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International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)

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International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)

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I. INTRODUCTION

Under Cooperative Agreement EE-A-00-97-00034-00, the International Foundation for Election Systems conducted a number of projects designed to support its ongoing mission in Tajikistan. This mission focused on bolstering democratic development through support for electoral sector reform, political party development, emergence of civil society, and civic education. The Agreement began after the signing of the Peace Accords in June of 1997, which set in motion a series of internationally-monitored actions designed to bring about the reconciliation of the population, culminating in the election of a professional parliament and instituting a system of representative democracy in the country. The signing of the Accords provided the impetus for establishment of an IFES on-site presence, and in January 1998, IFES formally opened a country office in Dushanbe. The Agreement afforded IFES an opportunity to engage in activities designed to support the national reconciliation process, such as creating a positive environment for the holding of multi-party elections through technical election assistance, helping political parties to prepare for the elections and create sustainable networks, encourage the emergence of women in politics, assisting the development of non-governmental organizations, and embarking on a school-based civic education project. At the end of the Agreement, IFES focused on civic education activities and political party development in the post-election environment. The stage was set for future work as IFES worked intensively with high school students through the development of a textbook and accompanying materials for a course on civics and democracy.

IFES established a working relationship with a number of partners during the period of this agreement. One of the most important local partners became the Central Commission on Elections and Referenda (CCER), the government body charged with overseeing the presidential, parliamentary and local elections, as well as nationwide referenda. Though IFES had worked with the commission prior to the Agreement, the CCER essentially had no (meaningful) mission during the latter part of the Civil War. The conclusion of Peace Accords abruptly changed that, and the relationship with IFES took on new meaning. Political party development efforts would soon follow, and in 1998 IFES made its initial foray into this sector of assistance. Initial analyses, gained from meeting with all registered and non-registered parties and movements, would lead to concrete assistance activities in advance of the national elections as mandated in the Peace Accords. Such activities included election law reform, constitutional law reform, electoral grievance adjudication seminars for judges and lawyers, and development of pollworker training materials. Other forms of technical assistance would be offered, such as a computerized system of voter registration, which would be met with varying levels of success. Education efforts would gain prominence in this period, including voter education efforts in support of elections to the new Majlisi Oli as well as civic education efforts for high school students. Woven throughout the programs was the issue of gender equality, a particularly relevant topic in the post-independence period in Tajikistan. Projects were designed with special attention to the

needs of women in the country, including the *School of Political Leadership for Women*, emphasis on gender issues in the civic education programs, and focus on women in party politics. While not part of a separate gender program per se, the efforts as suggested were incorporated into "regular" IFES programming wherever possible.

Local NGO partnerships formed were numerous. A number of women's NGOs emerged as strong partners for a variety of civil society and civic education activities, such as *Traditions and Modernity*, *MODAR*, and the *Bureau for Women in Development*. The relationship with the NGO SHARQ, with whom IFES collaborated on its 1996 baseline public opinion survey, reached new levels as collaboration on several research projects was realized. New local partners appeared in the sphere of civic education, such as the NGOs *Mehr* and *Chasmoi Hoiyat*. These same NGOs as well as others worked with IFES on election observer training projects and civic education for students.

Relationships with all parties and movements, large and small, were forged through political party development activities, which were designed to be inclusive of all political interests. Ties were established with both national and local branches of the parties and movements. IFES established a working relationship with the new parliament and encouraged their professional development through discussion groups and roundtables. Media partnerships were created through a series of nationally televised interviews with national and local party leaders. IFES found willing local partners in the legal sphere as well during the conducting of regional seminars on adjudication of electoral grievances, which included a close working relationship with the Supreme Court. Partnerships were forged with universities, schools and individual teachers and professors in support of the civic education program, and with the Ministry of Education and other governmental education institutions.

IFES also worked in partnership with a number of international NGOs in the conducting of its projects, including both USAID-funded and non-USAID entities. Major partners among USAID-funded groups included the American Bar Association, AED/Global Training, Eurasia, and to a notable extent Counterpart Consortium and Internews. Non-USAID international partners included the George C. Marshall Center, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations, the Aga Khan Foundation, CARE International, UMCOR, the Soros Foundation/OSI, and others.

The following report is designed to provide a comprehensive, theme-oriented overview of IFES's work under this Cooperative Agreement in Tajikistan, from 1997-2001. Work under this agreement was continued post-September 2000 under the no-cost extension to the Cooperative Agreement as granted by USAID. Funds were expected to expire in late 2001.

