

PD ABK-078

92008

**TWO-YEAR REPORT
FORMER SOVIET UNION**

Cooperative Agreement #CCS-0007-A-00-2019

TWO-YEAR REPORT
FORMER SOVIET UNION

- **RUSSIAN FEDERATION**
- **UKRAINE**
- **CENTRAL ASIA**
- **CAUCASUS**
- **CHRONOLOGY OF NDI ACTIVITIES**
SEPTEMBER 1992-AUGUST 1994



NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Fifth Floor, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 328-3136

■ FAX (202) 939-3166

■ E-Mail 5979039@MCI.MAIL.COM

Two-Year Report Russian Federation Cooperative Agreement #CCS-0007-A-00-2019

I. Summary

The political and economic transformation of the Russian Federation has followed a rocky path since the failed coup of August 1991. Economic reform has advanced in fits and starts. Political reform has lurched from crisis to crisis. It is in the moments of political crisis that public participation has been at its highest. At these moments, differences among individual politicians have been forgotten and political groups that had drifted apart have come back together. But in the calm between the storms, the difficulties of daily life in today's Russia have been pervasive and the population, disenchanted with politics, has drifted away from political activity.

In its work in Russia, NDI has sought to understand the vicissitudes of this transformation, and to adapt its programming to meet both the realities of the moment and the requests of Russian colleagues. The goal of NDI's work has been to assist the development of an effective democratic political process, one that productively includes not only elected officials and political parties at both the national and local levels, but civic organizations that can represent groups of interested citizens.

NDI's work during the period of this cooperative agreement, and indeed throughout its four year involvement in the Russian Federation, has been in large part about the development of relationships with individuals who form the core of the new organizations that are at the center of the democratic transition in Russia. NDI has been able to assist vast numbers of individuals, who have developed their own organizational and management skills and, in turn, promoted the development of their respective organizations. It is in the thousands of participants trained and the innumerable requests received by NDI for follow-on programs at a more advanced level that the extent of NDI's success can best be seen.

II. Objectives

In its initial program submission in 1992, NDI proposed to focus its activities on political party building, municipal government reform, and the promotion of a democratic political culture, as well as the translation and dissemination of relevant documents on political parties, civic education, and municipal government.



In its programs to strengthen political parties and parliamentary factions, NDI's objectives, as stated in its 1992 proposal, were to:

- Professionalize political parties with regard to successful planning, organization, and communication;
- Strengthen the capacities of political parties and parliamentary factions to develop institutions and mechanisms for adequate debate and the implementation of public policy; and
- Promote the sharing of information and transition literature among the Russian Federation's democratic political parties and parliamentary factions

In the field of local government assistance, NDI's objectives were to:

- Strengthen local municipal leagues by expanding their network of contacts and improving their capacity to transmit technical expertise to provincial cities; and
- Further strengthen the practical capabilities of elected council members in the political and economic management of their cities.

In the development of civic groups, NDI's objectives were to:

- create and strengthen nonpartisan civic organizations that would conduct national campaigns to support a democratic civic culture and the intermediary institutions that preserve democracy and to heighten citizens' awareness of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society; and
- develop organizations that could play a positive role in a pre-election period and in monitoring elections to increase voter participation and confidence in the electoral process.

III. Program Activity

To meet these objectives, NDI engaged in a series of in-country seminars, roundtables, and consultations designed with input from Russian colleagues. For a complete schedule of NDI activities throughout the former Soviet Union for the period September 1992 through August 1994, please see the attached appendix.

Political Party Development

To promote the stability of a multiparty system in the Russian Federation, NDI has worked both to develop the capabilities of the emerging political parties and their key organizers.

Since late 1992, in a series of national, regional, and local seminars and consultations, NDI trainers have worked with nearly 2,000 democratic activists from a broad spectrum of political parties. In addition, NDI has developed, translated and distributed nationwide a range of written and video materials on political party organization.

As illustrated below, NDI's programs for political parties have been designed to respond to the needs of the democratic political parties. As the political situation in the country has changed, NDI, in consultation with the parties themselves, has sought to adapt its programs to the new reality.

- In February 1993, as Russians prepared for an April referendum that amounted to a vote of confidence on Yeltsin and his reforms, NDI sponsored a series of seminars for individual political parties holding their national party conferences in Moscow and Nizhnii Novgorod. These seminars were attended by 350 organizers from across Russia from the Party of Economic Freedom, Democratic Russia, the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, Civic Union, and the Novaya Rossiya bloc. The seminars addressed basic aspects of political party organizing such as message development, allocation of resources, polling and research, strategic planning for referendum and candidate campaigns, coalition building, and volunteer recruitment and management. These programs utilized the talents of international trainers from the U.S., Canada, Great Britain, Chile, and Hungary.
- After the February seminar, NDI's Moscow office responded to requests for follow-on training and consultations in regional cities across Russia. Between February and August 1993, NDI's trainer, Greg Minjack, conducted seminars and consultations in Magnitogorsk, Vladikavkaz, Kazan, Novosibirsk, Volgograd, Moscow Oblast, Krasnodar, Anapa, Irkutsk, Khabarovsk, and Vladivostok.

In addition, Mr. Minjack conducted training seminars and consultations in Moscow for individual parties. As a result of one such consultation, with a chief strategist for the Democratic Russia Movement, DemRossiya collected nearly 30,000 names and addresses of supporters prior to the April 1993 referendum through the use of volunteer cards.

- In the fall of 1993, in response to requests from the parties, NDI initiated a series of regional training seminars for democratic party activists. The seminars, held in Vladivostok in September and St. Petersburg in October, brought together 70 party organizers from the Far East and 50 from the Northwest regions of Russia respectively, many of whom were unacquainted with one another, despite being active members of the same political party. Sessions mixed representatives from different parties to discuss similar topics to the February program. In addition, NDI arranged consultations by party on

topics of organizational management and development. NDI invited representatives of the national parties to attend the seminar as well, as a way to build links between national and regional structures. These sessions proved valuable in helping the parties to prepare for the elections that were called for December 12. Not only were the themes immediately applicable, but the seminars themselves provided an opportunity for the parties' regional organizers to meet and discuss election preparations.

- After President Yeltsin announced on September 21 that snap elections would be held on December 12, 1993, NDI reorganized its programs to meet the new situation and canceled its remaining regional seminars. In consultation with the political parties, from mid-October to mid-November, teams of NDI staff trainers, supplemented by international trainers, travelled to 17 regional centers throughout Russia. In each city, the training teams conducted general seminars open to all democratic parties and more specific consultations with individual parties. NDI also took part in training programs organized in Moscow by several of the political parties and conducted consultations upon request. These smaller consultation sessions enabled parties to discuss specific topics of concern to them and learn new organizational methods for approaching the dilemmas posed by the elections.
- During the spring and summer of 1994, NDI narrowed the scope of its political party programs to focus on several key cities -- St. Petersburg, Samara, Nizhnii Novgorod, and the Kuzbas mining region -- in which local and regional elections were being held. During ten-day visits, NDI staff trainers, aided by international specialists, conducted a series of consultations with local political parties and independent democratic candidates. Again, with elections upon them, the parties and candidates were able immediately to implement new approaches. In St. Petersburg, for example, one candidate was able to come from last among seven candidates to finish second by implementing concepts of voter targeting in disseminating his campaign message.
- Since the December 1993 elections, several of the major democratic blocs, most notably the Russia's Choice Bloc, leaders of which have reorganized as the party Democratic Choice of Russia (DCR), and the Party of Russian Unity and Accord, have reorganized and taken a serious approach to building a stable national political structure.

At the request of Chairman Egor Gaidar of the Democratic Choice of Russia, in June 1994, NDI arranged an intensive training program in Washington for Gaidar and other leaders of the party on American experiences of political party organization and management. Cooperation with DCR has continued in Russia on issues such as fundraising and message development. In addition,

NDI has participated in regional training programs sponsored by the DCR as a means of building effective regional structures.

Parliamentary Assistance

NDI's work with the current and former parliaments in Russia (the State Duma and Council of Federation and the Supreme Soviet, respectively) has followed two paths. Since 1992, NDI has responded to requests for assistance both on legislative issues and on the politics of governance. In both parliaments, NDI has answered specific requests from committees of the parliament by organizing consultations on specific issues such as electoral law, political party legislation, and federalism.

- In the fall of 1992, at the request of the Committee on Mass Media and Public Organizations of the Supreme Soviet, NDI provided written analysis of draft legislation on the regulation of political parties by experts from England, Hungary, and Portugal. NDI also provided analysis of draft regulations on public meetings and demonstrations.
- In May 1994, at the request of the State Duma's Committee on Political, Civic, and Religious Organizations, NDI brought an Israeli expert to Moscow to discuss how legislation on political parties might be drafted.
- In July 1994, NDI cosponsored a round table on "Democratic Governance of a Federal State" with the Committee of Federal Affairs of the Council of the Federation (the upper house of the parliament). The round table and consultations examined the problems and issues in constructing a federal system of government, how powers might be divided and how fiscal affairs are managed.

Because the former parliament, the Supreme Soviet, was not democratically elected, and because the vast majority of the deputies were not democratically oriented, NDI avoided direct political training work with that body. With the election of the new State Duma, however, NDI has begun to work directly with the parliamentary factions of the democratic parties and blocs, as well as with individual deputies, on issues such as intraparty communication, relations with the mass media, and constituent relations.

Since the spring of 1994, NDI's staff trainers in Moscow have conducted more than 20 consultations with individual deputies and with faction staffs. In addition, NDI has sent targeted mailings to deputies on specific issues, such as federalism. These mailings, and word of mouth from previous consultations, have created a vast number of requests for further cooperation with NDI.

Local Government Assistance

Since the beginning of NDI's work in the former Soviet Union in 1990, the Institute has provided assistance in the field of local government. Although some of this early work examined technical management issues such as budget development and finance, the majority of NDI's activities has concentrated on the political aspects of local government, such as constituent services, communications, and involvement of civic organizations in the political process.

From January to June 1993, NDI placed a full-time local government trainer in its Moscow office. During this six months, the trainer conducted seminars and consultations in 17 cities across the Russian Federation on technical and political issues involved in municipal management. In addition, the trainer developed, translated, and distributed a number of documents, including draft municipal charters, U.S. state constitutions, and other model legislation and training materials throughout Russia. NDI's trainer also was asked to comment on draft legislation being developed by the Committee on Local Self-Government in the Supreme Soviet.

In June and July 1994, NDI initiated a six-week series of consultations with the Moscow City Council (MosDuma) on developing effective structures for communication, community outreach, and constituent services. The program was attended on a regular basis by 15 of 35 deputies, including the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, and numerous members of the council staff. NDI has been asked to continue this series when the MosDuma returns from its summer recess in October.

Civic Advocacy

In the field of civic advocacy, NDI's activities focus on assisting organizations in playing a more effective role in the political process and to strengthen the lines of communication between political parties, public officials, and civic activists. NDI initiated programming in this field during the summer of 1993, with the placement of a full-time grassroots organizer in the Moscow office.

- In the fall of 1993, in preparation for the December elections, NDI trainers conducted a series of regional training seminars in 22 cities for political parties and civic organizations on domestic poll-watching. In addition to its in-country staff, NDI brought six international experts to Russia to take part in this training. To complement the training, NDI developed and distributed a handbook on domestic election monitoring that included poll-watching forms for election day.
- Beginning in the spring of 1994, NDI concentrated its work in two cities, St. Petersburg and Ekaterinburg. (Two additional cities, Vladivostok and Samara,

will be added under NDI's new grant.) In each city, NDI held an initial seminar to introduce local civic organizations to the concepts of advocacy and introduce basic organizational and management skills. The initial seminars, held in St. Petersburg in May 1994 and in Ekaterinburg in April 1994, each brought together nearly 100 organizers from over 50 civic groups for two-day seminars on organizational management, developing missions and goals, volunteer recruitment, coalition building, and press and media strategies. Further seminars and consultations have examined in more detail the interaction between civic organizations and local government.

- In addition to NDI's program activities in St. Petersburg and Ekaterinburg, NDI's representatives have conducted smaller seminars in such cities as Tver', Nizhnii Novgorod, Novosibirsk, and Saratov at the request of local civic organizers.

Assistance in Electoral Processes

NDI has provided assistance to the political parties, to parliamentary representatives, and to citizens in the development of a sound electoral process.

- In December 1992, a delegation composed of experts from the United States and Portugal visited Moscow at the request of a member of the Committee on Local Self-government to consult on initial draft legislation on elections. During two days of discussions, the group examined the impact of the selection of electoral systems, as well as issues such as reducing the size and number of election commissioners. A seminar also was conducted with political party representatives to make them aware of the implications of the electoral law for party development.
- In June 1993, experts from the United States and Portugal again visited Russia to consult with electoral law authors and take part in a three-day discussion of transitional regulations, including election laws, laws on political parties, and constitutional agreements. The seminar brought together representatives of both the parliament and the presidential administration for an open discussion on these issues. During the visit, the delegation also continued the consultations on the draft electoral legislation that had been initiated in December.
- Prior to the December 1993 parliamentary elections and constitutional referendum, NDI produced and distributed three public service announcements in Russian that explained the structure of the new parliament, explained balloting procedures, and encouraged citizens to vote. The Public Service Announcements were distributed to Russian television stations throughout the

Russian Federation and were broadcast three to four times per day on Ostankino and Russian Television, the two major channels. Many voters with whom NDI spoke before and on the day of elections had seen these ads and commented that they helped to make a complicated set of voting regulations more understandable.

Development of an In-Country Resource Center

Since 1992, NDI has placed an emphasis on the development, translation, and distribution of materials. These materials provide supplementary information to NDI's seminars and consultations. In addition, such materials remain after trainers have departed, are often passed from hand to hand, and thus reach a far broader audience than participates directly in NDI activities. The materials vary, from translated articles, to training handbooks, to video tapes.

- NDI has purchased and distributed a handbook entitled "How to Win Elections," a basic organizational text developed by the Republican Party of the U.S. and edited and translated by a Russian organization, INDEM. NDI's in-country staff have also developed, translated, and distributed a range of other materials related to political party development and management. Many organizers and elected officials, particularly in the regions, have commented on the utility of these materials in developing and running a campaign.
- Beginning in the spring of 1993, NDI entered into an arrangement with *Politicheskije Issledovaniya* (PoliIs), one of the most influential political science journals in Russia, to publish articles on contemporary political topics on a bi-monthly basis. The journal, which has a subscriber circulation of approximately 6,000, reaches a nationwide audience that includes politicians, academics, and students. NDI articles have discussed such topics as comparative electoral systems, the development of election law, post-electoral coalition building, and the role of political parties and civic organizations in transitional societies.
- Since January 1994, NDI has, on a monthly basis, sent materials on political development and civic organizing to over 2,500 Russian political and civic organizers who have taken part in past NDI programs. These mailings serve as a means for broader distribution of materials, as well as a way for NDI to keep in touch with former participants. In addition, NDI has begun to distribute a monthly newsletter in these mailings, detailing NDI activities throughout the country.
- NDI has sent two targeted mailings to members of the State Duma and Council of Federation. These have included documents on communications with

parties and constituents and on constituent services. As the Duma reconvenes this fall, NDI will continue these mailings.

