



Quarterly Report
BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA: POLITICAL AND CIVIC ORGANIZING,
PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENT
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I. SUMMARY

The governments in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) have contended recently with several challenges to their authority and with other, more deep-seated challenges to the constitutional framework. In the Federation of BiH, a Croat movement for political autonomy has strained the composition of the Federation and the operation of its government. In the Republika Srpska (RS), political violence at two mosque dedication ceremonies brought forth questions of religious tolerance and the government's reaction to political protests. The challenges have extended beyond entity-level politics as the continued lack of a permanent election law hinders BiH's entry into the European Council of Ministers. In all cases, the ability of the governments to function effectively and represent divergent constituent interests is being tested. How the governments react and the policies that are subsequently put in place will indicate the strength of BiH's state of democracy and the prospects for continued democratic development.

Since 1996, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) has supported the long-term development of political parties, encouraged citizen participation in the political process, and cultivated professional and transparent legislative bodies. The overarching goal of NDI's program is that political party, parliamentary and nongovernmental actors are provided the skills and knowledge they need to contribute to a self-sustaining, peaceful and democratic political system. In the second quarter of 2001, NDI's objective for its political party development program is to assist with the development of party workplans to improve their internal organization. In the parliamentary development program, NDI is pursuing the following objectives: improving the understanding of new members of parliament (MPs) in the Federation and Republika Srpska entity legislatures of their roles and responsibilities, knowledge of parliamentary functions, and recognition of the importance of representing citizen concerns; developing a Federation parliamentary internship program; and outlining leadership development training with RSNA committee chairs. NDI has also recently expanded its program to work with state-level institutions in order to ensure the sustainability of democratic development efforts across entity lines. To that end, NDI is working with MPs in the BiH Parliament on committee development and constituency relations; at the same time, NDI is working with political parties to develop a political party professionals program and to strengthen the coalition, Alliance for Change.

In this quarter NDI conducted the following activities in its political party, parliamentary and joint institutions development programs:

Political Party Development Program

- Conducted a series of in-depth training sessions with political party branches and grassroots operations on areas of long-term party building, such as membership development, organizational structure, and party finance; and
- Convened the second School for the Development of Democratic Leadership to impart new skills and serve as a forum for young political, civil and student activists to discuss the process of democratic development in BiH and opportunities and challenges to increased political participation of youth.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

- Conducted orientation sessions for MPs from the Federation Parliament; and
- Completed the framework for the parliamentary internship program in the Federation Parliament and submitted a concept paper outlining the program to the speaker of parliament and the pro rector of the University of Sarajevo.

Republika Srpska

- Continued work with the Assembly on drafting a new Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct.

II. BACKGROUND

Three key events occurred during the past quarter that have the potential to influence future political developments in Bosnia. These events illustrate that five years after the Dayton Accords rebuilding a multiethnic Bosnian society remains a challenge for BiH's developing political institutions and for the international community.

On April 6, 2001, United Nations and Bosnian police, backed by NATO troops, attempted to seize the Mostar branch of the Hercegovacka Banka, in addition to ten other branches located throughout BiH. Authorities conducted the raid because they believed that the nationalist Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) used the bank to launder money in order to achieve its goal of establishing a separate Croat state. The seizure was unsuccessful; mobs thronged the bank, beating and detaining police and international officials inside. Only after regrouping and returning with superior force was the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) able to seize the bank on April 18. This event highlights that nationalist sentiment and distrust of the international community's actions persists, despite the gradual development of democratic institutions.

The events that transpired in Trebinje and Banja Luka on May 5 and 7 demonstrated the persistence of religious and ethnic intolerance in BiH. In Trebinje, hundreds of ethnic Serbs gathered to protest at a mosque dedication ceremony and beat an official from the Office of the High Representative and a Bosniak journalist. These actions were repeated in Banja Luka, where rioting occurred two days later during a cornerstone laying ceremony to dedicate the rebuilding of the Ferhadija Mosque, which had been destroyed during the war. More than 1,000 Serb rioters threw rocks, burned buses and trapped more than one hundred officials and Muslim visitors in the Islamic Community Center. In total, 30 people were injured, and one Bosniak man died of injuries he sustained during the fighting. The situation in the city became so tense that the NDI office in Banja Luka office was forced to close on May 7 and the resident parliamentary representative, Shauna Martin, was evacuated to Zagreb, Croatia. High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch spoke out strongly against these protestors and Republika Srpska leaders, claiming they were too lenient in the face of extremist views and acts.