II. OFFICE AND PERSONNEL

After having staffed the Tajikistan project out of its Central Asian Regional Office in Almaty since 1996 (with previous, on-site assessments and technical assistance efforts taking place periodically since 1994), IFES formally established an on-site presence in the Republic of Tajikistan by opening an office in Dushanbe in late 1997. Regional Project Manager Thomas Leckinger set up an office staffed with local personnel charged with overseeing day-to-day

operations. Lawyer and Constitutional Law/Political Party Consultant Jack Martin resided as on-site project representative through much of 1998, working with local staff on constitutional development initiatives together with local and international partners. Martin also initiated the IFES Political Party Development program by undertaking face-to-face meetings with representatives of all political parties and movements. Results of these meetings were used to put together IFES's first guidebook on political movements in Tajikistan, a document widely shared and circulated among U.S. government and international partners. Leckinger provided ongoing oversight of the project through continual visits and communications from Almaty. Another legal consultant, John Christman, completed an election law analysis in 1998 that was used to evaluate areas of possible technical assistance to the CCER. Christman worked from his bases in Bishkek and Washington to render the analysis, evaluating existing election laws of Tajikistan and providing recommendations based on his experience in the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan.

In October 1998, IFES sent Consultant Enrique Saltos to Tajikistan to undertake a program of Computerized Voter Registration. Though originally IFES had intended for Saltos to work from Khojand due to security concerns in Dushanbe, the instability in Leninabad Oblast caused by the Khoderberdiyev military incursion forced a relocation of the project to Dushanbe. Saltos completed all three phases of his assessment by spring of 1999, which culminated in a detailed action plan for the setting up and implementation of a computerized network of voter registration, with due deference to the security and technological conditions in the country. The lynch pin to the entire plan was the agreement by the Government of Tajikistan to use the network as envisioned in a Memorandum of Understanding between IFES, the U.S. Government, and the Government of Tajikistan. Though ultimately the Government of Tajikistan failed to demonstrate the necessary fortitude to enter into such an agreement, the outline and mechanics of setting up a voter registration system are available should they demonstrate the required commitment in the future.

In spring of 1998, IFES conducted a major Conference on Constitutional Law with members of the Committee on National Reconciliation (CNR), the body set up to oversee all aspects of the implementation of the Peace Accords. Judge Randall Rader of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was the main presenter, and was joined by IFES Constitutional Law Consultants Jack Martin and Evgyeni Tantchev of Bulgaria. The event was conducted under the joint auspices of IFES, the OSCE and the United Nations. Another major event occurred in autumn of 1998, as IFES, again with the United Nations and OSCE, held a five-country Regional Conference for Election Administrators in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Tajikistan participated by sending a delegation of national election officials representing all regions of the country. It was the first time all of these officials had met since the Civil War, and old prejudices were replaced with newfound partnerships.

In the autumn of 1999, Washington-based IFES Program Officer Anthony Bowyer served as a main speaker in a joint IFES-Marshall Center-OSCE two-day political party development seminar in Dushanbe. The seminar focused on preparing political parties for the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. Weeks later IFES Consultant Michael Yard arrived to begin implementation of the Voter Registration project as envisioned in the report prepared previously by Enrique Saltos. Yard worked onsite into early 2000, until it became clear that the Government of Tajikistan could not commit fully to the project.

Autumn of 1999 proved an exceptionally busy time for IFES in Tajikistan, as preparations for the February 2000 parliamentary elections reached full-blown intensity. The increased project activity demanded a corresponding increase in the amount of local support staff, and IFES added several personnel to work on the voter education, political party development, and voter registration projects. IFES also hired new international staff, including Project Manager Frank Vassallo, a former Australian Election Commission official, and Philip Griffin, a political party development specialist from the United States. Vassallo oversaw all aspects of project and office management, and also worked with the CCER to create a pollworker training manual and training program for election officials. Vassallo also worked with local NGOs to train local election observers and encourage the development of women candidates, a project originally begun by Tom Leckinger. Griffin conducted both open- and closed-door political party development sessions to help parties prepare for the elections through organizational preparedness and clarifying the rights accorded to parties under the new proportional-representation election law. Many of the open-door sessions were televised by state television.

In early January 2000, IFES hired Joaquin Bernardo to conduct a voter education project prior to the February elections. Bernardo organized a television/radio Public Service Announcement (PSA) series and created "how to vote" posters which adorned most polling stations throughout the country. Bernardo additionally oversaw an election day evaluation project to monitor the effectiveness of the voter outreach efforts, employing and training student-volunteers across the country.

