic practice in Belarus has been a pivotal tool. The fact that Belarus is a member of the OSCE, which entails

the formal and legal embrace of a whole host of democratic norms gives the OSCE mission access to prisoners denied to other diplomats. The wide-ranging OSCE AMG mandate allowed it to facilitate negotiations between the government and opposition in the (vain) hope of ending the deadlock prior to parliamentary and presidential elections.

USING THE DIPLOMATS' TOOLBOX IN BELARUS

Golden Rules

The democratic diplomatic corps in Belarus makes a practice of **listening** to the concerns and positions of civil society and the repressed political opposition, both in frequent meetings and by attending public events. The EU heads of mission conduct regular collective field visits to the regions of Belarus to meet representatives of civil society and local government.

A number of diplomats, such as former US Ambassador George Krol, have made a point of learning to speak in Belarusian for public addresses and interaction with Belarusians, despite – or because of – the efforts by the Lukashenka regime to squeeze Belarusian out of the public square. This conveys **respect** for Belarusians. Swedish diplomat Stefan Ericsson “is very popular in Minsk... (he) speaks Belarusian better than 70% of Belarusians,” according to one Belarusian civil society figure. A senior opposition advisor said that such ability to speak Belarusian “is very important for those with national consciousness.” Ericsson also has translated Belarusian literature into Swedish. Embassies have assisted in getting Belarusian literature translated into English, German, and French to introduce the country to a European audience. To commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Belarusian National Republic, several senior diplomats took dictation in Belarusian at the Francisak Skaryna Belarusian Language Society in Minsk. In the words of one Belarusian civic activist, the supportive diplomatic role has been “tremendous” while the government has worked to identify use of the Belarusian language with opposition political activity. In 2009, the dictation event was repeated, with ten foreign diplomats participating. Another example of the interest the diplomatic corps demonstrates in Belarusian culture is the rock festival held in 2006 at the US ambassador's residence where 16 rock bands, most of them banned from performing in Belarus, performed for a predominantly Belarusian audience who could see them live nowhere else.

Coordination among diplomatic missions, including strategizing and **sharing** of information, is a stock feature of the Minsk diplomatic corps. The EU heads of missions meet regularly, every Tuesday. Ambassador Frick remembers that the EU had “high standing” with the Belarusian population and was an “attractive brand,” so there is a premium on being seen to act together on the ground. The US has a more fraught relationship with the Belarusian authorities than the EU, so has less access, making coordination all the more important. **Sharing** ensures that trials and events are covered, that recommendations to capitals are in sync, and that regime efforts to divide the democracies – on unconditional release of political prisoners, for example – do not succeed. There is also coordination between the US, EU, and other concerned countries at the capital level and in donor meetings, which take place roughly every two months, usually in Brussels.

This was not always the case. Friction among staffs of diplomatic missions, often generated not only by personality conflicts among the opposition, but also fomented by the Belarusian security services, undermined unity of effort. Prior to the 2001 presidential elections, Ambassadors Kozak and Wieck met to establish a positive working relationship.

Truth in Communications

The regular **reporting** of diplomats from Minsk has conveyed the deepening level of repression through the consolidation of the Lukashenka regime, and has generated targeted policies to leverage more space for free civic activity in Belarus. The OSCE AMG, for example, with its wide mandate, reported regularly to the OSCE Permanent Council on the repression of the regime, including the “disappearance” of regime opponents in the late 1990s and the jailing of many others.

The importance of media dominance to the Lukashenka government is hard to overstate. Most people get their news from television, and that is state-controlled – and often mesmerizingly bizarre in its programming. The print realm is hardly any better. Ambassador Frick recalls that “small newspapers were allowed to appear, but they...couldn’t be distributed throughout the capital – so their messages were kept marginal. The folks outside Minsk didn’t even *know* that there was a different line.” A recent policy paper states that “dissenting voices and media outlets (have been) silenced by repressive media laws and licensing rules, libel suits, arbitrary closure...discriminatory pricing for print and distribution, and systematic harassment of journalists.”

The EU, US and others work to **inform** the Belarusian public through sponsoring or hosting broadcast efforts into Belarus from abroad, especially neighboring countries, including the EU-funded European Radio for Belarus, Polish and Lithuanian Belsat, and US-sponsored Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. However, due to their being primarily on shortwave frequencies, the listenership of these stations is unfortunately rather low. A breakthrough effort was the launch of the first independent Belarusian TV, Belsat, operating from Poland, on Human Rights Day, December 10, 2007. Although denied the registration in Belarus and accessible only via satellite, this TV channel has a broad network of own correspondents in Belarus and provides independent and unbiased news coverage exclusively in Belarusian language. The TV is funded by Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs with support of US Department of State, the British Embassy and Irish Aid. According to the TV-channel’s statistical data, it is watched by 10-20% of Belarusian people – between one and two million people. Diplomats work around the media blockade to inform the public. *Radio Racyja*, supported by the Polish Government, is broadcast from the Polish border city of Białystok. The November 2006 EU non-paper “What the European Union could bring to Belarus,” was used by the EU diplomatic missions as a platform for presentations not only in Minsk but country-wide, working around the Lukashenka regime’s control of the broadcast media and severe strictures on print journalism. With the arrival of the EC’s own representation in Minsk, Belarusian civic activists hope that this outreach will grow. Diplomats also convey information materials in and out of Belarus – grant reports, records, magazines, newspapers and other communications.

Ambassador Stewart notes that while Belarusian TV follows all her public appearances, if any of the footage is used, it is never to allow her to speak, but to cast her activities in a negative light. Ambassador Frick made a point of telling the Belarusian media about his visit to hunger striking opposition figures. The existence of the external broadcasting channels, however, provides one method for diplomats to communicate unmediated to a Belarusian audience in a roundabout way.

Diplomats also avail themselves of new media to directly engage the public. British Ambassador Nigel Gould-Davies, who served in Belarus from 2007 to 2009, was an advocate of such direct people-to-people contact. He used an informal, open style of communications with citizens, kept his own blog on the Internet (<http://zubritanets.livejournal.com/>), and often communicated with young activists and bloggers.

Working with the Government

Given the nature of the Lukashenka regime, working with the government is almost always difficult, and often thankless. But Belarus offers two perhaps unique diplomatic examples: the first involving the OSCE AMG under Ambassador Hans Georg Wieck, the second involving an attempt to construct a roadmap out of isolation by the American Ambassador, Mike Kozak.

The OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group was mandated in 1997 “to ‘assist’ in the establishment of democratic institutions and was duty bound to monitor the complying of Belarus with the OSCE Human Rights and Democracy standards.” **Advising** the government on how to return to democratic practice after its 1996 departure, specifically on “re-introducing OSCE standards into the legislation on parliament, electoral code, media and penal code” was Ambassador Wieck’s mission. He established separate working groups with the government and opposition, in an effort to achieve concrete progress. The unique mandate and leverage of the mission was brought to a halt in 2002, with the Belarusian authorities denying visa renewal to its international staff in an effort to force the OSCE mission to clear all projects with the government, supported in the OSCE by Russia and others in the CIS. The successor mission was launched in 2003 having agreed to that stipulation.

Ambassador Mike Kozak endeavored to initiate a constructive **dialogue** with the Belarusian authorities soon after he arrived. Lukashenka and his officials complained about the “unfair” sanctions and restrictions that were applied to the regime, and asked how to get rid of them. Ambassador Kozak sat down with then-First Deputy Foreign Minister Martynou and developed a precise roadmap, with actions on one side leading to corresponding reactions on the other. He began the process by asking Martynou to list what specific actions he wanted from the US government, while Kozak made a list of his own, listing actions the US wanted the Belarusian government to take. Kozak recalled “What he wanted was a restoration of (trade privileges) foreign assistance, etc – all in the economic and diplomatic sectors. What I listed was the election commission, a release of political prisoners, media freedom, and an investigation of the disappearances – all in the human rights and democracy columns. Then, we tried to sequence and link these wishes, to determine good faith. It was literally cut and pasted, with scissors and tape.” Unfortunately, though there was broad approval in the Belarusian government for this approach, it was scuppered by the Chairman of the Security Council Viktor Sheiman and Lukashenka himself: “he balked at investigation of some killings.” But the exercise was worthwhile all the same, as “we drove some wedges within the (parts of the regime) that (were) reasonable, and only Luka (Lukashenka) and his close cronies rejected it. It was still worth doing to prove that there was not unremitting, implacable hostility...I traded on this capital for the rest of my time there.” The unconditional release of all political prisoners remains linked to a lifting of certain sanctions and restrictions.

Various EU embassies hold consultations with state administrative bodies, particularly with the Foreign Ministry. In 2007, during its local presidency, Slovakia consulted with the Belarusian MFA’s political directors, consular departments, and international law departments. “The aim of all these activities is not to support the self-isolation of (the) regime, but (rather) to create basic preconditions for future full-fledged dialogue and cooperation” following liberalization, according to Slovak *Chargé d’affaires* Ľubomir Rehák.

Belarusian civil society figures appreciate the value of such dialogues. One notes the utility of contacts with mid-level officials, to illustrate what would be possible for “a different kind of Belarus.” But he adds “such engagement should not come at the expense of civil society, nor should it be detrimental... An increase in engagement should also come with a boost in assistance to civil society.”

In addition, the broader diplomatic community regularly **demarche** the Belarusian authorities on their violation of internationally recognized human rights norms (such as the “disappearance” or imprisonment of opponents), and advised home authorities on which responsible officials, regime associates, and firms should be subject to asset freezes and visa bans. Belarusian opposition figures and independent observers, as well as diplomats, make the connection between concerted diplomatic pressure from ambassadors and the release of a majority of political prisoners. Yet there is some disagreement among some Belarusian analysts on how effective the visa bans and asset freezes are. One opined “they introduce sanctions and Luka runs with these sanctions to Moscow...So, from Luka’s perspective, the US is useful idiot... actually some of them...go on the UN visa (*laissez passer*).” But others are adamant that these sanctions do bite, citing the government’s constant efforts to get them lifted, to the level of public statements by Foreign Minister Martynou, as proof.

Following the release of some high-profile political prisoners (Aliaksandr Kazulin among them) and Lukashenka’s shutout of all opposition from parliament, the government engaged in consultation with the OSCE on media and the election law. The EU has also begun engaging in an official human rights dialogue with the Belarusian government. In October 2008, the EU suspended visa sanctions against most Belarusian officials (except of the head of the country’s CEC and four persons suspected of involvement in the 1999-2000 disappearances of Lukashenka’s opponents) for six months and endorsed dialogue with Belarusian authorities on matters of technical cooperation. In March 2009, the suspension of the sanctions was extended another nine months to encourage the Belarusian government to carry out “further concrete measures towards democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.” Finally, in November 2009, EU foreign ministers agreed to extend the suspension until October 2010 to encourage further democratic advances of Belarus.

In June 2009, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe voted in favor to grant the Belarusian Parliament’s Special Guest status, suspended since 1997, with the aim of engaging in a political dialogue with the authorities while supporting the strengthening of democratic forces and civil society in the country,” so long as Belarus abolishes the death penalty. However, the recent execution of two convicts in March 2010, the government’s treatment of the Polish minority, the absence of international observers during the local elections, and the authorities’ refusal to permit the establishment of the Council of Europe’s East European School of Political Studies led to the suspension of high-level contacts with Belarusian officials in late April 2010 amid “a lack of progress” in the country toward the Council’s standards.

Reaching Out

Diplomats in Minsk help **connect** promising project ideas and potential Belarusian partners to foundations and NGOs outside. They can “act as contact points and mediators for us,” said one international civil society figure. Diplomats ensure that Belarusian civil society figures meet visiting officials, or get appointments with them when they are outside the country.

Diplomats also connect dissidents to external assistance, for example by facilitating efforts by the German Marshall Fund to allow opposition figures and their families to vacation in Slovakia to allow them to decompress. Lithuania has done something similar. Opposition leaders and their families – Aliaksandr Milinkevich and Iryna Kazulina, for example – have been able to receive medical care in the free world, in Poland, Germany and the US. Western diplomats, as a part of their usual diplomatic business, also regularly **convened** civil society and opposition activists in Belarus in efforts not only to give them a place to meet away from government surveillance, but also to encourage this often fractious group to work together toward the common goal of reestablishing democracy. This message has been reiterated

throughout the diplomatic community, which met them at their embassies, residences, dissidents' homes, and outside Minsk.

Given the pressures faced by Belarusian civil society and democratic opposition, **facilitating** the cooperation among this divided group is a challenge for diplomats. The basics of "retail" democratic politicking, such as direct constituency development to develop support, were often alien to the opposition, who were inclined to rely heavily on international support – and attempt to be favorites of different sponsors. This seems to have lessened since the 2001 and 2006 election debacles, with a growing recognition that opposition needs to hang together or hang separately. According to Kozak, the joint delegation "got" that they needed to work together toward reinstituting democracy in Belarus before they could oppose each others' policy preferences – now was not that time.

The OSCE's AMG also facilitated the domestic observation of Belarusian elections from 1999-2001. A pilot project in 1999 for local elections was successful, and was followed by training thousands of observers for the subsequent parliamentary and presidential elections: 6,000 in 2000 and 15,000 in 2001. These efforts were opposed by both Belarus and Russia within the OSCE. The domestic observation effort was thwarted the day before the election, when the government rescinded accreditation for the observation coalition, *Viasna* ("spring").

While most **financing** is allocated at the capital level, many embassies in Minsk have funds they can disburse directly as needed to assist civil society projects. Most of these grants are small so as to work around Belarusian bureaucratic hurdles, and some are administered from outside the country, such as the Dutch MATRA program, which aims at supporting "social transformation in Central and Eastern Europe," administered from the embassy in Warsaw. The US government, Sweden's SIDA, Denmark's DANIDA, Polish Aid and Norway are enumerated in a recent study as being the main funders of civic activity in Belarus. Diplomats note that for Belarusian conditions, flexibility on their part, and the part of their own government aid agencies, is essential. Education is an area in which diplomats play an important role in directing funding. The Norwegian Embassy in Kyiv is helping repressed Belarusian students continue their education through the Nordic Council and EC mechanisms. The European Humanities University (EHU), once based in Minsk, was driven out by the Belarusian authorities who view it as subversive. The Lithuanian Government invited the school to continue as a university-in-exile based in Vilnius, and granted it accreditation and premises to use free of charge. The vice rector says, "Our project is academic. The authorities have a sort of interpretation of our project as a political project." The US and EU have collaborated to fund the EHU in exile in Vilnius. One student notes that at EHU "you can receive a free education, where you are provoked to express your thoughts, your feelings, and where you can discuss, you can argue. And if you don't like something, your opinion will always be taken into consideration." The Nordic Council of Ministers, the European Commission, and individual governments such as Hungary and Norway, are funders for about 650 students. The EU is primarily giving scholarships, while the US is funding their distance learning program, which is especially useful for students who have been expelled or kept out of school for their activism. The Nordic Council also funds up to 100 Belarusian students studying in Ukraine. Poland's Kalinauski program is among the largest educational efforts undertaken by the international community, with 300 Belarusian students being able to study in Polish universities. The Human Rights House in Vilnius, established by Norway, Sweden, the Czech Republic and the US, provides premises, accommodation and staff for conferences, training, research and studies outside Belarus.

Diplomatic embassies and missions also **showcase** democratic practices and norms for Belarusians, and not merely through events in Minsk, as the series of press conferences and public consultations around the EU's "What the EU could bring to Belarus" non-paper shows. There are other notable examples, such as the Swedish Association of Local Authorities' work with its counterparts in the regions of Belarus. To

showcase democratic practice, US Ambassador Stewart held a “Super Tuesday” party for Belarusians around the 28 primaries and caucuses held in the United States in February, contrasting by example the array of open contests with wide field of candidates with Belarus’ simple and closed system. She also holds annually a concert at her residence with Belarusian rock bands that cannot perform publicly in the country or get radio airplay, giving them some visibility. She hopes that this year’s concert can be broadcast on radio into Belarus for a wider domestic audience.

Defending Democrats

Demonstrating solidarity with and support for civic and democratic activists in Belarus is a frequent activity for diplomats posted in Minsk, and helps protect dissidents from repression to a degree. Often EU ambassadors and others make a point of being seen together in meeting civil society. A visit to dissidents on hunger strike by a group of ambassadors elicited an angry response from the regime, which perceived public attention of this kind as a threat. Ambassador Wieck recalls that “on the eve of the presidential elections in 2001 Ambassadors of the EU countries and the Head of the OSCE mission accompanied the protest march of the opposition,” along with some members of the European Parliament. More recently, diplomats have made public statements about the continued imprisonment of Aliaksandr Kazulin. The US Ambassador, Karen Stewart, used to hold Christmas parties for the families of political prisoners. Slovak *Chargé d'affaires* Lubomir Rehak met political prisoner Zmitser Barodka upon his release from prison and escorted him home to meet his newborn twins, to ensure he did not face rearrest. In December 2007, the US Ambassador and Slovak *Charge d’Affaires* visited a leader of the youth opposition group Malady Front, Zmitser Fedaruk, at Minsk’s Clinical Hospital No. 9 after his being beaten-up at an unsanctioned opposition demonstration.

Diplomats also regularly meet with members of religious communities that often come under official pressure and harassment. Embassy personnel at all levels have also demonstrated these principles off the radar through direct engagement with the population on a whole host of topics – including utterly apolitical activities such as quilting – to forge people-to-people contacts. Such outreach has not been a constant. Civil society figures noted that some ambassadors have been less comfortable with a forward-leaning role, so that Belarusian civil society – and younger embassy staff – have experienced a sort of “whiplash” effect of shifting sharply from strong engagement to more cautious “old school” bilateral diplomacy.

Of the frontline support activities undertaken by diplomats in Belarus, **witnessing** trials and **verifying** the whereabouts and condition of political prisoners are among the most important. This is arranged through coordination among the democratic embassies (EU+US, essentially) to ensure that all such trials are covered, and prisoners checked-on. In one case, a professor, Yury Bandazheusky, was targeted by the regime for publishing a study that was at variance with the government’s policy that the dangers from the Chernobyl disaster were dissipating – this line being essential to restarting agriculture and industry in the region, a government priority. He was jailed for 8-10 years on trumped up charges that he was taking bribes from students. The EU worked successfully to get him released from jail. He was then furloughed to a collective farm, still under guard, where the German and French Ambassadors came to pay an unannounced visit to check on him. The professor ultimately was allowed to emigrate.

In undertaking such activities, diplomats can to a certain extent **protect** civic activists and dissidents. A host of civil society figures, Belarusian and foreign, agree that diplomatic presence at civic and opposition activity helps insulate Belarusians from regime repression. The broad diplomatic presence at the March 2006 demonstrations against election fraud is an oft-repeated example by Belarusian activists. But this pertains not only to demonstrations, or meeting over tea at the embassy or residence, but also to underground theater events and concerts. This engagement is part of standard operating procedure for the

diplomatic corps, especially those from Central and Eastern Europe. When former opposition presidential candidate Aliaksandr Milinkevich was detained in February 2008 with aides, the German Ambassador and US diplomats went to the detention facility where they were held, and the German Ambassador telephoned Milinkevich directly. During the March 2006 election and subsequent police crackdown, EU Common Foreign and Security Policy High Representative Javier Solana phoned Milinkevich. In the most recent cases of the imprisonment of Awtukhowich Asipenka on May 6, 2010 and of raids at the offices and flats of the Tell the Truth! activists on May 18, 2010, the British Embassy, as acting local presidency of the EU in Minsk, immediately expressed its deep concern about the events in respective official statements.

Western diplomats in Belarus have personally observed elections. For the local elections held on April 25, 2010, fifty representatives from 24 embassies were accredited by the Central Election Commission, including five US embassy officers, four diplomats representing Sweden and Lithuania each, and three representatives from the Polish, British, and Slovak Embassies. Interestingly, China also deployed three diplomatic election observers.

CONCLUSION / LOOKING FORWARD

Belarus remains strongly in the grip of President Aleksandr Lukashenka and his national security state, which further consolidated its control after the 2006 elections. “Belarus is like an experimental laboratory, where 10 million people are being kept in an ideology of totalitarianism and populism,” according to opposition leader Anatoly Labiedzka. However, due to the worsening relations with Russia, who for years supported Belarus regime with preferential economic treatment, and a faltering economy, in 2008 Aleksandr Lukashenka declared his willingness to pursue a dialogue with the West, released high-profile political prisoners and allowed the registration and distribution of some independent media outlets. The EU and the West enthusiastically responded by lifting some sanctions and engaging in dialogue with Belarusian authorities.

Despite Lukashenka’s newly proclaimed adherence to reforms and liberalization, above all in the economic sphere, the situation with human rights and freedom has again deteriorated in the first half of 2010, including persecution of civil society activists and journalists and the emergence of new political prisoners. The escalating pressure on civil society may be related to the forthcoming presidential election that is to be held on February 6, 2011 at the latest. At the same time, vulnerable economy that last year has been sustained with IMF loans and complicated relations with Russia will probably compel Lukashenka to balance between Russia and the West and to make efforts not to disappoint the West too much, providing windows of opportunity for civil society and political opposition.

Belarusian civil society and the opposition, not often on the same page, are continuing to undertake a great deal of soul-searching on how to move forward in an effort to transform Belarus into a democratic state. In this effort, the democratic diplomatic community is openly challenged to remain engaged, provide constant monitoring and reporting on the situation, tighten its coordination so each democracy can play to its strengths, and use the emerging windows of opportunity by which they can support Belarus’ growing number of democrats, who will ultimately prevail.

The Suffering of Burma/Myanmar

INTRODUCTION

Burma/Myanmar,¹⁴ a country of about 55 million at the crossroads of South and Southeast Asia, is a multiethnic nation with a long history as a state and an empire, though without a history of successful adaptation to a changing world. There has always been a strong social, cultural, and even political role for the dominant religion of Buddhism. As author Thant Myint-U points out, the Burmese military dictatorship is the longest-lasting military dictatorship in the world.

Brought incrementally under British colonial control in the early 19th Century, Burma/Myanmar became an independent state anew soon after the end of the Second World War, led by General Aung San and his Burma National Army, which turned on the occupying Japanese in 1943. He was assassinated by rivals in July 1947, but achieved his goal of ensuring Burmese independence, which was declared in January 1948. The armed forces – the *Tatmadaw* – had a position of central respect in independent Burma/Myanmar.

Though there were continuing insurgencies by Burma/Myanmar's numerous ethnic minorities, it was hoped that a democratic Burma/Myanmar would be able to develop a peaceful *modus vivendi* for all its citizens. At that point, Burma/Myanmar was seen as having excellent prospects, being the largest rice exporter in the world, rich in minerals, rubber and timber, and possessing a larger educated managerial class than most other new states. The country held democratic elections, became an important founding member in the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1950s, and played an active role on the world stage. In 1960, the Burmese elected U Nu as Prime Minister, and the following year Burmese diplomat U Thant succeeded Dag Hammarskjöld as the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

In 1962, a military coup by General Ne Win brought Burma/Myanmar's fledgling democracy and international engagement to a halt with his "Burmese path to socialism," an isolationist policy intended to be a blend of "Marxist economics, Buddhism, and autocratic, military-dominated political rule." All political parties, unions, and associations were outlawed, protests brutally suppressed, and the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) served as a civilian front for military rule. Military intelligence services became ubiquitous, "producing a sense of fear and foreboding that permeates society." Many of Burma/Myanmar's ethnic minorities – Karen, Shan, Chin, Karenni, Kachin, and scores of others – had never reconciled themselves to the dominance of ethnic Burmans (the dominant and largest single group – "Burmese" usually connotes all peoples of Burma/Myanmar) post-independence, and increasingly saw the *Tatmadaw* as an occupying and oppressive force, increasingly rebelled against central control.

All aspects of governance were brought under the control of the *Tatmadaw*, including, most disastrously, the economy. Rice production began a long downward slide, and economic development began to increasingly lag behind neighboring Thailand and Malaysia, while physical plant decayed. An informal economy emerged to provide what the official economy could not, offering ample opportunity for corruption by the military. The country's professional class and academic institutions suffered greatly from the isolation and the militarization of society.

Not a strategic interest internationally, Burma/Myanmar effectively disappeared from international consciousness for two and a half decades, as the regime resisted all elements of external influence. The

¹⁴ Both Myanmar and Burma are titles the citizens of the country use. After the seizure of power by the military junta, the then-SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) formally changed the name of the country to the more formal of the two, Myanmar. It also renamed the capital, Rangoon, "Yangon." The choice of terminology is often seen to carry a political connotation: most democracy activists continue to call the country Burma and capital Rangoon. The use of "Myanmar" is often seen to confer legitimacy on the regime that formally adopted the name.

insurgencies which had plagued Burma/Myanmar from independence gained ground, exacerbated by the *Tatmadaw's* harsh tactics involving violence against civilians. These insurgent armies sometimes relied on the opium trade to finance their operations. An Ambassador in Rangoon in 1987-1990 speculated that these insurgencies were allowed to continue on a low boil by the regime because they provided a useful justification for the necessity of military rule and prerogatives.

Burma/Myanmar's relative advantage at independence of having an educated stratum of civil servants was squandered from 1962 on, with the stifling of educational exchanges and the chilling effect of dictatorship on intellectual freedom. Well before the 1988 crackdown Burma/Myanmar's educational establishments were in sad decline, both physically and in terms of their ability to develop Burma/Myanmar's next generations. This deterioration has only increased since, stunting Burma/Myanmar's capabilities to adapt to higher-end global economic activity.

In 1987, in an attempt to rein in the black market it had itself created, the regime declared currency in circulation to be worthless. This naturally generated a public outcry, leading to demonstrations in Rangoon and elsewhere. Short-lived in themselves, they represented a crystallization of discontent, and tension with the regime simmered in the months that followed, erupting periodically through mid-1988. Ne Win resigned after 23 years as unelected ruler, transferring power to senior officers handpicked to succeed him. But his successor, General Sein Lwin, known as the "Butcher of Burma" for his brutal suppression of student demonstrations in 1962, was not acceptable to the Burmese street, which began to mobilize in August for what became known as the 8-8-88 movement.

A massacre of students, doctors, and nurses in front of Rangoon's main hospital on August 11 was a turning point. Disbelief that the army would shoot doctors and nurses caused the residual social stock of the *Tatmadaw* to fall precipitously. Protests broadened to include the professional classes and importantly Buddhist monks, and to other cities and towns, including the northern urban center of Mandalay. After street violence driven by the regime killed 112 people in Rangoon, Sein Lwin, in turn, was forced to step aside, and the first civilian leader since 1962, Attorney General U Maung Maung took the helm, but only in title. The *Tatmadaw* remained the power in Burma/Myanmar.

U Maung Maung declared in a national broadcast the need for economic reform and patience on the part of the Burmese, and raising the possibility of – but did not commit to – multiparty elections.

The opposition was not united. Former Prime Minister U Nu pressed for the interim return of the last elected government, overthrown in 1962. Democrats around scholar and UK resident Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of independence leader Aung San, disagreed, and asserted it was time for more thorough change. Discussions were ongoing to resolve this and announce a joint interim government on September 21. The announcement by U Maung Maung that elections would be held under supervision of the current, and not an interim government, as soon as late October were roundly rejected by all opposition leaders and the situation became increasingly militant. One student group approached the US embassy seeking weapons with which to fight, and Buddhist monks led an armed assault on an army position forcing the surrender of 100 troops. Opposition leaders issued a joint call for restraint.