Issues concerning national identity and ethnic background will continue to remain at the forefront of Bosnian politics in the foreseeable future, especially given the recent extradition of Slobodan Milosevic to The Hague and the subsequent pressure on RS leaders to turn over indicted war criminals suspected to be hiding in the RS. The persistent tensions also signal that there may be difficulties in returning refugees to their homes. Despite these problems, there are some causes for optimism. Refugee returns increased by 100 percent in the first four months of 2001, compared with the year before. In addition, Croat soldiers returned to the Federation army in June after boycotting duty in March upon the urging of the HDZ and Croat separatist leaders.

On the political front, there has been upheaval in the government regarding the parliament's failure to pass a new election law. Upset by the parliament's inaction, Bosnian Prime Minister Bozidar Matic submitted his resignation on June 25. Passage of the election law is a prerequisite for BiH to enter the Council of Europe. Opponents did not want to pass the law because it contained provisions that a Croat or Muslim would be forbidden from voting for a Serb candidate for the presidency, and vice versa. The law also would have permitted displaced persons to vote in the areas where they now reside. As of this writing, no candidate has been named as Matic's successor.

Since 1996, NDI's political party program has promoted the development of a viable, multiparty system by providing political parties with the tools necessary to strengthen their organizational capacity in order to compete effectively in elections. NDI provides consultations and training seminars that assist select parties¹ in strengthening internal organization and

¹ Since 1996, NDI has evaluated its political party relationships on the basis of a given party's commitment to the constitutional framework of Bosnia-Herzegovina and peaceful pursuit of political objectives, viability as a representative body of the electorate, and willingness and ability to effectively absorb and apply NDI assistance. Based on these criteria, the primary beneficiaries of NDI's political party program are: the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS); the New Croatian Initiative (NHI); the Party of Social Democrats (SNSD); and Social Democratic Party of Bosnia-Herzegovina (SDP). The following parties receive NDI assistance in multiparty training settings and in response to specific requests for assistance: the Bosnian Patriotic Party (BPS); the Citizens' Democratic Party (GDS); the Croatian Peasant's Party (HSS); the Democratic Party of the RS (DSRS); the Democratic Patriotic Party (DPS); the Democratic People's Union (DNS); the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP); the Party for BiH (SBIH); the

improving public outreach capabilities. Due to the extended non-election period in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the opportunities that presents, NDI has concentrated efforts on long-term party development issues, such as: internal party democratization; financial resource generation and allocation; membership development; policy development; and constituent outreach.

The parliamentary development program, introduced in the Federation Parliament in 1999 and in the RS National Assembly in 2000, works to build more efficient legislative structures, increase constituent involvement and outreach, and improve parliamentary staffing resources. Work began with the basic functions of the legislatures and has since expanded to reflect the more diverse roles and needs of representatives.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Political Party Development Program

Grassroots and Party Branch Training

Following consultations held in February and March with senior representatives of selected political parties, NDI developed a training program for regional party branches targeted toward identified development priorities. These training sessions were the first series in a two-part program for the grassroots party base designed to promote party sustainability through internal party democratization and skills development. This cycle focused on areas related to membership development, organizational structure and party financing. Individual party-specific workplans developed during the February planning meetings served as the basis for determining party priorities and interests, and identifying topic areas for targeted assistance to be addressed during the training.

Based on the priorities outlined for party branches, training sessions were held in Prijedor, Banja Luka, Bihac, Doboj, Zenica, Pelagicevo, Brcko, Tuzla, Sarajevo, Serb Sarajevo, Gorazde, Visegrad, Kakanj, Konjic, Orasje and Trebinje throughout the month of April. A few training locations planned in Herzegovina were avoided due to security risks and continued political unrest. In the Republika Srpska, NDI conducted single-party trainings for the SNSD, PDP and SDP; multiparty training sessions were held for SNS, DSP, DPS, DNS, SPRS and NHI. In the Federation, single-party training sessions were held with SDP and NHI; multiparty sessions were held with SBiH, DNZ, LDS, SNSD and PDP. Approximately 10 to 20 participants attended each session, with the percentage of women and youth in attendance ranging from 27 to 69 percent. All told, a total of 482 party activists were trained during the cycle.