IFES invited Legal Consultant Lamar Cravens to undertake a Grievance Adjudication project prior to the February 2000 elections. Cravens traveled to Dushanbe and met with counterparts at ABA and the Supreme Court to develop adjudication handbooks in multiple languages. The handbooks were used in training sessions conducted by IFES, the Supreme Court, CCER and ABA in January and February. Program Officer Anthony Bowyer delivered additional quantities of handbooks for future use to Supreme Court Chairman Davlatov in May 2000.

After Vassallo's departure following the February elections, Philip Griffin remained to manage the office and all project activities, including a second IFES-Marshall Center-OSCE political party seminar in spring of 2000. The event brought together representatives of three tiers of parties and movements: the victors in the 2000 elections, those fielding candidates but not winning seats, and those not allowed to field candidates, to discuss "next steps" in party relations and governance. Griffin also oversaw the beginnings of the civic education program for students, presiding over a series of Focus Groups (conducted under CEPPS funding) in May 2000 that would serve as the starting point for the project. In autumn 2000, IFES sent Civic Education Specialist Lori Handrahan to Tajikistan to research further the state of high school civics and initiate ideas for a course and textbook modeled after the Kazakhstan example. Handrahan found willing partners among international and local NGOs and, to a lesser degree, in the Ministry of Education. Consultant Gregory Stephenson picked up the project in December of 2000 under the no-cost extension negotiated with USAID. Stephenson continued firming up necessary relationships with key players both inside and outside the government to gain support for the project. At the same time he worked under the new Cooperative Agreement to implement the Student Action Committee and Student Local Government Day projects. In late winter 2001, IFES dispatched New Zealander Simon Jenkins to take over the civic education/textbook project

as Stephenson focused full-time on other aspects of the program. Jenkins completed two tours in 2001 in Tajikistan, establishing a solid working relationship with the Ministry of Education and laying the groundwork for the adaptation of the textbook to meet Tajikistani requirements. This involved revising the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan models to focus on a student interactive approach as the target on the book, supported by text, and targeting younger students (9th graders) instead of 10th or 11th graders due to the fact that girls tended to leave school after that grade. Jenkins established positive relationships with others working in this sphere, including Soros/OSI, the World Bank, Aga Khan, OSCE and the UNDP. By the end of calendar year 2001 chapters and activities for a draft textbook had been completed, though introduction was delayed due to the September 11 terrorist attacks.

By spring of 2000 IFES decided to move its offices into the Tajik Film Studio at 25 Behzod Street in Dushanbe in order to meet the needs of its increased staff and programs. The office currently is located on the 3rd floor of this building, with prominent neighbors being Film Studio personnel and CARE International.

At the end of the Cooperative Agreement funding period, IFES maintained a staff of one expatriate Project Manager, one expatriate Civic Education Specialist, and eight permanent local staff.

III. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

A. Technical Election Assistance

As the Cooperative Agreement took effect in the autumn of 1997 IFES was exploring opportunities to work in support of the national reconciliation process in the sphere of technical election assistance. In the spring of that year, IFES revealed the results of its ***national baseline survey of public opinion*** conducted in December 1996, which included a number of questions on election issues. A randomly selected, nationally representative segment of the population (1500 respondents) generally held a negative view of previous elections in the short, independent history of the country. But they also reported a strong willingness and interest in voting in future elections, expressing a desire and hope for peace and stability in the country. Though the survey was conducted prior to the conclusion of the Peace Accords in June 1997, a lingering skepticism was noted in subsequent months on matters of politics and government due to ongoing violence throughout the country.

The Accords mandated the holding of nationwide parliamentary elections by the end of calendar year 1999, after which the Committee on National Reconciliation (CNR), a coalition of government and opposition representatives acting as an overseer and implementer of the accords (though not having a relative degree of power higher than President Imomali Rakhmonov), would disband in favor of a new, professional parliament. Due to issues of disarmament of opposition fighters, reintegration of those personnel into society, repatriation of refugees and ongoing squabbles within the CNR and among Opposition elements, the parliamentary election date was not realized. The population proved patient in accepting the delays, though military clashes continued in all regions of the country due to the prevalence of local warlords and remaining pockets of Opposition holdouts seeking to disrupt the Accords.