The army launched a violent crackdown nationwide. Hundreds were killed by the army, including monks and students. Civilians armed themselves and fought pitched street battles with whatever weapons they had at hand – mostly knives and slingshots. Troops fired into the crowd outside the US Embassy, proving the expectations of many demonstrators and diplomats wrong that the location would protect them. Students put up posters calling for "appropriate action" against the army. Aung San Suu Kyi stated that the people "are not prepared to give in, because their resentment and bitterness has reached such

proportions.” By September 24, the army’s control over Rangoon, Mandalay, and the other cities of the country appeared secure to diplomats and journalists. All opposition leaders were jailed or detained.

Estimates of the numbers killed ranged between three and four thousand. The *Tatmadaw*’s new regime was called the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which renamed the country Myanmar, and its capital Yangon. They mounted a campaign to resettle forcibly tens of thousands of presumed opposition supporters outside the main cities. Many students and others sought refuge in Thailand, where most languished in a stateless status for years, with little international attention to their plight or efforts to assist on the part of democratic governments.

At the end of May 1990, the SLORC organized elections in which the opposition could participate. Western diplomats, human rights activists and journalists made the logical assumption that the elections would be neither free nor fair, given the continued imprisonment of opposition leaders like Aung San Suu Kyi, who now headed a unified opposition, the National League for Democracy (NLD). Campaigning was essentially nonexistent, there was no free media. “In a free election, the National League for Democracy would win. Even under severe restrictions, it would do well if the votes are counted fairly,” said one diplomat at the time. While voters were afraid, they turned out to cast their votes in a process that was indeed free, delivering a landslide NLD victory— 386 of the 495 seats in parliament. The SLORC apparently had been confident that its puppet party would perform well in the countryside and overwhelm the urban vote. “It showed how positively obtuse and divorced from its own people the military was... They were pretty confident,” noted then-US Ambassador Burton Levin.

As soon as the gravity of its error sank in, the SLORC initiated a rear-guard action to deny the election results, stating that an NLD government would not be “strong” enough. “The military...came up with one regulation and restriction after another...trash(ing) the election results,” according to former Ambassador Levin. Levin noted the military self-justification was that intellectuals and businessmen could not be trusted – “we are the only ones with the requisite patriotism and selflessness to hold the country together.” The regime prioritized establishing territorial control over all of Burma/Myanmar, intensifying efforts to crush ethnic minority efforts at *de facto* or *de jure* independence, even in cases where hostilities had stalled. The regime also began to expel the Muslim minority Rohingyas, from western Burma/Myanmar, into Thailand and Bangladesh. They were deprived of citizenship under a law passed by the Ne Win regime.

The National Convention was established by the SLORC in 1993 to develop a new constitution, but failed to do so. In 1997, the SLORC changed its name to the State Peace and Development Council, or SPDC. But while there were some changes in the personnel lineup, the military’s dominance and the repressive apparatus of the regime was unchanged.

To call the *Tatmadaw* a state within a state is an understatement – as far as they are concerned, the generals *are* the state. A statement made on Armed Forces Day in late March 2010 – the only one in bold print on the English press release – was “the nation will be strong only when the armed forces are strong.” The SPDC is theoretically a collegial body, but Senior General Than Shwe is the *primus inter pares* and has demoted, sidelined or imprisoned former senior officers who he considered insufficiently loyal.

The SLORC/SPDC needed foreign investment to fuel the *Tatmadaw*’s buildup, so the regime began to open up economically – but only to the benefit of the regime and its all-controlling patronage system. There was considerable foreign investment in the 1990s, particularly in the petroleum and gas sectors, logging, mining, and fishing, but also in consumer goods. Few of the benefits have trickled down to the general population. Furthermore, the extraction of these natural resources often entails major environmental degradation.

The opposition was outlawed and heavily restricted, with Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest with rare exception since 1988. The SPDC announced a “roadmap to disciplined democracy” in 2003, but this was derided as a sham by the NLD, which called for international sanctions and a boycott of tourism to Burma/Myanmar. Fearing popular backlash despite the massive repressive apparatus, SPDC leader and *Tatmadaw* commander Senior General Than Shwe had a purpose-built capital city built in Burma/Myanmar’s northern highlands to isolate the increasingly wealthy leadership further from the general population, and even from civilian members of the government. Reportedly, Than Shwe made the decision after consulting his court astrologer.

In September 2007, rising fuel costs sparked civil unrest anew in Rangoon and elsewhere in Burma/Myanmar. Resistance grew, drawing in thousands of Buddhist monks along with a cross-section of the broad population. The regime initially held off on cracking down, especially on the revered monks, no doubt hoping that the demonstrations would fizzle. But ultimately, the SPDC employed brute force in late September to suppress the peaceful demonstrations, and conducted invasive searches in monasteries in search of those involved. The government claims nine were killed, but the UN Human Rights Council’s Special Rapporteur for Burma/Myanmar Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro estimates the number at 31. Mr. Pinheiro also reported that protestors detained by the Burmese government were subjected to torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. He stated, “Since the crackdown there have been an increasing number of reports of deaths in custody as well as beatings, ill-treatment, lack of food, water, or medical treatment in overcrowded unsanitary detention facilities across the country.” Estimates of political prisoners range up to 2,100, including a number of veterans of the 1988 student uprising. The brutality of the crackdown is seen by diplomats and analysts as placing a major damper on popular will to mobilize.

The junta set the date for a national referendum on the new constitution for May 10, 2008, and increased its repressive measures in advance, cracking down on those members of the opposition and civil society apt to be working to generate a “no” vote. The new constitution would give the *Tatmadaw* an automatic 25 percent of seats in both houses of the legislature, grant blanket amnesty to all soldiers for any crimes, and legally disqualify Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of the modern state’s first leader, from political office because she had been married to a foreigner.

On the night of May 2, 2008, Tropical Cyclone Nargis hit the Irrawaddy Delta area southwest of the capital, inundating the country’s most agriculturally productive land and killing tens of thousands, mostly due to the storm surge. Over 40 warnings from Indian meteorologists sent to the Burmese regime on the scale and likely impact area of the storm did not lead to a proper warning to Delta residents.

The flooding damage was assessed by external observers to be massively exacerbated by the prior destruction of mangroves in coastal wetlands. British Ambassador Mark Canning said at the time that the scale of the required relief effort was roughly double that of the 2004 Acehese tsunami. The health threat placed 1 to 1.5 million in direct jeopardy. Access to disaster relief experts and those prepared to distribute aid remained severely constrained for more than a month after the cyclone. Foreign journalists reported local anger at the lack of assistance from the military. The estimated death toll was 140,000, with 2.5 million displaced. Following weeks of heavy international diplomatic engagement and pressure, the regime finally allowed some international assistance into the affected areas. Aid agencies are now permitted to operate in the disaster zone, but the initial resistance to external humanitarian assistance has cast a long shadow, dissuading international assistance. One humanitarian aid worker estimated that the assistance devoted to relief for Nargis was a mere 10 percent of that dedicated to relief from the 2004 Aceh tsunami, though the scale of the suffering was comparable. A Johns Hopkins University study, conducted with Burmese volunteers, asserts that the junta sold on aid supplies and used forced labor for reconstruction efforts, and recommends that a case against the regime should be brought before the

International Criminal Court. Transparency International's 2008 report placed Burma/Myanmar in second-to-last place, only ahead of Somalia, in terms of corruption.

Perhaps the only positive by-product of the calamity was that *ad hoc* Burmese "community-based organizations," many of which were organized to deliver assistance to their compatriots in the wake of Cyclone Nargis, seem to be finding a way to operate with increasing confidence in a still very repressive environment. "There is still room to change at the small scale," said one AIDS activist. "People say civil society is dead. But it never dies. Sometimes it takes different forms, under the pretext of religion, under pretext of medicine." Through such tolerated activity, Burmese are trying to expand the space for civic organization, with the hope of applying this organization politically at a stage when this is possible.

The regime pushed ahead with the referendum for May 10. In the wake of Cyclone Nargis, the referendum results were hardly reported in the foreign press. Journalists who reported from the disaster area without permission reported delta residents who said they would vote "no" as a result of the risible response from the junta. Despite some Burmese bravely (though not openly) voting against, the "overwhelming support" for the measure was never really much in doubt given the process before the election and who counted the votes. The official figures reported 99 percent turnout and 92 percent support for the new constitution. A general election to the bodies envisioned in the new constitution will be held sometime in 2010.

The violence meted out against the citizens, including monks beaten and tortured, in the 2007 protests, and the callous indifference to their plight after the 2008 cyclone further diminished the regime's legitimacy in the eyes of the Burmese people. But "the memories of 2007 are still raw," according to a Rangoon-based diplomat.

In May 2009, an American, John Yettaw, swam across a lake to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's home uninvited; he was arrested on his swim back two days later. The incident struck many long-time Burma/Myanmar watchers as highly implausible, given the tight security around the residence. Yettaw was later released after an August 2009 visit by US Senator Jim Webb, a Virginia Democrat who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's East Asia and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee, and who has advocated greater engagement with the junta. Webb was the first member of Congress to visit the country in a decade, and the first to meet Senior General Than Shwe. The regime accused the Nobel laureate of breaching the terms of her house arrest, and incarcerated her in Insein Prison before her trial. With varying degrees of difficulty, diplomats were given access to the proceedings. She was convicted in August, and her sentence, initially five years imprisonment, was commuted to 18 months additional house arrest. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office noted that Than Shwe issued a directive to the court the day before her sentencing. Before the conviction, the NLD had stated it would participate in the election if all political prisoners (estimated in the thousands, including some arrested for distributing cyclone aid) were released, the constitution changed, and international observers were admitted.

But hopes that the elections might allow some element of open competition or result in the *Tatmadaw's* power being checked to some degree have been dashed since. In March 2010, the Burmese government annulled the results of the 1990 election which the NLD won by a landslide, stating that the new election law that it had promulgated invalidated the prior electoral law. This new electoral law greatly expanded the pool of those who could not contest for seats to include those convicted of crimes (to eliminate former opposition and other political prisoners) and those belonging to religious orders (to disallow monks who participated in the attempted "Saffron Revolution" of 2007). The new election law was roundly criticized internationally. Then-Filipino Foreign Minister Alberto Romulo said in March 2010 "Unless they release Aung San Suu Kyi and allow her party to participate in elections, it's a complete farce and therefore contrary to their roadmap to democracy," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stated that any election

that didn't allow Aung San Suu Kyi to participate would not be regarded as credible, and US State Department spokesman PJ Crowley stated that the laws were "a mockery of the democratic process and ensure that the upcoming election will be devoid of credibility." Aung San Suu Kyi was reported by NLD spokesperson Nyan Win to have said, "such challenges call for resolute responses and (she) calls on the people and democratic forces to take unanimous action against such unfair laws."

With so many of its leaders disqualified from participating in the elections, the NLD's leadership of roughly 100 decided, after what was apparently spirited internal debate, to not participate for fear of legitimizing an inherently unfair process. Prior to the decision, long-time NLD member Win Tin described the decision to the BBC as a "matter of life and death...If we don't register, we will not have a party and we will be without legs and limbs." But Tin Oo, the NLD deputy leader recently released from prison, stated "There are many peaceful ways to continue our activities." Spokesman Nyan Win told Reuters that "After a vote of the committee of members, the NLD party has decided not to register as a political party because the election laws are unjust."

The stacking of the deck for the election continued with the resignation from the military of Prime Minister Thein Sin and about 20 other senior officers and their formation of a political party, the Union Solidarity and Development Party (to parallel the *Tatmadaw's* ostensibly mass popular organization, the Union Solidarity and Development Association, which claims to have 24 million members). This move was apparently aimed at boosting the *Tatmadaw's* control of the elected legislature, which will be composed of 25% of their own to begin with, and requires more than 75% of votes to amend the constitution that now governs the "disciplined democracy." As of May 2010, the government claimed that 25 groups had applied to participate, twelve of which were authorized at that time, in addition to four already existing parties.

Tomás Ojea Quintana, a UN special envoy for human rights who visited the country three times, stated in a leaked report to the UN Security Council in March 2010 that the junta engages in "gross and systematic violation of human rights...The possibility exists that some of these human rights violations may entail categories of crimes against humanity or war crimes." These abuses were especially pronounced in the border areas, and included the recruitment and use of child soldiers. The junta is estimated to incarcerate roughly 2,100 political prisoners. Quintana's report also noted that "far too many" people in Burma/Myanmar were denied basic food, shelter, health, and education. Minority groups have been particularly persecuted.

The resulting desperation has led to even more violence. Some who had inked ceasefire agreements with the military years before decided that they could no longer accept the violation of their rights and again took up arms. Khun Thurein, head of the 100-man Pao National Liberation Army operating from the eastern border region, explained to the BBC Burmese Service's Ko Ko Aung that he resumed fighting with his small force to resist persistent human rights abuses by the *Tatmadaw* and an effort to establish a "Burmese mono-culture." "Our leaders wanted peace and democracy. They wanted to sort out the political problems by political means. We never had a chance to sort the problems politically, so I thought the Burmese government would eliminate us." When the journalist noted that a single military operation could eliminate his entire force, Khun Thurein replied that he "would rather die fighting than bowing down to the pressure of the Burmese military regime to lay down arms without a political solution." A series of coordinated bombings in a lakeside park in Rangoon in April 2010 killed 9 people and wounded 75, according to state TV. Their perpetrators remain unknown. The bombing sent an ominous signal that not only Burma/Myanmar's ethnic minorities have determined that the path to political change cannot be achieved peacefully.

Rumors of a *Tatmadaw* nuclear weapons development effort began to surface in 2009, and gained credibility in 2010 with the defection of a former officer and his allegations broadcast by the Oslo-based Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB).

INTERNATIONAL POLICY POSTURES

The international reaction to the government's violence towards pro-democracy activists has been almost uniformly negative. Most democratic governments have called for a cessation of government violence against demonstrators and some countries have tightened previous economic sanctions. Global civil society has made Burma/Myanmar a perennial and evocative cause as well, keeping the issue on the agenda of democratic legislatures, and thereby governments.

In general, international policy responses to date have fallen into one of two very general categories:

1. Countries which unequivocally condemn the Burmese military government and have called for reinstatement of the 1990 election results and democratic transition.
2. Countries which call for engagement with the Burmese military government rather than isolation.

Western states, including the US, European Union members, Norway, Canada and Australia, have since the 1990s increasingly pursued a policy of sanctions and have unambiguously called for a democratic transition. The effectiveness of sanctions in promoting beneficial change has long been a subject of debate. Arms embargoes are the least controversial.

But partisans of economic sanctions argue that the revenues from foreign investment and purchase of Burmese exports essentially only redound to the benefit – and repressive capacity – of the *Tatmadaw* by giving it foreign exchange to buy arms from China, Russia, and probably North Korea. While the NLD leader Aung Sang Suu Kyi has called on tourists to not come to Burma/Myanmar, others argue that sustaining activity such as non-official tourism helps to develop Burmese civil society. The relative merits of isolating further an already insular and hence indifferent regime are also debated by the Burmese living outside the country. Some high-profile Burmese abroad advocate an effort to induce the regime to evolve and see a heavily censorious Western approach as counterproductive.

The **US government** applied economic sanctions to Burma/Myanmar immediately after the 1988 military coup and repression of the 8-8-88 pro-democracy demonstrations. Initial economic sanctions included an arms embargo and restrictions on new investments by American companies in Burma/Myanmar. The US also downgraded its relations with Burma/Myanmar, never replacing Ambassador Burton Levin, but leaving the embassy headed by a *charge d' affaires*.

The 2003 Burma/Myanmar Freedom and Democracy Act banned imports, but allowed teak and gems processed outside the country to be imported. Subsequent legislation, the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE (Junta's Anti-Democratic Efforts) Act in 2008 closed this loophole, banning importation of jadeite or rubies in any form. As a result of the government's September 2007 crackdown, the US tightened economic sanctions, enabling the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) to deny entry to the US and freeze the assets of individuals "responsible for human rights abuses as well as public corruption" including "those who provide material and financial backing to these individuals or to the government of Burma." However, California-based Chevron remains invested in a prior joint venture with Burma/Myanmar's state-owned oil firm.

In February 2009, new Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced a policy review on Burma/Myanmar. “Clearly, the path we have taken in imposing sanctions hasn’t influenced the Burmese junta;” adding that the path taken by others, including ASEAN, of “reaching out and trying to engage them has not influenced them, either.” In March 2009, State Department official Stephen Blake met with Burmese Foreign Minister Nyan Win. President Obama renewed the US sanctions in May 2009. US Senator Jim Webb visited Burma/Myanmar in August 2009, meeting with both the generals in Naypyidaw and with Aung San Suu Kyi, after which American John Yettaw was released. Webb, close to Obama, has long advocated a lifting of US sanctions. But following the new election law which has deterred NLD participation, this new approach appears to have hit a wall. The current policy posture is less than clear. After condemning the election law and stating any results from it would lack credibility, the State Department stated “Our engagement with Burma will have to continue until we can make clear that...the results thus far are not what we had expected and that they’re going to have to do better.”

The **European Union** adopted the EU Common Position on Burma/Myanmar in 1996, and also progressively strengthened measures since, extending EU sanctions to include an arms embargo, freeze of assets, visa bans for government officials and their families, and prohibition of financial loans to Burmese state-owned enterprises. In October 2007, a ban on investment in or export of equipment for the timber, mining, and gems industries was added.

The EU continues, however, to provide humanitarian and development assistance to Burma/Myanmar, and its sanctions regime has allowed French oil giant Total to continue its exploration and drilling. Following the conviction of Aung San Suu Kyi in August 2009, the EU added members of the Burmese judiciary who were involved in her trial to a list of over 500 officials who cannot enter the EU and whose assets in the Union are frozen.

While bilateral aid aside from humanitarian has been suspended by all EU members, they vary in terms of their assertiveness on democracy issues. The British in Rangoon have developed a reputation as the most vocal and proactive. The Dutch and Czechs, operating from Bangkok, also have some profile. Following the conviction of Aung San Suu Kyi in August 2009 for violating the terms of her house arrest, Britain and France called for global arms and economic embargoes against the country. The British Foreign Office also proposed EU-wide sanctions “targeting the regime’s economic interests” and urging the UN Security Council to adopt wider sanctions. The Foreign Office also called on Burma/Myanmar’s neighbors in Asia to ratchet up the pressure. Then German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier called the trial a “farce” and called on the regime to free Aung San Suu Kyi immediately.

Norway is a backer of the exiled opposition, and also hosts the Democratic Voice of Burma television and radio.

Canada levied sanctions on Burma/Myanmar in 2007, barring exports to the country, except for humanitarian goods, as well as imports. Regime-linked Burmese had their assets frozen, and financial and technical services were barred.

Australia expanded its personal sanctions of restrictions on arms sales, travel restrictions on senior figures and associates of the regime, and targeted financial sanctions to include 418 “Burmese regime figures and their supporters” in the wake of the September 2007 crackdown, but explicitly excluded “Australians with commercial dealings with regime members in the oil, gas or publishing industries.”

New Zealand has visa bans on the military leaders and their families.

Japan has, in contrast, pursued a softer-line position regarding Burma/Myanmar, asserting that a policy of economic and political engagement can be more productive. During the 1988 military coup and

repression of the 8-8-88 demonstrations, Japan, along with Western states, condemned the human rights violations perpetrated by the Burmese military, but was also the first OECD country to officially recognize the new military government. A senior representative from the Japanese Foreign Ministry stated that Japan's position is for "pressure and dialogue. [The Japanese government tries to] keep a working relationship with the government while maintaining pressure." Consequently, Japan has become Burma/Myanmar's largest official development assistance donor, contributing approximately three-quarters of Burma/Myanmar's entire foreign aid. Japan argues that its closer economic engagement give the Japanese Foreign Ministry greater influence with the Burmese government, though the results are unclear.

However, as a result of the September 2007 protests and the killing of Japanese photojournalist Kenji Nagai by the Burmese military, Japan imposed economic sanctions on the Burmese government, including halting \$4.7 million in funding for Rangoon University. Yet the Japanese government, commenting that it could send observers to some polling stations in May 2009, called it an "improvement in transparency." Japan is also providing technical assistance to the regime for the 2010 elections

China is reputed by diplomats in Rangoon and NGO activists to have the greatest influence and potential leverage on the Burmese junta. Beijing emerged over the 1990s as Burma/Myanmar's most important regional ally, investor, trading partner, arms supplier, and consumer of Burma/Myanmar's resources. China has supported the Burmese status quo, and is also Burma/Myanmar's main defender in international forums such as the UN, vetoing non-punitive, multilateral UN Security resolutions that would have condemned the Burmese government. The Chinese position in favor of the principle of noninterference in Burmese domestic affairs has been supported by Russia and others, even democracies such as **South Africa**. This support has extended to preventing humanitarian access from being placed on the agenda of the UN Security Council in the wake of Cyclone Nargis.

In the aftermath of the September 2007 protests, however, China has used its influence with the Burmese government to negotiate a visit to Burma/Myanmar by UN Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari. Though China failed to directly condemn the Burmese government's crackdown against democracy activists, Chinese officials have explicitly stated that Burma/Myanmar should "push forward a democracy process that is appropriate for the country." Premier Wen Jiabao has also urged the Burmese government to "achieve democracy and development." On October 11, 2007, China supported a UN Security Council resolution condemning the Burmese government's violence against protestors and calling for the release of political prisoners.

China has continued since the cyclone to cover for the Burmese regime in international forums, preventing joint international sanctions from being levied. It said the international community should respect Burmese law following Aung San Suu Kyi's August 2009 conviction. But a resurgence of ethnic conflict in the northeastern Shan State, bordering China's Yunnan province, between the *Tatmadaw*, local allies, and ethnic Chinese *Kokang* rebels has driven tens of thousands of refugees across the border, putting Beijing in an uncomfortable position. This led to the greatest friction between the junta and Beijing in recent memory. The Chinese government called on the Burmese regime to cease its offensive and restore stability.

India, despite being the largest democracy in the region, also pursues a policy of economic and diplomatic engagement with Burma/Myanmar. India is a major consumer of Burmese oil and gas, as well as a major investor in Burma/Myanmar's economy. Like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (see below), India asserts that dialogue, rather than sanctions, is the most effective way to persuade the Burmese government to improve the political and human rights situation in the country, though some observers see India's interest focused as well on access to strategic resources, and the ability

to counter growing Chinese influence in Burma/Myanmar, which Indian strategists believe stole a march on India in the late '80s and early '90s, when it also isolated the regime. During the 2007 crackdown, India declared it had "no desire to interfere in the internal affairs" of Burma/Myanmar. During a visit earlier that year, Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee said "India is a democracy and it wants democracy to flourish everywhere. But we are not interested in exporting our own ideology." In March 2008, India made a \$120 million deal with the junta to "build, operate and use" the port of Sittwe in the Bay of Bengal as part of a growing regional rivalry with China. UN Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari called on India to employ its growing influence on the Burmese generals to gain the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners. But India backed China and Russia in resisting broader international sanctions against the regime. India's response to the August 2009 Aung San Suu Kyi verdict was muted.

Russia has, along with China, typically vetoed efforts to apply pressure through the UN Security Council against the Burmese junta. It has also been a major arms dealer to the regime, selling it advanced fighter aircraft, and is supplying nuclear technology to build a research reactor, which has generated considerable concern.

ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which allowed Burma/Myanmar to join in 1997, has many member states which have close relationships with the regime and are strong trading partners. Following the violent crackdown on the Saffron Revolution in 2007, ASEAN did condemn the government's violent repression. But ASEAN rejected calls from the US Senate to suspend Burma/Myanmar from membership. "Our approach is not to take such a confrontational, drastic action, especially when it doesn't yield good results," said ASEAN's then-Secretary General Ong Keng Yong. Following the August 2009 verdict against Aung San Suu Kyi, the ASEAN Chairman released a statement expressing "deep disappointment" in the ruling and reiterating a call made at its summit the month before for "all those under detention," including the NLD leader, to be released so they could participate in the 2010 general elections.

Thailand, perhaps the most closely linked with Burma/Myanmar, took the chair of ASEAN in July 2008. Thailand helped keep the Burmese junta afloat financially immediately after the 1988 crackdown by signing business deals that gave the country foreign exchange. Thailand is a major consumer of Burmese gas. There is hope that as Thailand returns to democratic rule, it will be more assertive on behalf of Burma/Myanmar's democrats, as the Philippines and Indonesia have been. ASEAN's parliamentarians have also been more supportive of Burmese democrats than their governments. While the site of much political turmoil over recent years, Thai policy toward Burma/Myanmar has been consistent, and heavily influenced by the military, which has strong links with the junta. From the chair of ASEAN, Thailand criticized the verdict against Aung San Suu Kyi. Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva called for "balanced" and "complementary" international approaches toward Burma/Myanmar. Thailand's own fraught democratic practice makes it less likely to carry the torch for democratic practice in Burma/Myanmar. As noted above, the outgoing Filipino Foreign Minister was quite incredulous about the new election law and its exclusion of Aung San Suu Kyi. But such statements remain an anomaly in the neighborhood.

Burmese ties with the "hermit kingdom" of **North Korea** have resumed, after over 20 years of severed relations, following a 1983 bombing in Rangoon targeted at a South Korean delegation. North Korea is widely suspected of selling arms, including missile and even nuclear technology, to the Burmese junta. Some analysts suspect that the North Koreans, long involved in underworld transactions for hard currency, may be paid in heroin for equipment and expertise. One diplomat posted in Rangoon noted recently that the Naypyidaw-Pyongyang relationship is "the big question mark." Speculation on whether North Korea was involved in a suspected Burmese nuclear program gained ground in 2010.

The United Nations' level of engagement has varied. At the outbreak of the September 2007 protest and the government's violent reaction, the then-UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, singled out Burma/Myanmar for criticism. But, in general, China (and to an increasing extent Russia) has proven itself willing to protect the junta's interests by vetoing resolutions in the Security Council. In contrast, the veto-free General Assembly has issued repeated statements on the violation of human, civil and political rights by the SLORC/SPDC. On September 26, 2007, the Security Council did give the Secretary-General unanimous support to send Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari to Burma/Myanmar, who visited most recently in January 2009. His series of visits have achieved little from a seemingly indifferent military. Gambari said following Aung San Suu Kyi's August 2009 conviction, that "(she) is absolutely indispensable to the resumption of a political process that can lead to national reconciliation." The UN's human rights envoy, Tomás Ojea Quintana, reported to the Security Council in 2010 on the deplorable state of human rights observance in Burma/Myanmar, at roughly the same time that the Secretary-General stated the new election law made the process non-credible.

There is presently a sense among the democracies that none of these approaches has delivered satisfactory results. "It's not a question of sides," said one Rangoon-based diplomat. "I think this sort of thinking has been a big part of the problem. We should all see what we can do together to help the people of Myanmar. There's no question that the government is underperforming and under-providing for its people – there is common agreement about that. We've got to try and find ways to change that."