- In November 1993, NDI produces an hour-long political party training video entitled "Strengthening Democracy" that addressed fundamental aspects of party organization and management. The video describes voter contact strategies, message development and communication, and candidate recruitment and training. NDI has since distributed almost 500 copies of this video in conjunction with its regional training programs.
- In December 1993, NDI produced a Pre-Election Report intended to educate international observers about the context of the parliamentary elections. The report outlined the structure of Russia's new parliament, summarized the regulations governing the elections, and described the 13 political blocs competing in the elections. NDI distributed 2,300 copies of this report to international observer delegations, embassies in Moscow, international news organizations and members of the U.S. Congress.

Staff

In recognition of the complexity of the Russian political situation, as well as the growing sophistication of those involved in the political process, over the past two years NDI has shifted the emphasis of its programs away from large seminars conducted mainly by international trainers and towards smaller seminars and individual consultations. NDI's staff in the Moscow office has grown accordingly to include regional specialists, functional trainers, and Russian-speaking program assistants.

This approach allows NDI to adapt its programming quickly to changing political situations, respond rapidly to local requests, and conduct the majority of its programming without short-term international participants. Because the full-time trainers spend a minimum of one year in Russia, they are able to learn more about the political culture and specifics of the Russian situation and in turn become more effective trainers. In those instances where specific topics require additional expertise, NDI has developed a cadre of international participants who have made multiple *pro bono* trips to Russia (in some cases five times in the past year). Since 1992, international trainers have contributed some 670 days of *pro bono* expertise to NDI's projects.

IV. Program Assessment

NDI's work in the fields of political party development, parliamentary assistance, local government assistance, and civic advocacy has taken place during a period of serious economic and political turmoil in the Russian Federation. It was within this context that the

process of democratic development has taken place and it is in this context that these programs must be evaluated.

Building upon the foundation of NDI's work in the former Soviet Union from 1990 to 1992, NDI has worked to develop and implement programs that are responsive to the needs and requests voiced by those who are playing a role in the process of democratic transition. It is this responsiveness and the relationships that it engenders that are the key to the success that NDI has had in its activities in Russia. In turn, the success of the activities undertaken and the relationships developed over the last two years will provide the foundation for the work that NDI will undertake in the period 1994-1997 under its new cooperative agreement with USAID.

Political Party Development

During the period of this cooperative agreement, the development of democratic political parties has been influenced by Russia's political instability. In the period leading up to the December 1993 elections, the atmosphere was far from conducive to party growth. The parliament, the Supreme Soviet, was elected in 1990 on a nonpartisan basis. New elections were not held after the August 1991 coup, forcing the emerging democratic parties to periphery of the political process even as they drew increasing blame for the new and more visible economic hardships of the post-communist era. Numerous parties, coalitions, and movements emerged and collapsed. Nevertheless, although stable parties had not emerged, a professional class of Russian politicians and political organizers supportive of democratization was developing and assuming greater prominence in transitional Russia.

The December 1993 national parliamentary elections were a turning point in the developmental process. New parties such as then-Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhrai's Party of Russian Unity and Accord emerged as national contenders in the months before the elections. Coalitions were quickly formed as parties tried to organize for elections to be held in two months. Some small parties, such as the Social Democrats and the Republican Party of Russia chose to form a coalition with economist Grigorii Yavlinsky to contest the elections. Even powerful structures such as the Democratic Russia Movement and the Russia's Choice Movement that had broken off from it came together for the elections. Several smaller parties, such as the Party of Economic Freedom and the Russian Movement for Democratic Reforms, chose to contest the elections alone and failed, effectively disappearing from the national political scene. Alone among the democratic parties that existed before 1993, the Democratic Party of Russia was able to successfully contest the elections and form the country's largest parliamentary faction.

Paradoxically, however, it was the unexpectedly poor electoral performance of the democratic forces as a whole that gave the impetus to the next wave of political party development. Where party leaders previously had been unconvinced of the necessity of developing and maintaining national political structures, the success of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and the ephemeral nature of their own

unstable organizations has convinced several of the leading democratic figures -- most prominently Egor Gaidar of the Democratic Choice of Russia, Sergei Shakhrai of the Party of Russian Unity and Accord, and Grigorii Yavlinsky of the parliamentary faction Yabloko -- that strong national structures are essential to building popular support for continued democratization and economic reform. That support will be tested in the next parliamentary elections, currently scheduled for December 1995 and the presidential elections scheduled for June 1996.

The day-to-day organizers and managers of these parties are the organizing elite in Moscow and the regions that has developed in Russia since 1989, and particularly, since 1992. It is these individuals who have been the focus of NDI's programming since its inception in 1990. Currently, leading organizers of the Democratic Choice of Russia, the Party of Russian Unity and Accord, the United Democratic Center, the Republican Party, and the Social Democratic Party are all frequent participants, partners and trainers in NDI programs in Russia.

Outside of Moscow, NDI has conducted extensive training with regional political organizers. Although there has to date been little regional party organization, the training of interested and active individuals or groups provides a crucial basis for successful national party building. Since the initiation of this grant, NDI has conducted seminars and consultations in which over 2,000 regional political activists have taken part. These seminars have helped national party leaders identify and provide support to regional organizers. They also provide a forum for regional activists to articulate their concerns and needs to the parties' national leadership. Ideas and organizational tools suggested during these meetings have also given regional activists a new perspective from which to evaluate previous performance and adapt these tools for the future, as many have indicated they will.

One concrete measure of the positive impact of NDI's programs has been the extent to which additional training is conducted on "demand" basis. As late as the winter of 1993-1994, much of NDI's regional programming was proactive, with NDI working to arrange programs. Since then, nearly 100 percent of NDI's current program activities are organized in response to requests from political parties or regional activists who have participated in previous NDI programs. Interest in continued training signifies the sustained involvement of political activists during a highly uncertain period of transition. Such requests also indicate the potential for broader political participation in the regions stimulated by additional activists recruited by NDI's regional contacts for these programs.

NDI's cooperation with the national parties is extremely important now that those parties are working to develop their nationwide structures. Currently, NDI is designing a series of regional training seminars for the Democratic Choice of Russia and for the Democratic Russia Party. Through these programs, NDI and its trainers can serve as a bridge and an organizational tool for the national parties in reaching into the regions. NDI trainers also have held a series of consultations with leaders of PRES on message development and communications. NDI expects to be further involved with Yabloko, the Republican Party, the Social Democratic Party, and the United Democratic Center if those organizations remain

active and relevant to the political process.

Parliamentary Assistance

It is difficult to assess the impact of NDI's work with the new Russian parliament. That body has had a rough beginning, moving office locations twice since opening its first session in January and being on summer recess from mid-July through September. Still, NDI has had approximately 20 consultations with individual deputies and with their personal and faction staffs. Many deputies have requested follow-up consultations when they return in October. In addition, deputies have heard about the NDI consultations from their colleagues and have begun to make individual requests for further assistance.

NDI's legislative consultations and analyses have strengthened the capacity of political parties and factions to develop mechanisms for the formulation and debate of public policy. By providing international perspectives on issues such as electoral law, regulation of political parties, laws on public meetings and demonstrations, and the development of a federalist state, NDI has provided legislators with a context within which to evaluate and develop legislation that is appropriate to Russian society and culture and in accordance with international standards and practice.

Local Government Assistance

The development of local government structures that are both responsive and responsible to the public is a crucial component of the transition from a totalitarian to a democratic state. From the initiation of its programming in Russia, NDI has focussed on assisting democratic-oriented representatives in local government to approach their work in a more effective manner.

The work of NDI's in-country trainer in January-July 1993 was consistent with this approach and with the stated goals of NDI's local government work. In her seminars and consultations, NDI's trainer concentrated on strengthening the practical capabilities of elected council members in the political and economic management of their cities. Topics ranged from outreach to economic development. In addition, NDI's trainer held extensive discussions in a number of cities on the development of municipal charters, one of the key topics in the decentralization of power. With the political uncertainty of the fall of 1993 and the decree by President Yeltsin in September 1993 that all local councils should dissolve themselves and hold new elections within a year's time, NDI placed its local government programming on hold.

The first post-communist local elections, held during the spring and summer of 1994, have given a fresh start to the process of democratic development at the local level. New, smaller councils are made up of individuals who are closer and more beholden to their constituents.

Many of the new deputies are inexperienced in governing, but are trying to make government function. It is in this formative stage of the development of new political structures and new political careers that NDI is trying to make an impact.

NDI's six-week program for deputies and staff of the Moscow City Council (MosDuma) exposed newly elected deputies to the political aspects of the governing process, with which few had any experience. Fifteen of 35 deputies attended on a regular basis, including the Speaker and Deputy Speaker. As the Duma reconvenes in October, members have already approached NDI to request follow-on consultations. NDI has received requests for similar programming from the municipal councils of Perm', Nizhnii Novgorod, and Ekaterinburg and hopes to also extend its programming to Samara and St. Petersburg as new local councils are elected in those cities this fall.

Though it had been one of NDI's stated goals, the Institute refrained from working closely with any one municipal league. Although the Institute's trainer cooperated with the Union of Russian Cities, the administrations and councils of many of the municipalities in which NDI sought to work were suspicious of such organizations, and were more inclined to work with NDI on an individual basis.

Civic Advocacy

NDI initiated its programming in the field of civic advocacy in June 1993 with the arrival of a full-time civic advocacy specialist as a trainer in the Moscow office. Prior to that time, it became clear that, in light of the size of the country and the lack of a tradition of electoral fraud, it would be impractical to attempt to aid the development of a single national organization that would concentrate on domestic monitoring and voter education, as the Institute had been able to do in other countries. Rather, NDI has attempted to assist the development of civic organizations as an active and effective voice in the political process.

NDI's initial work with these organizations was further delayed by the announcement of early elections by President Yeltsin in September 1993. In the unstable politically polarized atmosphere of the time, it was not possible to engage in developmental training for civic organizations. Instead, NDI conducted training sessions for those civic organizations and political parties that were interested in monitoring the elections locally. Nearly 500 civic and political organizers took part in NDI's election monitoring seminars in 22 cities during November and December. On election day, international observers in several cities noticed and commented on local monitors at the polling sites using NDI-developed monitor forms.

Beginning in the spring of 1994, NDI initiated programs to support the advocacy capacity of civic groups in a post-election context. Following early spring surveys of some seven cities by NDI's in-country trainer, the Institute selected four cities -- St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Vladivostok, and Samara -- to be the focus of its long-term work. In April and May in Ekaterinburg and St. Petersburg respectively, NDI held seminars to introduce local civic

organizations to basic concepts of advocacy and organizational management. Each seminar was attended by almost 100 participants from 50 civic groups.

These seminars have had a positive affect on the civic groups that participated and on their role in the political process in their cities. In St. Petersburg, several of the largest organizations that took part in the seminar have established a coalition to work on issues such as the new municipal charter, human rights abuses, and a new municipal law on civic organizations. In Ekaterinburg, many of the groups that participated have been invited to join the recently formed "Public Chamber" initiated by the local government to play an advisory role to the municipal дума and administration. As NDI's seminars and consultations with these organizations continues under its new cooperative agreement, it is expected that these groups will play a more active role in the political process and serve as a model for other organizations both locally and in other cities. Such a role is particularly important now, when many citizens have turned away from traditional avenues of political expression, but nevertheless wish to be involved in the political process.

Development of an In-Country Resource Center

One of the most lasting contributions that NDI can make to the development of a democratic culture in the Russian Federation is the broad distribution of written documents. These documents -- which are passed from hand-to-hand and which range from texts on municipal budgets and finance to comparative articles on electoral systems to nuts and bolts organizing materials -- reach an audience far wider than that which is able to attend NDI's seminars.

NDI's current mailing list exceeds 4,000 individuals across the country who have taken part in NDI programs. Since January, 1994, these individuals have received monthly mailings providing concrete information on organizing and NDI programs throughout the Federation. NDI's August 1994 mailing has generated more than 250 requests for training or additional materials.

NDI's cooperation with the journal *Polls* has provided another source for widespread distribution of contemporary information on politics and political thought. The journal has a subscription base of 6,000, but is distributed far more widely through shared copies. Each issue reaches individual subscribers, political organizers, politicians, and universities not only in Russia, but in Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and other former republics. With articles on issues such as comparative electoral systems, the role of political parties in a transitional system, and the formation of post-electoral coalitions, NDI and *Polls* have been able to provide one of the few sources of contemporary political thought in the former Soviet Union. Particular articles have been reproduced for university syllabi and requested by members of the Russian Presidential Administration for review and consideration.

NDI also has been able to serve as a conduit for individual requests for information on topics such as municipal charters, state constitutions, municipal legislation, information of federal

structures, comparative systems of election finance, and numerous technical issues of political party organizing. By providing such a service, NDI often gives political parties and activists their only access to outside information.

V. Conclusion

Assessing immediate and concrete results to some extent obscures the larger and long-term objectives of political empowerment and institution-building in the Russian Federation and, indeed, all the of the former Soviet Union. Progress toward these goals is necessarily hard to measure. During the first years of a democratic transition, political and civic organizations tend to rise and fall rapidly as they search for the best way to express and represent the interests and concerns of citizens. Working with these organizations, even those that may subsequently disappear, is an investment in the human capital from which all political institutions are ultimately molded. International involvement can advance the process. However, it is the local leaders who experiment with and adapt international experiences to their own situations.

In a similar fashion, the capacity of political institutions to channel and contain diversity of opinion depends on the wisdom and commitment of those who populate them. International programs can outline these structures, their functions and the principles of their interaction. NDI's programs play an important role in providing democrats throughout Russia with additional skills and support to assert leadership, to put themselves forward for continued and regular popular judgement, to sustain each other through the shared experience of setbacks and success, and to institutionalize democratic politics. Ultimately, however, only those who populate the countries of the region can invest their institutions with authority that is responsible, respected and essentially democratic.

Nevertheless, with increasing frequency, the political and civic organizing elite of Moscow, as well as organizers across the country, are turning to NDI as a neutral and respected source of information and training. In the continued commitment of Russia's new democrats to cooperating with NDI to enhance their skills, the positive impact of NDI's work can be felt.