IFES's focus at the beginning of the Agreement was seeking ways to cooperate with the Central Committee on Elections and Referenda (CCER), a body clearly controlled by the executive branch of government. A culture of fair, non-partisan elections did not exist in Tajikistan, thus efforts had to be undertaken to help the CCER and local electoral bodies become a more independent body and hence build up confidence among the population and those vying for office at all levels of government. The Peace Accords provided such a mandate, and IFES met with the CCER to discuss "priority" areas of assistance. The CCER had been a significant contact during the 1996-1997 Public Opinion Survey, and Chairman Mirzoali Baltuyev was among the first to receive a private briefing of the results. Though those results were largely negative, the manner in which they were received and accepted by the CCER as well as other key governmental partners showed a willingness to recognize the many issues faced in rebuilding confidence among the populace. The openness of the project and the support of the government also underscored a commitment to keep an open mind when viewing the current mood in the country. Though President Rakhmonov had taken steps to consolidate his power base and rule over the country, there clearly were a plethora of political interests at work in the country, both having ideological and regional characteristics.

IFES identified the needs in preparing for the forthcoming elections to be multi-fold, ranging from constitutional law issues (a nationwide referendum was planned), political party developmental issues, voter awareness, and all manner of technical election assistance with the CCER and local commissions. In autumn 1997, new IFES Project Manager Thomas Leckinger held meetings with Chairman Baltuyev, members of the CNR, governmental representatives, and representatives of various political parties to fortify existing relations or establish new working relationships. Among the first projects undertaken was an ***assessment of political party needs.*** IFES sent Legal Consultant Jack Martin to Tajikistan in late 1997 to hold detailed talks with representatives of parties and movements, and meticulously gage the major issues and needs of each party. The political party landscape was, to be concise, murky and shifting in the autumn of 1997 and winter of 1998. Ministries were still being divided up between the government and opposition, and the parties themselves were in various stages of "legal" existence and operating in a fog of uncertainty. Officially, the Islamic Renaissance Party was still banned at this time, and only formally allowed to register with the Ministry of Justice the following year.

At the same time IFES began to look at the election law, law on political parties, voter education, voter registration, and women's issues. In early 1998, the CCER was still conducting, as it would for the foreseeable future, by-elections to the Majlisi Oli (single-chamber national legislature) under the old election law. As the fate of the election law was closely tied to that of the country's constitution, IFES employed two legal consultants, one on-site and the other outside the country, to work on these issues and render recommendations. IFES's primary Election Law Consultant was John Christman, who, working in Kyrgyzstan, wrote an ***overview of the existing law on elections to the Majlisi Oli*** and made a series of recommendations. As mentioned, Jack Martin arrived in 1997 and remained on-site throughout most of 1998 to provide ***on-site electoral and constitutional legal consultation*** as well as work to identify needs of political parties on a non-partisan basis, which he did in the winter and spring of 1998.

In March 1998, IFES, in partnership with the United Nations, OSCE and ABA/CEELI conducted a ***two-day conference*** with members of the CNR on ***constitutional development***. IFES invited U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Randall Rader to be a main presenter along with constitutional law specialist Evgyeni Tantchev of Bulgaria. The event brought together what would become the CNR's official Working Group of legal experts preparing changes to the constitution and created an open atmosphere for discussion, once issues of protocol were resolved. IFES ***translated into Russian and Tajik a compendium of international constitutional practice*** that served as a springboard for discussing different models. Rader presented the merits of the American model, while Tantchev offered insight into the various forms of European constitutions. The international constitutional models did offer many positive elements and "success stories" which could be adopted, though admittedly such ideas had to conform to the specific needs of the country. The Russian constitutional model as well as those from Eastern European countries also proved to be attractive models.

At the end of the two-day conference, a dialogue had been created that would set the state for the formal creation of the CNR's Working Group on constitutional law. The conference provided many of the Tajiks with the first opportunity to meet and discuss, in an atmosphere of mutual respect, making fundamental changes to the governing document of their republic. Each attendee was given a copy of the compendium, which would be used for future reference. At the end of the conference, IFES liaisons, working with other international partners, continued to meet regularly with the Working Group to provide guidance and recommendations of subsequent drafts.

In May 1998, the Committee on National Reconciliation (CNR) released its latest proposals for constitutional reform, and these proposals incorporated many of the recommendations made by IFES and international partners such as ABA/CEELI in a ***Working Seminar on Constitutional Development*** conducted in Dushanbe in March.