RESOURCES AND ASSETS OF DIPLOMATS IN BURMA/MYANMAR

The international diplomatic community's isolation from government decision makers which dates from the Ne Win regime has deepened in the SLORC/SPDC era, especially after the migration of the capital to the closed garrison city of Naypyidaw north of Rangoon, where civilian ministries are cordoned-off from those of the *Tatmadaw*. Diplomats posted in Rangoon bemoan their limited toolbox. But in the absence of countervailing interests and even day-to-day contact with authorities, embassies can concentrate their local missions on supporting civil society's efforts on behalf of human rights and democracy.

Despite the regime's violation of diplomatic premises repeatedly since 1988, rarely if ever does the regime take direct action against diplomatic personnel (as opposed to domestic staff). Diplomats can and do avail themselves of their **immunity** to meet with opposition and make public statements. According to an international NGO worker, "there is theoretically the risk of being expelled, but this never happens." The UN Head of Mission, Charles Petrie, was however made to withdraw in late 2007 for underlining the cruel effects on the population of the regime's destructive economic policies. To date, he remains a solitary example.

Diplomats accredited to Burma/Myanmar can count on the **support of home authorities** as most democratic national governments have been very vocal about the repression in Burma/Myanmar, with the US Secretary of State naming it an "outpost of tyranny" in 2005. EU governments have represented the concern of their publics. Former US President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush were widely reported to be personally engaged on Burma/Myanmar, as was former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who has written on the subject and questioned his staff regularly on developments there. Former Czech President Václav Havel mobilized several Nobel Peace Prize winners in favor of concerted action, including in the UN.

Without much access to SPDC officials, diplomats have limited, but occasionally significant, **influence** on the regime. Perhaps with increased friction between Beijing and the generals in Naypyidaw, this influence might increase. Japan claims to have somewhat more influence than either the US or the EU have, but has less than it had, and less than China and India have now, given their economic engagement.

A senior Japanese diplomat working on Burma/Myanmar policy stated that “Our position is for dialogue. We try to keep a working relationship with the government while maintaining pressure. This position is similar to the ASEAN approach, so I believe we can coordinate with them.” A Western diplomat currently posted in Rangoon said that because junta leader Sen. Gen. Than Shwe wants sanctions lifted, the sentence meted out to Aung San Suu Kyi was less than it could have been, and what many expected.

Embassies **fund** civil society development, training programs, and activities to promote open and democratic discussion in Burma/Myanmar. Embassy funds are also available for international exchange programs to connect Burmese activists with politicians and activists in other countries. Most aid is now humanitarian – mainly to the health sector, delivered through embassies, development agencies, and multilaterals – and therefore coordinated with the government. Due to poor government policies and transport restrictions, Burma/Myanmar now imports rice, “perversely,” according to a UN World Food Program official.

The **solidarity** of the western democratic world was clear in 1988. There was already near total disdain for the Ne Win regime, including the ambassadors of the USSR and China in Rangoon. During and after the 1988 crackdown, the EU ambassadors – from France, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands and West Germany, delivered a joint *démarche* on behalf of the EU to the regime in protest. After the 1988 crackdown the American and German ambassadors worked to persuade their Japanese colleague to mirror their cut off development aid, and ultimately succeeded. This solidarity continues, with the US, the EU, Australia, and Japan raising democracy and human rights in their (few) meetings with Burmese officials.

There are significantly different approaches among democratic embassies at present, as discussed above in *International Policy Postures*. However, in the greatest adversity the Burmese people have faced since 1988, Cyclone Nargis, one diplomat says that democracies, and even some non-democracies, showed “extraordinary solidarity” in trying to get the door opened for humanitarian aid.

The democratic world’s diplomats can refer back to UN General Assembly, Security Council and other UN bodies’ statements on the human rights situation in Burma/Myanmar for **legitimacy**. This unfortunately cuts little ice with the regime. But the UN has deep reservoirs of legitimacy with the Burmese people. In addition, countries have specific resources to draw upon – Burmese demonstrators in 1988 believed that the US and France, as symbols of democracy and leaders of the “free world,” would rally to their side.

WAYS DIPLOMATIC ASSETS WERE APPLIED IN BURMA/MYANMAR

The Golden Rules

Diplomats assigned to Burma/Myanmar operate within an extremely constrained public and diplomatic space, but several, especially the Norwegian embassy operating from Bangkok, have earned plaudits for **listening** to a wide range of groups and individuals involved in the democracy movement. Glen Hill, the former Executive Director of SwissAid, asserted that the Norwegians “gave the impression that they were there to learn.” Seasoned Burma/Myanmar human rights activist Benedict Rogers of Christian Solidarity Worldwide said of the democratic embassies, the British and American were “by far the most robust, forward, and accessible.”

While embassies, and especially the Australian today, have tried to be approachable, all are under regular surveillance by the regime, and fear of questioning or worse inhibits the civil population from coming, especially to the US Embassy. One Burmese activist noted that embassies lack “good human intelligence” on the situation in the country, and rarely speak the language(s), limiting their **understanding**. Making an effort to recognize a country’s best value added is another important element of understanding the

situation. The Czech Ambassador, Jiří Šitler, operating from Bangkok, noted that the Czechs' experience of having lived under a repressive regime was something that his democratic colleagues did not have, and centered his country's approach to the Burmese around that core.

But the situation in Burma/Myanmar has been beneficial in promoting **sharing** among missions, both of information and of tasks, in a way which avoids competition and promotes comparative advantage, as detailed in Chapter 3. The US, EU, Australian and Japanese embassies in Rangoon meet regularly to coordinate strategy in pursuit of supporting peaceful democratic change.

In the immediate aftermath of Cyclone Nargis, the differences among diplomatic approaches were set aside in light of the scale of the calamity. One Western diplomat states that "there was a common sense of urgency...we felt more common ground than previously... It was a different focus than usual; getting aid to the delta was paramount."

Truth in Communications

Reporting on the situation in Burma/Myanmar by diplomats has long been a crucial source of information, given the lack of international media access and independent media within Burma/Myanmar. Yet freedom of movement for diplomats is restricted and the *Tatmadaw's* pervasive police state deters many Burmese from actively providing information.

Diplomats in embassies can be misled if their only sources of information are from Rangoon circles. But even under constraints, embassies do provide crucial information on the situation and their reports are read at high levels, including at 10 Downing Street and in the White House, for example. The UN Development Program office in Rangoon was well-situated to witness the demonstrations of the 2007 "Saffron Revolution" and the subsequent crackdown, and had an independent satellite communications system that allowed for internet access as well, so provided an important information conduit.

In the absence of objective news gathering – the regime has expelled most foreign journalists and blacked-out web sites – diplomats have a long history of informing media outlets of the internal situation. In 1988, Dutch Ambassador Peter van Walsum, based out of Bangkok, gave extensive interviews to the press reporting on the nature of the crackdown and its brutality. US Ambassador Burton Levin released reports that the embassy had received "credible, first hand reports" of beatings, torture and executions of pro-democracy activists and others, thousands of whom were arrested.

Burma/Myanmar's government has long controlled public access to information, and to the means of communication. Mobile phone costs are prohibitive. Land lines are primitive. Internet servers are frequently jammed. In such a closed society, rumors are rife and travel quickly. The mobile phone cameras and video uploads of protests and violence in 2007, made from outside the country, were so devastating to the regime – it hadn't foreseen them. Once broadcast outside the country, it could boomerang back into Burma/Myanmar.

Former British Ambassador Mark Canning was perhaps the most vocal diplomat posted to Rangoon, and is rated by one international Burma/Myanmar watcher as having been "absolutely superb...a great example of doing the right thing. He made himself accessible to human rights NGOs." He was quoted regularly in the international press, and even had a regular blog where he wrote on developments in Burma/Myanmar, through the Aung San Suu Kyi trial in the grim Insein Prison. American *chargé* Shari Villarosa was also a regular in the international media, particularly important in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis. Human rights advocates sing the praises of both in their efforts to inform the world, noting that they also help inform Burmese indirectly.

Embassies play a key role in **informing** the Burmese public and the international community about activities and events occurring in Burma/Myanmar. Embassies have committed resources to support media and journalism trainings for young Burmese journalists. While independent media sources are starting to develop in Burma/Myanmar, training is not readily available and the quality of reporting tends to be varied. Embassies support training programs, both in Rangoon and in Thailand, to help Burmese journalists learn how to write, develop, edit, and market pieces for a wide-range of audiences. The Czech Embassy provided a basic video and journalism course in Burma/Myanmar: how to use a camera, how to edit, and how to produce a story. This was not explicitly political, but proved extremely useful in providing imagery of the 2007 crackdown.

Embassies also support the actual dissemination of information to the Burmese public. Both the American Center and the British Council provide important access to information to Burmese citizens, such as English medium newspapers and materials published by exile groups. The information available at the centers provide Burmese users a vital link to the outside world as well as a better understanding of what exactly is occurring in Burma/Myanmar itself. The centers also invite speakers from outside to present – and some have spoken both about the international policy toward Burma/Myanmar and the situation with the insurgencies and in refugee areas in Thailand.

The Japanese Embassy, which enjoys greater access to the regime than other embassies, has often conveyed information between the SPDC and the NLD. “I think the NLD appreciates our activities. We can give them information. Unfortunately, the NLD has no contact with the government.”

Diplomats and politicians remain active today in getting information about pro-democracy events and human rights violations out to the international community. The UK and Australian Ambassadors and the US *Chargé d’ Affaires* are very present in international media, discussing Burma/Myanmar’s political situation and abuses in the country. These reports are beamed back into Burma/Myanmar by Radio Free Asia, Voice of America, the BBC, the Democratic Voice of Burma/Myanmar, and exile information organs in Thailand.

In the wake of tropical Cyclone Nargis in May 2008, diplomats were among the most quoted information sources in Burma/Myanmar on the scale of the devastation, the shocking inactivity of the Burmese military to the humanitarian need, and the scale of the aid effort required. In the aftermath of both the cyclone disaster and earlier, during the protests in September 2007, British Ambassador Canning and American Chargé Villarosa were oft-quoted in the media, both setting baselines for international response. When Aung San Suu Kyi was imprisoned in Insein Prison facing trial, Ambassador Canning visited her in jail and reported to the press that she was “composed” and “crackling with energy.”

Working with the Government

Given the insular nature of the regime, it is a challenge for diplomats to **dialogue** with government on a regular basis, especially with the move of the capital to the purpose-built garrison city of Naypyidaw.

Yet the extraordinary nature of Cyclone Nargis brought a string of international dignitaries to Burma/Myanmar to offer assistance and press the regime to allow urgent humanitarian assistance to be brought directly to the Irrawaddy Delta. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon came to press for an opening to external aid. Britain alone sent two key ministers, Deputy Foreign Minister Lord Mark Malloch-Brown and Secretary of State for International Development Douglas Alexander, in as many weeks.

A representative in the US Embassy in Rangoon stated that officials from the US, European, Australian, and Japanese embassies regularly raise issues of democracy and human rights when they have opportunity

to meet with Burmese officials. However, human rights and democracy concerns raised by western diplomats are dismissed by government officials; they, instead, prefer to focus on their roadmap to democracy plan.

Diplomats have on occasion tried to **advise** the Burmese government, but to no discernable effect. In 1989, Ambassador Levin met with SLORC intelligence chief General Khin Nyunt in an attempt to see if the regime could be convinced to enter into an effort for national reconciliation and to bring in Burmese expatriate technocrats to return vibrancy to the economy. His effort elicited an earful of invective about “communists” and “traitors” straight out of the regime phrasebook. He determined such efforts were useless at that point.

Civil society in Burma/Myanmar has survived suppression and is a beneficiary of advice by diplomats. Ambassador Šitler determined early on in his tenure that his approach should be to concentrate on transferring applicable know-how to Burmese. “We discovered that our experience from transformation to democracy was exactly what they (the Burmese dissidents) needed and wanted. The old EU members who were heavily engaged (the Dutch, Danes, British and the US) could give more money, but just didn’t have this experience.”

Discussions between Czech diplomats and Burmese dissidents in refugee communities in Thailand include:

- The role of returned exiles in the society after democratic transition.
- How to obtain justice for crimes committed by the regime.
- How to promote economic reforms.

The American Center “pushed the limits” by providing journalism, human rights and democracy training. The Australian Embassy rather controversially provided human rights training to *Tatmadaw* officers.

The Chinese and Indian embassies have frequent contact with the Burmese government. Mr. Ichiro Maruyama stated that the Japanese embassy, in meetings with Indian diplomats, have asked the Indian and Chinese embassies to convey the Japanese embassy’s interests and concerns to the Burmese government.

Reaching Out

While easier to do in refugee communities outside Burma/Myanmar, efforts to link Burmese with the outside world and with each other need to be undertaken within Burma/Myanmar. Diplomatic immunity gives diplomats in Rangoon the ability to do what local and foreign NGOs would normally be doing, but cannot, given the pervasive repressive apparatus of the state.

Diplomats can play a role in **connecting** Burmese activists to other democracy players outside of Burma/Myanmar, including Burmese activists in exile as well as activists in the diplomat’s home country.

In coordination with an ongoing Dutch foreign policy training program aimed at promising young refugees, the Czech embassy organizes a three-month study segment in the Czech Republic; during the visit, participants attend three months of trainings and meetings.

The Norwegian embassy transmitted information from exiled groups residing in Thailand to groups within Burma/Myanmar, with the objective of promoting linkages and common ground.

The American Center, located in Rangoon, helped Burmese activists establish a peer network for those who had been imprisoned and tortured by the Burmese government. One of the goals of the peer network

was to decrease the isolation of those who had experienced torture and are likely suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and to connect them with other survivors and activists.

Embassies and cultural centers have provided essential space for Burmese activists and others to **convene** and exchange information, sometimes with government officials included, and other times without them. The Australian, Japanese, EU, US and UN missions in Rangoon all engage in this sort of activity.

Given the heavy regime surveillance of the embassies, *Alliance Francaise*, the British Council, and the American Center have all played critical roles in providing space for Burmese to meet and discuss a wide array of social and political issues, particularly for youth. While these were not packaged as “democracy courses,” they offered young people an opportunity to explore issues of human rights, democracy, and globalization in a safe space and without drawing undue attention from the Burmese government. However, most of those attending knowingly assume a certain amount of risk.

Cultural people-to-people contacts also come into play. In May 2009, the US State Department financed the Burmese performances of a Los Angeles-based alternative rock/hip-hop band, Ozomatli. As part of a wider Southeast Asian tour, the band visited music schools, performed with a local metal band of blind musicians, “Blind Reality,” and held a performance at the American Center in Rangoon. Despite the fact that the government’s “Scrutiny Board” monitors Facebook, the only social networking site, through servers it controls, the band has garnered many Burmese “friends.” Ulises Bella, the band’s saxophonist, said after the trip “I think that for me one of the things that struck me about Myanmar in particular was the strength of the people...And the hospitality and love people felt for us just being there was really eye-opening.” He continued that at the American Center “we jammed with a local rapper who came onstage and did his thing with us. He’s a big deal out there. Interesting interpretations and perceptions of what hip-hop is. They’re getting it from magazines and movies but also trying to incorporate their own things.”

The US embassy has been one of the most vocal advocates for a democratic transition, **showcasing** democracy in practice through the programs offered by the American Center. Programs include lectures covering many sensitive topics, including the situation in the ethnic minority areas, the United Nations Security Council, sanctions, and genocide. SwissAid’s Glen Hill asserted, “The American Center...didn’t shy away from difficult subjects.” France’s *Alliance Francaise*, in collaboration with the Czech Embassy, projected films of interest that otherwise would not be seen by Burmese activists.

The American Center is also a prime example of how embassies can **facilitate** discussion among Burmese civic and opposition members. The American Center not only offered resources not readily available in Rangoon, the Center offered a safe space where democracy activists could participate in trainings and workshops that would strengthen their ability to participate and direct the pro-democracy movement. It is certainly easier to facilitate dialogue among Burmese opposition and minority groups outside the restrictions in Burma/Myanmar itself, either among refugee communities or further afield, and a number of embassies in Thailand work on this front.

Embassies finance assistance projects for Burmese civil society, though the restrictions by the regime make doing so complex. Embassy support for the democracy movement in Burma/Myanmar ranges from funding training (both short and long-term) to financing civil society projects. Some of the funding comes directly from embassy operating budgets, while funding is also available from development funding agencies, including the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Human rights activist Benedict Rogers, when asked what sort of diplomatic activity he would wish for, said “the main thing is if embassies can provide a space for ordinary Burmese, as well as dissidents and activists, to meet, learn, develop skills, and debate.” He said the American and British Embassies, along

with the American Center and British Council, were doing this. “I would like to see more (democratic embassies) acting the same way.”

“We support civic activists...by trying to help them develop better knowledge, better analysis, to help them better strategize. We want to help them broaden their ways to get at democracy, good governance. We want to help break down this “us vs. them” split between the government and the people,” one diplomat stated in mid-2009.

Former Czech Ambassador Šitler notes that small, well-targeted grants for projects can evade regime strictures and accomplish a great deal. Some NGOs which received embassy funding managed to find ways through the bureaucratic morass by cultivating relationships with officials who helped them navigate the regulatory maze.

A variety of training and “capacity building” programs have been provided to democracy activists, including:

- English language and other educational courses funded by the British Council.
- English language courses; journalism and media training; human rights training; transitional justice workshop; and organizational and communication trainings funded by the American Center.
- Film and media training funded by the Czech Republic (which showed its utility in documenting the 2007 protests and crackdown).
- Foreign policy training seminar funded by the Netherlands.

Embassies also financed library resources, increasing access to books and magazines either difficult or illegal to obtain in Burma/Myanmar. The American Center and the British Council offered extensive library resources to Burmese members, including extensive offerings on democracy and Burma/Myanmar. The Czech embassy had Czech authors’ books translated to Burmese as well as collecting and translating volumes of articles on the Czech democratic transformation. The US, UK, and Czech embassies have also provided direct support to local Burmese NGOs to fund environmental, social, and education projects to assist community development.

Defending Democrats

Diplomats regularly **demonstrate** their support for democracy and human rights in Burma/Myanmar, and have done so for two decades. In 1988, US Ambassador Levin made a point of driving to observe demonstrations with his car’s flag flying. British and American diplomats regularly meet with NLD officials, and when British Ambassador Mark Canning visits the NLD office he arrives in his official car flying the British flag. Embassies as a matter of course declare public support for Burmese demands that fundamental human rights and freedoms be respected.

There are reports that diplomats have on occasion **protected** individuals who feared imprisonment or other retaliation from the Burmese government. Assistance has included financial and logistical support for these individuals to reach the Thai-Burmese border. In 1989 and 1990, embassies of the democracies protested in solidarity against aggressive interrogation and other repressive measures against their local staff, including one member of the British Embassy staff who was sentenced to three years in prison by the regime. In 1988, Ambassador Levin agreed with Aung San Suu Kyi to limit their contact so as to reduce the potential for the regime to paint her as an American stooge.

Diplomatic protection has also been given in other, less obvious, ways. By disseminating information about human and political rights violations by the Burmese government, diplomats have been able to

direct international scrutiny and criticism on the government. The Burmese government's reluctance to draw negative international attention constrains its actions, at least as regards the internationally known face of Burmese opposition, Aung San Suu Kyi. But the junta does not appear to feel such constraints regarding other less visible opposition figures.

It was also reported that during the September 2007 protests, the UNDP allowed demonstrators to seek refuge within its building as well preventing the Burmese security officers from forcibly entering the premises. Even when diplomats are not able to directly protect activists, by **witnessing** and **verifying** anti-democratic activities and human rights violations committed by the Burmese government, diplomats play an integral part in collecting and disseminating information (See "Getting to the Truth").

By publicly witnessing and verifying abuses by the government, key embassies are also able to send a message to the Burmese government, by regularly sending officers to witness demonstrations and court trials, and by supportively attending prayer services, various holiday celebrations, and commemorations. As noted earlier, many diplomats attended the long trial of Aung San Suu Kyi in summer 2009. These reportedly included European, American, Russian, South Korean, Japanese, Thai, and Chinese diplomats. On July 31, 2009, as the trial neared its close, a European quoted by a journalist noted that most were ambassadors. Aung San Suu Kyi thanked the diplomats for attending. She is merely the most prominent of an estimated 2,100 political prisoners in Burma/Myanmar.

In an exit interview with the Burmese exile internet publication, *The Irrawaddy*, Ambassador Mark Canning noted the counterproductive effect the SPDC's trial of Aung San Suu Kyi had. "It's ironic that a trial which is intended to marginalize her from playing a political role is having precisely the opposite effect – illustrating what a towering figure she is. If she wasn't relevant, none of this would be happening. She would be the first to recognize that many others, not least the ethnic minorities, need a voice, but there is no doubt she remains central to a meaningful process of reconciliation and that's why the international community has been united in calling for her release."

CONCLUSION

The ability to influence the inward-directed and wholly self-interested military regime remains a massive hurdle for most democracies, especially now with new revenue streams coming to the military from natural gas, along with the continued destructive clear-cutting of old growth forests and trade in gemstones, and diversion of agricultural land to cultivate jatropha for bio-fuels. The *Financial Times* reported in July 2009 that a *nouveau riche* of connected urban traders is increasingly visible in Rangoon, but some question whether the conspicuous consumption is a sign of economic health and durable progress. "You can't put it in the bank, so you put your money in cars or a nice new house to keep the value of the money," one business person told the reporter.

Burma/Myanmar's major trading partners, its fellow members of ASEAN, China, and India, have still not exerted serious pressure on the SPDC to allow greater civic space and to make a genuine turn toward establishing democracy. Benedict Rogers cited specifically Japan, India, and Thailand as potentially having a positive impact. "If they stood up to the regime more, there might be progress. They seem completely unwilling to say anything negative."

Ultimately, the key will be with the Burmese population and the diaspora of exiles, who have been developing their capacities to reclaim the rights denied them by successive generations of self-serving military officers. If Burma/Myanmar's commercial partners can persuade the regime of the inevitability of change, it may arrive sooner rather than later. It will arrive in a country whose institutions have atrophied under a military which lives apart from the people, and it will be up to supporters of democratic transition to support the people in their efforts to re-build the country.

Some encouraging signs can be discerned in the wake of the cyclone disaster. Most hopefully, networks of ordinary Burmese citizens themselves formed volunteer relief teams to try to compensate for the inability of the regime to safeguard its own citizens. Despite the hardships placed upon them, Burmese civil society seems to have emerged strengthened and determined. It remains to be seen how this will manifest itself in the upcoming, and sure to be flawed, 2010 elections.

More ominously, the renewed conflict in Shan State, which is only the latest area in which the army has sought to tighten its grip before next year's elections, shows the cost of lack of democracy in Burma/Myanmar. Undemocratic Burma/Myanmar, even with massive revenues from sales of its considerable resources, shows no sign of being able to crush the will of the country's numerous minorities for autonomy or independence. Ironically, the *Tatmadaw's* iron grip on power may force it to fail in its stated *raison d'être*: maintaining the unity of the state.

Many democratic embassies in Rangoon and Bangkok remain engaged in assisting Burmese civil society and opposition within and outside the country, and will no doubt continue to develop new innovative avenues to assist and circumvent regime restrictions. When asked what more could be done, a seasoned NGO activist dealing with Burma/Myanmar and its border areas said "more of the same: providing space, enabling visitors to meet dissidents." Additional funding for these activities would also help. So would greater language ability on the part of diplomats posted to deal with Burma/Myanmar. Given the harsh repressive nature of the regime and the pervasive fear of informers, citizens are more likely to trust a foreigner who speaks their language than his or her interpreter.

Clearly, the environment for democracy assistance to Burma/Myanmar is constrained, and has been getting more so. "The impact of Western measures and policies is less because of the neighbors' approach," said one diplomat. Diplomats on the ground and activists who follow events in Burma/Myanmar closely have a wide spectrum of views on how best to assist the Burmese in gaining popular control of their destiny. A legitimate debate is ongoing about whether the current Western policies can deliver the change for which they were devised, with the corresponding questioning of what the engagement policies of neighboring countries have achieved for the Burmese people. This is the ultimate question that must be answered.

Despite the transparently ham-fisted effort by the military to legitimize its political dominance, one Western diplomat believes that the 2010 elections hold an opportunity for Burmese civil society to mobilize ("not in a 'color revolution' way"), and that it should be seized, despite the clear determination of the generals to leave nothing to chance. "(This will be) the first time in 20 years for Burmese to engage in politics. Many (Burmese) think of 'politics' as a dirty word. But this is an opportunity of engaging people, and changing the regime dynamic. There will be a generational shift as well. There will be a new parliament. There will be new ways to influence policy in a positive way. It's a long shot, but the opportunities are there, both because there will be new structures and elements that are impossible to predict because of the shifting dynamics."

Others, both outside Burma/Myanmar and within, are far more skeptical of the prospects for change, though not against engagement in principle. According to human rights activist Benedict Rogers, "it's not a question of engagement or not – we've advocated dialogue among the regime, Aung Sang Suu Kyi and the ethnic groups...The question is what you talk about and how you do it." The NLD had made clear it was willing to participate if Aung San Suu Kyi and others were released and could participate; the fact that they cannot and that the NLD will not participate without them was roundly criticized internationally. Whenever the elections are called, unless this policy is reversed, it is difficult to envision the opening that looked like it might come to pass as recently as a year ago. How the Burmese react to this loaded electoral process remains to be seen. But with so many of democracy's champions excluded, and others having

determined that participation is counterproductive, it seems unlikely they will see the electoral process as an avenue for change.

Zimbabwe: From Hope to Crisis

INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe's precipitous decline from peaceful "bread basket" to malnourished autocracy has become one of Africa's most notable stories of post-colonial state failure. But the situation was not always grim: far from it. Upon transition from white-ruled Rhodesia in 1979, the country's future appeared bright. With plentiful natural resources, a bountiful agricultural sector, a strong complement of educated human capital, and solid government administration, Zimbabwe appeared poised for success. The government of the new Prime Minister Robert Mugabe, regarded as a liberation hero for his role in armed struggle against white supremacist rule, was racially inclusive in language and personnel. The new regime in Harare was embraced worldwide, on both sides in the Cold War and in the group of nonaligned developing states.

Since that moment of optimism, a slow decline, blamed by Western observers almost entirely on Mugabe's misrule, has led to the crippling of a vibrant agricultural economy, repression of political dissent, and violent land seizure. Others note the effect of rosy assessments early on and easy money in the 1980s, followed by the social destabilization of structural readjustments in the 1990s. As conditions in Zimbabwe began growing steadily worse in the 1990s, and as President Mugabe grew more adversarial, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States, among others, opted for an approach of punitive and denunciatory opposition to his methods and sought to isolate him while supporting a second track of outreach from Zimbabwe's regional neighbors.

But among Zimbabwe's neighbors in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Mugabe's casting of Western powers as neo-colonialist meddlers has carried some weight with politicians and a public attuned to the language of liberation struggle. President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and other SADC leaders for some time eschewed open criticism of Mugabe in favor of attempts at engagement and mediation. However, though their methods differ, SADC leaders claim to seek the same goal as Western leaders: a stable transition to functioning democracy in Zimbabwe. But the power-sharing arrangement between President Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has been fraught from the beginning, and barely functions, despite the fact it did allow for economic stabilization and reduction of political violence.