APPENDIX: NDI ACTIVITIES IN RUSSIA SEPTEMBER 1992-AUGUST 1994

1992

- September** **Russia:** Political party law consultation
- October** **Russia/US:** 10-day study trip to the United States for 15 key political organizers from the seven major Russian political parties to observe final political and organizational preparations for the US presidential and congressional elections.
- Russia:** Legislative consultation on draft law on demonstrations and public gatherings
- December** **Russia:** Election law consultation

1993

- January** **Russia:** Regional Political Party Training -- Moscow Oblast
- February** **Russia:** "Election Strategies" Seminar -- Moscow, Nizhnii Novogorod
- March** **Russia:** Regional Political Party Training -- Magnitogorsk and Vladikavkaz
- Russia:** Regional Local Government Consultations -- Kaluga, Moscow and Voronezh
- April** **Russia:** Regional Political Party Training -- Kazan, Novosibirsk and Volgograd
- Russia:** Political Party Building Consultations -- Moscow Oblast
- Russia:** "Domestic Poll-Watcher Training" Seminar & Voter Education Video -- Moscow
- Russia:** Regional Local Government Consultations -- Kirpichnikov, Moscow, Naro-Fominsk, Nizhnii Novogorod and Talakov
- Russia:** Survey of Russian Referendum Procedures -- Moscow Oblast
- May** **Russia:** Russian Parliament Citizens Lobbying Conference -- Moscow

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Cheboksari, Dedovsk, Kaluga, Kostroma, Moscow, Nizhnii Novgorod and Voronezh.

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Krasnodar and Anapa

June **Russia:** "Procedures and Laws for Transition Periods" Seminar -- Moscow

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Magnitogorsk, Moscow, Saratov and Yekaterinburg

Russia: NDI/CIPE "The Politics of Economic Reform" Seminar -- St. Petersburg

Russia: Election Law Consultation

July **Russia:** Regional Political Party and Civic Organization Training -- Irkutsk

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Kazan

August **Russia:** Regional Political Party and Civic Organization Training -- Khabarovsk and Vladikavkaz

Russia: Regional Political Party and Civic Organization Training -- Vladivostok

Russia: Local Governance Roundtable -- Washington, D.C.

September **Russia:** Regional Political Party Training -- Kirov

Russia: Campaign Training with Candidates and Operatives in the Moscow Oblast Parliamentary By-Elections -- Moscow

Russia: Training Seminar for Russia's Choice Activists -- Moscow Oblast

Russia: "The Technology of Elections and Political Parties" -- Vladivostok

October **Russia:** Production of Organizing for Elections Video -- St. Petersburg and Washington

Russia: "The Technology of Elections and Political Parties" Seminar -- St. Petersburg

Russia: Political Party Training (Election Preparation) -- Chelyabinsk, Ekaterinburg, Kemerovo, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, Nizhnii Novgorod, Novokuznetsk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Penza, Pskov, Riazan, St. Petersburg, Samara, Saratov, Vladikavkaz, Volgograd and Voronezh.

November

Russia: Continued Political Party Training (Election Preparation) -- [See above]

Russia: Media Consultations on Election Coverage -- Moscow

Russia: Voter Education - Production of Public Service Announcements -- Moscow

Russia: Election Monitor Training -- Ekaterinburg, Kazan, Kirov, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, Nizhnii Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Penza, Perm, Pskov, Riazan, St. Petersburg, Samara, Saratov, Ufa, Vladivavkaz, Volgograd and Zhikovsky.

December

Russia: Media Consultations on Election Coverage -- Moscow

Russia: Voter Education - Production of Public Service Announcements -- Moscow

Russia: Continued Election Monitoring Training -- [See above]

1994

February

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- St. Petersburg, Samara

Russia: Parliamentary consultations with Russia's Choice, the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES), the Democratic Party of Russia (DPR), Yabloko and Women of Russia.

March

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Nizhnii Novgorod, Kuzbas mining region

Russia: Regional Political Party Training for Republican Party of Russia and Russia's Choice organizers -- Belgorod

Russia: Roundtable at Moscow State University to discuss 1993 parliamentary elections -- Moscow

Russia: Regional Civic Advocacy Training -- Nizhnii Novgorod and Saratov, Tver

Russia: Parliamentary party consultations continue

April

Russia: "Effective Civic Organizing" Seminar -- Ekaterinburg

Russia: Regional Civic Advocacy Training -- Novosibirsk, Nizhnii Novgorod

Russia: Observation of local and regional council elections -- Ekaterinburg

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Magnitogorsk

Russia: Presentation at Conference "The Politics of Reform: The Ural Variation" -- Cheliabinsk

May

Russia: Seminar on legislative development for political party regulation

Russia: "Effective Civic Organizing" Seminar -- St. Petersburg

Russia: Training seminar for potential Russian political party trainers -- Moscow

Russia: Seminar on "Legislative Approaches to Regulating the Activity of Political Parties" -- Moscow

June

Russia: Survey and evaluation mission -- Vladivostok

Russia: Parliamentary Roundtable -- Moscow

Russia: Six-week training program for deputies of Moscow City Council

Russia: Survey and evaluation mission -- Samara

Russia: Consultations with Egor Gaidar and the leaders of Democratic Choice of Russia -- Washington, D.C.

August

Russia: Training session for Russian civic advocacy trainers



NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Fifth Floor, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 328-3136

■ FAX (202) 939-3166

■ E-Mail 5979039@MCIEMAIL.COM

Two-Year Report Ukraine Cooperative Agreement #CCS-0007-A-00-2019

I. Summary

NDI opened its Kiev office in September 1992, at the beginning of the two-year cooperative agreement. At that time, Ukraine had only recently become an independent country. Since that time, the Ukrainian government and people have been struggling through the processes of state-building, nation-building, and economic and political transition. Each of these developments has been traumatic for the new country. None of them have yet reached stable conclusions. Institutionalization remains elusive. Ukraine's situation remains entirely transitional.

NDI's Kiev-based field representatives have followed all of these developments closely, recognizing that the processes are tightly interconnected. NDI Kiev's primary focus, however, has been on the political sphere. In its work in Ukraine, NDI has sought to understand the transitional processes in Ukraine and to design its programming to suit the needs of reform-oriented individuals and organizations under unstable and sometimes unpredictable circumstances. Ultimately, it has been NDI's goal to promote the formation and consolidation of democratic institutions in Ukraine.

II. Objectives

NDI's goals in Ukraine, as proposed in the summer of 1992, were to strengthen political parties and movements and parliamentary factions, support the creation of civic organizations, and promote local government reform.

NDI's objectives for strengthening political parties and parliamentary factions were to:

- Professionalize Ukrainian political parties with respect to successful planning and organization; and
- Enhance parties as effective instruments of democratic political participation and promote a competitive political environment.

In the field of local government assistance, NDI's objectives were to:



10

- Conduct four local government reform programs;
- Expand its network of contacts; and
- Disseminate information to a widening number of cities and towns across the country.

In the development of civic groups, NDI's objectives were to:

- Create and strengthen nonpartisan civic leadership and organizations that would conduct national civic campaigns to rebuild democratic civic cultures and the intermediary institutions that preserve democracy and to heighten citizen's awareness of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society; and
- Generate practical programs or develop organizations that could play a positive role in a pre-election period and in monitoring elections to increase voter participation and confidence in the electoral process.

III. Program Activity

To meet these objectives, NDI Kiev conducted regular seminars, roundtables, and consultations with input from Ukrainian participants and colleagues.

Political Party Development

- NDI conducted its first political party-building seminar in Odessa in March 1993. The seminar was designed to encourage strategic preparations and planning for national and local elections and referenda through the exchange of practical skills and techniques. Seven international trainers discussed the role of the national party in managing election strategy; the essentials of message development and communication; voter contact; and field operations and fundraising. Over 100 Ukrainian political activists from 13 political parties participated in the seminar.
- On May 27 1993, NDI sponsored a half-day political party training seminar for party leaders and activists in Kiev at which

party platforms, campaign staffing and election strategy were discussed.

- During the summer, fall and winter of 1993, NDI conducted a series of ongoing consultations with the major political parties to discuss political party structure, strategy, and development, focusing on issues such as voter identification and contact, message development and delivery, fundraising, volunteer recruitment, get-out-the-vote strategies, and campaign planning. Consultations were held with the Democratic Party of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Republican Party, the Party of Greens, Rukh, the Liberal Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, the Party of Democratic Rebirth of Ukraine, and New Ukraine.
- In February 1994, NDI sent eleven international political experts to Ukraine to conduct 28 political party programs in the regional centers of Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Kiev, Luhansk, Lviv, Mykolayiv, Poltava and Vinnytsya. The programs addressed basic organizational issues in a pre-election period. Individual consultations were also held in each city to address the specific needs of political activists and candidates.

NDI trained more than 1,000 political activists and candidates in this pre-election period. The participants included activists from all 26 oblasts in Ukraine.

- In February 1994, NDI sponsored a political party training program for women candidates and political activists. The NDI representative conducted the seminar along with four trainers from Women of the World (WOW), an organization that provides political party training for women in the former Soviet Union.
- Also in that month, NDI sent international polling experts, one from Chile and the other from the Czech Republic, to help the Ukrainian polling firm Democratic Initiatives to formulate questions and analyze data for election-related polls.
- In late April 1994, NDI conducted a post-election assessment roundtable in Kiev for participants who took part in training seminars prior to the March parliamentary elections. The program was cosponsored by Democratic Initiatives, the Ukrainian political training and polling organization, and the

International Republican Institute. Discussion focused on analyzing the campaigns of the parliamentary candidates NDI trained in the previous quarter, on assessing NDI's training methods, and on looking ahead to future programs and elections.

- Throughout April and May of 1994, NDI field representatives and international political experts conducted party training seminars and consultations with parties and candidates for local elections. The consultations focused on message development and delivery, volunteer recruitment, and voter contact and get-out-the-vote activities.
- In May, NDI conducted a political party building seminar in Kiev for national and regional heads of political parties.
- In June, NDI provided further party training consultations prior to the July 24 round of parliamentary elections. NDI targeted areas in which large numbers of seats remained open: Kiev, Cherkassy, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, and Vinnitsia.

Parliamentary Assistance

- Following the March round of parliamentary elections, NDI initiated efforts to establish a parliamentary training program within Ukraine's parliament, the Supreme Council. These preliminary consultations focused on helping deputies to develop and expand their political and constituent bases of support.

Local Government Assistance

- NDI conducted its first large-scale local government seminar in Ukraine in conjunction with the Ukrainian Association of Democratic Councils in November 1992. The seminar was designed to respond to issues of local governance and politics. Nine international trainers discussed with 185 Ukrainian participants the functions and responsibilities of local elected officials and local political party representatives, the structures of local government, the politics of privatization and citizen participation in local government.
- In April 1993, NDI sponsored with the Association of Democratic Councils a local government survey program in the Dnipropetrovsk oblast. Issues discussed included the structure

of councils, elections to city councils and relationships between the central and local governments. In June, NDI conducted a follow-up consultation to this survey program.

- In August 1993, NDI sponsored a roundtable discussion in Washington featuring representatives from the Association of Democratic Councils of Ukraine, who were in the U.S. under the aegis of the USIA International Visitors' Program.
- In early 1994, NDI conducted a series of consultations with city council members and local government officials in Dnipropetrovsk on the topic of the formation of a conference of mayors. NDI also distributed materials outlining models of municipal governments.
- In July 1994, NDI conducted a seminar in Kiev for newly-elected local council members. The workshops focused on intergovernmental relations, coalition-building and constituent outreach.

Civic Advocacy

- In October 1993, NDI conducted an "Effective Civic Organizing" seminar in Kiev. The seminar addressed practical, applicable skills and information on the fundamentals of civic organizing. The workshops addressed issues such as defining attainable goals and strategy, organizational management, membership recruitment and relationships between civic organizations and government. NDI also included an election monitoring component in the seminar.
- In follow-up to the October seminar, NDI conducted biweekly meetings with civic organizations. The meetings focused on each group's particular needs and goals and their activities in relation to the upcoming parliamentary elections.
- In January 1994, NDI helped to establish the Nonpartisan Committee of Voters, a civic group committed to organizing domestic election monitoring. The Committee drew its support from several pre-existing civic groups.
- NDI sponsored a seminar, "Organizing for Election Monitoring," in Kiev in February 1994. The seminar included workshops on volunteer recruitment; media relations; media

monitoring, organizing and moderating candidate forums; and election day monitoring.

- Following the organizational seminar in Kiev, NDI trainers traveled to sites outside of Kiev to train the Committee's regional coordinators. In all, these programs reached more than 500 volunteers.
- Throughout the spring and summer of 1994, NDI worked with the Committee leaders and traveled around Ukraine to help organize local chapters of the Committee, recruit volunteers, and conduct election monitor trainings.
- On election day in March 1994, NDI-trained monitors reached more than 1,963 polling sites across Ukraine. Within a day of the election, the Committee fielded more than 250 violation complaints.
- With NDI's assistance, the Nonpartisan Committee worked through the spring and summer of 1994 to gain registration from the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice, as required by the Law on Public Associations. The effort has thus far been unsuccessful.
- In May 1994, NDI and the Nonpartisan Committee sponsored a post-election assessment seminar to evaluate the Committee's performance in the parliamentary election period. The meeting brought together national Committee leaders, regional coordinators, and active volunteers.
- NDI helped the Nonpartisan Committee coordinate monitoring for June and July elections, as well. Up to 1800 volunteer monitors were mobilized for presidential and local elections on June 26.

Assistance in Electoral Processes

- In November 1993, NDI conducted an evaluation of the draft election law then before the Supreme Council. NDI collected, translated and distributed copies of the draft to political and legal experts. The evaluations were forwarded to deputies to serve as references for the debate on the electoral law.
- NDI, in conjunction with the Free Trade Union Institute (FTUI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), and a

25

Ukrainian partner, the Center for Political Studies, produced seven issue-oriented debates which were televised nationally on UT-1 before the March elections. Debaters represented both the reformist and conservative or communist positions. Each half-hour debate concentrated on one issue.

- In March 1994, the Nonpartisan Committee of Voters produced a public service announcement to encourage citizens to vote, to explain the voting procedure and to outline the rights of voters. The announcement aired on Ukrainian national television (UT-1) ten times.
- In cooperation with the Ukrainian Legal Foundation, NDI distributed thousands of copies of the parliamentary election law and a "how-to-vote" guide before the elections.