In July 1998, Consultant Jack Martin and local Project Coordinator Behzod Mingboev participated as observers for ***by-elections to the Majlisi Oli*** in Tobashar and Matchinskiy Rayons in Leninabad Oblast. IFES participation in the observation mission came at the invitation of CCER Chairman Baltuyev, who accompanied the IFES team to Leninabad from Dushanbe. All candidates for the two open seats ran as self-nominated independents, with no immediate political party affiliation. Voter participation in both jurisdictions was high, particularly in Tobashar, where a reported 80% of eligible voters cast ballots. After the elections, the IFES team began working on a ***technical analysis of election day procedures***. The report was completed and distributed to USAID, the US Embassy in Tajikistan, and other international implementing partners.

In late summer 1998, IFES began a project of ***voter registration***, and in October it finalized plans to help develop an ***electronic database of all registered voters*** in Tajikistan. IFES Voter Registration Expert Enrique Saltos was contracted to work with USAID and US Embassy/Dushanbe representatives once he arrived in Almaty in November. Saltos was subsequently scheduled to travel to Tajikistan to undertake an assessment of the current voter registry system as part of Phase I of the IFES project. Phase II was to involve the creation of an

updated, computerized voter registration system, with the close consultation of the Central Election Commission of Tajikistan and the Commission on National Reconciliation.

IFES Voter Registration expert Enrique Saltos arrived in Dushanbe on December 1, 1998 to begin Phase I of a nationwide electronic voter registration project for the Republic of Tajikistan. Mr. Saltos, who had extensive experience designing computerized voter registration systems in Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Europe, began his assignment at IFES/Dushanbe by conducting an assessment of current voter registration records and methods, along with conducting an analysis of technological capacity.

Saltos produced a draft schematic for a unified computer network, which was been presented to the CNR and members of the international assistance community. The project was designed to ultimately result in the establishment of a computerized voter registration network covering all major cities and regions in Tajikistan, and would contain an updated, nationwide database of registered voters. The system could also be used in the election process to transmit district results to Dushanbe for collating and publication.

In April 1999, Tom Leckinger and Behzod Mingboev met with representatives of three local NGOs *Sharq, Traditions and Modernity*, and *Modar*, who agreed to participate as the main implementing partners with IFES in a nationwide ***domestic observer training program***. It was decided that the territory of Tajikistan would be partitioned to maximize the number of observers receiving training. *Modar* would be responsible for the Garm area, *Sharq* for Leninabad Oblast, and *Traditions* for Khatlon Oblast. The training program was designed to consist of two phases: 1) a three day training session in Dushanbe, with 60-65 NGO representatives from across Tajikistan trained in how to conduct seminars on a regional level for domestic observers; and 2) approximately 90 one-day seminars in all areas of Tajikistan, with 3000 individuals trained as observers.

Training 3000 individuals would allow at least one observer to be present in each polling station on Election Day. It was decided that representatives of local election commissions and political parties would also be invited to participate in the training. A request was forwarded to the CEC that all persons trained receive immediate certification as accredited domestic observers, which would in turn allow access to local election commission meetings for all elections/referenda in the coming year. Once implemented, this represented a significant step towards creating a legitimate and transparent atmosphere surrounding domestic observers.

IFES Program Officer, Anthony Bowyer and IFES/Tashkent Project Coordinator, Lola Maksudova met with OSCE Elections Expert Rainer Hermann in Tashkent to discuss common approaches to domestic observer training in Tajikistan. Hermann indicated that OSCE's focus would be on training observers to participate in the parliamentary elections, though they would consider conducting limited training of observers to monitor the nationwide constitutional referendum scheduled for September 26, 1999. Bowyer suggested that the referendum would provide a unique opportunity to pilot test the observer training program in a national electoral event. Hermann agreed, though emphasized as relevant that the referendum and parliamentary elections be held in a relatively close timeframe in order to make maximum benefit of the

training schedule. Both IFES and OSCE pledged to continue an ongoing dialogue on domestic observer issues.

Anthony Bowyer and Lola Maksudova also met with Lisa Coll, the Eurasia Foundation Director to discuss a domestic observer training initiative involving local NGOs in Tajikistan. Eurasia originally suggested that the Dushanbe-based NGO *Modar* might be a viable candidate to include in any training activities, along with *SHARQ* and *Traditions and Modernity*. IFES worked to identify additional local candidates to take the lead in domestic election observer training issues in advance of a national referendum and elections to be held in the subsequent months. Together with USAID, OSCE, Eurasia, the Academy for Educational Development and the United Nations, IFES began pursuit of establishing of a nationwide network of domestic NGO watchdogs that would be able to monitor the entire electoral process, including but not limited to polling day procedures, and conduct voter education activities.