Each training session began with exercises on group decision-making and political issues definition. These exercises were designed to challenge participants to examine their party operations from an external perspective; participants were encouraged to evaluate how and why decisions are made within their respective parties or branch offices and whether the party's platform accurately reflects issues of importance and concern to the party membership.

Party for Democratic Progress (PDP); the Republican Party (RP); the Serb People's Party (SNS); and the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska (SPRS).

Following these exercises, NDI worked with participants to develop an action plan, to identify specific party priorities for organizing in a non-election year, and to establish a framework for building stronger party structures. NDI also identified areas for continued development and focus, such as: building party capacity and strength at the local level; solidifying base membership support; reaching out to new members and supporters; building support for basic party issues and principles; developing sustainable party finance; improving internal communications; and building internal party democracy. NDI worked with participants on ideas for party reform, such as increased outreach to women and youth and platform development. Finally, trainers elicited feedback from the participants and designed a strategy for follow-up activities and review.

Training sessions were orchestrated by two short-term resident representatives – Vicki Robinson in the Federation and Katherine Triantafillou in the RS – hired to augment the political party program staff and ensure an efficient continuation of program activities. Triantafillou and Robinson worked cooperatively to develop a training agenda and manual with NDI’s program coordinators (formerly known as regional field coordinators). Program coordinators had worked in previous months to assess individual party branch interests and were integral in developing, structuring and conducting these sessions.

Grassroots Party Development Training Evaluation and Staff Training

Following the conclusion of the Grassroots and Party Branch Development training, NDI political party program staff convened a session to evaluate the training and review goals and objectives for follow-on activities. Each team analyzed the training seminars and drafted a report suggesting areas for further cooperation with individual party branches. Throughout June, NDI informed party leadership of the results of the training sessions, worked with municipal party branches on individual action plans and provided material and assistance for follow-up.

The first staff development training was conducted with the program coordinators following the training sessions and in conjunction with the evaluation. This seminar was designed to reinforce and improve the program coordinators’ skills as trainers and develop their skills in a train-the-trainers model. The training session included a discussion on the principles and processes of a democracy, the roles of and skills needed by political trainers and experts, and written presentation skills.

Program Coordinator Training and Follow-up Activities

Following baseline assessments conducted in March to assess individual party interests and needs, NDI’s party program coordinators also continued developing workplans with party branches, following up on training requests, and evaluating progress and change. Program coordinators for NDI’s youth and women’s programming have begun meetings with individual parties to determine activities in these specific areas as well. NDI resident representatives provided feedback to the program coordinators and the training session concluded with ideas and priorities for future skills development.

School for the Development of Democratic Leadership

To address the challenge of widespread political and social disenfranchisement among youth, NDI developed the School for the Development of Democratic Leadership as an opportunity for young activists from both entities to expand their understanding of the principles of a multipartisan, participatory democracy. Building on the success of the November 2000 School, NDI conducted a second expanded school in May.

The second school included training and discussion sessions on values and practices within a multipartisan representative political system. The agenda focused on short-, medium- and long-term democratic development in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the relationship between this development and various political, economic, legal and social functions and institutions. Based primarily on the format of the first school, the May school was extended from five to seven days and included several new elements. NDI added a new section with workshops on civic activism, media and gender that replaced the skills building component of the first school. NDI also invited all former participants from the first school for follow-up work during the final two days of the May school.