Development of an In-Country Resource Center

- NDI developed a mailing list of over 1500 names, including political party leaders, local government council members, civic activists, and students, to whom the NDI staff periodically sends information about its programs and relevant translated documents.
- NDI regularly responded to specific requests for primary- and secondary-source materials in English, Ukrainian, and in Russian.
- NDI distributed its packet of Ukrainian-language election preparation materials at every political party training program. Each packet contains a copy of the election law, the Ukrainian draft constitution, a campaign workbook, an election calendar, an outline explaining the rights of candidates, a copy of the rules governing campaign finance, and guides on developing candidate profiles, effective voter contact tactics, press relations, and running an effective meeting.
- NDI also distributed materials on local government and parliamentary rule, as relevant. NDI collected and distributed additional literature on comparative forms of local government.
- With assistance from NDI, the Nonpartisan Committee of Voters developed a campaign monitoring checklist and a

violations reporting form for its volunteers to use over the course of the campaign period.

- NDI produced a pre-election report, intended to educate international observers about the context of the March parliamentary elections. More than 1,000 copies of the report were distributed to international election observer delegations, U.S. policymakers, members of Congress, embassies in Kiev and international news organizations.

Staff

Since 1992, NDI's programming has expanded to include parliamentary assistance. Also, the emphasis of programs has shifted away from large seminars conducted mainly by international trainers towards smaller seminars and individualized and ongoing consultations. Accordingly, NDI Kiev's staff has grown to include field representatives with expertise in the functional areas of political party development, civic organization, and parliamentary reform and program assistants with language and area studies skills.

This approach allows NDI to adapt its programming quickly to changing political situations, respond rapidly to local requests, and conduct the majority of its programming without short-term international participants. Because the full-time trainers spend a minimum of one year in Ukraine, they are able to develop an expertise in the political culture and structures and thus become more effective trainers. In those instances where specific topics require additional expertise, NDI has developed a cadre of international participants who have made multiple *pro bono* trips to Ukraine.

IV. Program Assessment

Much of NDI's work from fall 1992 to summer 1994 was devoted to helping Ukrainians to prepare for and to participate in parliamentary, presidential, and local elections that were held in the spring and summer of 1994. These elections were the first in Ukraine's post-communist, independent era. Through analysis of the election law, party and candidate trainings, support for civic organizations, promotion of a network of domestic election monitors, distribution of scholarly and training materials, local government training, and voter education programs, NDI was closely involved with many aspects of the preparations for the elections. NDI worked with individuals and groups at all levels: government officials, party activists, grassroots organizers, constituents and voters. Also, NDI worked in all areas of the country. Although based in Kiev, NDI field staff visited and worked in all 26 oblasts in Ukraine during this period. They used a variety of approaches to reach their audiences, from large conferences, to seminars and small workshops, to individualized consultations.

21

NDI has observed that significant opportunities for promoting democratic institutions in Ukraine lie at the local level. NDI has identified a new class of young, ambitious, reformist activists -- in politics, in government, and in civic associations -- who offer great promise for Ukraine's future. Most of these individuals operate in local, rather than national, arenas. They staff the local chapters of parties, they run for office or serve as council members or mayors in their city or oblast, or they mobilize regional chapters of civic organizations.

As individuals, these grassroots reformists are impressive. However, they face daunting obstacles and constraints. Because they are reform-oriented, they often find themselves in the ideological minority. Because they are young, they tend to be inexperienced. Because they live outside of Kiev, they tend to be isolated from other like-minded individuals and from outside influences and support. They need a great deal of assistance to reach their potential as the vanguard of democracy in Ukraine. For these reasons, NDI has made a point of devoting a large proportion of its skills and resources to the local level.

A second lesson NDI has learned from its work in Ukraine is the value of developing a cadre of indigenous trainers. NDI has found that once Ukrainians have acquired the experience and the skills to conduct trainings themselves, they become uniquely qualified to convey new information, ideas, and concepts to other Ukrainians. NDI has worked closely with three organizations in this regard: the Nonpartisan Committee of Voters of Ukraine, Democratic Initiatives, and the Association of Democratic Councils of Ukraine.

Democratic Initiatives was founded as a public opinion polling and political training center. (It has since split along functional lines, so that one group has retained the name Democratic Initiatives and focuses on polling while a separate group called Ukrainian Perspectives focuses on political training.) NDI has cosponsored a number of training programs with Democratic Initiatives and its descendant, Ukrainian Perspectives. Equally important, Democratic Initiatives/Ukrainian Perspectives regularly initiates and conducts its own training programs.

The Association of Democratic Councils was founded with the goal of promoting the development and strengthening of the democratic aspects of local governments in Ukraine. NDI has cooperated with the Association in a number of programs and projects, and the Association has pursued its own schedule of programming, independent of NDI.

A third lesson that NDI has learned in Kiev is that smaller is better. Participants feel more comfortable and tend to be more open and honest in formats such as one-on-one consultations, intimate workshops, and small-scale roundtables. Larger conferences and seminars work best as venues for solidifying ideas introduced on a smaller scale. Wherever possible, within the constraints of limited resources and time, NDI Kiev has attempted to follow these principles.

Political Party Development

NDI's party-building trainings began in the fall of 1992, when NDI Kiev's first field representative began identifying and consulting with party activists. More formal trainings were launched in March 1993 and continued through June of 1994. During this period, over a thousand party activists and candidates -- at the national and local levels -- were trained by NDI. To count victories at the polls is a premature and simplistic measure of success for party training, given the time and resources required for a party to develop into a viable political organization. Nonetheless, the extent to which some of Ukraine's newly elected officials attribute their own victories to information and practices gained through NDI training is a barometer of the relevance and receptivity to what NDI has to impart. Of the 340 candidates who attended NDI's local election seminars, 77 won local government seats on the rayon, city, or oblast councils in 13 of Ukraine's 25 oblasts.

Of course, Ukraine's political party system remains extremely fragmented and weak. Those who claim to have learned valuable lessons from NDI are challenged to apply themselves to building coherent national structures and supporting the consolidation of democratic forces -- processes to which NDI will offer its continuing support.

Parliamentary Assistance

NDI waited to embark on the effort to establish a parliamentary training program until after the first round of parliamentary elections in March 1994. Initial consultations, which were conducted both in Kiev and in the regions, with party leaders, deputies and their support groups, focused on helping deputies to develop and expand their political and constituent bases of support. NDI has identified roughly 100 deputies who can be characterized as reform-minded and with whom NDI field representatives will attempt to work as the Parliament returns to session in the fall of 1994. The focus of the parliamentary training will be on constituent outreach, coalition-building, and developing popular support for political and economic reform.

Local Government Assistance

NDI's first programmatic initiatives in Ukraine focused on local government, reflecting NDI's belief that decentralization of power to the local level is an essential component of democratization. Over the two-year period, NDI has conducted a series local government programs in Ukraine, working with members of oblast and city councils and city officials. These programs have been conducted throughout the country. NDI has promoted the goal of establishing a viable, nationwide municipal association that could advocate for municipalities' interests at the regional and national levels. The idea seems to have gained momentum, and NDI will continue to contribute to this effort.

Civic Advocacy

Early in 1994, NDI helped to establish the Nonpartisan Committee of Voters of Ukraine, a civic group committed to organizing domestic election monitoring. The Committee is based

in Kiev, but includes regional chapters throughout the country. Throughout the spring and summer elections, NDI field representatives and Committee members recruited and trained thousands of volunteer monitors. The Committee developed and distributed, with NDI assistance, over 3000 copies of instructions, monitoring checklists, and violations reporting forms for use by volunteers. On June 26 alone, the day of presidential and local elections, NDI helped the Committee coordinate a national monitoring program involving 1500 - 1800 volunteers from twenty oblasts across Ukraine.

Development of an In-Country Resource Center

One of the most lasting contributions that NDI can make to the development of democratic structures and a democratic political culture in Ukraine is the distribution of written documents. These documents, which are passed from hand-to-hand and which range from texts on comparative politics, to literature on electoral regulations, to training materials, reach an audience far wider than that which is able to attend NDI's seminars.

NDI Kiev's current mailing list exceeds 1000 names of individuals across the country who have taken part in NDI programs.

V. Conclusion

Assessing immediate and concrete results to some extent obscures the larger and long-term objectives of political empowerment and institution-building in the Russian Federation and, indeed, all the of the former Soviet Union. Progress toward these goals is necessarily hard to measure. During the first years of a democratic transition, political and civic organizations tend to rise and fall rapidly as they search for the best way to express and represent the interests and concerns of citizens. Working with these organizations, even those that may subsequently disappear, is an investment in the human capital from which all political institutions are ultimately molded. International involvement can advance the process. However, it is the local leaders who experiment with and adapt international experiences to their own situations.

In a similar fashion, the capacity of political institutions to channel and contain diversity of opinion depends on the wisdom and commitment of those who populate them. International programs can outline these structures, their functions and the principles of their interaction. NDI's programs play an important role in providing democrats throughout Russia with additional skills and support to assert leadership, to put themselves forward for continued and regular popular judgement, to sustain each other through the shared experience of setbacks and success, and to institutionalize democratic politics. Ultimately, however, only those who populate the countries of the region can invest their institutions with authority that is responsible, respected and essentially democratic.

APPENDIX: NDI ACTIVITIES IN UKRAINE NOVEMBER 1992 - JULY 1994

1992

November **Ukraine:** Local Government Seminar -- Kiev

1993

March **Ukraine:** "Organizing for Elections" Seminar -- Odessa

April **Ukraine:** Local Government Training -- Dnipropetrovsk Oblast

May **Ukraine:** Party Training Seminar -- Kiev

Ukraine: NDI/CIPE "The Politics of Economic Reform" Seminar -- Lviv

June **Ukraine:** Local Government Consultation -- Dnipropetrovsk Oblast

September **Ukraine:** Political Party Consultation Series -- Kiev

October **Ukraine:** "Effective Civic Organizing" Seminar -- Kiev

November **Ukraine:** Election Law Analysis -- Washington

1994

January **Ukraine:** Consultations with city officials -- Dnipropetrovsk

Ukraine: Helped to establish Nonpartisan Committee of Voters, a civic group committed to organizing domestic election monitoring.

February **Ukraine:** Political Party Training -- Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Kiev, Luhansk, Lviv, Mykolayiv, Poltava and Vinnytsya.

Ukraine: Political Party Training for women candidates and political activists

Ukraine: Seminar for the polling firm Democratic Initiatives

Ukraine: Seminar "Organizing for Election Monitoring" -- Kiev

Ukraine: Trainings for Regional Coordinators of Nonpartisan Committee

March

Ukraine: Election day pollwatching

Ukraine: Political debates produced in conjunction with FTUI, IRI, and the Center for Political Studies

Ukraine: Distribution of voter education materials

Ukraine: Nonpartisan Committee of Voters public service GOTV announcement

Ukraine: Ongoing organization of Nonpartisan Committee local chapters

Ukraine: Election Day Monitoring

April

Ukraine: Post-election assessment roundtable -- Kiev

Ukraine: Party training seminars for local elections

May

Ukraine: Political Party Building seminar

Ukraine: Political training seminars for local elections

Ukraine: Post-election assessment seminar

June

Ukraine: Coordination of monitoring for June and July elections

Ukraine: Party training consultations

July

Ukraine: Telephone survey to compile election results -- Kiev

Ukraine: Seminar for newly elected local council members



NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Fifth Floor, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 328-3136

■ FAX (202) 939-3166

■ E-Mail 5979039@MCI.MAIL.COM

Two-Year Report Central Asia Cooperative Agreement #CCS-0007-A-00-2019

I. Summary

In 1991 independence came to Central Asia on the wave of transformative events taking place elsewhere in the former Soviet Union. Unlike in the Russian Federation or Ukraine, where independence stimulated a proliferation of political forces and the emergence of new habits of popular activism, the same event in Central Asia occurred with little popular participation and without disruption to the power structure that operated under the previous regime.

Accordingly in Central Asia NDI faces the conundrum of seeking to promote liberalization in a political environment still dominated by the old status quo. In the shadows of these old structures, however, individual activists, political parties and reform-minded groups have emerged to advocate new principles of public life and a redistribution of political power. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in particular, a spectrum of political parties, along with organizations dedicated to promoting environmental protection, human rights, women's issues and entrepreneurial activity have formed. Although these groups are generally poorly organized, ill-defined and weak, their survival and development is an essential precondition for the creation of a civic culture in Central Asia.

Over the term of this cooperative agreement, NDI sought to support the efforts of these diverse forces as they strived to redefine the region's political life on a democratic and pluralistic basis. This overarching focus enabled NDI to undertake individual activities of varying content, audience and methods. As the discussion below shows, it afforded NDI a training approach that was flexible and responsive in its programs and at the same time unified and integrated in purpose.

II. Objectives

In its 1992 program submission, NDI proposed to promote the development of a democratic culture through activities in the areas of political party building, civic education, electoral reform and legislative development. As a component of all its training activities, NDI also committed to disseminate written materials on a range of topics related to democratic development and political reform.



The objectives that governed NDI's program in Central Asia over the term of the agreement may be stated as follows:

- establish NDI's capability as a regional resource center that responds to the requests of political activists, government officials and ordinary citizens for information and training;
- develop programs to strengthen the organizational structures and promote the political effectiveness of political parties and civic groups;
- direct public awareness toward and provide technical support to the emergence of a competitive and multiparty electoral process in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; and
- assist the development of a parliament in Kazakhstan in accordance with the democratic principles of pluralism, representation and accountability.

III. Program Activity

NDI pursued its program objectives through a combination of seminars, conferences, roundtables and consultations organized at the behest of or in cooperation with locally-based organizations. Activities took place primarily in Kazakhstan. The full-time presence of a field office and staff in Almaty rendered some concentration of resources here inevitable. NDI organized several activities in Kyrgyzstan, however, often in conjunction with parallel programs in Kazakhstan. Field staff also made periodic visits to Kyrgyzstan in order to remain abreast of political developments there.

NDI conducted no programs in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan during this period, and held only one conference in Uzbekistan. Whenever possible, however, NDI invited representatives from these republics to participate in programs in Bishkek and Almaty. For a comprehensive schedule of NDI's activities in Central Asia for the period September 1992 through August 1994, please consult the appendix.

Political Party Development

Kazakhstan

As part of the goal to promote the creation of a pluralistic political culture, NDI developed programs to support the emergence of a multi-party system in Kazakhstan. Training activities were guided by the need to assist parties in their first efforts to claim an institutional role in the political arena. They were informed by an awareness that parties face enormous organizational and psychological challenges as they seek to emerge from the repressive apparatus imposed over seven decades by the Soviet state.