Later that month, Tom Leckinger and Behzod Mingboev met with CCER Chairman Baltuyev, OSCE Ambassador Marin Buohara, Laura Meenk of AED, and Abdulmageed Dostiyev, parliamentarian and Deputy Chairman of the Committee on National Reconciliation (CNR), to discuss the rescheduling of an ***election law seminar***. The event was re-scheduled to take place on May 25-27 and include participation of members of the legal and political subcommissions of CNR, the Majlisi Oli, Presidential Apparatus, several ministries, and local NGOs.

One major topic to be presented and discussed by an international panel of experts was the advantages and disadvantages of various types of electoral systems. Presenting different models of election systems would help guide the election law drafting committee in determining the most optimal alternative, while taking into consideration Tajikistan's unique post-conflict developmental situation. Observer rights, transparency, voter registration, media coverage, ballot access and many other elements of standard election legislation were planned to be reviewed. It was hoped that the seminar would serve as a prelude to serious, sustained dialogue on election issues geared towards preparing for forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections.

Also in April 1999, IFES and the CEC petitioned the Prime Minister's office in support of the designation of a Computer Center to serve as the nerve center of the ***voter registration project***. The building, once committed, would be fully administered by the CEC, which would maintain responsibility over the Computer Center and its contents for the duration of the election cycle. The Center would house the central electronic voter database to be used in the upcoming national elections and referendum, with the building itself becoming the permanent home of the Central Election Commission. The Government of Tajikistan pledged to support the initiative.

IFES, the OSCE, and the United Nations sponsored an ***Election Law Working Seminar*** from May 25 to May 27 in Dushanbe. Participants included the leadership and members of the Committee on National Reconciliation (CNR), representatives of the legal offices of the Presidential Apparatus and the Majlisi Oli, the Ministry of Justice, the judiciary, and representatives of domestic non-governmental organizations. Members of political parties, journalists and international organizations were invited as observers.

Each participant received a collection of Russian language information on legislative system norms in elections; a collection of sample laws from other republics in Central Asia, the NIS, and Europe; and information on the system of elections in the United States.

Presentations were made by a number of international and local election experts, including a presentation on Registration of Voters, Parties, and Candidates by IFES Project Manager, Tom Leckinger.

The Working Seminar proceeded smoothly considering the challenging political environment, and discussion among the participants was extremely lively, particularly on the topics of the role of women in the electoral process, refugee/expatriate voting, and adjudication of electoral grievances.

From the discussions that took place, it became clear that the CNR would have to overcome inherent distrust in order to focus intensively on drafting a new election law as required by the Peace Accords. Though members of the Committee presented several concepts, these were sometimes made without the benefit of a broader consensus, even among CNR members representing the United Tajik Opposition. As a follow-up to the Working Seminar, IFES prepared to engage the CNR in a full-time election law development initiative, including advising on legislative drafting and the creation of user handbooks outlining administrative regulations. Though much work remained to be done, the Working Seminar represented a positive step forward in the discussion of revising the framework of Tajik election legislation.

In June 1999, a critical logistical issue for the implementation of Phase II of the IFES-sponsored ***Voter Registration Project*** took a positive turn. After several months of meetings with Deputy Chief, Mansur Kadyrov, the Presidential Apparatus, Central Election Commission, Committee on National Reconciliation, Majlisi Oli, and officers of the State Committee on State Property, a building was finally offered that successfully matched the criteria established by IFES for housing the Computer Center. The Computer Center and potential new headquarters of the CEC would be moved to the second floor of a research institute, which would allow and assure independent control and exclusive use of the Computer Center by the CEC for the upcoming elections.

The process of formalizing the arrangement was contingent upon conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between IFES, the United States government, and the government of Tajikistan. Advance preparations for registering voters for the September 26, 1999 Constitutional Referendum began with the CEC developing a paper registration form to be used to form new voter rolls. IFES targeted the Referendum for the Pilot Phase of developing the electronic voter registry and began working with the CEC to ensure that data collected in the Referendum registration period could be easily transferred to the computer database.

Also in June, IFES/Dushanbe Project Coordinator Behzod Mingboev traveled to Garm to establish connections with NGOs located in the Garm Valley to discuss needs for training local election observers. A table of the number of voters and language preferences was created in order to more effectively develop handbooks for election observers and materials for voters.