The school was attended by 48 participants, including political party activists and representatives of civil society, media and student groups. As with the previous school, sessions were held focusing on issues relevant to a developing democracy, including: law and democratic development (rule of law, legal reform and corruption); human rights (human rights, refugee returns, and reconciliation); political institutions (political parties, legislative institutions and nongovernmental sector); and civil society (media, civil action and gender issues). One day was devoted to each of the main areas listed above. Participants were divided into three groups and rotated through each of the workshops with an afternoon plenary aimed at synthesizing the various topics discussed, which provided an opportunity for participants to engage in debate and extended discussion. Plenary sessions and discussions were also held on economic reform, environmental protection, the role of trade unions, educational reform and challenges and opportunities for young people.²

Approximately 60 percent of the trainers and presenters were Bosnian experts, who served as positive examples through their active roles in the country's democratic development and were able to directly relate to and challenge participants. In-country or regional expatriates were also recruited to provide other examples of political systems and methods. NDI also brought in high-ranking members of the international community in BiH, including the Deputy Chief of Mission at USAID, the U.S. Ambassador to BiH, the Canadian Ambassador to BiH, and the High Representative to BiH. Each of these individuals spoke with participants and discussed the challenges to and opportunities for democratic development and the importance of youth in continuing that process.

For approximately two days of the conference, returning participants from the first school had the opportunity to reconvene as a group and discuss their professional experiences and activities since the school in November. These participants then joined the second school participants in small groups and a plenary session in discussing challenges and opportunities for

² Agenda for School for the Development of Democratic Leadership is attached.

young people in the democratic development of BiH; all participants also engaged in a group discussion to develop ideas for working together for change.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

Federation Parliament Orientation Seminars

On April 26 and 27, NDI held two one-day orientation sessions for the members of the Federation Parliament House of Representatives. All members, including members of the HDZ who had been boycotting parliament, were invited to the sessions by personal written invitations by Parliament Speaker Enver Kreso. The invitations accompanied the orientation manuals prepared by NDI. A total of 51 MPs attended, including the HDZ caucus chair, sessions that mixed representatives from the government and opposition parties.

At the start of each session, Speaker Kreso addressed the participants, explaining the work of NDI, its relationship to the parliament and the objectives of NDI's program activities. Following the introduction, seminars focusing on four major topics were conducted by parliamentary experts working in the region. The four topics were chosen to give a strong overview of legislative activities to the MPs, many of whom had been elected for the first time in the November 2000 elections. This overview addressed the importance of balancing MPs' responsibilities as legislators, constituent representatives and party members, while discussing how to address the issues and challenges with which they may be faced.

The first presenter, NDI Bosnia Country Director Michael Balagus, conducted a seminar on communications techniques for legislators. He described the importance of determining the audience being addressed – public, party or parliamentary – in order to then be in a position to identify the objectives and to craft the appropriate message. NDI Croatia Country Director Karen Gainer followed with a presentation on the importance of constituency outreach for MPs. She explained how constituency outreach was tied to the party responsibilities of MPs because of the open party list electoral system; the key to electoral success was to balance their work with both the party and the voters. Gainer then reviewed strategies for addressing voter expectations as well as for meeting with voters and handling casework.

After a break for lunch, NDI Bosnia Resident Representative for Parliamentary Programs in Republika Srpska Shauna Martin conducted a seminar on MPs' relationships to their caucuses. Martin emphasized the importance of common guiding principles within caucuses: open debate within the caucus; acceptance of responsibility for individual work by all caucus members; confidentiality of caucus discussions and decisions; individual acceptance of caucus decisions; and solidarity outside the caucus. Martin then described the structure of a typical caucus and stressed the value of developing a system of caucus committees to manage important political developments. In the final workshop, NDI Bosnia Resident Representative for Parliamentary Programs in the Bosnia Federation Leonard Kuchar gave a presentation on the operations of committees within parliament. Kuchar stressed the importance of committees as a tool for public

participation in the parliamentary process and for gathering information to make informed decisions about legislative and political issues.

The objective of this orientation session was to give these MPs, many of whom are newly elected legislators, an overview of their functions and activities in the Federation Parliament. NDI plans to use these sessions as the foundation for working with MPs, caucuses, and committees to develop their skills and functionality as well as for focusing on more issue-specific tasks.

Internship Program Consultations

Following discussions on the internship program with Pro Rector Professor Foco of Sarajevo University and Speaker Kreso of the Federation House of Representatives, NDI drafted a detailed proposal that outlines the specifics of the program. In order to write the proposal and use existing institutional resources, Len Kuchar visited Bratislava, Slovakia, to consult with people involved in NDI Slovakia's parliamentary internship program.