The harsh fact, though, is that neither sanctions nor "quiet diplomacy" has alleviated the fiscal and humanitarian crisis in the country. The Mugabe regime has bequeathed Zimbabwe's people with what was the world's fastest contracting economy and one of the lowest life expectancies in the world. The devastated economy will take years to rebuild. Zimbabwean society is dire in need of reconciliation to heal the scars of political violence that continues, and looms larger as elections approach. Three to four million Zimbabweans have moved to neighboring South Africa in search of a livelihood in recent years. In addition, the issue of land distribution at the heart of Zimbabwean conflict for decades remains divisive. The tasks ahead will likely require technical capacity from government that has largely eroded, and which will need robust reinforcement from the donor community.

Roots of Conflict

The history of Zimbabwe's independence from British colonialism and white supremacist rule continues to play a significant role in political discourse. Southern Rhodesia, as it was formerly known, was settled by whites beginning in the late 19th Century. In 1930, the Land Apportionment Act restricted black access to land and forced many would-be farmers into wage labor.

In 1965, Ian Smith, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, fearing that the “wind of change” sweeping over Africa in the wake of de-colonization would ultimately produce majority rule in Rhodesia, unilaterally declared independence from Britain of his white-minority regime. The international community declared Rhodesia an outlaw state and imposed strict sanctions. It was recognized only by apartheid South Africa.

Liberation groups ZANU and ZAPU (the predominantly majority Shona and Chinese-backed Zimbabwe African National Union and predominantly minority Ndebele and Soviet-backed Zimbabwe African People’s Union, respectively) intensified their guerilla campaign against white rule, eventually leading Smith to submit to negotiations. British-brokered talks at Lancaster House in the UK led to British-supervised elections in 1980, won by independence leader Robert Mugabe’s ZANU party. Mugabe became Prime Minister and has remained leader of the country ever since, changing the constitution to become President in 1987.

Post-Colonial Violence

In 1982, Prime Minister Mugabe feared rebellion by his political rival and cabinet member Joshua Nkomo and sacked him (ZAPU was unified with ZANU in 1987 to form ZANU-PF, or Patriotic Front, in what was seen by some as a move toward the one-party state Mugabe had been advocating). Mugabe then sent the North Korean trained 5th Brigade, a unit subordinated directly to him, into Matabeleland in an operation known as *Gukurahundi* (“the early rain that washes away the chaff before the spring rains” in Shona). Nkomo himself fled to London in 1983, accusing the 5th Brigade of killing three persons in his home and fearing for his own life, calling the unit a “political army,” and denying the main issue was tribal in essence, but rather one of political control. The killings that took place over the next few years are widely referred to as a massacre, with estimates of the number killed as high as 20,000.

Diplomats in Harare conveyed to their governments the reports of massacres but authorities at home, not eager to call into question such a recent success and fearful of further regional instability, chose not to confront Mugabe’s evident intolerance for dissent. It remains a searing memory for Ndebeles and a social divide in the country. A commission to look into the campaign drafted a report that was never publicly released. Fear of accountability or retribution for the campaign is reputed to be among the reasons Mugabe fears losing power. Mugabe eventually succeeded in bringing ZAPU to heel, signing an accord with Nkomo to merge ZAPU into ZANU in 1987, and amending the constitution to create an executive presidency.

Hope and Disappointment: the 1990s

There was a glimmer of hope for democracy in 1990 when Mugabe’s post-election attempt at constitutional change to establish a one-party state failed (his party and loyal security forces continued their *de facto* one-party rule, and Mugabe was re-elected in 1996). In 1991, hope continued to predominate among Western diplomats as Mugabe hosted the Commonwealth Summit, at which he held a garden party with Queen Elizabeth. With his support, the Commonwealth adopted the Harare Declaration, which committed member states to protect “democracy, democratic processes and institutions which reflect national circumstances, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, just and honest government; (and) fundamental human rights, including equal rights and opportunities for all citizens regardless of race, color, creed or political belief...” Mugabe’s “constructive neutrality” was instrumental in overcoming objections from a number of autocrats: Kenya’s Daniel arap Moi, Malaysia’s Mahathir bin Mohamad, and Uganda’s still-serving Yoweri Museveni among them.

In the early 1990s, the land distribution issue came to the fore as Mugabe seized four large white-owned farms and denied any right of appeal. He dismissed the objections of Harare-based diplomats and isolated

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from government contact those who protested vigorously, such as Canada's High Commissioner, Charles Bassett. The sense emanating from President Mugabe that he was embattled by foreign opponents began to dominate his public statements from this time.

Through the 1990s, Mugabe increasingly relied upon party and loyal security forces, which included the feared Central Intelligence Organization. In 1996, after being re-elected, Mugabe stated that land would be expropriated without compensation, which would be deferred until later. With infusions from international financial institutions drying up, both due to larger global trends and to misuse by the government, Zimbabwe sought alternative sources of income. Wealth from timber and mining concessions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where his armed forces participated in what became a regional war, went directly to military and party leaders. The relationships with Libya and China grew closer as the West became more estranged, less tolerant of Mugabe's authoritarian tendencies.

In 1997, John Major's Conservative government was defeated at the polls by the Labour Party under its new leader, Tony Blair, in Britain. Blair's first meeting with Mugabe at the Commonwealth Summit in Edinburgh was mostly consumed by a monologue by Mugabe on land compensation. The Mugabe government claims that Britain reneged on a commitment to support land redistribution efforts. Britain's position was that it would support "willing seller" land purchases, along with other donors, so long as it was integrated in a wider land reform and poverty reduction policy. Earlier efforts were assessed to have benefited ZANU-PF officials rather than the intended recipients. Mugabe never agreed to these stipulations. According to British High Commissioner Brian Donnelly, "The great Mugabe myth is that it has been lack of money that has precluded land reform. There would always have been money if he had been prepared to accept a transparent and equitable process." In Mugabe's worldview, this was an injustice.

By late 1999, a government-appointed commission on drafting a new constitution recommended that his powers be curbed, and limited to two terms in office. At that point, the Constitution had been amended fifteen times to increase executive power. Dissenting opinions on the committee criticized the draft for leaving Mugabe too much authority. Mugabe then proposed a constitution to increase his powers, put it forward in a referendum in February 2000, and lost. A civic movement, the National Constitutional Accord, met despite official vilification to discuss a constitution that could be accepted by a majority of Zimbabweans.

Land Seizure and Opposition Politics: Becoming a Pariah

In 2000, forcible seizures of white-owned land by ZANU-PF "war veterans" (often party thugs too young to have fought in the wars of independence) began to seriously destabilize Zimbabwe's economy.

The 2000 Parliamentary elections saw a ZANU-PF victory over the newly formed opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), led by trade unionist Morgan Tsvangirai, but Mugabe's party lost its margin to change the constitution.

In 2002, Mugabe won the Presidency, but the freedom and fairness of the vote was condemned by the Commonwealth and western powers. A planned EU observer mission was called off by Brussels due to obstacles from the government, despite the advice of EU ambassadors in Harare that criticism of what was already an unfair electoral process would be undermined by not having observers on the ground. Norway did field an observer mission and strongly criticized the electoral process. The Commonwealth suspended Zimbabwe, citing high levels of violence in the election; this was the beginning of ongoing sanctions by the EU, US, Australia and New Zealand. South Africa, fearful of state collapse on its border, endorsed the poll, as did the rest of SADC's members. The divergence between the western democracies' views and those of most in the region widened from here.

Also in 2002, the Supreme Court struck down the legislation allowing non-consensual land acquisition. Mugabe forced many judges from the bench in response.

Zimbabwe suffers from periodic droughts, and the combination of natural conditions and the chaos surrounding the country's agricultural land combined in 2002-3 to require rapidly escalating external food assistance – indeed most generously from the countries most vilified by Mugabe. The economic and social ripple effect from high rates of HIV/AIDS infection also began to take their toll. Zimbabwe's agricultural productivity and economy in general began to nosedive.

In 2004, Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition MDC, was tried for treason on trumped-up evidence and acquitted. Violence against MDC supporters would only escalate. The following year, 2005, the United States ramped up its anti-Mugabe rhetoric, declaring Zimbabwe one of six world “outposts of tyranny.” Perhaps both threatened and emboldened by his pariah status, Mugabe authorized Operation *Marambatsvina* (“take out the trash”). In the months leading up to another flawed election, hundreds of thousands of urban slum dwellers were forcibly displaced and their homes destroyed. ZANU-PF won at the polls in the wake of this brutality. The next few years, leading up to the 2008 parliamentary and presidential elections, were marked by further sanctions, escalating rhetoric on all sides, and increasing economic woes, especially for Zimbabwe's poor.

Agricultural production and distribution fell to a point where at least half of Zimbabwe's population was at risk of hunger. Inflation reached astronomic dimensions. The flow of refugees across the border to South Africa grew unabated as Zimbabweans fled in search of jobs, food, and safety from political persecution. MDC leaders and activists came under increasing attack, often physical, by the government and ZANU-PF's own youth militia. The security forces publicly beat a number of prominent opposition figures, including Tsvangirai himself, in early 2007.

The different approaches of Western and African leaders to the crisis would grow more divergent, with increasing isolation and condemnation by the former, and what the international press dubbed “quiet diplomacy” led by South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki, though Mbeki's passiveness following the April 2008 election has been increasingly contested by other SADC leaders and in South Africa itself. The failure of these two schools of thought to find more common policy ground on at least the shared interest in change became a subject of heated argument on both sides.

On June 27, 2008, Mugabe won a run-off election which Tsvangirai boycotted, stating that no free election was feasible under conditions where opposition supporters' lives were threatened. Mugabe quickly held a defiant inaugural ceremony, and then jetted-off to an African Union summit. No African leaders present questioned his legitimacy openly. Efforts led by the US and Britain to apply new sanctions to the Mugabe regime were rejected in the UN Security Council by China and Russia. But EU members added new sanctions on business transactions with the regime and connected individuals in August 2008. Reminiscent of the model that followed Kenya's fractious election and its bloody aftermath, Mugabe and Tsvangirai entered power-sharing talks in August 2008, which ultimately led to a deal in September. But implementation of the deal was stalled for months over the distribution of key ministries, especially those pertaining to public security, where Mugabe's ZANU-PF insisted on a monopoly. Meanwhile, a cholera outbreak brought on by the collapse of once-enviable public health infrastructure, along with rapidly accelerating inflation (well over 2 million percent annualized) sent ever-greater streams of refugees to South Africa. South Africa announced it would withhold aid until Zimbabwe had a representative government. Unpaid troops rioted in November 2008.

From Pretoria in January 2009, Tsvangirai announced the MDC was willing to take part in a unified government. He was sworn-in as Prime Minister in February of that year. Foreign currencies (primarily

the US dollar) were legalized to stem the hyperinflationary spiral, allowing consumer prices to fall. But the International Monetary Fund refused the new government a loan until its \$1 billion in debt was settled. China granted the country a \$950 million loan in July. Talks between Mugabe and Tsvangirai on the shape of a new constitution resumed in July 2009, but have gotten nowhere since. In late August 2009, Mugabe railed against the West in a public rally, claiming that after opening up to the West as friends “you want to be masters.”

The frustration of the MDC at its separation from real levers of power grew, and attacks on its members in the capital and the hinterland continued apace. South African President Jacob Zuma came in an attempt to mediate between Mugabe and Tsvangirai and seek full implementation of the Global Political Agreement that is the foundation of the power sharing government in order to “create confidence.” The MDC accused hard-line ZANU-PF supporters in the security forces of attempting to derail the deal. Soon after, the IMF loaned Zimbabwe \$400 million to bolster its foreign currency reserves without conditions, but did place an additional \$100 million in escrow until the country cleared its arrears. The parties differed on how the funds should be used, with ZANU-PF pushing for immediate disbursement to farmers and companies (many of which are party-linked).

The EU also sent a delegation to Zimbabwe in September 2009 to meet both Mugabe and Tsvangirai to press for progress that would allow fully normalized ties. Swedish Prime Minister (and chair of the EU Presidency at the time) Fredrik Reinfeldt said that a curtailment of the personal sanctions was not on the agenda. “It is not the restrictions that are creating problems in Zimbabwe, it is the mismanagement (and) not respecting of human rights.” The MDC wanted lifting of these sanctions to be conditional on full implementation of the Global Political Agreement, Mugabe wants these lifted immediately. While Mugabe noted that the talks “went well... Obviously they thought the Global Political Agreement was not working well.” He went on to claim that ZANU-PF had done “everything” required under the “GPA.” Tsvangirai said in a speech before his meeting with the delegation that “I am not going to stand by while ZANU-PF continues to violate the law, persecutes our members, spreads the language of hate, invades our productive farms (and) ignores our international treaties. We want partners who are going to commit themselves to good governance principles. We cannot have partners of looters.” Then-European Commissioner for Development Karel De Gucht said “They do not have the same reading of the same document. They have a different reading on how this should be done and at what speed.” Despite the positive characterization of the visit by President Mugabe, Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa accused the EU of buying into the MDC’s arguments “hook, line and sinker.” “They seem to want to undermine the inclusive government,” he said.

Prime Minister Tsvangirai began to boycott government meetings in October as a result of the prosecution of deputy Minister of Agriculture-designate, former coffee farmer and MDC member Roy Bennett, for terrorism, insurgency, sabotage and banditry. Bennett had been arrested earlier in February on the day government ministers were sworn-in. The case drew criticism from western capitals, including Washington and London, for having been politically motivated. Tsvangirai vowed not to go to his office until the case against Bennett was “resolved.”

While shops in Harare and Bulawayo may have finally been stocked and more citizens were able to afford basic necessities, fear continues to grip the countryside. White farmers, who once had 4,000 farms and were now down to a few score nationwide, told the BBC that “anarchy and lawlessness” remained the norm well after the power-sharing deal. Former British diplomat Philip Barclay opined “I think people now realize that what the (farm evictions) policy has really been about is the transfer of land from an arrogant white elite that was at least productive to an arrogant black elite that is totally unproductive. So it’s really hard to see this empowering the ordinary Zimbabweans in any way. The people who own the land now are a very small number of Mugabe’s cronies.” And Mugabe (and wife) themselves, he might

have added. Mugabe's wife now owns an expropriated farm that had been selling to Nestle, before the negative publicity compelled the corporation to end the arrangement.

A teacher in West Mashonaland noted that all teachers were suspected by ZANU-PF officials, war veterans and young toughs to be MDC supporters, and regularly harassed, intimidated, or attacked. The MDC asserted that the ZANU-PF was creating militia bases in the countryside and militarizing state institutions, in preparation for future elections. Military and security officials were even emplaced in the state broadcaster, the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation.

But while the ZANU-PF still holds most of the high cards, the tenuous political arrangement is taking its toll on party unity. Mugabe himself stated at a party congress in December 2009 that "The party is eating itself up. The more intense the internal fighting is, the greater opportunity we give the opposition to thrive." Complaints about lack of pluralism in the party are more audible than before, as members look to the inevitable post-Mugabe future. "We must win (elections) resoundingly and regain the constituents we lost," Mugabe told the 10,000 members assembled. How ZANU-PF might get out the vote might not be from the democratic retail politics playbook either.

But in March 2010, South African President Zuma mediated between President Mugabe and Prime Minister Tsvangirai to arrive at a deal to allow the government to move forward. The package of measures apparently included some senior appointments for the MDC that had long been on hold, including a new head of the Central Bank, Attorney General, and provincial governors. Soon after, a Human Rights Commission and Electoral Commission were inaugurated by Mugabe, and also applauded by the MDC. The former is headed by Reginald Austin, former head of the Commonwealth's legal affairs division; the latter is headed by Simpson Mutambanengwe, a former judge on the Zimbabwean Supreme Court and acting chief justice in Namibia. Of the Election Commission, Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara (who is from an MDC splinter party) said "The Commission will go a long way in creating conditions for free and fair elections in our country." President Zuma also made a point of meeting with deputy Agriculture Minister designate Roy Bennett, who was still on trial. In May, Roy Bennett was acquitted by Zimbabwe's High Court. The judge found insufficient evidence of the charges. The government (the Justice Ministry is held by ZANU-PF) vowed to appeal the verdict. An Attorney General's office spokesman said the High Court judge had taken a "piecemeal approach. He should have considered the merits of the case and the facts which pointed to the accused." The MDC's spokesman denounced the appeal, stating "This has nothing to do with the law, but something to do with politics."

Yet in a rare show of unity, Prime Minister Tsvangirai invited President Mugabe and Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara to join him at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where all three encouraged investment in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwean media landscape opened more in May 2010 with the new Zimbabwe Media Commission's (ZMC) licensing of four private dailies, including the *Daily News*, which had been shut down in 2003 and whose restart was delayed since 2008. "We are here to allow Zimbabweans access to media," said the ZMC's chairman, Godfrey Majonga.

The government remains prone to ructions, and there is no clear common governing agenda for the elements of the power sharing government, short of trying to attract foreign investment to Zimbabwe. There have been some successes by the MDC in reducing ZANU-PF leverage, its own power still appears constrained. Finance Minister and General Secretary of the MDC, Tendai Biti, is seen by former British diplomat Philip Barclay to have "more direct power (than Tsvangirai). At least he gets to control the budget. And given the difficulties he's faced getting public servants back to work, he's achieved a

tremendous amount.” Zimbabwe may be off the boil, for now, but its situation remains precarious and uncertain.

DIPLOMATIC ASSETS

Diplomats have supported the quest for democratic rule in Zimbabwe since the country’s early days of independence. The assets available, however, have varied largely depending on factors including historical legacy, membership in regional organizations such as SADC and international ones such as the Commonwealth, and whether or not the diplomat’s home country is in Zimbabwe’s neighborhood.

The legacy of colonialism and the power of the liberation struggle still make for strong domestic politics in Zimbabwe, and ZANU-PF has traditionally exploited its roots in the independence movement. Robert Mugabe has specifically vilified Britain, reveling in caricatured criticism of Tony Blair during his tenure as Prime Minister and referring to any diplomatic actions taken by British diplomats as plotting by “colonizers.” After United States President George W. Bush openly advocated regime change in Iraq and invaded that country in 2003, Mugabe was able to invoke the US as bogeyman, and scapegoat US sanctions for Zimbabwe’s economic crisis. The dynamic created by Zimbabwe’s colonial legacy has limited diplomatic assets available to many embassies. By linking diplomatic actions taken by Western countries with colonialism, the Zimbabwean government limits the *influence* that these diplomats can have. But the sense that there was a golden age of mutual understanding may be illusory. According to High Commissioner Brian Donnelly, “I am not sure that Mugabe ever would have been receptive to advice on democracy. Moreover, he was never very accessible to diplomats...even in the ‘good’ years.” This point seems to be bolstered by the treatment meted-out to outgoing Swedish Ambassador Sten Rylander in the pro-government press upon his departure in June 2010. Rylander had served throughout southern Africa, and noted Sweden’s support for the liberation struggle when making criticisms over child detention, media freedoms, and other matters. He was pilloried in the pro-ZANU-PF press as a simple cheerleader for the opposition and agent of “British capitalist-inspired change.”

Furthermore, *immunity*, traditionally one of the greatest assets afforded to diplomats, has been called into question as Mugabe has threatened and intimidated many Western diplomats along with journalists and other critics of his government. Mugabe has grown increasingly outspoken and brazen in his actions. Security services have used violent tactics against two Canadian High Commissioners.

On March 20, 2007, President Mugabe threatened to expel Western diplomats, accusing them of meddling in Zimbabwe’s domestic affairs. This warning to Western diplomats against supporting or interacting with opposition leaders was thought to have been aimed at scaring Zimbabweans from interaction with Western diplomats, and more specifically the British Ambassador Andrew Pockock and the American Ambassador Christopher Dell. Ambassador Dell walked out of the meeting in protest.

Other countries, particularly those with similar historical circumstances such as South Africa, have enjoyed a larger degree of *legitimacy* in Zimbabwe – and thereby access to decision makers. Mugabe and ZANU-PF leaders perceive shared interests arising from common struggle for African self-rule in a post-independence environment. Many countries in the Southern African region directly supported Zimbabwe’s independence struggle, and Mugabe returned the favor to them once in power by assisting against South African-backed insurgencies. These governments, acknowledging Zimbabwe’s economic crisis, have been able to leverage these historical ties to maintain a dialogue with the ruling ZANU-PF party. In becoming a SADC member, nations agree to share values including “human rights, democracy and the rule of law.” But this formal pledge has rarely been employed by SADC members to hold Zimbabwe to these commitments, in part because of questionable democratic credentials of some SADC members themselves, although Botswanan legislators operating in the SADC inter-parliamentary

assembly have long been critical of Zimbabwe's anti-democratic practice; recently the Foreign Minister followed suit. Diplomats from South Africa, particularly Ambassador Jeremiah Ndou, have on occasion reminded Zimbabwe of democratic values all members have agreed to uphold. South Africa has also been leading SADC-supported negotiations between ZANU-PF and opposition parties, although MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai publicly called for former South African President Thabo Mbeki to be replaced in this role, citing his lack of willingness to confront Mugabe.

The centrality of the British contribution to Zimbabwean independence was recognized by Mugabe until a decade ago. Other Commonwealth, EU, and democratic governments like the US and Norway also contributed a great deal to post-independence development. Western embassies have shown *solidarity* toward Zimbabwe's civil society and opposition, though often at the risk of antagonizing the government.

Finally, many diplomats have cited their ability to leverage *funds* in Zimbabwe as a useful asset to their diplomatic efforts. Funds have been used to provide support to civil society groups and democratic institutions, such as the judiciary, as part of a larger strategy to support democratic development in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean lawyer and intellectual Dr. Alex Magaisa has emphasized the importance of these initiatives as local resources become increasingly scarce. Embassies refrained from direct support to the MDC, "since any evidence of this would be used to prosecute opposition leaders." International food aid – both bilateral from governments (such as the UK, US, and Sweden) through embassies, and multilateral through programs like the World Food Program – has also been a major force by the diplomatic community in helping to stave off famine in Zimbabwe. This aid has vastly increased as Zimbabwe's food crisis has worsened in recent years as a result of land seizures, economic mismanagement, non-cancellation of debt, and persistent drought. In terms of proportion, funds for democracy and civil society assistance are dwarfed by the level of humanitarian aid. The fact that most democratic governments remain skeptical that aid will be abused by the still ZANU-PF dominated government has meant that food and other humanitarian assistance (particularly in the devastated education sector) has been a focal point.

TOOLBOX APPLICATION

The Golden Rules

Many diplomats cited *listening* as an important part of their strategy for democracy support. This includes listening to all sides of the struggle for democracy in Zimbabwe. Edward Gibson Lanpher, US Ambassador to Zimbabwe from 1991-1995, said that he never turned down an invitation to speak to people throughout every region of the country. He made an effort to be very public in his conversations with a variety of stakeholders in Zimbabwe's future, including both white and black farmers, rural and urban residents, and missionaries. Listening to a wide variety of perspectives helps ambassadors to better *understand* the political situation. British High Commissioner Brian Donnelly organized "roadshows" rotating around the main provincial cities, including staff from all the High Commission's sections – commercial, consular, British Council, and aid. This effective moving open house facilitated access for citizens. Local officials, parliamentarians, religious and civic figures were invited to evening receptions. Often the visits would be pegged to the opening of some UK-funded project in the area. The effort allowed the High Commission to counter accusations that it was acting covertly. Other embassies conducted similar efforts on a smaller scale. Swedish Ambassador Sten Rylander made a point of getting outside the capital as soon as he was accredited in 2006 to donate vehicles to a community children's rights group, and sought their views on the situation in the country. Yet the ability of diplomats to operate this freely was further curtailed soon after. Some of that room to maneuver may be returning, but so long as there remains lack of clarity over who is in charge, this remains uncertain.

A major part of listening to stakeholders and gaining a strong understanding of the situation in Zimbabwe is showing **respect** for Zimbabweans' hopes for the country. This respect forms a major part of South Africa's diplomatic interactions with Zimbabwe, which is largely centered on listening and engaging the government and opposition so that Zimbabweans can find a common solution to their political problems. Former South African Ambassador Jeremiah Ndou says, "The most important thing is that Zimbabweans themselves sit down and agree on what they want." Yet, the Zimbabwean opposition and civil society feel this approach is overly solicitous to Mugabe and insensitive to their democratic aspirations.

In recent years it has become more difficult for some diplomats to engage broadly across all sectors of Zimbabwean society. This is especially true for many of the more outspoken critics of the Zimbabwean government, such as the UK, who have been unable to speak directly with government officials. Because of these limitations, information **sharing** between diplomatic missions has become an important tool for foreign offices. The EU ambassadors meet regularly, Commonwealth countries have monthly lunches, and constant informal bilateral exchanges among diplomats are the norm. Matthew Neuhaus, Director of the Political Affairs Division of the Commonwealth, says that since Zimbabwe withdrew from the Commonwealth in 2003, it has relied largely on its relationship with SADC for information.

Truth in Communications

Sharing information gathered from stakeholders in Zimbabwe with others through **informing** has been an equally important task of diplomats in the country. A key component of the Canadian mission's current approach is informing the public about human rights abuses and violent or undemocratic actions. Jennifer Metayer, Head of Aid for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), says that CIDA stays in direct contact with all of its implementing partners several times per week. If affiliated staff members disappear or experience harassment, incidents are publicly reported so as to shine a spotlight aimed at preventing further abuse.

Formal **reporting** also plays an important role in communicating the current situation in Zimbabwe to home countries and the public, especially with the government's effort to limit international media access. Eden Reid, of the South African High Commission, said in 2008 that a major role of South African diplomats inside of Zimbabwe is reporting back to the Department of Home Affairs in Pretoria. Because South African diplomats are able to talk to government officials, opposition leaders, and civil society within Zimbabwe, Reid believed they were able to report an accurate picture of the situation in the country, which is useful for forming South African policy. Yet given misgivings about South African policy, some opposition and civic figures are more apt to talk to Western diplomats. Furthermore, the humanitarian aid given by western governments enabled insight into conditions and contacts with civil society around the country.

Some of the failure of diplomacy in Zimbabwe, however, may be attributed to a failure to heed warnings reported by diplomats. Former Canadian High Commissioner Robert MacLaren found little support at home for his alarm over reports of massacres in Matabeleland in the 1980s. A decade later, former US Ambassador Lanpher reported in his final cable to Washington DC in 1995 that Zimbabwe was "increasingly corrupt" and had "the appearance of democracy, but was basically under a one-party, one-man control." In this case it was not a failure of reporting, but a failure of capitals to follow up on these reports with action to help prevent further breakdown of democracy.

Working with Government

Though working with ZANU-PF government officials was initially the goal of most, if not all, diplomatic envoys, many diplomats soon found their efforts at democracy support severely impeded by these same

officials. When Mugabe's government became increasingly authoritarian beginning in the late 1990s, many diplomats decided they could no longer stay quiet and issued public demarches condemning the actions of the ZANU-PF government. While there continued to be efforts to work with the Zimbabwean government, illegal land seizures and violence surrounding the 2000 elections seemed to be the last straw.