As in its programmatic goals, the principle of pluralism guided NDI's training approach. Programs therefore sought the participation of representatives from parties and movements across the political spectrum, including the Union of People's Unity of Kazakhstan (SNEK), the People's Congress of Kazakhstan, Socialist Party, Lad, the Republican party, Azat, Kazakh Tili and others.

- In January 1993, NDI conducted a series of seminars for political party representatives on "Effective Organizing." The three-day series addressed over 100 activists from diverse parties, and introduced them to fundamental organizational techniques and skills, including issue identification, membership development, communications strategies and basic administration. In conjunction with the training, participants received Russian translations of party-building manuals and other literature.
- In March 1993, an international seminar addressed the political implications of economic reform. In addition to approximately 150 Kazakhstanis, small delegations from the other four Central Asian republics and Russia travelled to Almaty to participate in this event. NDI's training team included experts from England, Estonia, India, Israel and South Korea.

The program enabled NDI to be responsive to the pervasive economic crisis gripping the region, while pursuing the goal of increasing popular participation, scrutiny and debate in public life. It sought to enable parties to develop an authoritative stance on political and legislative issues, and to equip them to organize themselves to achieve desired outcomes. Emphasis was placed on coalition and consensus-building as practical devices for achieving legislative, political and institutional goals. Additional topics addressed the components of economic reform; political and electoral implications of economic reform; the role of parties in advocating a reform agenda; and the importance of voter education and popular consensus.

In conjunction with the conference NDI distributed written materials to participants on comparative economic development and political reform, consensus-building and the role of parties in the political process.

- In October, 1993, NDI invited members of various political parties from the outlying regions of Kazakhstan to attend a seminar on the election law. NDI's team of American and British trainers discussed with the audience the political implications of particular clauses in several different draft laws. The purpose was to better prepare political party activists from outside the capital in anticipation of upcoming elections.

Kyrgyzstan

As a result of limitations imposed by the location and resources of its Almaty-based field office, NDI declined to develop a stand-alone party-training program in Kyrgyzstan. Instead NDI organized back-to-back programs in Almaty and Bishkek that extended programming to Kyrgyzstan while utilizing a uniform framework of resources and conference arrangements. In addition, NDI on numerous occasions invited representatives from Kyrgyzstan's political parties to participate in programs in Almaty. The purpose of these activities was to promote the organization and crystallization of Kyrgyzstan's emerging parties in order to secure the development of a dynamic and pluralistic political process.

In Kyrgyzstan NDI worked principally with the Democratic Union, the Democratic Movement, Erkin Kyrgyzstani, Atamaken, Asaba, the Social Democrats and the Communist Party.

- In March 1993, NDI conducted an international seminar on the political implications of economic reform. Over 100 Kyrgyzstani political party activists attended the seminar. While the program differed slightly in emphasis, it replicated in format, staffing, content and goals the seminar of the same name conducted in Kazakhstan and described in the preceding section.
- In May 1993 NDI convened a roundtable of political party activists for a preliminary discussion on Kyrgyzstan's draft election law. Approximately 40 participants attended the one-day session that NDI administered with the help of election law experts from Germany, Turkey and the United States. The training team presented and contrasted several models of election laws and parliamentary systems. On the basis of this comparative discussion, participants were able to begin identifying consequential issues and defining priorities at an early stage in the drafting process.

Uzbekistan

- In February 1993 NDI conducted an international conference in Tashkent on the topic, "Building Political Consensus for Economic Reform." The program brought together approximately 40 participants from Uzbekistan, including representatives of the National Democratic Party and the Party of Fatherland and Progress, and government officials. In addition, multi-partisan delegations from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan attended the conference. The international training team included experts from Bulgaria, Hungary, Turkey and the United States.

The purpose of this program was to begin to stimulate the opening of Uzbekistan's highly repressive political system to a measure of pluralism and debate. While NDI chose an innocuous title for the conference in order to elicit official sponsorship and approval, the participation and discussion were sufficient to enable an authentic exchange of views and information to take place. Workshops assembled participants

in small interactive groups to discuss the political conditions necessary for economic reform in Hungary and Turkey; coalition-building among parties to promote a reform agenda in Bulgaria; and the implications of privatization for the development of political rights and liberties in the Czech Republic. Kyrgyz participants took the opportunity of the conference to question their Uzbekistani counterparts about reports of government-sponsored persecution against citizens, and the consequences of Uzbekistan's repressive politics for the political reform, economic development and stability of the Central Asian region.

In conjunction with the conference all participants received packets of written materials in Russian translation on comparative economic development and political reform, consensus-building and the role of political parties in the development of a representative political process.

Parliamentary Assistance

During the term of the cooperative agreement NDI initiated a program for the newly elected parliament to provide assistance on political and procedural aspects of governance. In many cases, NDI received requests for training from parliamentarians who, formerly as political activists and party leaders, participated in earlier NDI programs.

- Immediately following the March elections, NDI convened a roundtable to encourage parliamentarians to assess their experience as candidates in the elections. Approximately 35 representatives gathered to examine the conduct of their recent political campaigns in order to derive lessons for future races. The session also sought to demonstrate the relationship between electoral politics and governance by prompting participants to anticipate the challenges and expectations now facing them as elected leaders.
- In June NDI conducted an international program on organizational aspects of governance entitled, "Comparative Parliamentary Structure and Procedure." NDI's international team of trainers included representatives from the Indian parliament and the United States Congress. Approximately 40 parliamentarians with diverse political affiliations attended the two-day event.

The seminar presented parliamentarians with a comparison of organizational and procedural models, and explored their political implications. Structural and procedural topics of interest included the rights and prerogatives of the Speaker and the parliamentary leadership; the roles and functions of committees; and the process of drafting bills and passing laws. Participants examined the political significance of various draft rules, including their impact on constituency liaison, executive - legislative relations and faction organization and effectiveness.

Civic Advocacy

In their attempts to create a civic sphere, organizations in Central Asia face myriad organizational, programmatic and legal obstacles. NDI has sought to support the efforts of locally-based groups to build and promote their organizations, raise public awareness of issues of common concern and influence the political process.

Kazakhstan

In Kazakhstan, NDI's civic partners included the women's group LIANA, the Center for Strategic and Analytic Studies and the Independent Trade Union Center, along with student and teachers groups.

- In January 1993, NDI invited representatives of civic groups to participate in the training series on "Effective Organizing." Human rights activists, trade unionists, teachers, journalists and students attended the workshops and gained exposure to organizing strategies and techniques. In conjunction with the session, NDI distributed a variety of written training materials and samples of institutional and promotional literature gathered from American civic groups.
- Following this series, NDI conducted a town meeting for teachers to discuss advocacy techniques for eliciting legislative action on education reform. Approximately 50 people attended the session, including teaching professionals, ministry officials, journalists, parents and students. The meeting demonstrated how ordinary citizens can unite to empower themselves and promote a collective agenda.
- In May 1993, NDI conducted a program entitled, "Building a Student Organization" in Almaty. Approximately 35 students representing different institutions in the capital attended the seminar to discuss organizational goals and strategy. The program sought to stimulate the creation of a student group able to stimulate young people's participation in politics and community action.
- In August 1993, NDI sponsored the participation of two international women political leaders in a women's conference organized by the locally-based group, LIANA. NDI also provided consultation to the conference organizers and assistance on the development of the program agenda.

The conference attracted almost 200 women from each of the Central Asian republics, and Russia. This broadly-ranging program addressed the role of Central Asian women in the spheres of politics, culture, business and the economy, and featured over 70 testimonials and short presentations from participants. The NDI-sponsored participants shared their experience with political activism and advocacy of behalf of women's rights in Pakistan and France. The conference concluded with the formulation of a popular manifesto on priorities for change.

- In September 1993, NDI sponsored the participation of an American woman political leader in a conference organized by the Republican Women's Council. The conference addressed political and organizational issues confronting women in administrative and leadership positions. The NDI-sponsored participant spoke about the experience of American women in politics and their contribution to reform movements over the past 100 years.
- In February and March, 1994 NDI worked with members of the Independent Trade Union Center to enable them to conduct monitoring for Kazakhstan's March parliamentary elections. In addition to Almaty, NDI's international teams provided training to members in the provincial capitals of Chimkent and Karaganda.
- In May 1994, NDI participated in a conference on human rights organized by the locally-based US-Kazakhstan Bureau of Human Rights, a branch of the Union of Councils of Soviet Jews. NDI Field Representative addressed the importance of an open flow of information between government organs and civic organizations.

In addition to these specific projects, NDI consulted on an ongoing basis with several other nascent nongovernment organizations and interest groups, including the Center for Strategic and Analytic Studies, a nonpartisan institute for policy formulation and research; and the Kazakhstan student association. NDI has sought to assist these entities on organizational and administrative matters, as well as defining institutional identities, purposes and goals. Finally NDI produced a pre-election review and a pre-election report to compliment the its activities and to help inform the efforts of other organizations on the ground. The report included an assessment of pre-election conditions, political background and a directory of political parties, and was incorporated into a briefing packet distributed to international monitors on election day.

Kyrgyzstan

NDI has sought to promote civic advocacy in Kyrgyzstan through efforts designed to support the initiatives of local groups.

Through periodic consultations and the activities described below, NDI maintained relations with the Bishkek-based United States - Kyrgyzstan Bureau of Human Rights, along with journalists and students groups.

- In the spring of 1993, NDI initiated a series of consultations to support the efforts of students in Osh to form an independent association. The NDI field representative met with a core of approximately 7 students to assist them in establishing an organization structure, recruiting members and formulating an institutional agenda. NDI sponsored the representation of the Osh association in an international conference of Asian students in Mongolia that summer.

- In the fall of 1993, NDI cooperated with the independent newspaper, *Asaba*, and Kyrgyzstan's largest newspaper, *Evening Bishkek*, to draft and publish a series of articles on democratic development and the construction of civil society. The articles discussed the relationship of popular participation, the independent media, elections and civic groups to the democratic process.

Assistance in Electoral Processes

In anticipation of parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan in 1994, NDI designed program activities to assist political parties, nongovernmental organizations and ordinary citizens in their efforts to develop a competitive, multi-party electoral process.

- In May 1993, NDI conducted a seminar to introduce political parties to the concept of strategic planning by addressing the question, "What a political party should be doing 18 months before an election." The one-day seminar attracted approximately 100 political party organizers, and addressed a range of practical issues, including how to develop a campaign calendar, recruit volunteers, develop a message, conduct voter contact and mobilize voters.
- NDI followed this discussion on electoral strategy and planning with a roundtable two weeks later on the draft election law. The program was intended to help parties participate in elections under new conditions. Thirty representatives from Kazakhstan's main political organizations engaged in an examination of the implications of competing election law drafts. The People's Congress of Kazakhstan convened the roundtable, for which NDI provided an international faculty of experts from Germany, Turkey and the United States. Discussion focused on the rights available to parties under different election law drafts; the implications of diverse electoral systems for the subsequent organization and operation of parliament; and strategies for reaching compromise and consensus on competing drafts.
- NDI resumed consultations on election law drafts in October 1993. Within the framework of the draft laws under parliamentary review, a small team of American and British political specialists travelled to Almaty to conduct a series of meetings on comparative electoral administration and parliamentary systems. Approximately 60 political party leaders and members of parliament attended meetings over the course of two days. Discussions provided a comparative perspective on proportional and majoritarian electoral systems; campaign finance laws; the role of domestic and international monitors; the functions of electoral commissions; and the relationship of the media to the electoral process.
- The December announcement of parliamentary elections in March 1994 provided NDI with an urgent programmatic focus. In addition to addressing the situation's particular demands, training sought to convey an awareness that electoral preparation is one component of an ongoing process of party-building that requires organizational

activity and voter contact year-round. The circumstance of snap elections compelled NDI to rely exclusively on the resources of its field office to respond to many requests. In particular, parties asked for assistance in interpreting the election law; elucidating aspects of the electoral process; and reporting official complaints and grievances.

- In the weeks prior to elections, NDI sent two international teams to Kazakhstan to conduct training for party leaders and civic organizers on domestic pollwatching and monitoring. The teams featured pollwatching trainers and electoral specialists from the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand and the United States. The first team mobilized in January and travelled to the regional capitals of Chimkent, Jambul and Karaganda. In February, a second training team returned to Chimkent and visited Taldy-Kurgan.

Through small workshops and meetings, the teams addressed a varied audience of political party leaders, civic activists, local government officials, election administrators, journalists and students. Discussions treated media monitoring and pollwatching techniques as specific election-related activities designed to protect the integrity of the elections. Trainers also explored the wider application of these activities as means for promoting popular participation and accountability in the larger political process.

By conducting training in the regions, NDI demonstrated to parties the interrelationship among strong regional organization, effective representation, responsive politics and electoral votes. NDI also demonstrated its commitment to political development beyond the capital, and established a network of contacts for use in future regional programming.

- In advance of parliamentary elections, NDI produced a pre-election report that assessed electoral preparations. The report provided information on the pre-election environment, the election law, the functions of the electoral commissions, the role of the media and the constellation of political parties contesting elections. One purpose of the report was to provide briefing material for international observers. For the benefit of political parties, election administrators, government officials and local observers, it documented progress made toward and remaining impediments to the conduct of genuinely competitive multi-party elections.

Development of an In-Country Resource Center

Since the inception of its program in Central Asia, NDI has placed great value on the dissemination of written training materials. These materials reinforce the content of training activities, as well as provide those participants who are interested with a means for

elaborating and expanding upon training concepts. Since written documents are often shared with colleagues and friends, the provision of such materials has enabled NDI to reach an audience that extends far beyond that which participates in its programs.

Staff

NDI has implemented its program in Central Asia through the use of field representatives who combine familiarity with the region with a diversity of political experience and skills. Because of the vicissitudes of the political environment, NDI maintained a staffing level of one permanent representative throughout the term of the agreement. International experts and political trainers from the Moscow and Ukraine field offices provided additional expertise and program support when necessary.

This approach enabled NDI to establish an operation in Central Asia capable of providing ongoing information and support, while responding to specific training demands with timely and expert assistance.

IV. Program Assessment

NDI readily acknowledges that the task of evaluating its work over the term of this grant is problematic. The reasons for the difficulty are manifold. NDI's efforts take place within an amorphous, erratic and weakly institutionalized political environment. In the absence of a well-articulated and orderly political process there is little opportunity to measure the effectiveness of training activities in terms of their direct impact on political outcomes. Moreover the objects of NDI's efforts, people, may respond enthusiastically to NDI training without proceeding immediately to implement new knowledge to demonstrable effect. Finally rather than working with quantifiable materials and products, NDI develops programs to share information, raise awareness and build skills among people. While it is difficult to ascertain the long-term significance of these activities it is possible to assess discrete aspects, including the level of attendance and interest, quality of presentations, usefulness of written materials and vigorousness of discussion and debate.