In Bratislava, Kuchar met with NDI Resident Representative Nicolas Ruskowski, who arranged a series of meetings with interns and officials who work on the program, including: Zuzana Janovicova, the internship program coordinator and former intern; Professor Steven Strop of the City University of Bratislava, which was the first institution to participate in the program; Judita Takacova, the clerk of the Foreign Affairs Committee; Lubomir Fajtak, director of the Parliamentary Institute; Professor Vatrak, dean of journalism at Comenius University; and a large number of parliamentary interns. The meetings clarified the skills and amount of effort required for interns as well as solutions for potential issues that may arise.

Upon returning to Sarajevo, Kuchar drafted the proposal and submitted it to the speaker and the pro rector for their review and consideration. Information about the potential structure of the internship program is affixed as an appendix to this report.

Committee Consultations

During the orientation sessions, many of the committee chairs expressed an interest in working with NDI to improve the functioning of their committees. Based on this response, NDI began consulting with individual committee chairs to discuss strategies for collaboration and committee development.

On June 19, NDI met with Naset Muminagic, chair of the Education Committee. Muminagic expressed his frustration at the number of young educated Bosnians immigrating to other countries in search of greater individual opportunities and his interest in using the Education Committee to investigate this matter. NDI agreed to work with the Education Committee to structure public hearings and select witnesses as it tries to gather information. Muminagic also expressed an interest in having an intern assigned to his committee to help with this project.

Committee Chairs Workshop

NDI met with the Centers for Civic Initiatives (CCI) on June 19 to discuss ways in which NDI and CCI could cooperate on parliamentary development activities. Preliminary discussions were held on the possibility of NDI and CCI organizing a conference in the fall, where NGOs and parliamentary committee chairs could meet and discuss ways to work together to help committees realize their full potential as the link between the public and the legislature. NDI began drafting a plan for this conference and further discussions will follow.

Republika Srpska

Assembly Staff Development Meeting

On May 11, NDI met with Jacques Sabourin, former director of Human Resources for the Canadian House of Commons, who has been working for the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) with the BiH Parliament on staffing issues. As NDI is working with the speaker and secretary general of the Republika Srpska National Assembly on staffing issues, Sabourin was able to provide valuable information on the staff evaluation process. Sabourin also provided suggestions on ways to include other training organizations. NDI is compiling this information in order to work with the Assembly leadership on developing a staff development plan for Assembly staff.

Rules of Procedure Development Meeting

A working body completed a first draft of the Rules of Procedure, although it appears that the date of formal introduction has been postponed to September, after the summer recess. Zoran Djerić, vice-president of the National Assembly, solicited comments on the draft from both NDI and members of the working committee. During a meeting with Djerić on May 24, he stated that he would distribute the draft, once comments are received, to all of the Assembly caucuses. He also invited NDI to meet with the working committee to discuss the draft. Djerić and NDI also discussed the importance of having a separate Code of Conduct, which would enhance constituency relations. NDI outlined a possible communications strategy, whereby an Assembly committee would travel to a few places in the Republika Srpska to hold public meetings and explain the Rules of Procedure and the Code of Conduct to citizens.

IV. RESULTS

Political Party Development Program

Objective: Parties enhance their long-term development and sustainability through building their organizational and operational capacity and democratizing internal structures.

- Central party headquarters continued formulating medium- to long-term strategic workplans to assess and guide the future development of the structure, finance, coordination and operational capacity of party offices and to identify priority areas for targeted NDI assistance.

- Individual party branches began developing action plans that are framed on central party objectives: to build party strength at the local level, assess voter and membership interests and build support for party interests and principles.
- Certain parties (NHI, HSS) began developing structures to facilitate improved internal party communications and increased coordination among local, regional and central branch offices. Efforts were made by the central party to solicit input from party branches in developing a coordinated party development plan, and grassroots activists demonstrated their ability to express their interests within the party.

Objective: Participants in the School for the Development of Democratic Leadership will understand fundamental components of a democratic society, including legal reform, human rights, political and social activism, and learn the basic skills necessary to apply this knowledge to their work.