As a result of the June Working Seminar on Election Law Development, the CNR responded favorably to an IFES offer to work on reviewing drafts of the election code on an ongoing basis. The project would involve an IFES election law expert working in a liaison capacity with the CNR and CEC to comment on election law development and create a handbook and training program for poll workers and election administrators at all levels.

During the month of July 1999, Phase II preparations for the IFES-sponsored ***voter registration project*** proceeded with a discussion of arrangements with the Committee on State Property to occupy one floor of the Tajikgiprostroy Research Institute, which was to have served as the computer center for the voter registration project, new IFES offices, an enhanced IFES Resource Center and possibly the new offices of the Central Election Commission (CEC). IFES/Tajikistan staff submitted a letter to the State Architecture Department to request permission for the remodeling of the second floor of the building that would include knocking down the walls, moving doors, etc. The agreement offered a potential opportunity for the eventual setup of the computer database of voters. The project remained fully supported by the government of Tajikistan, and advance preparation for registering voters for the February 2000 elections began.

In July 1999, IFES, OSCE/ODIHR, the Eurasia Foundation, and the Open Society Institute concluded an agreement to conduct a series of ***training events for domestic election monitors*** beginning in mid-October in Dushanbe. Initially, 68 observers would be trained to serve as the group of "core trainers". In turn, this core group would train observers on a regional and local level on how to monitor the pre-election and election day periods in accordance with international norms and Tajikistani electoral regulations. The ultimate goal was to train up to 4000 domestic observers to follow the February parliamentary elections. The United Nations, not an active participant in the domestic observer training program, requested the acceleration of regional training provide the optimal number of domestic observers in time for the November 7 presidential poll. UNMOT requested IFES to consider and support a project that would have added a conflict resolution dynamic to the Dushanbe observer training, but timing and cost considerations ruled out that option.

In August 1999, IFES and its local NGO partners, *SHARQ*, *Traditions and Modernity* and *Modar*, completed preparations for ***regional, intensive monitoring seminars*** with a wider spectrum of observers to maximize the potential and capacity of observers to serve as watchdogs during the election process, on election day, and thereafter. The goal of the project was to train sufficient number of observers so that one independent monitor could be present in each polling station on election day, backed up by a core of supervisors who would assist in resolution of disputes, ensuring mobile ballot box coverage, and other such back-up roles. While the observer training was designed primarily for the parliamentary election cycle, a number of observers was trained in time to monitor polling for the presidential election on November 6.

IFES also coordinated this effort closely with the plans of UNMOT and OSCE to implement an international observer effort, meeting with Linda Edgeworth and Andrew Ellis, election consultants for OSCE and the United Nations respectively, and participating in four electoral sector focal point meetings. At the request of the participants from the UN, OSCE, and various embassies, Tom Leckinger prepared a draft plan that would merge the two observation efforts

into one cohesive plan, utilizing all available resources. IFES continued to work with the group in planning for training and deployment of the monitors.

In September 1999, IFES/Tajikistan, and the *First Press Club* of Dushanbe held five out of a series of nine televised ***voter outreach events*** leading up to the September 26 Constitutional Referendum. The press conferences/round tables each covered a particular aspect of the changes to the constitution. Guest speakers included:

Khalifabobo Khamidov, Legal Advisor to the president, led a question-and-answer discussion on the meaning of the September 26 Referendum, and why it is important for the people of Tajikistan.

Zarif Aliev, CNR Deputy Chair of the Legal Sub-commission, discussed the meaning of a "professional parliament" as proposed in the Constitutional Referendum. Aliev described the changes proposed to the structure of the parliament, which, if passed, would create a two-chamber parliament. The upper house would be made up of representatives from the regions of Tajikistan, and representatives could not be younger than 35 years of age. The Lower House would consider laws and pass budgets, and its members could be no younger than 25 years of age. The upper house would consider territorial and regional issues. A 2/3 vote from each house was required for a measure to be adopted, which it ultimately was. Incoming IFES/Dushanbe Project Manager Frank Vassallo provided closing comments to the presentation.

Mirzoali Baltuyev, Chairman of the Central Election Commission, was joined by Abdulojon Bobojanov, Senior Advisor and CEC Member, to discuss the technical aspects of the proposed changes to electoral legislation. This occasion allowed the Tajikistani mass media an opportunity to become acquainted with Baltuyev and the CEC, and the lecture was followed by a lively and productive question and answer period. IFES provided guidance for this event.