This evaluation section will accordingly survey the quality of the programs themselves and, when possible, their implications for near-term political development. On occasion, as the section will show, NDI has identified correlations between the impact of individual training programs and developments in the political sphere. In the final analysis, however, NDI remains well aware that despite its programs, political development will obey a logic of its own.

42

Political Party Development

NDI's political party training programs were designed to assist newly-emerging parties in their efforts to participate in the political system. Overall, NDI evaluates these activities positively. The series on "Effective Organizing" reached a populace that had never before undertaken independent political activity and certainly never before had access to foreign assistance in support of its efforts. The low level of attrition; receptiveness to organizational techniques; and the interest in supplementary written materials offered during the program attested to the enthusiasm for the subject matter and the usefulness of the program.

Similar indicators warrant a positive assessment of the March and May conferences in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The programs brought together a spectrum of political party activists to discuss the relationship between national interests and their institutional concerns. Again attendance was very high, discussion was vigorous and participants seized every page of written material NDI was able to offer. The conferences assembled an international training team that imparted diverse perspectives on political and economic development and legislative reform to information-starved audiences in both countries.

While the March conference can claim no long-term systemic effects, it signalled a departure from the command-based approach to political discourse and practice that was normalized under Soviet rule. The conference, and the May program on the draft election law that followed it, acknowledged political parties as legitimate actors in the political process. Both conferences accomplished this structurally by bringing political party leaders and government officials together as equals to discuss public policy concerns. Accordingly they explicitly promoted the participation of political parties in debates on public policy and legislative issues; confronted the stake that political parties have in institutional and political reform; and examined their responsibilities as representative institutions to build a public consensus around desired political and legislative outcomes. The conferences also demonstrated to government officials in attendance that the international community considers multi-party participation in public life to be a necessary component of democratic development.

The February conference in Uzbekistan confronted NDI with numerous institutional and evaluative challenges. From the start, repressive government policies dictated rigid parameters for both the format and content of the conference, and ultimately denied representatives of the country's political opposition access to the event. During plenary and workshop sessions government officials sought to monopolize proceedings and silence trainers in order to prevent open discussion and debate. Despite these obstacles, however, the conference managed to provide participants with substantive information on problems related to their political and economic conditions. In addition by inviting them to question colleagues and challenge ideas, the program involved them in a process, however brief and controlled, that exposed them to some of the dynamics, privileges and responsibilities inherent in life under a more open system.

Special notice is merited by the Kyrgyzstani delegation, which used the Tashkent conference as a forum for challenging the Uzbekistani government on a record of political repression and human rights abuses. In a singularly powerful way, the presentations exemplified the spirit of democracy and pluralism that the conference sought to promote, and demonstrated a bold commitment to use newly-won independence to achieve collective political and societal goals. No less important was the moral support provided by the protestations of the Kyrgyzstani political activists to their Uzbekistani counterparts.

Despite officially-sponsored attempts to restrict discussion, the experience of trainers and the curiosity of participants proved stronger, and combined to generate a vigorous exchange of information and ideas. The comparative perspectives of experts from Eastern Europe and Turkey provided the Uzbekistanis with an array of approaches and solutions to problems intrinsic to the process of economic liberalization and political reform. Perhaps more importantly, participants also gained exposure to the potential implications of economic reform for the subsequent distribution of rights, property and power in developing states.

Finally NDI's packets of written materials provided information that was unprecedented in Uzbekistan both in terms of content and availability. Participants remarked that the distribution of these materials constituted the most powerful assault on the country's long history of conservatism and isolation.

Of course, the development of constructive and viable political parties in Central Asia remains a distant goal. The President's party retains much of the membership and infrastructure that afforded it supremacy under the old regime; those parties that have managed to emerge to challenge its hegemony, however, are largely motivated by resentments and ethnic agendas. The dearth of material resources available to parties and the persistence of political controls will also hinder their development over the short-term. NDI's programs can therefore seek only to contribute to the development of political conditions that will enable free assembly, informed expression and effective organizing to take place.

Parliamentary Assistance

NDI initiated a parliamentary assistance program during the term of this grant to provide Kazakhstan's new legislature with support on political and procedural aspects of governance. These early efforts in this sphere were admittedly sporadic in contrast to the ongoing program that NDI established this fall with the addition of a full-time parliamentary trainer to the Almaty office. Nevertheless several indicators suggest that this preliminary work was effective in its own right, and provided a useful introduction to subsequent programming.

Both the March and June programs commanded respectable attendance and, in the latter case, reached beyond the group of parliamentarians generally characterized as "reform-minded." The subject matter in both cases was extremely topical; written materials elaborated upon concepts discussed during the program; and international trainers managed to share aspects of

their own experience with political and legislative problems while displaying sensitivity to the unique problems facing Kazakhstan. NDI's decision to develop an ongoing parliamentary assistance program in part derived from the positive assessment provided by participants of the June program.

NDI's experience with parliamentary assistance raises several concerns that may influence the effectiveness of the program. The undemocratic nature of the March 1994 elections produced a parliament that, despite its "newness," is not a priori committed to institutional reform. While attendance in the June program represented only 25 percent of the parliament's membership, it is unclear that this liberalizing constituency receptive will expand over time. Despite NDI's efforts the ability of liberal forces to increase their influence or scope will greatly depend upon the whims of the president and the political preferences of his apparatus. The effectiveness of NDI's program is also contingent upon a host of independent factors that nevertheless impinge upon the integrity of parliament, including the development of an independent press, the emergence of organized interests and advocacy groups in the civic sector and societal respect for the rule of law.

Civic Advocacy

NDI sought to support the efforts of locally-based groups to build effective organizations and project their interests into the political sphere.

NDI's efforts in this area were various and broadly-ranging. Activities addressed nonpartisan groups of women, professionals and students, as well as trade unions and research institutes affiliated in some way with political parties. In some cases NDI offered strategic and practical guidance on building an organization. In others NDI arranged to contribute a speaker to an already-existing program. Unlike NDI's training activities for political parties and parliament, efforts in the area of civic advocacy were rarely organized in the form of seminars and conferences, and instead utilized varying formats and the resources of the field staff.

The main reason for the unstructured nature of much of this activity was, and remains, the undeveloped character of Central Asia's nongovernmental sphere. Whereas Central Asia's emergent political parties have models, however negative, to refer to in the Soviet party state, independent groups that organize private citizens around self-defined interests for the purpose of influencing government policy are unprecedented. NDI's approach therefore sought to promote any initiative that signified a departure from past practice by pursuing a civic or political agenda through self-styled collective action.

The lack of formally-structured training activities in this area complicates efforts to assess them in concrete terms. More qualitative measures, however, suggest the ways that NDI's assistance has helped to strengthen the efforts of these groups to expand the margins of and operate within a nongovernmental sphere. The series of seminars on "Effective Organizing" supplied many people who retain antipathies toward political parties with skills they could

use to fashion nonpartisan means for pursuing collective interests in the political sphere. By assembling a diverse group of party activists, professionals and curious private citizens, the seminar embodied an underlying premise of democratic societies that the right to assemble and express and pursue one's interests is a right of all human beings. The program concluded with a request, to which NDI responded in February, to help teachers form an advocacy group.

In a similar manner the work conducted with students both in Almaty and Osh reflected the conviction that students are qualified to participate in and entitled to make demands of the political system. NDI's activity ultimately enabled Osh students to test their leadership capabilities and form independent political contacts by participating in an international student conference in Mongolia in 1993.

While NDI has not yet succeeded in conducting exclusive programs for women in Central Asia, its support of local initiatives lent legitimacy to the efforts to fashion a women's political and civic agenda. The LIANA conference in particular afforded women experience in organizing a vast international program, translating collective issues and concerns into a unified agenda, at the program's end, drafting a manifesto to declare a plan of action for the future. One of the participants has recently formed her own women's group and secured a computer from the East-West Foundation to facilitate its activities.

Assistance in Electoral Processes

In advance of Kazakhstan's parliamentary elections in March 1994, NDI conducted a range of activities to assist political parties, nongovernmental organizations and ordinary citizens participate in the political process.

NDI's May seminar for political parties drew great numbers of party activists and generated much interest in similar training programs of the kind. One indicator of the impact of the program may be the restrictions placed by the government on NDI's activities for the ensuing four months.

NDI's consultations on the election law, both in formal international programs and informal office visits, helped to inform the public on a variety of points concerning electoral finance, campaigning and administration. As elections drew near, these consultations provided candidates and party activists with a venue through which they could report election-related irregularities or harassment. By forwarding these reports to the U.S. Embassy NDI was able to contribute to the formulation of the United States' official response to the elections. The Embassy interceded on behalf of several candidates with whom NDI was in contact and who were ultimately denied registration.

NDI's work to develop a nonpartisan domestic monitoring effort in advance of Kazakhstan's March elections demonstrated the ability of ordinary citizens to exert control over the political process. Undertaken explicitly to equip monitors to provide election-day security at

the polls, the training also revealed the ability and right of ordinary citizens on a daily basis to impose accountability on the political system. Two of the lead participants in the monitoring training were ultimately selected by local authorities for polling-day duty on the district-level election commission.

While NDI's pre-election report had little impact on the Kazakhstani public, a copy, recording the concerns registered by NDI during a pre-election survey, was submitted to President Nursultan Nazarbaev and circulated among members of the Central Election Commission. NDI has no evidence of the influence of the report on the subsequent conduct of elections. International monitors arriving in Kazakhstan just prior to the elections remarked that the report, and in particular the pre-election assessment and the directory to political parties, provided background information that was essential for an adequate briefing on the electoral situation.

Development of an In-Country Resource Center

The ability of NDI to provide written materials and in-person consultations on a range of political issues is indisputably among its major contributions to democratic development in Central Asia. At any given conference the demand for copies of political manuals or articles consistently matches or exceeds the supply available for distribution. Independent of conference activity political activists and ordinary citizens increasingly tender requests to NDI field staff for materials on a specific topic. NDI's ability to respond to informational requests strengthens the efforts of Central Asians to participate in and reform their political system, while promoting the supporting role of NDI in the process.

V. Conclusion

Assessing immediate and concrete results to some extent obscures the larger and long-term objectives of political empowerment and institution-building in Central Asia and, indeed, all of the former Soviet Union. Progress toward these goals is necessarily hard to measure. During the first years of a democratic transition, political and civic organizations tend to rise and fall rapidly as they search for the best way to express and represent the interests and concerns of citizens. Working with these organizations, even those that may subsequently disappear, is an investment in the human capital from which all political institutions are ultimately molded. International involvement can advance the process. However, it is the local leaders who experiment with and adapt international experiences to their own situations.

41

In a similar fashion, the capacity of political institutions to channel and contain diversity of opinion depends on the wisdom and commitment of those who populate them. International programs can outline these structures, their functions and the principles of their interaction. These programs play an important role in providing democrats throughout the region with additional skills and support to assert leadership, to put themselves forward for continued and regular popular judgement, to sustain each other through the shared experience of setbacks and success, and to institutionalize democratic politics. Ultimately, however, only those who populate the countries of the region can invest their institutions with authority that is responsible, respected, and essentially democratic.

APPENDIX: NDI ACTIVITIES IN CENTRAL ASIA SEPTEMBER 1992 - JUNE 1994

1992

September **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan:** Technical Mission -- Almaty, Bishkek, Osh, Tashkent

1993

January **Kazakhstan:** Basic Organizing Training Seminar -- Almaty

Kyrgyzstan: Basic Organizing Training Seminar -- Bishkek

February **Uzbekistan:** "Building Political Consensus for Economic Reform" Seminar -- Tashkent

March **Kazakhstan:** "The Relationship Between Economic Development and Political Reform" Seminar -- Almaty

Kyrgyzstan: "The Relationship Between Economic Development and Political Reform in Resource-Limited Countries" Seminar -- Bishkek

May **Kazakhstan:** "What a Political Party should be Doing 18 Months Before an Election" Seminar -- Almaty

Kyrgyzstan: "Fundamentals of Election Law" Seminar -- Bishkek

August **Kazakhstan:** LIANA Conference on Women in Politics -- Kazakhstan in conjunction with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation

September **Kazakhstan:** "Women in Politics and Public Administration" Conference -- Almaty -- In cooperation with Women's Parliamentary Caucus

October **Kazakhstan:** Election Law Consultation and Analysis -- Washington and Almaty

1994

January **Kazakhstan:** Survey and training mission -- Chimkent, Jambul, Karaganda

February **Kazakhstan:** Survey and Training Mission -- Chimkent, Taldy-Kurgan

- Kazakhstan:** Publication of pre-election reports and surveys
- March**
- Kazakhstan:** Survey work and consultation -- Chimkent, Taldy-Kurgan
- Kazakhstan:** Initiation of consultations with newly elected deputies
- Kazakhstan:** Election day pollwatching -- Almaty, Chimkent
- Kyrgyzstan:** Survey of the political environment, meeting with political party leaders, journalists and members of the presidential apparatus.
- Uzbekistan:** Meeting with U.S. Embassy personnel to determine programming possibilities
- May**
- Kazakhstan:** Presentation at international human rights conference
- Kyrgyzstan:** Consultations with political party leaders -- Bishkek, Osh, Jalabad
- June**
- Kazakhstan:** Seminar "Comparative Parliamentary Structure and Procedure" -- Almaty



NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Fifth Floor, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 328-3136

■ FAX (202) 939-3166
■ Telex 5106015068 NDIIA

Report Program Development Mission Republic of Georgia July 2 - 16, 1994

Summary

A small delegation sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) travelled to the Republic of Georgia during July 2 - 16, 1994. The purpose of the mission was to introduce NDI to a broad range of political figures in anticipation of establishing a field office in Tbilisi. After spending the first week in the capital city, the delegation travelled to Rustavi, Khobi, Zugdidi and Tsaledjikha. On the basis of numerous conversations and meetings conducted during this time, NDI now plans to initiate a field-based assistance program in Georgia, aimed at strengthening political parties and enhancing the effectiveness of party factions in parliament.

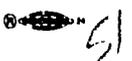
NDI regards these activities as part of an ongoing commitment to Georgia. In 1992 the Institute organized a program before the Republic's October parliamentary elections that culminated in the deployment of an international observer delegation on election day. This program was undertaken with the expectation that NDI would develop an expanded assistance effort in Georgia. Because of internal political conditions, these plans were put in abeyance.