The UK and US governments most notably attempted to pressure the Mugabe regime through public condemnation and economic sanctions, though this made their relationship with a retaliatory Zimbabwean government even more dysfunctional. Sir Brian Donnelly, the British High Commissioner from 2001 to 2004, was demonized in the official press and denied ministerial access, which led him to turn to public means of expressing his views on human rights, and detailing the UK's large humanitarian assistance program. The Mugabe regime, seeking to undermine his local credibility, retaliated in many ways, placing Sir Brian on 24-hour surveillance in 2002 and threatening to expel him in 2003, accusing him publicly of various fictitious plots ostensibly intended to overthrow the Zimbabwean government. Donnelly believes these acts were designed primarily to intimidate Zimbabwean interlocutors.

This pattern of the Zimbabwean government continuing to refuse to work with diplomats in the wake of public declarations, may prompt reflection on the benefits of such proactive public diplomacy in a one-man state. While such condemnations satisfied domestic constituents' desires to have their governments speak out about human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, the ability of diplomats in the country to influence or negotiate with ZANU-PF officials via *demarches* was severely thwarted. While the softer line taken by other countries' may have preserved access, their ability to influence – or will to influence – Zimbabwean policies is hardly evident.

Matthew Neuhaus believes that better *advising* and greater mentoring involvement with Zimbabwe's government in the early years of independence might have made a difference in the country's ultimate democratic development. Yet the first Zimbabwe cabinets included several leaders who had spent exile years in international institutions. Focused diplomatic advising to build up more such homegrown future leaders may have forestalled the transformation to authoritarian rule that Zimbabwe later faced. Zimbabwe's government *did* avail itself of external advice in areas of concern when it was desirable. Britain, for instance, helped mold the Zimbabwean National Army, having deployed a military training mission in Zimbabwe for over 20 years. However, many in the international community were eager to overlook governance deficiencies that could have been corrected through advising earlier in exchange for having a "model" democratic African leader to point to in the once-esteemed figure of Mugabe.

The abilities of diplomats to *advise* the Zimbabwean government in a way that would meaningfully improve democratic development have been constrained by a frequent divergence of views with officials on what constitutes a modern democratic state in Africa. But diplomats have also turned to civil society as a potential force to strengthen Zimbabwean governance. By advising civil society leaders and working to build their capacity, diplomats believe they are helping to create an environment conducive to better future government. It appears that the new government, particularly Finance Minister Tendai Biti of the MDC, has been more open to international advice; he is perhaps the minister most open to the international community as he pursues foreign capital for the recently stabilized economy. Others are also likely receptive. The real question is who is actually handling the levers of power. Of "power ministries" (Defense, Interior, Justice) and other government bodies (such as the Central Intelligence Organization), these remain firmly in the hands of ZANU-PF hardliners who – if they take any advice – are more likely to accept it from counterparts in Beijing, Tehran, or Tripoli than from the democratic world, near or far.

This advising has largely taken place through an emphasis on *dialogue* that has formed a cornerstone of many diplomats' actions in Zimbabwe. South African Ambassador Ndou emphasized the importance of dialogue, specifically citing South Africa's efforts to encourage conversations between government

officials and opposition leaders using the institution of SADC to maintain legitimacy and solidarity as an honest broker. Others tried to reel Zimbabwe back before relations with the West reached their current state. Commonwealth Secretary General and New Zealand ex-Foreign Minister Don McKinnon was mandated by the Commonwealth Ministerial Advisory Group (CMAG), formed as a follow-on to the 1991 Harare Declaration, to attempt to forge a creative solution, but was unsuccessful in gaining meaningful political access to Mugabe.

Following this failed attempt, the Commonwealth adopted the Abuja Process in 2001 at the request of then-British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook to attempt to work with the Zimbabwean government on issues of human rights, elections, and land reform. A deal was reached, but the September 11, 2001 attacks on the US diverted international attention, and Mugabe rescinded his consent to the agreement at the end of the month. According to one senior diplomat, this “led the UK (and other western governments) to doubt the value of dialogue when the other party seemed patently insincere.”

The arrival of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai in the unity government in 2009 has certainly opened relations between Harare and much of the international community. Tsvangirai was welcomed to the White House in June 2009 by President Barack Obama, who proclaimed his “extraordinary admiration for the courage (and) the tenacity that the prime minister has shown in navigating through some difficult political times.”

Yet despite the new unity government, dealing with Mugabe remains difficult. Western democracies have adopted benchmarks for granting aid to the government, to ensure it is spent appropriately. These have generated the predictable acrimony from Mugabe, who in July 2009 attacked the new US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Ambassador Johnnie Carson, as an “idiot” after a meeting on the sidelines of the African Union summit in Libya. “We have the whole of SADC working with us, and you have the likes of little fellows like Carson, you see, wanting to say: ‘You do this, you do that.’” the pro-government *Herald* quoted him as saying. “Who is he?... I hope he was not speaking for Obama. I told him he was a shame, a great shame, being an African-American, an Afro-American for that matter.” He refused to meet outgoing US Ambassador James McGee, who departed his post also in July. In May 2010, Carson again came under assault, this time by Zimbabwe’s Ambassador to the US, Machivenyika Mapuranga, who interrupted the Assistant Secretary’s remarks on the state of human rights and good governance in Zimbabwe at an Africa Day dinner with a shout “You are talking like a good house slave!” He continued with “We will never be an American colony, you know that!” Carson retorted “You can sit in the audience in darkness, but the light will find you and the truth will find you...It seems that Robert Mugabe has some friends in the room tonight. Unlike in Zimbabwe, they are allowed to speak without oppression because this is a democracy. In Zimbabwe, that kind of talk would have been met with a policeman’s stick. We don’t do that here.” The Zimbabwean Ambassador was quietly convinced to leave by the event staff at the hotel. Another diplomat in attendance told the *Foreign Policy* reporter that “In Africa, an ambassador is treated like a king. Here he can be humiliated just like anyone else.”

Reaching Out

Former Canadian Ambassador John Schram was typical of several ambassadors over recent years who sought to encourage dialogue by **convening** a group of people who had a stake in Zimbabwe’s future development and provide them with a safe place for discussion. This allowed local leaders to network with others in the country who were also working toward a more democratic Zimbabwe.

Strengthened by experience in South Africa a decade earlier, Ambassador Schram also emphasized his efforts to encourage dialogue by hosting private dinners every few weeks attended by leaders from government, business, academia, and the media, among other segments of civil society to discuss

Zimbabwe's challenges and brainstorm solutions for the future. He and other such diplomatic hosts believe these efforts had an impact and helped to create a cadre of leaders who will be ready to help move Zimbabwe on a path toward democracy once the opportunity for change arises. The Norwegians developed a prominent profile for their outreach efforts in Zimbabwe, drawing on their experience organizing the negotiations that led to the Oslo Accords. Most embassies engaged in convening government and opposition at dinner parties and other gatherings.

Ambassador Lanpher highlighted active participation of US diplomats in the International Visitor Program, which brings current and potential government, business, and civil society leaders to the United States for 30 days to "meet and confer with their professional counterparts and to experience America firsthand." Many diplomatic missions also worked to **connect** local leaders with outside groups or individuals who might be helpful to their efforts, including in policy centers and universities outside Zimbabwe. Britain's Chevening program sends about 20 Zimbabweans per year for one year of graduate training in the UK. Other democracies have such exchange programs. The British Council also organizes training programs on aspects of democratic governance inside and outside of Zimbabwe. By **showcasing** best practices through these trainings, diplomats such as those from the US Embassy attempted to build capacity of the local Zimbabwean officials, public institutions and civil society.

Much of the support diplomats have provided to Zimbabwe has also been in the form of **financing**. Diplomats have given funds to promote dialogue, support Zimbabwe's vocal labor movement, reinforce human rights, promote gender equality, and build capacity of civil society to push for democratic governance, among others. These funding mechanisms have chiefly been lauded as successful in supporting democracy development. Jennifer Metayer points to the especially flexible and rapid-response nature of CIDA's funding as critical to the impact it has had in Zimbabwe.

Beyond the direct benefit diplomats have gained from providing funding to local groups, an additional benefit is that providing funding – especially to development or humanitarian projects – allows diplomats an opportunity to interact with people and the media in a more public way than they might otherwise be able. Ambassador Schram, for instance, cited his ability to discuss the values of human rights, democracy, and rule of law enshrined in such agreements as the "Harare Declaration" of the Commonwealth and New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) undertakings on governance, both of which Zimbabwe had signed, to the media and the public during ceremonies designed to unveil development projects funded by the Canadian government. The ability to provide funds and other forms of aid also gives diplomats some leverage over government officials who rely on these funds. Ambassador Lanpher recalls an example in the early 1980s when Zimbabwe was suffering from a severe food shortage due to drought. Mugabe had imposed a food curfew on Matabeleland as part of the punishment for perceived rebellion by followers of Joshua Nkomo in 1982. When the US sent food aid to the country, Ambassador Lanpher refused to distribute it until Mugabe's government signed an agreement stating that the food would be distributed across all areas of the country. "I had a good relationship with the government," Ambassador Lanpher stated. "But sometimes you have to be tough." This approach became increasingly difficult, and with the 2002-3 drought and resultant food shortages, leverage was very limited, as most donor governments refused to channel aid through the Zimbabwean government for fear of it being misused or inequitably distributed.

These financing mechanisms sometimes come at a cost. The public emphasis that many Western diplomats have put on funding pro-democracy civil society groups and opposition parties has allowed Mugabe to decry that the West has been funding "regime change" and has, to some extent, de-legitimized opposition groups and even some NGOs in the public eye. Methods developed in post-Cold War Europe in the 1990s were predicated on open access to all parties. Given Zimbabwe's deepening authoritarianism, support to the ruling ZANU-PF seemed perverse. But it therefore generated fierce resistance. Anecdotal

evidence points to infighting that has begun to occur within NGOs and other civil society groups over access to foreign funds. The opposition MDC party split in 2005 was reported by some sources to be driven by disagreements over spending.

Since the adoption of the power-sharing Global Political Agreement, while most democracies have held off on delivering aid to the government until they see its full implementation, they have made a point of directing assistance to where it is needed most in Zimbabwe – the beleaguered public – with food aid, help for students to buy books, uniforms and other supplies, as well as to the civic sector.

Defending Democrats

Support for local leadership in the Zimbabwean struggle for democracy has also been a part of diplomatic action in the country. Diplomatic missions like the US Embassy have *demonstrated* their support by being quite vocal in defense of democrats who have been persecuted by the Mugabe regime. These diplomats have identified and called for an end to persecution through official statements, such as the following, released by the US State Department on July 26 2007: “Yesterday’s beating of over 200 Zimbabwean citizens that were peacefully demonstrating for a new constitution is an overt attempt by the Government of Zimbabwe to eliminate any criticism in advance of elections planned for next year.” Following an attack on a diplomatic convoy dispatched to investigate intimidation of citizens before the June 2008 runoff election, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband said that “I think that it gives us a window into the lives of ordinary Zimbabweans, because this sort of intimidations is the sort of thing that is suffered daily, especially by those who are working with opposition groups.” South African President Jacob Zuma’s visit to deputy Agriculture Minister-designate Roy Bennett while he was still on trial for terrorism and other charges sent a strong message to Mugabe’s government, and may have stiffened the resolve of those in the judiciary to refuse to succumb to political pressure.

CIDA’s Jennifer Metayer says that *verifying* the whereabouts of civil society members, and reporting any disappearances or threats has formed a large part of CIDA’s efforts in Zimbabwe. By verifying any persecution that civil society activists experience, CIDA lets the Zimbabwean government know that the Canadian mission is watching their actions.

In May 2008, a group including the British, American, EU and Japanese ambassadors and the deputy chiefs of mission from the Netherlands and Tanzania (which chairs the African Union) and several other diplomats drove in an 11-car convoy north of the capital to investigate allegations that the government and ruling party were targeting opposition supporters in the aftermath of the first round of the presidential election, held in late March. The diplomats found a ZANU-PF detention and torture center, and visited local hospitals to interview those injured. The diplomats pushed their way through armed guards at one hospital. On the way back to Harare, the diplomatic convoy was stopped at a roadblock, and a Central Intelligence Organization officer after hearing from a US diplomat of what they saw told them “we are going to beat you thoroughly too.” Diplomats prevented the agents from fleeing and photographed them. US Ambassador James McGee said afterward “We are eager to continue this type of thing, to show the world what is happening here in Zimbabwe. It is absolutely urgent that the entire world sees what is going on. The violence has to stop.” A second such convoy in June 2008, including American and British diplomats was stopped by police 80km north of Harare. After refusing to go to a police station, the convoy was chased. At another checkpoint, the cars’ tires were slashed by police. The immobilized cars were then attacked by a group of “war veterans.” Diplomats were threatened with being burned alive in their vehicles. A Zimbabwean driver was beaten up, and equipment was stolen. Ambassador McGee stated “Zimbabwe is now a lawless country. They are not following their own laws. They are not following international law. The government is trying to intimidate diplomats from going to the

countryside to witness the violence they are perpetrating against their own citizens.” The police said that the diplomats “behave like criminals and distort information” regarding the incident.

Dr. Alex Magaisa believes that the attention of the diplomatic community, including their *witnessing* trials of accused opposition supporters, has had a big impact on Zimbabwe’s democratic development. “It’s reassuring to know that the world is watching,” Magaisa said. “If you get a diplomatic figure from a more powerful country, it makes news and it communicates a message to the world... I think this has been very, very useful.”

Diplomats have also tried to *protect* democratic rights by identifying when these rights have been curbed or violated and publicly petitioning the Zimbabwean government to restore democratic norms, including safety for those who are working toward democratic goals. On November 26 2007, the US government released a statement: “We call on the Government of Zimbabwe to end immediately the violent attacks against democratic activists and civil society organizations, to respect the rule of law, and to allow the Zimbabwean people to exercise peacefully their political rights.”

These types of public statements that defend the actions of domestic democrats have become even more important in Zimbabwe’s increasingly constrained media environment. Many foreign journalists have been expelled. The few that are allowed in the country are subject to being censored and periodically arrested, as are local Zimbabwean journalists. Stories of journalists being censored, jailed, or beaten have become common, as independent media within the country has withered under stifling laws. Many of the country’s journalists have since taken refuge in willing host countries including Britain, the United States, and South Africa, where new independent media sources covering Zimbabwe have flourished.

What Lessons Learned?

From an early optimistic start, diplomats from both Western countries and those closest to Zimbabwe in history and geography have been able to use the assets at their disposal with diminishing success. Though colonial history has been manipulated by the Mugabe regime to exclude meaningful influence by the UK and other Western powers, the policies of entities as varied as the US government and the Commonwealth still require careful examination. In light of the diverging approaches of African and specifically SADC leaders and their diplomatic counterparts from the West, two questions are especially worth considering.

First, to what extent is public condemnation an effective diplomatic tool? The planned EU Observation Mission of the 2002 elections was canceled on the grounds that the conditions of observation were unacceptably constrained, but also to defer to EU public opinion. It left EU and other Missions the task of trying to monitor the elections with inadequate means (an apt example, however, of *sharing*).

Many countries and bodies have taken a hard line public stance against Mugabe himself and his regime. For example, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice took a stern position in a statement in 2007 which read in part: “The world community again has been shown that the regime of Robert Mugabe is ruthless and repressive and creates only suffering for the people of Zimbabwe. We will continue to follow closely events in Zimbabwe, and we urge the Government to allow all Zimbabweans to freely express their views without being subject to violence and intimidation.” In addition, “targeted” sanctions directed at regime officials and supporters have become a standard western policy tool. They can have a strong psychological impact. But while these measures are felt by their intended targets, their application and perceived irreversibility can also create a further obstacle to contact and influence with power brokers. Mugabe obsesses over the sanctions in most public appearance, decrying them as the reason for an economic recovery that remains unfelt by many Zimbabweans. This is not the case: investment and commerce can go forth unimpeded, except for arms sales, and Mugabe has traveled freely – even

unannounced – to Davos for the World Economic Forum. But the question of the opportunity cost remains – and is difficult to answer with certainty.

Such declarations and policies probably further hampered diplomats' already reduced ability to work directly with government officials and maintain a flow of information about the situation on the ground. But democracies understandably wish to maintain what they judge is an important position of principle on human rights abuses, political violence, and undemocratic action, and ideally consistently around the world. Inconsistencies on the part of critical democracies are exploited by autocrats and sow confusion among broad populations as well. Countries and bodies that on the other hand have focused on working within official channels have been accused of silent collaboration, but they have maintained open channels of communication and information inside Zimbabwe, for what they are worth in effecting moderation and change. Both approaches have had their strengths and weaknesses, with little public acknowledgment or cooperation on either side. Neither seems to have achieved their stated aim.

The second question concerns how much open support diplomats should provide to opposition parties and democracy-promoting civil society groups. In the case of politicians especially, credibility hinges on authenticity and independence. Too much public support and funding from foreign sources open opposition parties and civil society groups to charges that they are simply fronts for foreign governments. Yet without outside support, many of these groups do not have the resources or political space to operate. It is important for diplomats to find a balance between support for a multi-party democratic process and perceived support for "regime change." This case study does not pretend to provide an answer to these questions. But it does draw attention to the merit of creative thinking about the opening up of diplomatic space between differently positioned actors with varying strategies (an example in this case would be SADC and the Commonwealth), to find common ground in pursuing similar goals. Rather than viewing these approaches as either-or choices, better calibration of application might maximize the potential benefits of each: greater willingness to conduct back-channel talks on the part of western democracies and a greater willingness by SADC members to use the access they have to influence beneficial change.

CONCLUSION

Significant outside support will be needed to lift Zimbabwe back on the track of realizing its potential, given that its once noteworthy assets are now severely degraded through abuse or neglect. Rebuilding an effective civil service not tied to political leaders, and re-establishing an economic and fiscal climate in which trade and industry can flourish again will be priorities. Generous international support for Zimbabwe's government and civil society will hopefully help Zimbabwe to enjoy at last the self-governance and prosperity by and for the people that independence and self-determination promised.

Despite the changes in the past year in Zimbabwe, the functionality of the troubled power-sharing arrangement is questionable, as it snags on recurring political crises. Prime Minister Tsvangirai has said "Mugabe cannot govern without us. He can't act unilaterally... Already Zimbabwe is a different place, a significantly better place. As a society, we were near death, and we have come back to life." Finance Minister Tendai Biti, of the MDC, has also sought donor support for his reforms, which have delivered noteworthy success in restoring stability and market functionality. While help is coming in, particularly for humanitarian aims, Western donors maintain their wait-and-see attitude. President Obama noted when welcoming Prime Minister Tsvangirai in 2009 that none of the \$73 million being given for work in Zimbabwe would go through the government "because we continue to be concerned about consolidating democracy, human rights and the rule of law, but it will be going directly to the people of Zimbabwe." Also in 2009, former British Junior Foreign Minister Mark Malloch-Brown told the Zimbabwean Foreign Minister that more reforms are required "before the UK and international community as a whole can engage more fully." This essentially remains the policy today, a year later, as Western governments call

for full implementation of the Global Political Agreement to re-establish their full spectrum of assistance with Zimbabwe's government.

The amount of assistance to devote, and how soon to commit it, remains a debated issue among established democracies, both in the region and the wider international community. In the United States, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry said in a press conference with Tsvangirai that the new joint government has made "real progress in stabilizing runaway inflation and trying to begin to create the conditions for democracy... I believe that we should explore our options to increase assistance for reform. Failure to act now may squander this opportunity for change, and the greatest beneficiaries will be Robert Mugabe and the other architects of Zimbabwe's destruction." Since then, Tsvangirai and others MDC members in government have accused Mugabe and ZANU-PF from reneging on key elements of the deal, threatened to leave the government altogether and call for new (and internationally monitored) elections, and then come back after gaining concessions they hope will strengthen public freedoms and weaken the ZANU-PF hardliners.

South Africa's new President, Jacob Zuma, has taken a different approach to Zimbabwe from his predecessor, Thabo Mbeki, who pursued a "quiet diplomacy" policy. A spokesman for his African National Congress party said "President Zuma will be more vocal in terms of what we see as deviant behavior." In his August 2009 visit to Harare, President Zuma called on the power-sharing agreement to be fully implemented to allow foreign assistance to flow freely. "The inclusive government has the responsibility to fully implement the global political agreement and thus create confidence in the process...The important factor is that there is commitment amongst all parties which will make movement forward possible." He added that the current problems are not "insurmountable." As noted earlier, his engagement and personal mediation was integral to knitting the government back together in March 2010, after another crisis. President Zuma has been a frequent visitor to Harare since his inauguration. Still, Zuma went along with a SADC declaration in the midst of that crisis to say that the power sharing arrangement was working sufficiently enough to justify the lifting of all sanctions (which as noted above, are personal and arms-related only).

While there have been improvements felt by many Zimbabweans since 2008 and there has been progress in reopening the public space to independent media, the situation remains tense politically, and divisions in the ZANU-PF, while holding potential for greater democracy, also generate greater volatility. Philip Barclay, who served in Harare until last year, says "when the violence is bad, it's when the regime is driving it with an objective in mind, to terrorize everyone so they'll vote for them. And there's no need to do that at the moment. Though I'm afraid it would happen again if there were more elections...fundamental things haven't really changed. There's no greater respect for human rights."

As events in Zimbabwe unfold, diplomats will maintain a key role in helping the democratic world calibrate its approach toward a tenuous transitional government in Harare, by identifying opportunities and threats to consolidating democracy.

Resource List:

Donor Organizations, Other Democracy Support Organizations and Election Assistance and Observation Organizations

Accompanying the Third Wave of global democratization we have witnessed a new tide of needs for ideas and funding. Nongovernmental democracy activists seeking to establish and consolidate democratic institutions have knocked on doors of embassies seeking that help from representatives of democratic governments as well as from foundations and international organizations. To meet the complex and growing demand for assistance an array of new organizations have emerged to join the ranks of traditional sources of help.

The following list of organizations is provided as a guide to diplomats, civil society and others. The list provides answers to the question: what advice can I give to a representative of a lawyer's organization, a women's association, a group of journalists seeking to establish a press association or any other representative of a civic organization on sources of help beyond that assistance my own government might provide through its Foreign Ministry or official assistance programs? This list seeks to be the source of some answers. It does not intend to be exhaustive. We plan to expand upon it in future. It does not include major official governmental assistance programs. The list does not seek to include the many thousands of nongovernmental organizations; many of which courageously and against great odds, are participating in the struggle for democracy. Many are grouped together in such organizations as the World Movement for Democracy (WMD). Through such formal or informal networks democracy organizations learn from each others' experiences. This list seeks to link those organizations to ideas, information and resources that will help them in their struggle.

The resource list provides a brief description of institutional goals of each organization and a link to their websites where detailed information can be found.

INTERNATIONAL / MULTILATERAL DONOR ORGANIZATIONS

United Nations Democracy Fund **<http://www.un.org/democracyfund>**

The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) was created in 2005 as a means to support democratization throughout the world. It provides assistance to governmental, nongovernmental, national, regional, and international organizations, including relevant UN departments, offices, funds, programs, and agencies. The Fund will complement current UN efforts to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide.

United Nations Development Program **<http://www.undp.org/>**

At the United Nations Millennium Summit, world leaders put development at the heart of the global agenda by adopting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by 2015. On the ground in 166 countries, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) focuses on helping countries build and share solutions to many challenges including democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, the environment, and HIV/AIDS. UNDP programs operate mainly through its country offices.

UNDP Oslo Governance Centre (Norway)

<http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/index.html>

The Oslo Governance Centre (OGC) is an initiative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Established in 2002, OGC is part of the UNDP's Democratic Governance Group, but also works with other parts of UNDP. Functioning as a global policy network for democratic governance, OGC is involved engages in research with leading policy institutions. OGC also provides policy guidance for UNDP's more than 130 satellite offices around the world.

European Partnership for Democracy (Belgium)

<http://www.epd.eu/>

The European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) is an independent European organization that supports democracy outside of the European Union. It serves as the platform for European civil and political society organizations working on democracy assistance. The EPD's mission is to advocate for a stronger presence of democracy support on the EU's agenda, to share knowledge on democracy assistance among various stakeholders and to provide small grants to partner organizations in the field.

The National Endowment for Democracy (United States)

<http://www.ned.org/>

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a private, non-profit organization created in 1983 to strengthen democratic institutions around the world through nongovernmental efforts. With its annual congressional appropriation, it makes hundreds of grants each year to support pro-democracy groups in Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union. The NED family of organizations includes the Solidarity Center, the Center for International Private Enterprise, the International Republican Institute, and the National Democratic Institute.

National Democratic Institute

<http://www.ndi.org/>

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) is a non-profit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Calling on a global network of volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and to promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

International Republican Institute

<http://www.iri.org/>

A non-profit, nonpartisan organization, the International Republican Institute (IRI) advances freedom and democracy worldwide by developing political parties, civic institutions, open elections, good governance and the rule of law. The IRI works with multilateral organizations like the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the United Nations, with partners like Australia's Liberals and the European People's Party, and with institutions in newer democracies, such as Mexico, Lithuania, Slovakia and Indonesia, who bring recent, relevant democracy building experiences to bear.

Solidarity Center

<http://www.solidaritycenter.org/index.asp>

Solidarity Center is a non-profit organization that assists workers around the world in building democratic and independent trade unions. The Center's mission is to help unions and community groups achieve and establish equitable, sustainable, and democratic development. The Center and its partners promote democracy, freedom, and fair trade agreements in order to improve the quality of

life for workers around the world. The Center provides a voice for workers in the developing global economy.

Center for International Private Enterprise

<http://www.cipe.org/>

The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) is a non-profit affiliate of the US Chamber of Commerce and one of the core institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy. CIPE has supported more than 1,000 local initiatives in over 100 developing countries, involving the private sector in policy advocacy and institutional reform, improving governance, and building understanding of market-based democratic systems. CIPE provides management assistance, practical experience, and financial support to local organizations to strengthen their capacity to implement democratic and economic reforms. CIPE programs are also supported through the United States Agency for International Development.

World Movement for Democracy (United States)

<http://www.wmd.org/>

The World Movement for Democracy (WMD) is a global network of democrats, including activists, practitioners, academics, policy makers, and donors, who have come together to cooperate in the promotion of democracy. WMD offers new ways to give practical help to democrats who are struggling to open closed societies, challenge dictatorships, democratize semi-authoritarian systems, consolidate emerging democracies, and strengthen established democracies.

Center for International Media Assistance

<http://www.ned.org/cima/cima.html>

The Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA), aims to strengthen the support, raise the visibility, and improve the effectiveness of media assistance programs throughout the world. The Center approaches its mission by providing information, building networks, conducting research, and highlighting the indispensable role independent media play in the creation and development of sustainable democracies around the world.

International Foundation for Electoral Systems (United States)

<http://www.ifes.org/>

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) is a non-profit democracy development organization that works to give people a voice in the way that they are governed. It is a leading election assistance organization, providing countries with the technical advice and tools required to run democratic elections. Every IFES project is staffed by national and international staff in partnership with local organizations. The organization has worked with over 100 countries since its founding in 1987.

Open Society Institute (United States)

<http://www.soros.org/>

The Open Society Institute works to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve its mission, OSI seeks to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, OSI implements a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media. At the same time, OSI builds alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. OSI places a high priority on protecting and improving the lives of people in marginalized communities. Individual OSI offices are run autonomously in the following countries or regions of the world: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, East Africa, Estonia, Georgia, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, London, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia,

South Africa, Southern Africa, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and West Africa.

Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (Taiwan)

<http://www.tfd.org.tw/english/index.php>

The Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) was founded in 2003 as a link between Taiwanese political and civil society groups and the world democratic network. The TFD's international grants program is designed to assist organizations based outside of Taiwan to carry out projects to promote democracy and human rights. International nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions or think tanks, and other related organizations are eligible to apply. Geographically, the program places a priority on support for projects that address the Asian region, but projects in other regions occasionally receive funding as well.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (United Kingdom)

<http://www.wfd.org/>

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) based in London, was founded in 1992 to provide flexible and imaginative funding assistance to countries managing the difficult transition to democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and sub-Saharan Africa. Throughout the 1990s WFD's work expanded to support countries emerging from conflict and authoritarian rule and to support the consolidation and effectiveness of existing democratic regimes. The Foundation now invests a substantial proportion of its resources in supporting projects and developing programs in wider Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa.

Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (The Netherlands)

<http://www.nimd.org/>

The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) encourages democratization in young democracies by helping political parties enhance democratic systems in their countries, aiding in institutional development of political parties and collaborating in efforts to improve relations between political parties, civil society and the media. NIMD is currently working with more than 150 political parties from 16 program countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe.

Ford Foundation (United States)

<http://www.fordfound.org/>

The Ford Foundation is a resource for innovative people and institutions worldwide. Its goals are to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. The foundation makes grants or loans that build knowledge and strengthen organizations and networks through its headquarters in New York and regional offices in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

German Marshall Fund of the United States (United States)

<http://www.gmfus.org/>

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) is a nonpartisan American public policy and grantmaking institution dedicated to promoting greater cooperation and understanding between the United States and Europe. GMF does this by supporting individuals and institutions working on transatlantic issues, by convening leaders to discuss the most pressing transatlantic themes, and by examining ways in which transatlantic cooperation can address a variety of global policy challenges. In addition, GMF supports a number of initiatives to strengthen democracies.

Rockefeller Foundation (United States)

<http://www.rockfound.org/>

The Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1913 by John D. Rockefeller, Sr., to promote the well-being of humanity by addressing the root causes of serious problems. The Foundation works around the world to expand opportunities for poor or vulnerable people and to help ensure that globalization's benefits are more widely shared. With assets of more than \$3.5 billion, it is one of the few institutions to conduct such work both within the United States and internationally.

Rockefeller Brothers Fund (United States)

<http://www.rbf.org/>

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) was founded in 1940 as a vehicle through which the five sons and daughter of John D. Rockefeller Jr., could share a source of advice and research on charitable activities and combine some of their philanthropies to better effect. The RBF's grantmaking is organized around four themes: Democratic Practice, Sustainable Development, Peace and Security, and Human Advancement. The Fund awards grants to support a variety of charitable projects in the US and abroad that seek to expand knowledge, clarify values and critical choices, nurture creative expression, and shape public policy.

Alfred Mozer Stichting (The Netherlands)

<http://www.alfredmozerstichting.nl/>

Established in 1990 by the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA), the Alfred Mozer Stichting (AMS) supports the development of democracy through the training and schooling of social democratic political parties. Initially focused on Central and Eastern Europe, the foundation now concentrates primarily on making and maintaining contacts in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. AMS is sponsored by the MATRA program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. Interested political parties and organizations can send in applications for projects.

European Union - European Commission: Directorate General for Development (Belgium)

http://ec.europa.eu/development/index_en.cfm

The Directorate General for Development (DG DEV) is part of the European Union's European Commission. Focused on policy formulation at both the global and sectoral level, DG DEV initiates and drafts development policy applicable to all developing countries. Specifically, DG DEV's policy focuses on effectively combating poverty through helping to reduce and ultimately eradicate poverty in the developing countries through the promotion of sustainable development, democracy, peace and security.

Balkan Trust for Democracy (Serbia)

<http://www.gmfus.org/balkantrust>

The Balkan Trust, initiated in 2003, is a ten-year funding project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. A \$27 million grantmaking initiative, the Balkan Trust aims to strengthen democratic institutions in the Western Balkans, Romania and Bulgaria by promoting sub-national and trans-Balkan collaboration among governments, NGOs, civic initiatives, and other institutions. The Balkan Trust also supports local and national organizations' efforts to improve citizen engagement with government, monitor government performance and better citizens' understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

Robert Bosch Stiftung (Germany)

<http://www.bosch-stiftung.de/>

Since its founding in 1964, the Robert Bosch Stiftung has spent 735 million Euros on funding to trigger development, impact society and bring about change. The organization promotes relations between Germany and Central and Eastern Europe through its “International Relations Central and Eastern Europe” program, which focuses on promoting language and culture, dialogue with the media, politics and civil society and international exchange. In the future, the Robert Bosch Stiftung will expand its work to include Southeastern European countries.

Carnegie Corporation (United States)

<http://www.carnegie.org/>

Carnegie Corporation of New York was created by Andrew Carnegie in 1911 to promote “the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding.” Under Carnegie’s will, grants must benefit the people of the United States, although up to 7.4 percent of the funds may be used for the same purpose in countries that are or have been members of the British Commonwealth, with a current emphasis on select countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a grantmaking foundation, the Corporation seeks to carry out Carnegie’s vision of philanthropy, which he said should aim “to do real and permanent good in this world.”

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (United States)

<http://www.mott.org/>

The mission of the Mott Foundation’s Civil Society program is to support efforts to assist in democratic institution building, strengthen communities, promote equitable access to resources, and ensure respect for rights and diversity. The program is organized into four program areas: Central/Eastern Europe and Russia, South Africa, United States, and Special Initiatives – International. Three broad themes unite grantmaking within the program: strengthening the non-profit sector; promoting people’s rights, responsibilities and participation; and improving race and ethnic relations.

Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Germany)

<http://www.fes.de/>

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung was founded in 1925 as a political legacy of Germany’s first democratically elected president, Friedrich Ebert. The foundation was established to further political and social education of individuals from all walks of life in the spirit of democracy and pluralism; facilitate access to university education and research for gifted young people by providing scholarships; and contribute to international understanding and cooperation.

Friedrich Naumann Foundation (Germany)

<http://www.fnst.de/>

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation is an independent, non-profit, nongovernmental organization committed to promoting liberal policy and politics. The foundation has won a reputation for promoting freedom in human dignity as the ultimate precondition of a society where people can live freely and in peace. It carries out intensive work in political education, advice, training and dialogue. In Africa it supports various projects in cooperation with partner organizations and is similarly active in over 50 countries worldwide.

Hanns Seidel Foundation (Germany)

<http://www.hss.de/>

Since its establishment in 1967, the Hanns Seidel Foundation has been practicing political education work with the aim of supporting the democratic and civic education of the German people with a Christian basis. Beginning with the first development aid project in Togo in 1977, the Foundation’s Institute for

International Contact and Co-operation has steadily expanded its geographical and conceptual framework with a focus on promoting a sense of democratic community while preserving traditions.

Heinrich Böll Foundation (Germany)

<http://www.boell.de/>

The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a non-profit organization affiliated with the German Green Party that strives to promote democracy, civil society, human rights, international understanding and a healthy environment internationally. Headquartered in Berlin, it has 25 offices worldwide and cooperates with over 200 partner organizations in more than 60 countries.

Inter-American Foundation (United States)

http://www.iaf.gov/index/index_en.asp

The Inter-American Foundation (IAF) is an independent foreign assistance agency of the United States government, working to promote equitable, responsive, and participatory self-help development in Latin America and the Caribbean. IAF provides grants to people, organizations, and processes that work to encourage economic development, strengthen democratic principles, and promote human rights.

Jean Jaures Foundation (France)

<http://www.jean-jaures.org/>

Associated with the French Socialist Party, the Jean Jaures Foundation is dedicated to the study of international workers and socialist movements and the promotion of democratic and humanist ideals. The foundation brings together politicians, business leaders, union members, academics and others to develop means of promoting the growth of pluralism and democracy in the world. Though focused primarily on African and Central European countries, the Jean Jaures Foundation has participated in over 690 democracy development programs in 113 countries.

Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany)

<http://www.kas.de/>

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) offers political education, conducts scientific fact-finding research for political projects, grants scholarships to gifted individuals, researches the history of Christian Democracy, and supports and encourages European unification, international understanding, and development-policy cooperation. Currently, the KAS hosts more than 200 projects in 120 countries through its global network of field offices.

Nordic Council (Denmark)

<http://www.norden.org/>

The Nordic Council is the official inter-parliamentary body in the Nordic Region. The council, along with the Council of Ministers, works toward joint solutions that have tangible effects for the citizens of the individual Nordic countries. The Nordic Council does this foremost by submitting proposals to the Nordic governments and encouraging them to act upon those proposals. The organization is primarily concerned with the challenges of globalization, climate issues, freedom of movement and immigration, and cooperation with the Baltic states.

The Oak Foundation (Switzerland)

<http://www.oakfnd.org/>

Since 1998, the Oak Foundation has made over 1500 grants to not-for-profit organizations through a variety of project areas, including an International Human Rights program that seeks to, inter alia, place human rights squarely on international and national agendas, especially in the global south. The Foundation considers funding requests for projects that target root causes, demonstrate solutions that can be adopted by permanent providers and/or by government and involve target populations in the planning

and implementation of projects.

Pablo Iglesias Foundation (Spain)

<http://www.fpabloiglesias.es/>

The Pablo Iglesias Foundation is a cultural institution that focuses on research and dissemination of socialist ideology and on recovering and compiling historic and contemporary documentation of Spanish socialism. The Foundation also promotes cooperation with political, economic and cultural entities both from Spain and abroad, aiming to promote and support the values and culture of democracy and to defend human rights.

People in Need (Czech Republic)

<http://www.clovekvtisni.cz>

People in Need (PIN) is a Czech non-profit, nongovernmental organization that has implemented relief and development projects in crisis regions around the globe and supported human rights and democracy in countries repressed by totalitarian regimes throughout its history. PIN is one of the largest organizations of its kind in post-communist Europe, and has administered projects in thirty-seven countries since its founding.

Pontis Foundation (Slovakia)

<http://www.nadaciapontis.sk/>

The Pontis Foundation was established in 1997 and is one of the largest grantmaking and operational foundations in Slovakia. The name of the foundation is taken from the Latin word for “bridge” and expresses the foundation’s purpose: to connect the sectors of Slovak society with one another and to link sources of financial support with those who need it. The Foundation supports the increased capacities of Slovakia as an emerging donor in development cooperation and democracy assistance and is a founding member of the Slovak NGDO Platform, CONCORD, the World Movement for Democracy and the network of European foundations for democracy.

Rights & Democracy (Canada)

<http://www.dd-rd.ca/>

Rights & Democracy works with individuals, organizations and governments in Canada and abroad to promote the human and democratic rights defined in the United Nations’ International Bill of Human Rights. Rights & Democracy enjoys partnerships with human rights, indigenous peoples’ and women’s rights groups, as well as democratic movements and governments around the world with whom it cooperates to promote human rights and democracy.

Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy (Denmark)

<http://www.silba.dk/>

The Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy (SILBA) is a Danish cross-political NGO founded in 1994 by Bertel Haarder, current Minister of Education of Denmark, in response to the strong wish among Danes to assist in developing the new democracies of Eastern Europe. SILBA’s primary goal is to assist democratic political parties, youth organizations and NGO’s in the new EU East European Member Countries and new Neighboring Countries,, including Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Kaliningrad, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, SILBA has a strong focus on youth programs.

NATIONAL AID AGENCIES

Australian Agency for International Development (Australia)

<http://www.aisaid.gov.au/>

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) provides monetary funding to visiting scholars and to developing countries. Working to support the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals, AusAID aims to help developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. AusAID funds initiatives dedicated to the protection and advancement of human rights, strengthening law and justice, the development of civil society, and the strengthening democratic institutions and processes.

Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)

<http://www.international.gc.ca/international/index.aspx>

As a department of the Canadian government, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) works to ensure that Canada's foreign policy reflects national interests and values. Engaged in both economic and security initiatives, domestically and abroad, DFAIT believes development, security and peace, and democratic governance can be best achieved through global multilateral engagement. DFAIT's foreign policy agenda includes the promotion of human right and gender equality.

Danish International Development Assistance (Denmark)

<http://www.um.dk/en/menu/DevelopmentPolicy/>

The Danish International Development Assistance Agency (DANIDA), an arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, The objective of Denmark's official development assistance to developing countries is, through cooperation with governments and public authorities in these countries, to support their endeavors aimed at fostering economic growth, thus making contributions to ensuring social progress and political independence in accordance with the aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)

<http://www.bmz.de/en/issues/goodgovernance/demokratie/arbeitsfelder/index.html>

The German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development promotes a wide range of human rights initiatives, including the rights of women and children; political participation; rule of law; and local development and transparent governance. The Ministry stresses the central importance of democracy and the rule of law in meeting the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The Ministry also promotes sustainable economic development as a mechanism that supports positive global growth.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (Germany)

<http://www.gtz.de/en/index.htm>

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), whose mandate is to support the German government in achieving its development objectives, provides viable, forward-looking solutions for political, economic, ecological and social development in a globalized world while helping its partners establish democratic systems. It promotes democratic elections and parliaments, equal rights for women and the protection of minorities. It also supports participation by civil society in government decision-making processes, and promotes free and independent media.

Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (Spain)

<http://www.aecid.es/web/es/> *Spanish language only*

The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECI), a department of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, is a governmental organization that provides funding to civil society for initiatives to eradicate poverty and to promote sustainable development practices in developing countries. AECI also supports initiatives that promote democratic governance, gender equality, health, and education.

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sweden)

<http://www.sida.se/English/>

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is a department of the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Under the direction of the Swedish government, Sida provides funding to civil society organizations that work in developing countries. Sida hopes to promote the development of dynamic and democratic civil societies by strengthen local partner organizations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Sida is dedicated to reducing poverty around the world.

United Kingdom Department for International Development (United Kingdom)

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/>

The Department for International Development (DFID), the United Kingdom's aid agency, works in 150 countries around the world to eradicate extreme poverty and to promote sustainable development. In an effort to attain the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of halving world poverty by 2015, DFID works with international organizations and governments of developing countries to reduce poverty and promote human rights. DFID believes that aid can be more effective at reducing poverty through implementing sustainable country-based aid.

US Agency for International Development (United States)

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) is an independent agency that provides economic, development and humanitarian assistance around the world in support of the foreign policy goals of the US. The department of Democracy and Governance supports the US' main foreign policy objective of expanding the global community of democracies. USAID works towards strengthening rule of law and respect for human rights, promoting free and fair elections, increasing political engagement with civil society, promoting transparency in governmental processes, and promoting media freedom. The USAID Democracy and Governance program operates mainly through its overseas offices.

US State Department: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (United States)

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/democ>

The State Department promotes democracy as a means to achieve security, stability, and prosperity worldwide by assisting newly formed democracies in implementing democratic principles; assisting democracy advocates around the world to establish vibrant democracies in their own countries; and identifying and denouncing regimes that deny their citizens the right to choose their leaders in elections that are free, fair and transparent.

US State Department: The Middle East Partnership Initiative

<http://mepi.state.gov/>

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), a division of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the US Department of State. MEPI assists local organizations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in their efforts to expand political participation, strengthen civil society and the rule of law, empower women and youth, create educational opportunities and promote economic reform. Since its establishment in 2002, MEPI has contributed over \$530 million to more than 600 projects in 17 countries and territories.

OTHER DEMOCRACY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Academy for Educational Development (United States)

www.aed.org

The Academy for Educational Development (AED) is a non-profit organization that works globally to improve education, health, civil society, and economic development. Specifically, AED's democracy program promotes advocacy, civil society development, conflict mitigation/resolution, human rights, and local governance. AED is committed to strengthen civil society through coalition building, grantmaking, advocacy training, organizational development, and civic education campaigns.

African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (The Gambia)

<http://www.acdhrs.org/>

The Centre's main objective is to give meaning to Article 25 of the African Charter, which requires States Parties to, "promote and ensure, through teaching, education and publication, respect of the rights and freedoms contained in the Charter and to see to it that these freedoms and rights, as well as corresponding obligations are understood." The Centre is Governed by the Pan-African Council and focuses on training, action-oriented research, legal service and producing publications, including the draft code of ethics for NGO's in 2005.

African Democracy Forum (Kenya)

<http://www.africandemocracyforum.org/>

The African Democracy Forum (ADF), launched in October 2000, is an African regional network of the World Movement for Democracy that is comprised of democracy, human rights, and governance organizations. ADF seeks to consolidate democracy in Africa by providing opportunities for democrats to openly express their views while also acting as a platform for mutual support and the sharing of resources. Over 450 organizations and individuals working on democracy issues in Africa currently participate in ADF activities. ADF provides opportunities for democrats to speak with one voice as well as a platform for mutual support and the sharing of resources.

African Union

<http://www.africa-union.org/>

Comprised of 53 African member states with its headquarters in Ethiopia, the African Union (AU) is an organization that works to promote unity and solidarity between African countries and peoples through the acceleration of socio-economic integration throughout the continent. Working towards the common vision of unified Africa, the AU focuses on the promotion of peace, security and stability as prerequisites for sustainable development, successful integration, and the building of partnerships between governments and civil society.

Afrobarometer

<http://www.afrobarometer.org/>

Afrobarometer is an independent research project that measures the social, political, and economic atmosphere in Africa and produces a comparative series of national public attitude surveys on democracy, markets, and civil society. Launched as a joint project in 1998 by Michigan State University (MSU), IDASA, and the Center for Democratic Development (CDD) in Ghana, Afrobarometer aims to produce scientifically reliable data on public opinion, strengthen institutional capacity for survey research, and broadly disseminate and apply survey findings throughout Africa and around the globe. The core partners of this project are MSU, IDASA in South Africa, CDD in Ghana and Institute for Empirical Research in Political Economy in Benin.

Albert Einstein Institution (United States)

<http://www.aeinstein.org/>

The Albert Einstein Institution is a non-profit organization advancing the study and use of strategic nonviolent action in defense of freedom, democracy, and the reduction of political violence in conflicts around the world. The Institution's goals are to understand the dynamics of nonviolent action in conflicts, to explore its policy potential, and to communicate this through print and other media, translations, conferences, consultations, and workshops.

The Albert Shanker Institute (United States)

<http://www.shankerinstitute.org/>

The Albert Shanker Institute is a non-profit organization established in 1998 to honor the life and legacy of the late president of the American Federation of Teachers. The organization's by-laws commit it to four fundamental principles—vibrant democracy, quality public education, a voice for working people in decisions affecting their jobs and their lives, and free and open debate about all of these issues.

Alianza Civica (Mexico)

<http://www.alianzaciciva.org.mx>

A Mexican citizen organization devoted to advancing governmental and electoral processes, the Alianza Civica runs projects that promote citizen participation in political life, transparency in government and citizen security. The Alianza Civica was founded in 1994 by a network of election-monitoring organizations, and has since worked to strengthen Mexican government and civil society alike through numerous consultation and education projects.

Alliance for Democracy in Africa (United States)

<http://www.adeafrica.org/>

Headquartered in Washington DC, with a regional office in the Gambia, the Alliance for Democracy in Africa (ADA) is a non-profit nongovernmental organization that is dedicated to promoting democracy by encouraging Africans, particularly women and children, to internalize and practice democratic values in their societies. ADA partners with a global network of volunteer experts to provide practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values and practices.

Alliance for Reforms and Democracy in Asia

<http://www.asiademocracy.org/>

Alliance for Reforms and Democracy in Asia (ARDA), a steering committee member of the World Forum for Democratization in Asia, works to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Asia. Led by Dr. Chee Soon Juan, a leading dissident and member of the Singapore Democratic Party, ARDA serves as a network for activists' intent on spreading freedom and democracy throughout all of Asia. In addition, ARDA also functions as a network for the greater global community.

American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (United States)

<http://www.abanet.org/rol/>

The Rule of Law Initiative is a public service project of the American Bar Association dedicated to promoting rule of law around the world. The Rule of Law Initiative promotes legal reform efforts in over 40 countries and has over 400 professional staff working in the United States and abroad. The Rule of Law Initiative concentrates its technical legal assistance efforts in the following substantive areas: anti-corruption, criminal law reform and human trafficking, gender issues, human rights and conflict mitigation, judicial reform, legal education reform, and legal profession reform.

America's Development Foundation (United States)**www.adfusa.org**

America's Development Foundation (ADF) is a non-profit that works throughout the world to strengthen the capacities of civil society, the private sector, and government to work together for responsive democratic governance and social and economic development. ADF programs provide training, technical assistance and grants designed to strengthen democratic values, institutions and processes and promote democratic governance, economic and social development.

Amnesty International (United Kingdom)**<http://www.amnesty.org/>**

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement that works to promote the human rights inscribed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements. The organization takes action aimed at preventing and ending grave abuses of human rights by campaigning locally and globally. With more than 2.2 million members and subscribers in over 150 countries and regions, Amnesty International coordinates support of justice on a variety of issues including women's rights, protection for migrants and refugees and the defense of those trapped in poverty.

Anna Lindh Foundation**<http://www.euromedalex.org/>**

Named after former Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh who was assassinated, the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) is a network of civil society organizations from 43 countries in the Euro-Mediterranean region that work to promote intercultural dialogue. ALF works to promote cultural understanding among people of different religions and beliefs. In addition to championing human rights and democracy, ALF also provides grants to projects and initiatives that promote the Foundation's overall goal of creating intercultural dialogue.

The Arab Democracy Foundation (Qatar)**<http://www.arabdemocracyfoundation.org>**

The Arab Democracy Foundation (ADF) is an independent initiative by peoples of the Arab region to channel resources to causes that strengthen their democratic transitions. The mechanism by which ADF accomplishes its aims is strategic grantmaking, augmented by advocacy, networking and knowledge transfer. ADF believes that its primary impact lies in stimulating and supporting innovation in the programs of Arab civil society organizations and citizens' initiatives. ADF helps qualified groups strengthen their institutional capacities, engage in promoting democratic values, participate in important public policy debates to prepare their societies for a transition to democratic governance and work against all forms of social and political exclusion.

The Arab Human Rights Fund (Lebanon)**<http://ahrfund.org>**

The Arab Human Rights Fund (AHRF) is the result of a universal human rights vision whereby everyone enjoys life in freedom, equality and dignity and is able to be a participant in the achievement of that vision. The AHRF is aimed at strengthening human rights activities in the Arab region in accordance with intrinsic needs and priorities. It does this by providing the requisite financial resources to individuals and organizations active in the protection of all human rights whilst also promoting and strengthening social justice philanthropy in the region – independently of any governmental, political, religious or other interests.

Arab NGO Network for Development (Lebanon)

<http://www.annd.org/new/annd/index.php>

The Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND) is a regional network that advocates for social and economic rights in the Arab region. ANND works to strengthen the role of civil society, enhance the values of democracy and respect for human rights, and promotes sustainable development. ANND works to achieve its goal through influencing social and economic policymaking.

Arab World Center for Democratic Development & Human Rights – United for Human Rights and Democracy (Jordan)

<http://www.awcdd.org/>

The Arab World Center for Democracy Development & Human Rights is a non-profit nongovernmental organization based in Jordan that is dedicated to the defense and promotion of human rights and democracy in the Middle East region. The Center conducts research and training workshops, and holds conferences on the topics of human rights, gender equality, democracy, and child protection in order to increase awareness about the need for justice. The Center believes in strengthening democratic values through introducing changes to civil society.

ARTICLE 19 (United Kingdom)

<http://www.article19.org/>

ARTICLE 19 is a London-based human rights organization with a specific mandate and focus on the defense and promotion of freedom of expression and freedom of information worldwide. ARTICLE 19's work is organized into five Regional Programs – Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East – and a Law Program. ARTICLE 19 also works on global issues of concern that cut across national boundaries. To make freedom of expression a reality all over the world, they undertake the following: Working in Partnership, Monitoring and Research, Advocacy and Campaigning, Standard-Setting, Legal Development, Litigation, Capacity-Building, Lobbying, Cutting Edge Research and Policy Development.

Asian Barometer (Taiwan)

<http://www.asianbarometer.org/>

The Asian Barometer (ABS) is a regional network that encompasses research teams from 13 East Asian political systems and 5 South Asian countries. ABS works to generate a region-wide base of scientifically reliable and comparable data about political values, democracy, governance, human security, and economic reforms. ABS aims to strengthen intellectual and institutional capacity for research on democracy through surveying ordinary citizens in all participating countries. ABS disseminates its survey results to academics and policy audiences.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Indonesia)

<http://www.aseansec.org/>

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), whose members include Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, works to promote economic growth, social progress and cultural development within Southeast Asia. Established in 1967, underlying principles of ASEAN include respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and national identity between all member countries. ASEAN works to implement peace and security through promoting respect for law and justice.

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (United States)

<http://www.ceip.org/>

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations and promoting active international engagement by the United States. Founded in 1910, its work is nonpartisan and dedicated to achieving practical results. From its regional offices in Washington, Beijing, Moscow, Beirut and Brussels, the Carnegie Endowment provides commentary and analysis on a range of issues, including democracy promotion and the rule of law.

The Carter Center (United States)

<http://www.cartercenter.org/>

In collaboration with Emory University, the Carter Center is a not-for-profit organization committed to advancing human rights and alleviating human suffering. By working side by side with high-ranking government officials, as well as the general population, the Center has strengthened democracies in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. It has been very active in the monitoring and strengthening of elections in both emerging and established democracies.

The Center for Civic Education (United States)

<http://www.civiced.org>

The Center for Civic Education is a non-profit, nonpartisan educational corporation that administers a wide range of critically acclaimed curricular, professional development, and community-based programs. Its work is aimed at giving citizens an increased understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy and the fundamental principles and values upon which they are founded, the skills necessary to participate as effective and responsible citizens, and the willingness to use democratic procedures for making decisions and managing conflict.

Center for Democracy and Citizenship (United States)

<http://www.publicwork.org/>

The work of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship (CDC) draws on a rich heritage of people and institutions doing public work to achieve things of lasting importance. Part of the University of Minnesota, the CDC's philosophy is forged around the fundamentals of democracy and public work. CDC's current initiatives include training, community organizing, leadership development, and educational instruction for youth and community audiences.

Center for Democracy and Election Management – American University (United States)

<http://www.american.edu/cdem/>

The Center for Democracy and Election Management (CDEM) was established by American University in 2002 to fill the gap between abstract academic research on democracy and the work of the many practitioners administering or monitoring elections all over the world. CDEM has three goals – education, research, and public engagement – on the full gamut of democracy and election-related issues. They work to fill the gap between abstract academic research on democracy and the work of the many practitioners administering or monitoring elections all over the world.

Center for Global Development (United States)

<http://www.cgdev.org/>

The Center for Global Development (CDG) is a non-profit policy research organization that is dedicated to reducing poverty and inequality caused by uneven rapid global development. CDG engages policymakers from rich developed countries and institutions, like the United States and the World Bank, and the public to rethink economic and social development policies that have detrimental consequences for lesser developed countries.

Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights (Russia)

<http://www.demokratia.ru/>

The Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights (CDDHR) is a Russian independent nongovernmental organization. Founded in 1998, CDDHR promotes the development of effective democratic institutions and the creation of sustainable mechanisms for the protection of human rights by influencing public policy. In addition to influencing policy, CDDHR also works toward creating conditions for civic participation by promoting democratic values and ideas in Russian society by working with community groups.

Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (United States)

<http://www.csidonline.org/>

The Center for the Study of Islam & Democracy (CSID) is a non-profit organization, dedicated to the study and combination of Islamic and democratic political thought in order to produce a modern Islamic democratic discourse. The organization was founded in March 1999 by a diverse group of academicians, professionals, and activists--both Muslim and non-Muslim--from around the US who agree on the need for the study of and dissemination of reliable information on this complex topic.

Center of Studies and Research for Democracy, Economics, and Social Development (Mali)

<http://www.cerdesmali.org/>

The Center of Studies and Research for Democracy, Economics and Social Development (CERDES) is a nongovernmental organization based in Bamako, Mali and with an office in Bethesda, MD. Founded by Oumar Makalou in 1991, CERDES conducts research on politics and culture, law and institutions, and economics and social development. Makalou is a former French civil servant, a former Malian civil servant, and a former senior adviser at the International Monetary Fund.

The Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law (United States)

<http://cddrl.stanford.edu/>

Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law (CDDRL) seeks to promote innovative and practical research on the design and implementation of policies to foster democracy, to promote balanced and sustainable growth, and to advance the rule of law in countries undergoing dramatic change. CDDRL engages in research, training, and teaching, and organizes intellectual and policy dialogues aimed at increasing public understanding of economic and political development.

Centre for Democracy and Development (United Kingdom)

<http://cddwestafrica.org>

The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) was established in 1997 as an independent, not-for-profit, research, training, advocacy and capacity building organization. The purpose was to mobilize global opinion and resources for democratic development and provide an independent space to reflect critically on the challenges posed to the democratization and development processes in West Africa. The CDD's mission is to be the prime catalyst and facilitator for strategic analysis and capacity building for sustainable democracy and development in the West African sub-region.

Centre for Democratic Institutions (Australia)

<http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au>

Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI) was established by the Australian government to support the efforts of new democracies in the Asia-Pacific region to strengthen their political systems. CDI is specifically focused on strengthening parliamentary governance and political parties in the emerging

democracies of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. CDI works to improve governance and political practice by conducting high-level training courses, acting as a networking hub, providing direct technical assistance, and undertaking applied research on parliamentary and political party development.

Children's Resources International (United States)

<http://www.childrensresources.org/>

Children's Resources International, Inc. (CRI) is a non-profit educational and training organization whose mission is to promote democratic educational practices for children, their families, and their teachers around the world. Founded in 1994, CRI operates under the belief that children who encounter democratic principles at a young age are likely to adopt a democratic worldview as adults.

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation (South Africa)

<http://www.civicus.org/>

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation is an international network of individuals and organizations that nurture the foundation, growth and protection of citizen action throughout the world, especially in areas where participatory democracy and citizens' freedom of association are threatened. CIVICUS has worked for over a decade to strengthen citizen action and civil society throughout the world, especially in areas where participatory democracy and citizens' freedom of association are threatened.

CIVITAS International (United States)

<http://www.civnet.org/>

CIVITAS International is a world-wide nongovernmental organization that promotes civic education at the pre-collegiate and collegiate levels in order to promote informed and responsible citizenship in emerging and established democracies around the world. The organization believes civic education is vital both to emerging and established democracies to ensure that future generations of citizens understand the values, processes, and skills necessary to developing and maintaining a free and democratic political system.

Club de Madrid (Spain)

<http://www.clubmadrid.org/>

Established following the Conference on Democratic Transition and Consolidation in 2001, Club de Madrid, comprised of over 70 former democratically elected prime ministers and presidents from around the world, is an international forum committed to promoting democracy by developing practical programs for democratic transition. Current programs include promoting women's political participation and leadership, security and terrorism, and addressing the global economic crisis.

Committee to Protect Journalists (United States)

<http://www.cpj.org/>

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) is an independent, non-profit organization founded in 1981. CPJ promotes press freedom worldwide by defending the rights of journalists to report the news without fear of reprisal. By publicly revealing abuses against the press and by acting on behalf of imprisoned and threatened journalists, CPJ effectively warns journalists and news organizations where attacks on press freedom are occurring. CPJ organizes vigorous public protests and works through diplomatic channels to effect change. CPJ publishes articles and news releases; special reports; a biannual magazine, *Dangerous Assignments*; and *Attacks on the Press*, the most comprehensive annual survey of press freedom around the world.

The Commonwealth (United Kingdom)

<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/>

The Commonwealth is an association of 53 independent states consulting and cooperating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding and world peace. The Commonwealth's 1.8 billion citizens, about 30 % of the world's population, are drawn from the broadest range of faiths, races, cultures and traditions. Emphasizing equality, trust and understanding, the Commonwealth facilitates the advancement of democracy, human rights and sustainable economic and social development within its member countries and beyond.

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (India)

<http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/>

Headquartered in New Delhi, and with offices in Ghana and London, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) is an independent, non-partisan, international nongovernmental organization that works to promote awareness of and adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other internationally recognized human rights instruments. CHRI is also a clearinghouse for various human rights publications and works with community groups and civil society organizations to influence policymakers.

Council for a Community of Democracies (United States)

<http://www.ccd21.org/>

The Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD) is a nongovernmental organization that advocates for democratic change and international cooperation through its global network of civil society, the International Steering Committee (ISC). CCD promotes the views of the ISC to the Community of Democracies, an intergovernmental organization comprised of the world's democracies. CCD seeks to promote democracy education as a pillar of building a culture of democracy and the development of *the Diplomat's Handbook* to encourage and guide diplomats in fostering democracy in their countries of assignment.

Democracy Coalition Project (United States)

<http://www.demcoalition.org/>

The Democracy Coalition Project is a nongovernmental organization that conducts research and advocacy relating to democracy promotion policies at the national, regional and global levels. Created in June 2001 as an initiative of the Open Society Institute, the Democracy Coalition Project relies on an international network of civil society organizations, scholars, foreign policy experts and politicians committed to democracy promotion as an essential element of international peace and human development.

Democracy Council (United States)

<http://www.democracycouncil.org/>

The Democracy Council (DC) is a non-profit organization composed of individuals from around the globe that work to develop and manage programs in the developing world. DC works with local organizations in authoritarian countries to promote good governance, economic opportunity, human rights, the rule of law, and the free exchange of information. DC believes these are fundamental elements in stable societies. DC's network includes congressional staff members; government aid agencies; the United Nations; and international law, human rights, non-profit, academia, and private sector professionals.

Democracy Digest (United States)

<http://www.demdigest.net/>

Democracy Digest provides news, analysis and information on democracy promotion and related matters. The Digest is produced at the National Endowment for Democracy and published by the Transatlantic Democracy Network, which aims to inform and convene democratic and civil society activists committed to promoting democracy. The network is affiliated with the World Movement for Democracy.

Democracy International (United States)

<http://www.democracyinternational.us/>

Democracy International, Inc. (DI) designs, evaluates, implements, and provides technical assistance for democracy and governance programs worldwide. DI offers expertise in election processes and election monitoring, political party organizing, local government and decentralization, legislative strengthening, civil society development, strategic communications, and rule of law programming. The firm has extensive experience with assessments, evaluations, project designs, and survey research.

Democratization Policy Council

<http://democratizationpolicy.org/>

The Democratization Policy Council (DPC), registered in the United States, is a non-profit organization that was established in 2005 by a group of international affairs professionals from around the world. DPC asserts that the world's existing democracies have a responsibility to assist in the promotion of peaceful democratic change in countries that do not practice democratic governance. DPC pursues its overall goal of facilitating the active spread of liberal democracy by advocating for governments to adopt democratic policies in their foreign policy agendas.

Derechos (United States)

<http://www.derechos.org>

Derechos ("Rights") is an international human rights organization that works with national and international human rights organizations and activists all over the world. Specifically focused on human rights in Latin America, Derechos work involves human rights education initiatives, including promoting awareness of human rights abuses; investigating human rights abuses; contributing to the development of international and national human rights law; and providing assistance to human rights NGOs, activists and victims of human rights or humanitarian law violations.

Education Center for Women in Democracy (Kenya)

<http://www.ecwd.org/>

The Education Center for Women in Democracy (ECWD) is a non-profit nongovernmental organization that works to increase women's participation and leadership in politics, public life and decision-making. Founded in 1993, ECWD works to ensure the creation of a more conducive social, political, economic and democratic environment for the equal participation of women. ECWD works with like-minded organizations, institutions and individuals in the Greater East Africa region.

European Commission for Democracy through Law (Italy)

<http://www.venice.coe.int/>

Created by the Council of Europe, the European Commission for Democracy through Law, better known as the Venice Commission, is the Council of Europe's advisory body on constitutional matters. The work of the European Commission for Democracy through Law aims at upholding the three underlying principles of Europe's constitutional heritage: democracy, human rights and the rule of law - the cornerstones of the Council of Europe.

The European Democracy Caucus (Belgium)

<http://www.democracycaucus.org/>

The European Democracy Caucus was set up in 2005 as an informal, all-party group of Members of the European Parliament, committed to the promotion of democracy worldwide, but primarily in the EU's "Neighborhood." The Neighborhood is a formal definition of the arc of countries from Russia to Morocco which are now identified as a strategic priority for the EU after its enlargement in May 2004 to the eight ex-Soviet bloc countries, Cyprus and Malta.

European Institute for Democracy (Austria)

<http://www.eid.at/>

Founded in Vienna in 1999, the European Institute for Democracy (EID) works to support the endeavors of individuals and organizations struggling for civil democratic society in South Eastern Europe. EID promotes discourse between European key decision-makers from within and beyond the borders of the European Union by organizing colloquia, seminars, symposia, and conferences pertaining to European integration. EID also functions as a network that unites Central, South-eastern and Eastern Europe.

European Parliamentarians for Africa

<http://www.awepa.org/>

The Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) is an international nongovernmental organization that supports parliaments in Africa and works to keep Africa high on the political agenda in Europe. It has some 1500 current and former parliamentarians as members from the European Parliament and almost all EU member states, plus Norway and Switzerland.

Forum of Federations (Canada)

<http://www.forumfed.org/>

The Forum of Federations is an independent organization that was initiated in Canada and is supported by many countries and governments. The Forum is concerned with the contribution federalism makes and can make to the maintenance and construction of democratic societies and governments. It pursues this goal by: building international networks and fostering the exchange of experience on federal governance; enhancing mutual learning and understanding among practitioners of federalism; and disseminating knowledge and technical advice of interest to existing federations and of benefit to countries seeking to introduce federal elements into their governance structures and constitutions.

The Foundation for Democracy in Africa (United States)

<http://democracy-africa.org/>

The Foundation for Democracy in Africa (FDA) is a non-profit nongovernmental development organization committed to promoting participatory democracy, sustainable development and economic growth throughout Africa. FDA develops innovative culturally sensitive strategies and programs that are designed to foster democracy and good governance, enhance human and institutional capacity, reduce poverty and accelerate economic development.

Foundation for the Future (Jordan)

<http://www.foundationforfuture.org/en/>

Foundation for the Future (FFF) is an independent non-profit grantmaking organization, committed to promoting and strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in their efforts to foster democracy and human rights in the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) region. FFF's grants are awarded to programs that foster growth within civil society, specifically programs pertaining to rule of law, media freedom, women's empowerment, civic education, and youth engagement.

Freedom Forum (United States)

<http://www.freedomforum.org/>

The Freedom Forum is a non-profit, international organization that champions the First Amendment as a cornerstone of democracy. The Forum is dedicated to ensuring free press, free speech and free spirit for all people. The Forum also works to foster diverse newsroom environments by training people of color for journalism careers. Founded in 2001, the Forum is the main funder of the Newseum in Washington DC.

Freedom House (United States)

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/>

Freedom House, a non-profit, nonpartisan organization, is a clear voice for democracy and freedom around the world. Through a vast array of international programs and publications, Freedom House is working to advance the remarkable worldwide expansion of political and economic freedom. With over a dozen offices spread over four continents, Freedom House trains and supports democratic reformers on the front lines in their own countries, acting as a catalyst for freedom by strengthening civil society, promoting open government, defending human rights, and facilitating the free flow of information and ideas.

FRIDE (Spain)

http://www.fride.org/homepage_english

FRIDE is an independent think tank that focuses on Europe's role on the international stage. FRIDE's core research interests include peace and security, human rights, democracy promotion, development, and humanitarian aid. FRIDE seeks to mould debate in governmental and nongovernmental bodies through rigorous analysis, rooted in the values of justice, equality and democracy.

Front Line (Ireland)

<http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/>

Founded in 2001, Front Line aims to protect human rights defenders at risk and those who work nonviolently to defend the values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The organization provides rapid and practical support to at-risk human rights defenders, including through a 24 hour emergency response phone line, and promotes the visibility and recognition of human rights defenders as a vulnerable group. Front Line runs a small grants program to provide for the security needs of defenders, and mobilizes campaigning and lobbying on behalf of defenders at immediate risk. In emergency situations Front Line can facilitate temporary relocation.

The Fund for Global Human Rights (United States)

<http://www.globalhumanrights.org/>

The Fund for Global Human Rights believes in securing basic freedoms worldwide through challenging abuse wherever it occurs. The Fund works in 6 regions (North Africa, West Africa, African Great Lakes, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Latin America) around the world to create an effective global human rights community. Currently funded initiatives include promoting the economic, political, and social rights of vulnerable populations; confronting government corruption; and the promotion of rule of law and other democratic reforms.

The Fund for Peace (United States)

<http://www.fundforpeace.org/>

The Fund for Peace (FfP) is an independent, nonpartisan research and educational organization that works to prevent war and alleviate the conditions that cause conflict. FfP promotes sustainable security through the promotion of scholarship to define problems and the provision of competent answers, and the use of knowledge and information obtained to participate in debates and inform the public of the facts.

FfP focuses in the areas of conflict assessment, peace and stability operations, sustainable development, human rights promotion, and foreign policy.

Fundar (Mexico)

<http://www.fundar.org.mx/> *Spanish language only*

Fundar, the Center for Analysis and Research, is an independent organization that works to advance democracy and promote human rights. Through research and collaborative networking, Fundar is dedicated to widening and strengthening citizen participation, promoting governmental transparency and accountability, promoting the observance of the rule of law and promoting human rights.

GERDDES-AFRICA (Benin)

<http://www.gerddes.org/en/home.php>

GERDDES-AFRICA, also known as the Research Group on the Democratic, Social and Economic Development of Africa, is a nongovernmental organization that works in the fields of democracy, human rights, and social and economic development. The organization promotes democracy through civic education, training of election observers, research, and political intermediation. GERDDES-AFRICA has over 1,000 members in twenty African countries.

Ghana Center for Democratic Development (Ghana)

<http://www.cddghana.org/index.aspx>

The Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) is a non-profit research-based and policy-oriented think tank that is dedicated to the promotion of democracy, good governance and the development of a liberal political and economic environment in Africa. CDD-Ghana seeks to enhance the democratic content of public policy and to advance the cause of constitutionalism, individual liberty, the rule of law, and integrity in public life.

The Global Network for Good Governance (Cameroon)

<http://www.gngg.org>

The network is a non-profit, nongovernmental, independent research, information and training organization registered under Cameroon Law. It is dedicated to practical and country-tailored strategies and mechanisms to combat corrupt practices and to foster popular participation and transparency in the management of public affairs and honesty in private business transaction as a prelude to sustainable development.

Gorée Institute (Senegal)

<http://www.goreeinstitute.org/index.php?lang=en>

Gorée Institute is a Pan African civil society organization dedicated to the promotion of peaceful, self-reliant, and open societies in Africa. The institute's main objectives are to strengthen political dialogue and establish peace; improve democratic processes; and promote human rights through advocating for personal individual freedoms. The institute asserts that democratic governance will best flourish in states where enterprises are transparent and when civil societies are socially-engaged and independent.

Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (Poland)

<http://www.hfhrpol.waw.pl/index.php?lang=en>

The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR) is a nongovernmental organization involved in the protection of human rights in Europe. HFHR works with individuals, nongovernmental organizations, and to state institutions to provide expert consultation in the sphere of human rights and freedoms. HFHR conducts national and international trainings, organizes conferences and seminars. Specifically, HFHR programs address the issues of child, refugee, and migrant rights.

Human Rights First (United States)

<http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/index.aspx>

Human Rights First (HRF) is a non-profit international organization that promotes respect for human rights and the rule of law. HRF engages in coalition-building, insider advocacy, litigation, research and reporting, and public advocacy in order to work towards ending crimes against humanity, including torture, and all forms of discrimination. HRF is a resource for organizations that are working to eradicate intolerance, tyranny, and violence. HRF seeks to protect human rights defenders, and other champions of progress, who are often victims of repression.

Human Rights Watch (United States)

<http://www.hrw.org/>

Human Rights Watch (HRW) is a nongovernmental organization dedicated to protecting human rights of the people around the world, standing with victims and activists to prevent discrimination, upholding political freedom, protecting people from inhumane conduct in wartime and bringing offenders to justice. HRW fights to bring greater justice and security to people around the world through research, monitoring, and advocacy initiatives. Headquartered in New York City, HRW has offices around the world.

Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (The Netherlands)

<http://www.hivos.nl/eng/We-are-Hivos/Hivos-themes/Human-rights-democratisation>

The Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (Hivos) provides funding for programs and organizations that work to create fair, democratic and equal societies. Hivos believes human rights, rule of law, democratization, and diversity are necessary factors for sustainable development. As of 2007, Hivos has provided over 17 million Euros to civil society organizations working to promote human rights and democratization around the world.

Humanus International (Cameroon)

<http://www.humanus-international.org/>

Also known as Humanus Foundation, Humanus International is a human rights organization that works to promote and uphold rule of law in areas of the world where vulnerable populations are plagued with corruption. Based in Cameroon, Humanus International is an independent non-profit organization that promotes participatory and active citizenship, electoral transparency, and access to justice. In addition, Humanus International also promotes improving public health, access to education, and the reduction of poverty.

Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies (Egypt)

<http://www.eicds.org/>

Named after the great Arab thinker Abdel-Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), who was the founder of Arab Social Science, the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies (ICDS) is a research and advocacy organization that focuses on issues deemed relevant to Egypt and the Arab world. ICDS pioneered many of these programs, typically beginning with activities in Egypt, and then branching out to other countries of the Arab World. Under the current direction of Saad Eddin Ibrahim, in the future ICDS will concentrate its efforts in the following areas: civil society and democratization; sects, ethnic and minority groups; and gender and human development.

IJTIHAD (United States)

<http://www.ijtihad.org/>

Run and written by Dr. Muqtedar Khan, IJTIHAD is a news and opinion column on Islam and global affairs. IJTIHAD seeks to promote freedom of thought, rational thinking, and the quest for truth through an epistemology covering science, rationalism, human experience, and critical thinking among Muslims

everywhere. IJTIHAD's content focuses on Islam, democracy, and women's rights; Islam in America and the West; jihad against terror; and geopolitics.

Initiatives for International Dialogue (Philippines)

<http://www.iidnet.org/>

Founded in 1988, Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID) is a Philippines-based advocacy and solidarity organization that promotes south-south solidarity and people-to-people internationalism in order to create a sustainable global community. IDD focuses on conflict prevention and peace building, democratization, engaging civil society, and the right to self-determination within South East Asia. IDD has a strong commitment to upholding and promoting human rights.

Institute for Democracy in Africa (South Africa)

<http://www.idasa.org.za/>

IDASA is an independent public interest organization committed to promoting sustainable democracy based on active citizenship, democratic institutions, and social justice. Through its various programs, IDASA works to increase civic participation, provide democracy education and training, promote governmental transparency, and strengthen democratic institutions. Current IDASA initiatives include campaigning to have African governments ratify the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Formed in 1987, IDASA maintains international links with many similar organizations through the World Movement for Democracy.

Institute for Political Studies - Catholic University of Portugal (Portugal)

<http://www.ucp.pt/site/custom/template/ucptplfac.asp?sspageID=1751&lang=2>

The Institute for Political Studies, a department at the Catholic University of Portugal, offers programs in political studies and international affairs that strongly emphasize the Western tradition of liberty under law. The Institute believes in transatlantic relationship between Europe and North America, and works for the inclusion of Portuguese-speaking peoples in that relationship. The Institute's graduate programs promote the idea that academic scholarship is pertinent to the development of civil society.

Institute for Security Studies (South Africa)

<http://www.iss.co.za/>

The Institute for Security of Studies (ISS) is a pan-African applied policy research institute headquartered in Pretoria, South Africa. Working in the area of African human security, ISS provides empirical research and contextual analysis to policy makers, advocacy groups, and the media. Overall, ISS seeks to establish sustainable development, adherence to human rights, the rule of law, democracy, and collaborative security throughout Africa.

Institute of Social Sciences (India)

<http://www.issin.org/>

Institute of Social Sciences is dedicated to systematic study of social issues and problems that confront India, in trans-disciplinary perspective. Its finding and recommendations are made available to the members of the decision-making organization such as government bodies, trade unions, people's organization and corporate bodies and scientific communities to encourage them to enlarge the options for action. The evolution of an informed and action-oriented public opinion is our primary aim.

Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (Costa Rica)

<http://www.iidh.ed.cr/>

The Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IHR) is an international academic institution based in Costa Rica that works to promote and strengthen respect for human rights and to support the consolidation of democracy throughout the western hemisphere. IHR operates according to the

principles of representative democracy, rule of law, ideological pluralism and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms. IIHR is a leading teaching and academic center in human rights advocacy and education.

The International Bar Association (United Kingdom)

<http://www.ibanet.org/>

The International Bar Association (IBA) influences the development of international law reform and shapes the future of the legal profession by working to promote, protect and enforce human rights under a just rule of law worldwide. Specifically, the IBA promotes human right through its Human Rights Institute, which provides human rights training to lawyers and judges, conducts fact finding missions, offers technical assistance to countries with developing Bar programs, conducts trial observations, produces thematic papers, and conducts advocacy campaigns.

International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (United States)

<http://www.icnl.org/>

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) promotes an enabling legal environment for civil society, freedom of association, and public participation around the world. Program focuses include helping to establish a legal framework for civil society, civil society sustainability, good governance and accountability, public-private partnerships, self-regulation, advocacy and public participation, and educational initiatives.

International Center for Islam and Pluralism (Indonesia)

<http://www.icipglobal.org>

The International Centre for Islam and Pluralism's (ICIP) mission is to create both a regional South-East Asian network and global network of Islamic NGOs, progressive-moderate Muslim activists, and intellectuals. ICIP's goal is to disseminate the ideas of Indonesia's moderate and progressive Muslims to audiences in both Indonesia and around the world. ICIP is also interested in bringing together high-profile, progressive intellectuals from other parts of the Muslim, as well as Western, world.

International Center for Journalists (United States)

<http://www.icfj.org/>

The International Center for Journalists, a non-profit, professional organization, promotes quality journalism worldwide in the belief that independent, vigorous media are crucial in improving the human condition. Since 1984, the International Center for Journalists has worked directly with more than 40,000 journalists from 176 countries. Aiming to raise the standards of journalism, ICFJ offers hands-on training, workshops, seminars, fellowships and international exchanges to reporters and media managers around the globe.

International Centre for Democratic Transition (Hungary)

<http://www.icdt.hu/>

International Centre for Democratic Transition (ICDT), based in Budapest, promotes democracy worldwide by drawing on the experiences of those who have taken the road to democracy and helping apply what they have learned to the needs of those seeking to take this route or who need practical assistance in consolidating democracy in their own countries and societies.

International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (United States)

<http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/>

The International Center on Nonviolent Conflict is an independent, non-profit, educational foundation that develops and encourages the study and use of civilian-based, nonmilitary strategies to establish and defend human rights, democracy and justice worldwide. Acting as a catalyst to stimulate interest in

nonviolent conflict, the Center collaborates with likeminded educational institutions and nongovernmental organizations to educate the global public, influence policies and media coverage, and educate activists.

International IDEA

<http://www.idea.int/>

Created in 1995 with its headquarters in Stockholm, Sweden, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization that seeks to nurture and support sustainable democracy worldwide. Working in concert with policy makers, donor governments, UN organizations/agencies, regional organizations, and others engaged in democracy building, IDEA acts as a catalyst for democracy building by providing knowledge, resources, expertise, and a platform for debate on democracy issues.

International League for Human Rights (United States)

<http://www.ilhr.org/>

The International League for Human Rights (ILHR) is a nongovernmental, non-profit human rights organization that defends individual human rights advocates who have risked their lives to promote the ideals of a just and civil society in their homelands. Formed in 1942, ILHR raises human rights issues and cases before the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations in partnership with organizations abroad to help amplify their voices and develop cooperative strategies for effective human rights protection.

International PEN (United Kingdom)

<http://www.internationalpen.org.uk/>

International PEN, the worldwide association of writers with 145 centers in 104 Countries, exists to promote friendship and intellectual cooperation among writers everywhere, to fight for freedom of expression and represent the conscience of world literature. The association's primary goal is to engage with, and empower, societies and communities across cultures and languages, through reading and writing. The association believes writers can play a crucial role in changing and developing civil society.

International Steering Committee of the Community of Democracies

<http://www.isc-cd.org/>

The International Steering Committee of the Community of Democracies (ISC/CD) is a 25-member committee of civil society leaders from all regions of the world that represents the positions and concerns of civil society to the governments of the Community of Democracies. The Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD) serves as the secretariat for the ISC.

Journal of Democracy (United States)

<http://journalofdemocracy.org/>

Founded in 1990, the Journal of Democracy is an influential quarterly journal which focuses on analyzing democratic regimes and movements around the world. The Journal is a branch of the International Forum for Democratic Studies at the National Endowment for Democracy, and is published by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kawakibi Democracy Transition Center (Tunisia)

<http://www.kawakibi.org/>

The Kawakibi Democracy Transition Center is a technical nongovernmental regional organization, which specializes in transferring knowledge, engaging civil society, promoting citizenship, democracy education, and transnational justice. The Center was founded on the principle of partnership between organizations and experts in the Arab region and in the Middle East.

KIOS, The Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights (Finland)

<http://www.kios.fi/english/>

The Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights (KIOS) is an independent nongovernmental organization that provides funding to civil society projects that focus on the promotion and protection of human rights for vulnerable populations in the developing countries. Past KIOS funded initiatives have focused on democracy promotion, gender equality, and sustainable development.

La Federation Internationale des Droits de l'Homme (France)

<http://www.fidh.org/english->

The International Federation for Human Rights Leagues (FIDH) is a network of 115 human rights organizations from over 90 countries around the world. FIDH works to advance the implementation of all the rights defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other international instruments protecting human rights. FIDH's current programs focus on the promotion of human rights for vulnerable populations, security and terrorism, and sustainable globalization initiatives.

The Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice (United States)

<http://www.lantosfoundation.org/index.asp>

The Lantos Foundation was established to further the work of the late Congressman Tom Lantos, who as the distinguished Chair of the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs and co-founder of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. The Foundation works to strengthen the role of human rights in American foreign policy. The Foundation's three overall priorities are to recognize, support and honor the heroes of the human rights movement; educate and mentor a new generation of human rights activists; and to partner with and provide assistance to other human rights organizations working abroad.

Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy

<http://www.democracialatinoamerica.org/english>

The Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy is a network that works to promote democratic values and advocates for the protection civil society within the Spanish speaking world. Launching new initiatives and coordinated efforts in response to the obstacles to democracy, the network works to improve the quality of life for individuals who are affected by authoritarian regimes. The network also believes in the increased political participation of women in order to achieve stable and representative democracies and real sustainable development.

League of Women Voters (United States)

<http://www.lwv.org/>

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, has fought since 1920 to improve governmental systems and impact public policies through citizen education and advocacy. The League is a grassroots organization, working at the national, state and local levels. The Global Democracy Program is the League's integrated program for activists and nongovernmental organizations worldwide. Working with groups abroad to increase their voice in demanding transparency, accountability, and good government in their societies, Global Democracy assists in expanding community influence in public policy-making processes while building leadership skills through interactive, hands-on training and exchange programs.

MacArthur Foundation (United States)

<http://www.macfound.org>

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation works to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, strengthen institutions, improve public policy, and provide information to the public. The Foundation supports human rights and democracy through funding both national and

international initiatives focused on justice, peace, and security. In 2009, the Foundation funded \$232.2 million worth of grants.

Netherlands Development Organization (The Netherlands)

<http://www.snvworld.org/en/Pages/default.aspx>

The Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (SNV) is an international development non-profit organization. SNV's mission is to alleviate poverty through helping the economically disadvantaged be part of social and economic networks in order to increase their income and employment opportunities. SNV's overall goals include promoting gender equity and transparent public sector leadership. Currently operating in 35 countries around the world, SNV believes the alleviation of poverty is achieved through the strengthening local organizations.

North-South Centre of the Council of Europe

<http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/>

Headquartered in Portugal, the North-South Centre has a twofold task: to provide a framework for European cooperation designed to heighten public awareness of global interdependence issues, and to promote policies of solidarity complying with the Council of Europe's aims and principles - respect for human rights, democracy and social cohesion. The Centre works to improve education and information on global interdependence and solidarity by strengthening ties between NGOs in the North and South and developing working relations with all international organizations concerned with global interdependence.

ODHIKAR (Bangladesh)

<http://www.odhikar.org>

ODHIKAR works to create a wider monitoring and awareness raising system on the abuse of civil, cultural, economic, and political rights of the people of Bangladesh. The principal objectives of the organization are to raise the awareness of human rights and its various abuses and to create a vibrant democratic system through election monitoring. ODHIKAR is interested in the creation of transparency and accountability in the government with the intent of improving Bangladesh's human rights record and to facilitate an active democracy with the participation of people from all sections of society. The organization also does policy advocacy work.

The Olof Palme International Center (Sweden)

<http://www.palmecenter.org>

The Olof Palme International Center is nongovernmental organization that focuses on civil society development through the implementation of projects that promote democracy, human rights, and peace. Cooperating with people and organizations throughout the world, the Center – with the support of the Social Democrats – seeks to empower people in struggling democracies and dictatorships by providing democratization training to party members and organizations. The Center's projects predominantly focus on women, youth, and grassroots activists. The Center believes in the importance of the sharing of knowledge in order to facilitate discussion of international questions and stimulate debate.

openDemocracy (United Kingdom)

<http://www.opendemocracy.net>

openDemocracy is the leading independent website on global current affairs - free to read, free to participate, free to the world...offering stimulating, critical analysis, promoting dialogue and debate on issues of global importance and linking citizens from around the world. It is committed to human rights, democratization, election monitoring and economic and environmental security.

Organization for Civil Action (Lebanon)
(Website not currently available)

Organisation pour l'Action Civile (OPAC) is a nongovernmental organization that believes citizens should work together in order to improve civil society in Lebanon. OPAC collaborates with many nongovernmental organizations on projects that include business training and development for small management companies, education for youths, environmental sustainability, public health, and awareness of election laws.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<http://www.osce.org/>

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), based in Vienna, Austria, is the world's largest regional security organization. Comprised of 56 member countries, the OSCE is active in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, democratization initiatives, the promotion of human rights and post-conflict rehabilitation. OSCE also engages in a wide range of security-related issues including arms control, preventive diplomacy, confidence and security-building measures.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
<http://www.osce.org/odihr/>

Based in Poland, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' (OIDHR) expertise and activities focus on the following areas: democratic elections, monitoring the implementation of OSCE human-rights commitments by participating States, combating trafficking in human beings, Roma and Sinti issues, protecting human rights in the fight against terrorism, freedom of religion, civil society, freedom of movement, rule of law, gender equality, and combating racism and related forms of intolerance.

Organization of American States
<http://www.oas.org/>

The Organization of American States (OAS) works to strengthen democracy, justice, peace and prosperity in the Americas by bringing together the nations of the Western Hemisphere. The OAS acts as the Americas' principal multilateral forum for furthering democratic values, promoting human rights, strengthening security, ensuring sustainable development, and fostering Inter-American cooperation.

Oxfam International (United States)
<http://www.oxfam.org/>

Oxfam International (Oxfam) is an association of 14 organizations working with over 3,000 partners around the world to find lasting solutions to poverty and injustice. Oxfam promotes the respect for human rights and believes that sustainable development can be achieved by helping lift people out of poverty and injustice. Oxfam works directly with communities to help assist in the global movement for social change.

Pact, Inc. (United States)
<http://www.pactworld.org/>

Pact's mission is to build empowered communities, effective governments and responsible private institutions that give people an opportunity for a better life. We do this by strengthening the capacity of organizations and institutions to be good service providers, represent their stakeholders, network with others for learning and knowledge sharing, and advocate for social, economic and environmental justice. Interdependence, responsible stewardship, inclusion of vulnerable groups, and respect for local ownership and knowledge are core values across all of our programs.

Parliamentarians for Global Action (United States)

<http://www.pgaction.org/index.aspx>

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is an international non-profit organization composed of more than 1,300 free-elected legislators from 130 democratic countries that promotes democracy, peace, justice and development throughout the world. PGA annually presents the Defender of Democracy Award to an individual who, through their own commitment and active engagement, has made significant progress in strengthening democracy and democratic practices.

PARTICIPA (Chile)

<http://www.participa.cl/> *Spanish language only*

PARTICIPA, based in Santiago, works on domestic and international initiatives that seek to advance the knowledge and exercise of fundamental principles of democracy and human rights, so that citizens can participate in the public sphere in a more informed and organized manner. PARTICIPA focuses on citizen education and participation, electoral processes, multilateral process and the social responsibility of universities in educating the next generation of leaders and policy makers.

Partners for Democratic Change (United States)

<http://www.partnersglobal.org/>

Founded in 1989, Partners for Democratic Change (Partners) is an international organization that promotes finding non-violent, democratic-based solutions to conflicts around the world. Partners believes that advancing civil society through promoting a culture of change is the most effective way to implement conflict management worldwide. Specifically, Partners focuses on the areas of civil society leadership and development, government accountability, the creation of inclusive democratic societies, and economic and environmental stability.

PASOS (Czech Republic)

<http://www.pasos.org>

PASOS supports the development and strengthens the outreach and impact of its 28 member policy centers (and six Associate Members). PASOS builds upon the work undertaken by the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative of the Open Society Institute (OSI) since 1999 to upgrade the institutional capacities of the OSI-related policy centers which operated until 2004 within a collaborative and supportive network known as the Related Centers Network.

Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (Poland)

<http://www.community-democracies.org/>

The Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies was established in Warsaw, Poland in 2008. The Community of Democracies is an intergovernmental organization of democratic governments in the world, dedicated to a core set of democratic principles and cooperation among democracies worldwide. The Permanent Secretariat provides organizational and conceptual support to the Presidency of the Community of Democracies and the Convening Group. It initiates programmatic and intellectual efforts, and undertakes administrative, operational and technical tasks and maintains contacts with nongovernmental organizations and other partners.

Philippine Council on Islam and Democracy (Philippines)

<http://www.pcid.org.ph>

The Philippine Council on Islam and Democracy (PCID) is a non-partisan, nongovernmental organization dedicated to the study of Islamic and democratic political thought and the search for a peaceful solution to the conflicts affecting the Muslim communities of Mindanao, an autonomous and Muslim majority region of the Philippines. PCID believes that meaningful peace and development can only flourish within the framework of democracy. Founded in 2002, PCID functions as a voice for the Muslim communities in

the country. PCID believes in the importance of regional and international networking and has organized a series of forums and dialogues on issues relevant to the search for peace, development, and democracy in Muslim Mindanao.

Politeia (The Netherlands)

<http://www.politeia.net/>

Politeia is a partnership among European NGOs that works to strengthen active European citizenship and democracy participation. Current goals include: creation of a structure that sets civic participation and education higher on the European and national agenda, the strengthening of capacities of partner organizations through the exchange of methods and practices, increasing visibility on the European-NGO scene, and creation of a pool of potential partners for European projects as well as being able to profit from European funds.

Quê Me: Action for Democracy in Vietnam & Vietnam Committee on Human Rights (France)

<http://www.queme.net/>

Founded in Paris in October 1975, Quê Me: Action for Democracy in Vietnam is a non-profit organization that works to increase international awareness of human rights situations, mobilize support for victims of human rights abuses, and to promote democracy in Vietnam. Quê Me conducts human rights campaigns through its international organ, the Vietnam Committee on Human Rights (VCHR). Quê Me publishes an underground Vietnamese-language magazine that promotes democratic ideas.

Reporters sans frontières [Reporters Without Borders] (France)

<http://www.rsf.org/>

Founded in 1985, Reporters without Borders defends journalists and media assistants who have been imprisoned or persecuted for exercising and championing press freedom. The organization fights against censorship and laws that undermine press freedom; annually provides grants to journalists, the families of imprisoned journalists, and media outlets; and works to improve the safety of journalists – especially those who report from war zones.

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights (United States)

<http://www.rfkcenter.org/>

The Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to advancing human rights. The Center funds human rights advocates who are recipients of the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award, supports investigative journalists and authors who bring light to injustice, and provides rights education advocacy programs to schools and communities through their Speak Truth to Power program.

Robert Schuman Foundation (France)

<http://www.robert-schuman.org/>

The Robert Schuman Foundation works to promote the construction of Europe both with regard to its ideas and in the field alongside the citizens themselves. The Foundation, which is a center renowned for its research on the European Union, has provided itself with the task of maintaining the spirit and inspiration of one of the “Founder Fathers” of Europe, namely Robert Schuman and of promoting European values and ideals both within the Union’s frontiers as well as beyond.

Robert Schuman Institute for Developing Democracy in Central & Eastern Europe

<http://www.schuman-institute.eu/> (Hungary)

The Schuman Institute works to promote the idea of a United Europe; to support and foster the process of democratic transformation in the Central and Eastern Europe countries on the basis of

European Christian Democratic values in the spirit of Robert Schuman; and to promote the development of civil societies in these countries.

Search for Common Ground (United States)

<http://www.sfcg.org/>

Founded in 1982, Search for Common Ground works to transform the way the world deals with conflict - away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative problem solving. They work with local partners to find culturally appropriate means to strengthen societies' capacity to deal with conflicts constructively: to understand the differences and act on the commonalities. Search for Common Ground is engaged in Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Indonesia, Liberia, Macedonia, the Middle East, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Ukraine, USA, on US-Iran relations, and in West Africa in general.

Stefan Batory Foundation (Poland)

<http://www.batory.org.pl/english/index.htm>

The Foundation's mission is to support the development of an open, democratic society in Poland and other Central and East European countries. The key priorities of the foundation are to enhance the role and involvement of civil society, promote civil liberties and the rule of law, and develop international cooperation and solidarity. The Foundation currently provides grants to 14 programs that are in line with the Foundation's overall mission. The Foundation is guided by the principles of transparency, openness and accountability.

Street Law (South Africa)

<http://www.streetlaw.org.za/>

Aimed primarily at the youth, Street Law is designed to introduce the law and human rights to people of all levels of education, providing a practical understanding of the law, the legal system and the constitution to all learners. Their educational training courses focus on the areas of democracy, legal education, and HIV, the law and human rights programs.

Students for Global Democracy (United States)

<http://www.sfgd.org/>

Students for Global Democracy (SGD) is a nonpartisan organization that works to support those, especially students, who are fighting dictatorship worldwide. SGD encourages solidarity demonstrations and giving financial support to democracy activists around the globe. SGD also believes in lobbying governments to make democracy promotion the primary focus of their foreign policies, and working against those governmental policies that harm democratization. According to SGD's manifesto, the group strives to make the world a better place by promoting political liberties worldwide.

The Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights (Sweden)

<http://www.humanrights.se/default.aspx?documentId=100&g=2>

The Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights aims to increase awareness of human rights through informational and educational initiatives, and by working with local human rights organizations in Africa and Latin America. The Foundation's currently funded projects focus on the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights; global and regional protection of human rights; and human rights in conflict and post-conflict areas.

TEAM (Denmark)

<http://www.teameurope.info>

The European Alliance of EU-critical Movements (TEAM) is an information network connecting 40 organizations, political parties and NGO's, from 18 countries across Europe. TEAM brings together civil society organizations and political parties from all parts of the spectrum in the fight against the emerging EU State and the ongoing transfer of power from states to the EU. Members of TEAM work under a common belief in the principles of democracy – as requiring representative government, citizen participation, transparency, accountability and free and fair public debates.

Transnational Radical Party (Italy)

<http://www.radicalparty.org/en>

The Nonviolent Radical Party is an Italian non-profit nongovernmental political organization that advocates for the creation of an effective body of international law that promotes democracy and freedom throughout the world. Officially recognized by the United Nations as a NGO, the Party believes that the international political arena is best-suited for responding to problems posed by the weaknesses and shortcomings of national politics. Advocating for the creation of democratic internationalism, the Party believes in the attainment of liberty and rights for all individuals.

United States Institute of Peace (United States)

<http://www.usip.org/>

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) is a publicly funded national institution that develops research, analysis and educational tools to help prevent, manage and resolve violent international conflict both within and between states. USIP promotes the rule of law and the strengthening of civil society. USIP provides grants to individuals, universities, non-profit organizations and civil society organizations work in the areas of conflict management, international peace and security and peace building.

Vital Voices (United States)

<http://vitalvoices.org/>

Vital Voices is a nongovernmental organization that identifies, trains, and empowers emerging women leaders and social entrepreneurs around the globe. Since its founding in 1997, Vital Voices has conducted trainings with girls and women from over 127 countries. Vital Voices trains women in entrepreneurship and business endeavors; advocates for women to be active participants in promoting social change; and opposes human trafficking, domestic and sexual violence, and other forms of harm against girls and women.

Women of Zimbabwe Arise (Zimbabwe)

<http://wozazimbabwe.org/>

Women and Men of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) is a women's civic movement that provides women with a united voice to speak out on issues affecting their day-to-day lives, promotes community-based female leadership, encourages women to stand up for their rights and freedoms and lobbies and advocates on issues that affect women and their families. WOZA mobilizes non-violent campaigns in order to demand social justice in Zimbabwe.

World Justice Project (United States)

<http://worldjusticeproject.org/>

World Justice Project (WJP) is a multinational and multidisciplinary non-profit organization based in Washington DC that focuses on monitoring and strengthening rule of law worldwide. WJP's Rule of Law Index is a quantitative assessment tool used by policymakers to measure a country's adherence to rule of law. WJP's Opportunity Fund provides financing for initiatives around the world that work to strengthen rule of law.

World Forum for Democratization in Asia (Taiwan)

<http://www.wfda.net/>

The World Forum for Democratization in Asia (WFDA) was inaugurated in 2005 to advance the democratic agenda in Asia. WFDA serves to reaffirm and revalidate the core values of Asian democrats and expand the awareness of democratic values among Asian peoples. Rather than a discussion of the merits of democracy, WFDA focuses on supporting concrete measures and strategies to assist the democratization process in Asian societies; proposals for action plans to achieve identified goals and targets take precedence.

YAPPIKA (Indonesia)

<http://www.yappika.or.id/>

Yappika works towards creating a democratic and independent civil society. Yappika is a part of the support system of the civil society movement, providing public education, performing advocacy for national issues, connecting local advocacy to national advocacy networks, and coalition building between civil society organizations. Yappika's main goals include: developing democracy teachings based on first-hand experiences, strengthening the capacities and capabilities of civil society organizations in order to enable them to influence public policy, performing human rights policy advocacy, and promoting the growth of synergy among civil society organizations in the fight for democracy and human rights.

ELECTION ASSISTANCE AND OBSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

Leading organizations in this field are:

The African Union

<http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/index/index.htm>

The Carter Center

<http://www.cartercenter.org/homepage.html>

The Commonwealth Secretariat

<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/>

The Council of Europe

<http://www.coe.int/>

The European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations

<http://www.enemo.eu/>

The European Union

http://europa.eu/index_en.htm

International Commission of Jurists Inter-Parliamentary Union Center for Democracy

<http://www.icj.org/>

IFES (Formerly the International Foundation for Electoral Assistance)

<http://www.ifes.org/>

International Human Rights Law Group

<http://www.globalrights.org/>

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)
<http://www.idea.int/>

International Republican Institute
<http://www.iri.org/>

La Federation Internationale des Droits de l'Homme
<http://www.fidh.org/>

National Endowment for Democracy
<http://www.ned.org/>

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
<http://www.ndi.org/>

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)
<http://www.osce.org/odihr/>

United Nations Electoral Assistance Division
<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/ead/>

In addition, two cooperative partnerships provide information and support for the conduct of elections. These are:

The ACE Project
<http://www.aceproject.org/>

The *ACE Electoral Knowledge Network* provides comprehensive and authoritative information on elections, promotes networking among election-related professionals and offers capacity development services. ACE is a joint endeavor of eight partner organizations, including Elections Canada, EISA, Instituto Federal Electoral - Mexico, IFES, International IDEA, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and United Nations Electoral Assistance Division. All are long-term supporters of the Administration and Cost of Elections Project and leaders in the provision of targeted technical assistance in elections management.

BRIDGE Project (Australia)
<http://www.bridge-project.org/>

The past 15 years has seen a rapid increase in the number of democratic states. As a result, the number of elections worldwide has increased dramatically. Capable and professional election administrators are essential for organizing elections, and without the right skills in place election processes can be undermined. The Bridge Project maintains that to achieve effective and sustainable electoral administration, professional election administrative staffs must be developed.

Annex: International Human Rights Law

The practical realization of core civil society freedoms to express, associate and assemble, which are contained in a vast body of international law and inter-governmental commitments, is critical to civic existence and effective citizen participation. Nevertheless, in various contexts around the world, civil society faces new and increasing infringements on fundamental rights and the exercise of basic civil liberties and political freedoms. The Compendium of International Legal Instruments and Other Inter-Governmental Commitments on core civil society freedoms of expression, association and assembly collates and consolidates various commitments made by national governments - both regionally and at the UN - to assure necessary space to civil society to carry out its activities. It is intended to be a reference point for civil society organizations and human rights defenders in their efforts to realize such rights commitments and guard against infringements. From the diplomatic community's view point, the Compendium offers a comprehensive bird's eye view of international law and policy on civil society. The commitments included therein can be used to assess whether a government or an intergovernmental body is doing enough to honor the promises made to guarantee civil society space and provide a sound starting point for pro-active diplomacy to advance human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Compendium has been compiled by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, an international movement of civil society and can be accessed at: http://www.civicus.org/content/Compendium_Jan2010.pdf and is excerpted below.

**Prepared by Civicus, January 2010*

A. United Nations (UN) and the International Labor Organization (ILO)

- Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR)
 - <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>
- International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm>
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cerd.htm>
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
 - <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cmw.htm>
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/disappearance-convention.htm>
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/association.htm>
- Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
 - <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C098>
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/indigenous.htm>
- United Nations Convention against Corruption

- http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/Publications/Convention/08-50026_E.pdf
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - <http://www0.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/protocolrefugees.htm>
- Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/stateless.htm>
- Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)
 - <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/documents/cep43e.pdf>
- United Nations Principles of Older Persons
 - <http://www.un-documents.net/pop.htm>
- United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/firearms.htm>
- United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/lawyers.htm>
- Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
 - <http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/95ed4a11871f2ed6c1256b840038c884?Opendocument>
- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
 - <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,ILO,,425bbdf72,0.html>
- Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities
 - <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/minorities.htm>

B. Inter-Governmental Organizations of Africa

African Union (AU)

- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
 - http://www.achpr.org/english/_info/charter_en.html
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
 - http://www.achpr.org/english/_info/women_en.html
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
 - http://www.africa-union.org/official_documents/Treaties_%20Conventions_%20Protocols/A.%20C.%20ON%20THE%20RIGHT%20AND%20WELF%20OF%20CHILD.pdf
- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
 - <http://www.un.org/democracyfund/Docs/AfricanCharterDemocracy.pdf>
- African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption
 - http://www.africa-union.org/Official_documents/Treaties_%20Conventions_%20Protocols/Convention%20on%20Combating%20Corruption.pdf
- African Youth Charter
 - <http://www.africa-union.org/root/UA/Conferences/Mai/HRST/Charter%20english.pdf>
- Constitutive Act of the African Union
 - http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Aboutau/Constitutive_Act_en.htm

- Lomé Declaration on the Framework for and OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/lomedec.htm
- Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) Solemn Declaration
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/cssdca.htm
- The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/nepad.htm

Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

- Bata Declaration on the Promotion of Lasting Democracy, Peace and Development in Central Africa
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/eccas.htm

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

- Treaty of ECOWAS
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/ecowas.htm
- Declaration of Political Principles of the ECOWAS
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/ecowasdec.htm
- Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security)
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/ecowasprot.htm

Southern African Development Community (SADC)

- Declaration and Treaty of the SADC
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/sadc.htm
- SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/sadcprinc.htm

C. Inter-Governmental Organizations of the Americas

Organization of American States (OAS)

- American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man
 - <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/ga-res98/eres1591.htm>
- American Convention on Human Rights
 - <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-32.html>
- Inter-American Democratic Charter
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/americas.htm
- Promotion and Strengthening of Democracy: Follow-up to the Inter-American Democratic Charter
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/promotion.htm
- Declaration of Santiago on Democracy and Public Trust: A New Commitment to Good Governance for the Americas
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/santiago.htm
- Declaration of Nuevo León
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/nuevoleon.htm
- Draft Declaration of Quito on Social Development and Democracy, and the Impact of Corruption
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/quito.htm
- Declaration of Santo Domingo: Good Governance and Development in the Knowledge-Based Society
 - <http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/materiales/docs/997/DECSANTODOMe04.pdf>
- Access to Public Information: Strengthening Democracy

- http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/ga03/agres_1932.htm
- Increasing and Strengthening Civil Society Participation in the Activities of the Organization of American States and in the Summits of the Americas Process
 - <http://www.oas.org/consejo/resolutions/res864.asp>
- Citizen Participation and Strengthening of Democracy in the Americas
 - <http://www.civil-society.oas.org/General%20Assembly%20Resolutions/Panama/AG%20RES%202344%20ENG.doc>
- Human Rights Defenders: Support for the Individuals, Groups and Organizations of Civil Society Working to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Americas
 - <http://www.civil-society.oas.org/General%20Assembly%20Resolutions/Panama/AG%20RES%202280%20ENG.doc>
- Declaration of Medellín: Youth and Democratic Values
 - http://www.unicef.org/lac/Declaration_medellin_2008.pdf

Andean Community

- Declaration about Democracy and Integration
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/andean.htm
- Macchu Picchu Declaration on Democracy, the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the War against Poverty
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/machupicchu.htm
- Andean Charter for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/andeancharter.htm

Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA)

- Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Central America
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/alliance.htm
- Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/framework.htm

D. Inter-Governmental Organizations of Asia

League of Arab States

- Arab Charter on Human Rights (revised)
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/arabcharter.htm
- Sana'a Declaration on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/arab_region.htm
- Tunis Declaration
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/league.htm

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

- ASEAN Charter
 - <http://www.aseansec.org/21069.pdf>

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

- New Delhi Declaration of the Fourteenth SAARC Summit
 - <http://www.sdc.gov.in/AboutSAARC/summit-declaration/summit14.pdf>
- Dhaka Declaration of the Thirteenth SAARC Summit
 - <http://www.saarc-sec.org/userfiles/Summit%20Declarations/13%20-%20Dhaka%20-%2013th%20Summit%2012-13%20Nov%202005.pdf>

E. Inter-Governmental Organizations of Europe

Council of Europe (COE)

- European] Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms as amended by Protocol No. 11
 - <http://www.echr.coe.int/nr/rdonlyres/d5cc24a7-dc13-4318-b457-5c9014916d7a/0/englishanglais.pdf>
- European Social Charter (revised)
 - <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Presentation/ESCRBooklet/English.pdf>
- Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/council.htm
- Guidelines for Constitutional Referendums at National Level
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/guidelines1.htm

Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

- Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE)
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/csce.htm
- Charter of Paris for a New Europe
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/charterparis.htm

European Union (EU)

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/europe.htm
- Resolution of the Council and of the Member States meeting in the Council on Human Rights, Democracy and Development
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/councilres.htm
- Council Regulation (EC) No 976/1999
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/councilregulation.htm
- The Cotonou Agreement
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/cotonouagreement.htm

F. Other International Entities

The Commonwealth

- The Harare Commonwealth Declaration
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/commonwealth.htm
- Millbrook Commonwealth Action Program on the Harare Declaration
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/millbrook.htm
- Aso Rock Commonwealth Declaration on Development and Democracy
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/asoh.htm
- 2007 Heads of Government Meeting: Final Communiqué
 - <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/173044/FileName/chogm2007kampalacommunique.pdf>
- 2009 Heads of Government Meeting: Final Communiqué
 - <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/216904/FileName/TrinidadandTobagoCHOGMCommunique.pdf>

Community of Democracies

- Warsaw Declaration
 - http://community-democracies.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16:warsaw-declaration&catid=17:ministerial-declarations&Itemid=62

Inter - Parliamentary Union

- Universal Declaration on Democracy

- http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/ipu.htm
- Parliaments' Role in Strengthening Democratic Institutions and Human Development in a Fragmented World
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/parliament.htm
- Report of the Parliamentarian's Forum on the occasion of the Fifth Conference of New or Restored Democracies
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/report.htm
- Resolution on the Freedom of Expression and the Right to Information
 - <http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/120/120-3.htm>
- International Conference of New or Restored Democracies
 - http://www.icnrd6.com/pdf/declaration_en.pdf
- Ulaanbaatar Declaration Democracy, Good Governance and Civil Society
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/planofaction.htm

Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)

- Bamako Declaration
 - http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/compilation_democracy/oif.htm

Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)

- Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam
 - <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/cairodeclaration.html>

The *Handbook* authors would also like to note the following Community of Democracies Ministerial Declarations:

- Seoul Plan of Action
 - http://community-democracies.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=17:seoul-plan-of-action&catid=17:ministerial-declarations&Itemid=62
- Santiago Commitment
 - http://community-democracies.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18:santiago-commitment&catid=17:ministerial-declarations&Itemid=62
- Bamako Consensus
 - http://community-democracies.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19:bamako-consensus&catid=17:ministerial-declarations&Itemid=62
- Lisbon Declaration
 - http://community-democracies.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=20:lisbon-declaration&catid=17:ministerial-declarations&Itemid=62