- Several participants indicated an interest in building on relationships initiated during the school, began discussing coordinated ideas for action, and consulted with NDI on identifying areas in their work which they might apply newly developed skills.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

Objective: Parliamentary staff resources are increased through the establishment of an internship program.

- Preliminary approval for the internship program was received from both the University of Sarajevo and the Federation Parliament. The framework for the internship program was drafted and submitted to the participating institutions, and the relationship between NDI, the University of Sarajevo and the Federation Parliament was strengthened.

Objective: Party caucuses strengthen their ability to function.

Objective: MPs strengthen their ability to represent constituents.

Objective: Committees improve their ability to increase the efficiency of the legislative process and increase public participation.

- During the orientation sessions, MPs received information and resources that serve as the foundations for caucus development, constituency relations and committee development. NDI also established a relationship with MPs and committee chairs that will facilitate future cooperation.
- Committee chairs were receptive to working with NDI to improve the functioning of their committees. NDI began working with committee chairs that have expressed an interest and commitment in improving their committee structures and increasing public participation.

Republika Srpska

Objective: A more organized and efficient legislative process is created.

- The Republika Srpska National Assembly completed a draft of the Rules of Procedure and is prepared to introduce this document, as well as the Code of Conduct, to MPs and citizens. These documents will regulate the procedures of the Assembly and enable MPs to more fully understand their roles and responsibilities.

V. EVALUATION

Political Party Development Program

Due to deficiencies in internal party communications, priorities identified in preliminary consultations held in February with the central party leadership did not always accurately reflect the needs of local branch operations. Further research of individual party branch operations is needed. NDI's grassroots party development training sessions aimed to build on consultations with central party leadership and work with local activists on building party operations tailored to the specific needs, interests and capacity of particular branches. In reality, this past training served as an introduction to grassroots branches on the concept of long-term party development, planning and strategy. NDI worked with party activists to ensure that, in developing party structures, form followed function and not the reverse.

The contributions of the two temporary field representatives and the influx of their perspectives and experiences assured that parties received a variety of models and examples from which to build their own party strategies. Interactive exercises on fundraising and party structure served to enhance participants' knowledge of party finances and organization, and the program coordinators adapted training topics to specific needs and interests of the respective party branch. Much of the success of this work, however, will be centered on the efforts of the Program Coordinators to provide follow-up throughout the ensuing months to evaluate and facilitate progress in key areas, modify workplans as necessary, and ensure that NDI training addresses the identified needs.

Parliamentary Development Program

Republika Srpska

The political situation in the Republika Srpska slowed the parliamentary development program during this quarter. Continued political wrangling both internally and externally required that members of the Assembly executive focus much of their attention on resolving issues rather than on working to improve institutional structures. In addition, the evacuation after the incident at the Ferhadija Mosque hindered the continued development of programmatic activities.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Political Party Development Program

- Program coordinators will provide follow-up assistance and continue working with parties on developing strategic workplans and implementing action plans developed during the April grassroots training cycle.
- The program coordinators for youth and women's activities will work with NDI international staff to identify party activists, assess needs and interests among the groups, and develop a curriculum for training sessions on skills building and party development specifically tailored to their needs.
- A curriculum and selection process will be developed in anticipation of the launching of a political party professionals program, designed to develop and train a core group of emerging political leaders. NDI will begin an application process in order to select 25 to 30 participants from a variety of political parties.

Parliamentary Development Program

Federation

- During the next quarter while parliament is in recess, NDI will work with its institutional partners on finalizing the plans for the implementation of the internship program. In addition, NDI will work with CCI to plan the committee chairs' conference.

Republika Srpska

- As the Assembly will also be in recess, NDI will work with the Rules Committee and the Assembly leadership as they complete the Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct. NDI will also help implement the strategy for introducing these documents to the MPs and the public.
- NDI will work with the parliamentary leadership on conducting staff evaluations and devising a staff development plan.

Joint Institutions and Sustainability Program

- NDI will continue to work with World Learning to develop a program for BiH party leaders, including conducting meetings and a study mission.
- NDI will collaborate with the OSCE on creating a joint strategic plan of action for work at the national level.