Delegation

The July mission to Georgia was conducted by a three-person delegation whose members included Jonathan Aves, Research Officer on the European Security Program at the Center for Defense Studies at King's College and a specialist on Georgia; Sarah Farnsworth, former NDI Field Representative for Ukraine; and Joanna Levison, NDI Program Officer for Central Asia and the Caucasus. Ketu Khutsishvili, a lecturer at the Institute for Oriental Studies in Tbilisi, interpreted for the delegation.

Objectives

The purpose of the mission was to establish priorities for an ongoing field-based assistance program in Georgia. On the basis of NDI's previous activities and recommendations, the delegation operated on the assumption that assistance would be directed toward political parties. The group therefore paid special attention to the needs of parties, as well as to their roles inside and outside of parliament. The delegation also sought to identify civic initiatives and nongovernmental groups that might constitute a secondary focus for support, when and if NDI's assistance program expands.



Findings

As a result of the July mission, NDI has reaffirmed its commitment to develop an assistance program for Georgia. This program will address political parties in parliament as prospective actors in and initiators of an overall improvement of the political system. One goal of the program will be to promote the institutionalization of factions in parliament in order to enable them to claim a role in shaping the legislative process and defining the national agenda. In line with this, training will seek to assist them in establishing effective relations with the executive branch. A second goal of the program will be to encourage the factions to undertake political party development outside parliament. Efforts will seek to acquaint parliamentarians with the functions that political parties serve outside parliament to gather and disseminate information, enable regional outreach and operations, mobilize funds and resources and organize public support. On the basis of this awareness, NDI would then seek to assist parliamentarians in building party structures in the larger political arena and in establishing institutional linkages between these organizations and their parliamentary counterparts. Political parties that lack representation in parliament would also be included in NDI programs. As a general operational principle, training and consultation will be offered on a nonpartisan basis to all members of parliament, political parties and parliamentary factions that demonstrate interest.

The premise of this training approach is that as the nation's most visible governing institution, the parliament is uniquely situated to shape political development, promote national consolidation and enhance public attitudes toward the political process. The training program will seek to enable parliament to realize its potential in these areas and, accordingly, contribute to the effectiveness and legitimation of the broader political system. This in turn will stimulate broader popular participation in public life and promote the accountability, dialogue and responsiveness within the political process that are integral to dynamic democracies.

The proposal for an ongoing assistance program met with great receptivity both during the July mission and previous NDI-sponsored visits to Georgia. Many Georgians were painfully aware of the isolation the country has suffered as a result of successive wars and embraced international involvement of any kind as a means of providing a way out. The twin fears of isolation from the West and subjugation from the North prompted them to view a field office as a vital point of contact and influence with the wider world. This concern apparently outweighed the resentment Georgians harbor toward the West, and in particular the United States, over the perceived failure to intervene against Russia in the Abkhazian war. Sobered by the challenges of independence and demoralized by territorial conflict and economic collapse, they wish above all for domestic stability and international cooperation.

Beyond such intangibles, the program's specific goals enjoyed political leaders' enthusiastic support. The cessation of war and the slow shift of public attention to issues of national reconstruction and reform promise an auspicious beginning for the program. Having relinquished considerable authority at the request of the executive during the war, parliamentarians are now eager to reclaim an active role in the political process. Those who met with the delegation acknowledged the need to improve the organization and strengthen the legislative functions of their factions in parliament. They noted that assistance in these areas is particularly timely in light of expectations that this fall the parliament will address the critical

question of territorial status and deliberate over a new constitution. Looking forward to national elections in 1995, they expressed interest in the technical and organizational training that NDI can provide to political parties.

Political Overview

General Conditions

Georgia has traditionally delighted visitors with the raw beauty of its landscape, the piquancy of its cuisine and the hospitality and spiritedness of its people. More recent travellers, however, will be woefully dismayed by the catastrophic conditions that have followed in the wake of independence. While institutional breakdown and social disarray are distressingly familiar syndromes of the newly independent states, they are particularly acute in Georgia. Stories about economic collapse in Ukraine or Armenia do not begin to prepare one for the economic situation. To the extent that money remains a useful alternative to other means of exchange such as barter, transactions are conducted in Russian rubles and U.S. dollars; Georgia's own coupon has all but disappeared. Infrastructural collapse, a standard feature of post-Soviet life in all the republics, has eliminated the hopes of most Georgians for heat and hot water this winter, and reduced expectations for electricity to a few hours a day. Comparisons to war-time Armenia ignore the important distinction that Georgians now consider both the civil war and the war in Abkhazia to have ended, and the country to be at peace.

Of course not all Georgians are subject to these conditions. Independence produced a lucrative mix of chaos and opportunity that enabled a few beneficiaries to get very rich very fast. With some notable exceptions, their profits derive from the exploitation of the legal disarray and economic holes and gaps that are part of Georgia's tattered status quo. Far from enriching the country they have impoverished it further, gaining at Georgia's expense. They have drained scarce economic resources from the state and undermined an already fragile public confidence in the efficacy of governing institutions.

The reasons for the nation's plight are myriad. While many hold Shevardnadze responsible for mismanagement (campaigns to impeach the Head of State are perennially underway), others concede that the nation's predicament transcends the narrow issue of leadership. They extend blame to other factors, including the politicians who form the institutions around Shevardnadze. Special contempt is reserved for the role of Russia.

Direct evidence of Russia's presence in Georgia's internal affairs is manifest in the multifarious presence of Russian troops and the steady infusion of armaments and military supplies. Suspicion concerning Russia's indirect interference engenders further instability. Russia is perceived to have a hand in every area of the nation's misfortune, including organized crime and corruption, a burgeoning narcotics trade and restive independence movements north, south and west. Reality notwithstanding, the appearances of such involvement are corrosive, as they weaken a sense of national purpose, fray an already strained society and sow division within the political system. They also resurrect age-old speculation in scapegoats and distract Georgians from confronting the issue of their own culpability in the nation's demise.

The decision to join the CIS, taken by Shevardnadze last fall and approved by parliament this spring, is regarded by many Georgians as validating their fear of an inexorable slide into a neocolonial relationship with Russia. Its strategic merits aside, the decision exemplifies the layers of the nation's distress. To many, the decision was tantamount to a relinquishment of a sovereign national agenda. Proponents of this view maintain that it betrayed a willful capitulation to Russia, and thereby fatally discredited the Shevardnadze regime. Others either more pragmatic or resigned, regard the decision with greater equanimity, contending that it gave de jure status to a de facto state of affairs. In their judgement, it was an inevitable response to the hopeless combination of unceasing manipulation by Russia and unflinching indifference on the part of the West. They argue that far from waging resistance or independence, Georgia's task is to negotiate national sovereignty within a relationship of dependence to Russia.

Political Parties

The delegation met with representatives of the main political parties and movements in Georgia (a list of meetings is attached). In addition, meetings were held with the regional affiliates of some of the national political parties in Rustavi and Zugdidi.

Georgia's political parties are for the most part small, elite, urban organizations that are based in the capital city, Tbilisi. Like most aspects of social life in Georgia they are fundamentally personal: they are fraternal or intellectual groupings both organized around commanding personalities and oriented toward the persona of the national leader. Having earlier established their identity in terms of support for or opposition to former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, political parties now define political affiliation in relation to Head of State, Eduard Shevardnadze.

From one side to another, therefore, positions on the political spectrum denote attitudes toward the nation's leadership rather than affiliation with standard political ideologies of "left" and "right." This brand of personal politics has distracted parties from the task of developing coherent political positions or economic programs. It has generated the popular perception that rather than an institutionalized process, politics in Georgia is a chaotic arena in which alliances are opportunistic and rules and rhetoric constantly shift and change.

The political spectrum thus divides into three main segments: a pro-Shevardnadze majority, an opposition and a broad center. The NDI visit coincided with the creation of the centrist United Republican party, a coalescence of the Popular Front, Charter 91 and the Republican party. The merger took place largely in response to the consolidation of the pro-Shevardnadze Union of Georgian Citizens in late 1993. The Union is an amalgamation of diverse organizations and political groups, headed mainly by former leaders of the Green party and intended to provide Shevardnadze with an institutional base. The National Democratic party has thrown its weight to the side of the opposition, and surpasses every other group across the political spectrum in terms of incomparable organizational capacity, discipline and sophistication.

These three organizations dominate the political process, but do not necessarily determine the balance of power in public life. A number of small parties exist and are capable of playing an influential role. The most notable of these include the Ilia Chavchavadze Society, the Merab

Kostava Society and the National Independence party on the side of the opposition; the Union of Traditionalists and the Monarchist party in the center; and the remnants of the Green party on Shevardnadze's side. Albeit to differing degrees, they articulate vague political identities, reserving most of their political rhetoric for extended reflections on the leadership of Shevardnadze. However, they have proven their ability to mobilize public sentiment and a handful of swing votes to influence outcomes on select issues. They demonstrate that despite the major political parties' recent attempts at consolidation, fragmentation remains a defining aspect of Georgia's political system.

The pro-Gamsakhurdia Roundtable deserves separate mention, insofar as it repudiates the legitimacy of the present political system. Members challenge the legal basis of Shevardnadze's power and the claims to authority of the institutions around him. They regard both as the illegal products of the January 1992 coup and subsequent elections that October, and call for the old parliament's restoration. Many observers reject the Roundtable as too fundamentally anti-establishment to participate constructively in the political process. Such dismissiveness, however, may not be warranted. Members of the NDI delegation learned that Roundtable members had entered into negotiations with the National Independence party in July on a campaign to demand Shevardnadze's resignation.

To the extent that parties do articulate specific positions on issues, most propose fairly centrist political and economic reforms and standard organizational plans. Regardless of their political identity, the majority of parties support reform in the general direction of privatization and free markets with provisions for social support. There is virtual consensus on the inscrutability of the 1992 election law, the source of political party proliferation and fragmentation in Georgia, and the imperative of formulating a more rational draft. With the exception of the Roundtable, the National Independence party and the Ilya Chavchavadze Society, most representatives recommend that the parliament be allowed to serve its full term, and that parties work to equip their organizations, build regional structures, distinguish platforms, develop media capabilities and educate voters in advance of elections in 1995. Understandably, many leaders are preoccupied with the debate over confederation and federation and the optimal institutional arrangements for an ethnically diverse and divided state. Recalling Georgia's history of kingship and the cultural propensity to respect unitary rule, the Monarchists, Traditionalists and others support a more or less symbolic monarch that would preside over a confederate state in conjunction with a parliamentary structure. Others, citing the same factors, advise against any independent executive authority and advocate the restraining effects of a classic parliamentary system.

Political party leaders are quick to reflect upon the lack of institutionalization in Georgian politics and their self-described role as transitional actors. As elsewhere among the newly independent states, party development in Georgia has suffered from the conditions of general disarray that accompanied the collapse of the Soviet Union. The weakness of parties is also one of many national casualties inflicted upon Georgia as a result of the special circumstance of recurrent internal war. The wars in Mingrelia and Abkhazia have generated widespread distress and instability and concentrated the public's attention on national imperatives rather than discrete questions of reform. To a great extent, parties themselves desisted from a practice of competitive politics and offered compliance with a war-time agenda of national unity instead.

55

The political weakness of parties has engendered mutually-reinforcing organizational and professional atrophy. In part, the absence of a stable political identity has prevented parties from erecting strong organizational structures. Buffeted by political circumstances and dominated by a few personalities, most parties lack a membership sufficiently numerous and stable to staff a party apparatus. The lack of an institutionalized structure, in turn, prevents parties from affording their members opportunities for professional development and advancement. As a result, parties are limited in their capacity to attract new members, especially young people with career interests, produce a professional cadre and replenish leadership. On an optimistic note, appearances suggest that the process of waging peace in Georgia has started, and that the task of political institutions to differentiate, consolidate and mature has begun.

Parliament

Elected in 1992, the present parliament is a troubled body whose political difficulties are, in large part, the legacy of its origins. The elections were intended to begin the process of institutionalizing a political system that had become unhinged in the early stages of Georgia's independence. The presidency of Zviad Gamsakhurdia released a period of national turmoil that ended in the 1992 coup and resulted in the return of Eduard Shevardnadze to replace him. A civil war soon ensued, engulfing the territory of Mingrelia, the country's western region. Amidst these conditions, elections were proposed as a means to reestablish stability. A drafting committee met to formulate an election law that promoted broad party representation in parliament, and a ballot was devised to put Shevardnadze's mandate to a national vote. During the elections, there were allegations of irregularities; conditions of war further compromised the process, preventing nine western district from participating in the polling. Despite these difficulties, international organizations judged that the elections expressed the will of the people and created a legitimate basis on which sound institutional development might proceed. The elections produced a multi-party national legislature and conferred the posts of Chairman of Parliament and Head of State upon Shevardnadze.

In principle, the parliament is a national institution which could function as a representative forum for consolidating the legislative process and engaging the public in decisionmaking and debate. In practice, it is the object of near-universal contempt, discredited on historical, structural and political grounds.

While partisan affiliations account for varying reactions to the events of 1992, virtually all parties agree on the unfortunate ramifications of the election law on the resulting parliamentary structure. Twenty-five parties captured seats in the 1992 elections, producing a parliament in which most claim no more than half-a-dozen deputies and the largest contingent originally numbered only 29 out of a total of 150 members. (The consolidation of the United Republican party and the Union of Citizens of Georgia has recently altered these numbers.) Although most parliamentarians identify with their political parties, factions enjoy no legal status, lack organizational structure and as yet play no institutionalized legislative role. The problem of effective representation is exacerbated by the exclusion of several regions from the 1992 elections. Finally, conditions of secession and civil war prevent the parliament from plausibly championing a truly national agenda.

Politically, the public generally regards parliament as a dysfunctional chamber that has squandered its authority and esteem. Once again, the election law is blamed for establishing a structure that affords Shevardnadze, with parliament's consent, extraordinary power. For a range of reasons parliament has in most cases acceded to requests to expand his prerogative, in effect relinquishing its own claims to authority. While such compliance was largely a natural response to the imperatives of war, it inhibited a healthy process of differentiation from occurring between the executive and legislative branches. In the opinion of most observers, parliament is a subjugated body with no power to initiate legislative activity, implement decisions or exercise oversight over government actions. Cynics go further and conflate the lack of power with an absence of political will. They dismiss most parliamentarians as venal office holders who, only tenuously committed to a public purpose, are beholden to corrupt elements or motives of personal gain.

These circumstances have combined to prevent parliament from inserting itself into the broader fabric of political life in Georgia. In part, the isolation results from the use of a list system during the elections, which renders candidates beholden to parties rather than constituents. The absence of a tradition of political activism and a dynamic civic sphere has also prevented the development of linkages between parliament and the public. Despite the proliferation of political parties in Georgia, few have organizations that function outside parliament to integrate the general citizenry into the political process. In fact in most cases, members of parliament contemporaneously serve as the leaders of their political parties. This practice is indicative of a tendency to subordinate, if not ignore, the nonparliamentary and nonelectoral roles that political parties can play. Finally, critics relate the parliament's isolation to its failure to formulate a national agenda. They claim that rather than engage the public in issues of national interest, the parliament has abdicated its public obligations and concerned itself instead with self-absorbed rhetoric and debate.

51

Select Meetings and Commentary

Union of Georgian Traditionalists Led by Akaki Asatiani, the Traditionalists manoeuvre between the center and the opposition and are poised to play an important role as a swing party. Mr. Asatiani has reinvented his political career numerous times and manages to command considerable popular appeal across the opposition side of the political spectrum.

Merab Kostava Society Led by Vazha Adamia, the Society is on the radical wing of the Georgian opposition. Among its distinguishing features, the Society advocates territorial revision, including Georgia's reclamation of Sochi, and enjoys the support of a paramilitary formation.

National Independence Party This party, gravitating toward the radical opposition, is led by Irakli Tsereteli, an agitator whose street tactics and populist appeal should not be dismissed. He has a loyal if undisciplined following and, depending on the issue, has managed to claim people as diverse and noteworthy as Adamia, Asetiani, Notadze and members of the Roundtable among his supporters. Most recently, he dominated international and national headlines by staging a three-week hunger strike intended to force Shevardnadze's resignation.

Ilia Chavchavadze Society Led by veteran nationalist campaigner Tamara Chkheidze, the Society commands considerable respect among the intelligentsia. Members are stridently anti-CIS, anti-Shevardnadze and, to all appearances, anti-establishment. The Society cites the Republicans as potential allies in a campaign to demand Shevardnadze's impeachment.

United Republican Party The party emerged in June 1994 from a coalition of Charter 91, the Popular Front and the Republican party for the purpose of promoting "honesty, centristic opposition, democracy and the need to make the government less Russo-centric." The merger was undertaken partly in response to the coalescence last fall of the Union of Citizens of Georgia in support of Shevardnadze. It boasts several political leaders of national repute, including the Popular Front's Notar Notadze. The merger allows it to command a sizeable parliamentary faction, and to appeal to Georgia's intelligentsia and professional class for popular support.

National Democratic Party Led by Giorgi Chanturia and his wife Irine Sarishvili, the party is an astonishingly well-organized and disciplined party, able to go shoulder-to-shoulder with any political organization in the former Soviet Union and many further west. In addition to commanding office space, a specialized staff and a very active press center in Tbilisi, it possesses well-developed and trained organizations in the regions. The party abandoned its longstanding association with the majority last fall to protest Shevardnadze's decision to join the CIS; it appears now to have chosen for itself a nonallied status rather than to try and fit in neatly among the opposition. Members attribute the party's organizational capacity to its experience in the pre-perestroika underground.

Union of Monarchists The party's leader, Temur Zhorzhorliani, claims membership in the Liberal - Conservative faction in parliament, which includes the Ilia Chavchavadze and Merab

Kostava Societies and, formerly, Charter 91. Recalling Georgia's medieval Golden Age and a tradition of respect for unitary rule, the Union is the chief proponent of the idea of monarchical restoration in Georgia. It maintains ties with the country's royalty-in-exile in Spain.

Union of Citizens of Georgia The Union was created last fall to provide Shevardnadze with institutional support. It draws its leadership mainly from the Green party, and includes an eclectic mix of political and civic organizations among its members. The primary strength and weakness of the Union is its direct association with Shevardnadze who, though still the country's most popular political personage, is falling increasingly into public disfavor. The Union has well-developed regional structures throughout the country, a youth branch and, apparently, an affiliated women's organization.

Organization for Free Abkhazia While claiming to be the voice of the refugee community, the organization appears to be the single-handed operation of its leader, Boris Kakubava. Mr. Kakubava freely uses incendiary rhetoric and speaks of his willingness to undertake a partisan war against Russians in the street should diplomatic negotiations over Abkhazia fail. He lacks clear allies in parliament, and appears to renounce a constructive political role.

Gamsakhurdia Roundtable The Roundtable unites supporters of former president Zviad Gamsakhurdia around the dual premises of the illegitimacy of the present political leadership and the restoration of the status quo ante the January 1992 coup. Although widely dismissed as unconstructive, members demonstrated to the NDI delegation both political sophistication and receptivity to dialogue. Moreover, their campaign to remove Shevardnadze has compelled them to reach out to more established groups to forge political alliances. Members are debating whether or not to participate in parliamentary elections scheduled for 1995. While they report persistent government persecution and abuse, they appear to have some access to independent press, in particular the Iberia Spectr, to express their claims.

Green Party While the Green Party has relinquished much of its identity and membership to the Union of Citizens of Georgia, it remains an independent political party. A decision taken at the last party congress establishes that the Greens will continue to exist as a party apart and retain a parliamentary faction of four members. Zurab Zhvania, now leader of the Union, has left behind an exceptionally successful organization that continues to enjoy the allegiances of large segments of Georgia's youth and intelligentsia.

APPENDIX: NDI ACTIVITIES IN THE CAUCASUS OCTOBER 1992 - JULY 1994

1992

October **Georgia:** Election Monitoring Delegation

1993

February **Azerbaijan:** Technical Assessment Mission

1994

April **Georgia:** Consultations with leaders of political parties and civic activists
-- Tbilisi

May **Georgia:** Consultations with political party leaders and government
officials -- Tbilisi

July **Georgia:** Program Development Mission

APPENDIX: NDI ACTIVITIES SEPTEMBER 1992 - AUGUST 1994

1992

- September** **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan:** Technical Mission -- Almaty, Bishkek, Osh, Tashkent
- Russia:** Political party law consultation
- October** **Georgia:** Election Monitoring Delegation
- Russia/US:** 10-day study trip to the United States for 15 key political organizers from the seven major Russian political parties to observe final political and organizational preparations for the US presidential and congressional elections.
- Russia:** Legislative consultation on draft law on demonstrations and public gatherings
- November** **Ukraine:** Local Government Seminar -- Kiev
- December** **Russia:** Election law consultation

1993

- January** **Kazakhstan:** Basic Organizing Training Seminar -- Almaty
- Kyrgyzstan:** Basic Organizing Training Seminar -- Bishkek
- Russia:** Regional Political Party Training -- Moscow Oblast
- February** **Azerbaijan:** Technical Assessment Mission
- Russia:** "Election Strategies" Seminar -- Moscow, Nizhnii Novogorod
- Uzbekistan:** "Building Political Consensus for Economic Reform" Seminar -- Tashkent
- March** **Kazakhstan:** "The Relationship Between Economic Development and Political Reform" Seminar -- Almaty
- Kyrgyzstan:** "The Relationship Between Economic Development and Political Reform in Resource-Limited Countries" Seminar -- Bishkek

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Magnitogorsk and Vladikavkaz

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Kaluga, Moscow and Voronezh

Ukraine: "Organizing for Elections" Seminar -- Odessa

April

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Kazan, Novosibirsk and Volgograd

Russia: Political Party Building Consultations -- Moscow Oblast

Russia: "Domestic Poll-Watcher Training" Seminar & Voter Education Video -- Moscow

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Kirpichnikov, Moscow, Naro-Fominsk, Nizhnii Novgorod and Talakov

Russia: Survey of Russian Referendum Procedures -- Moscow Oblast

Ukraine: Local Government Training -- Dnipropetrovsk Oblast

May

Kazakhstan: "What a Political Party should be Doing 18 Months Before an Election" Seminar -- Almaty

Kyrgyzstan: "Fundamentals of Election Law" Seminar -- Bishkek

Russia: Russian Parliament Citizens Lobbying Conference -- Moscow

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Cheboksari, Dedovsk, Kaluga, Kostroma, Moscow, Nizhnii Novgorod and Voronezh.

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Krasnodar and Anapa

Ukraine: Party Training Seminar -- Kiev

Ukraine: NDI/CIPE "The Politics of Economic Reform" Seminar -- Lviv

June

Russia: "Procedures and Laws for Transition Periods" Seminar -- Moscow

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Magnitogorsk, Moscow, Saratov and Yekaterinburg

- 62-

Russia: NDI/CIPE "The Politics of Economic Reform" Seminar -- St. Petersburg

Russia: Election Law Consultation

Ukraine: Local Government Consultation -- Dnipropetrovsk Oblast

July

Russia: Regional Political Party and Civic Organization Training -- Irkutsk

Russia: Regional Local Government Consultations -- Kazan

August

Kazakhstan: LIANA Conference on Women in Politics -- Kazakhstan in conjunction with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation

Russia: Regional Political Party and Civic Organization Training -- Khabarovsk and Vladikavkaz

Russia: Regional Political Party and Civic Organization Training -- Vladivostok

Russia: Local Governance Roundtable -- Washington, D.C.

September

Kazakhstan: "Women in Politics and Public Administration" Conference -- Almaty -- In cooperation with Women's Parliamentary Caucus

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Kirov

Russia: Campaign Training with Candidates and Operatives in the Moscow Oblast Parliamentary By-Elections -- Moscow

Russia: Training Seminar for Russia's Choice Activists -- Moscow Oblast

Russia: "The Technology of Elections and Political Parties" -- Vladivostok

Ukraine: Political Party Consultation Series -- Kiev

October

Kazakhstan: Election Law Consultation and Analysis -- Washington and Almaty

Russia: Production of Organizing for Elections Video -- St. Petersburg and Washington

Russia: "The Technology of Elections and Political Parties" Seminar -- St. Petersburg

Russia: Political Party Training (Election Preparation) -- Chelyabinsk, Ekaterinburg, Kemerovo, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, Nizhnii Novgorod, Novokuznetsk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Penza, Pskov, Riazan, St. Petersburg, Samara, Saratov, Vladikavkaz, Volgograd and Voronezh.

Ukraine: "Effective Civic Organizing" Seminar -- Kiev

November

Russia: Continued Political Party Training (Election Preparation) -- [See above]

Russia: Media Consultations on Election Coverage -- Moscow

Russia: Voter Education - Production of Public Service Announcements -- Moscow

Russia: Election Monitor Training -- Ekaterinburg, Kazan, Kirov, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, Nizhnii Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Penza, Perm, Pskov, Riazan, St. Petersburg, Samara, Saratov, Ufa, Vladivavkaz, Volgograd and Zhikovsky.

Ukraine: Election Law Analysis -- Washington

December

Russia: Media Consultations on Election Coverage -- Moscow

Russia: Voter Education - Production of Public Service Announcements -- Moscow

Russia: Continued Election Monitoring Training -- [See above]

1994

January

Kazakhstan: Survey and training mission -- Chimkent, Jambul, Karaganda

Ukraine: Consultations with city officials -- Dnipropetrovsk

Ukraine: Helped to establish Nonpartisan Committee of Voters, a civic group committed to organizing domestic election monitoring.

February

Kazakhstan: Survey and Training Mission -- Chimkent, Taldy-Kurgan

Kazakhstan: Publication of pre-election reports and surveys

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- St. Petersburg, Samara

Russia: Parliamentary consultations with Russia's Choice, the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (PRES), the Democratic Party of Russia (DPR), Yabloko and Women of Russia.

Ukraine: Political Party Training -- Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Kiev, Luhansk, Lviv, Mykolayiv, Poltava and Vinnytsya.

Ukraine: Political Party Training for women candidates and political activists

Ukraine: Seminar for the polling firm Democratic Initiatives

Ukraine: Seminar "Organizing for Election Monitoring" -- Kiev

Ukraine: Trainings for Regional Coordinators of Nonpartisan Committee

March

Kazakhstan: Survey work and consultation -- Chimkent, Taldy-Kurgan

Kazakhstan: Initiation of consultations with newly elected deputies

Kazakhstan: Election day pollwatching -- Almaty, Chimkent

Kyrgystan: Survey of the political environment, meeting with political party leaders, journalists and members of the presidential apparatus.

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Nizhnii Novgorod, Kuzbas mining region

Russia: Regional Political Party Training for Republican Party of Russia and Russia's Choice organizers -- Belgorod

Russia: Roundtable at Moscow State University to discuss 1993 parliamentary elections -- Moscow

Russia: Regional Civic Advocacy Training -- Nizhnii Novgorod and Saratov, Tver

Russia: Parliamentary party consultations continue

Ukraine: Election day pollwatching

Ukraine: Political debates produced in conjunction with FTUI, IRI, and the Center for Political Studies

Ukraine: Distribution of voter education materials

Ukraine: Nonpartisan Committee of Voters public service GOTV announcement

Ukraine: Ongoing organization of Nonpartisan Committee local chapters

Ukraine: Election Day Monitoring

Uzbekistan: Meeting with U.S. Embassy personnel to determine programming possibilities

April

Georgia: Consultations with leaders of political parties and civic activists -- Tbilisi

Russia: "Effective Civic Organizing" Seminar -- Ekaterinburg

Russia: Regional Civic Advocacy Training -- Novosibirsk, Nizhnii Novgorod

Russia: Observation of local and regional council elections -- Ekaterinburg

Russia: Regional Political Party Training -- Magnitogorsk

Russia: Presentation at Conference "The Politics of Reform: The Ural Variation" -- Cheliabinsk

Ukraine: Post-election assessment roundtable -- Kiev

Ukraine: Party training seminars for local elections

May

Georgia: Consultations with political party leaders and government officials -- Tbilisi

Kazakhstan: Presentation at international human rights conference

Kyrgyzstan: Consultations with political party leaders -- Bishkek, Osh, Jalabad

Russia: Seminar on legislative development for political party regulation

Russia: "Effective Civic Organizing" Seminar -- St. Petersburg

Russia: Training seminar for potential Russian political party trainers -- Moscow

Russia: Seminar on "Legislative Approaches to Regulating the Activity of Political Parties" -- Moscow

Ukraine: Political Party Building seminar

Ukraine: Political training seminars for local elections

Ukraine: Post-election assessment seminar

June

Kazakhstan: Seminar "Comparative Parliamentary Structure and Procedure" -- Almaty

Russia: Survey and evaluation mission -- Vladivostok

Russia: Parliamentary Roundtable -- Moscow

Russia: Six-week training program for deputies of Moscow City Council

Russia: Survey and evaluation mission -- Samara

Russia: Consultations with Egor Gaidar and the leaders of Democratic Choice of Russia -- Washington, D.C.

Ukraine: Coordination of monitoring for June and July elections

Ukraine: Party training consultations

July

Georgia: Program Development Mission

Ukraine: Telephone survey to compile election results -- Kiev

Ukraine: Seminar for newly elected local council members

August

Russia: Training session for Russian civic advocacy trainers