Saidibrohim Gadoev, a member of the IRP Plenary, included topics covered by other members of the CNR, as well as a presentation on religion and state

CNR and IRP leader *Said Abdulloh Nuri* presented his views on general issues related to Referendum and Islamic states.

CNR Deputy Head *Abdumajid Dostiyev* was supposed to participate in the last press conference on Friday September 24th but, due to health problems, cancelled at the last moment.

The entire seminar was shown on television, and a similar format was considered for the weeks prior to the November 1999 presidential elections.

At several points during the late summer/early autumn of 1999 the CNR asked IFES/Dushanbe for ***material assistance and information on elections***. The information was provided specifically to Zarif Aliev and Jumaboi Niyozov who were working on a draft Election Law in the CNR. Zarif Aliev asked to provide, among other things, the Election Codes of other nations in the former Soviet Union. The information was gathered by IFES/Dushanbe staff and sent to Mr. Aliev the following day.

In October 1999, IFES awaited word regarding a draft Memorandum of Understanding submitted to the Government of Tajikistan. The MOU was to govern the proposed ***computerization project of the voter registry***, which would be undertaken in advance of nationwide parliamentary elections set for February 27, 2000. In preparation for the next phase of the project, IFES Elections Technology specialist Michael Yard traveled to Dushanbe to assess the situation for the pilot registration initiative and make recommendations for acquisition of hardware necessary to create the core computer center. It was anticipated that the Government and CEC would recommend changes to the election law explicitly supporting computerized voter registration that would be finalized after the November 5 presidential election.

Presidential elections in Tajikistan took place on November 6, 1999. With an officially reported voter turnout of 98%, incumbent President Imomali Rakhmonov was re-elected with an official total of 96% of the vote. Islamic Renaissance Party representative Davlat Usmon, who was the only challenger to Rakhmonov in an election and pre-election period, widely criticized elections for falling short of international standards.

In November 1999, following his arrival in Dushanbe, IFES Technology Consultant Mike Yard continued to assess the status of the computerized ***voter registration project*** with the Government of Tajikistan. Yard undertook a review of the political situation and met with several officials in the Government, Central Election Commission, and Committee on National Reconciliation to determine the feasibility of proceeding further with the project at this time. A Memorandum of Understanding offered to the Government by IFES guaranteeing its commitment to the project was not addressed by the Government during the month, and there was speculation that the registration issue would not surface as a major component of the Government's preparations for the February 2000 parliamentary elections. Yard offered a possible alternative by suggesting that hardware be procured to serve in an electronic vote-counting and results-reporting capacity. As of the end of November the Tajik side was still vacillating on the proposal, and it appeared increasingly unlikely that they would agree to the terms of usage for the voter registration system.

On December 11, 1999, President Imomali Rakhmonov signed a decree setting the dates of elections of Majlisi Oli and local representative Majlisis. Election of the lower chamber, the Majlisi were to be held on February 27, 2000, and the upper chamber, the Majlisi Milli - on March 23, 2000.

Six political parties of Tajikistan were registered to take part in the forthcoming election of Majlisi Oli and local Majlisis of people's deputies on February 27. The Ministry of Justice had registered the following parties by December: People's Democratic Party, Communist Party, Socialist Party, Democratic Party (Almaty platform), Adolatkhoh Party, and the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan.

These parties had a right to nominate their candidates by party lists and in single-mandate districts. The Social-Democratic Party "Adolathkoh" was later de-registered by the Ministry of Justice and would not take part in the election. Nomination of candidates to the lower chamber of the parliament would take place in the period of December 11, 1999 - January 12, 2000 and from

December 29, 1999 until January 12, 2000 for one-mandate districts. Candidates were to complete the procedure of registration and submit to the CCER the lists of signatures, application, biography and income declaration in January 14-15, 2000.

In January 2000, IFES, in cooperation with the Central Committee on Elections and Referenda (CCER), developed a ***polling station procedures manual*** that was used during the February 27 Parliamentary elections in Tajikistan. The CCER approved the final draft of the manual, which was translated into Tajik in January. The manual then served as a reference on polling station procedures for pollworkers nationwide on Election Day, and was based on similar IFES/Kyrgyzstan handbook amended for use in Tajikistan by IFES Project Manager Frank Vassallo.

After Parliamentary elections in Tajikistan were confirmed for February 27, IFES efforts focused on preparations for the elections. The six registered political parties submitted their list of candidates for the elections. The nomination of candidates to Parliament was completed and the registration of single mandate candidates was completed by February 6. A UNMOT/OSCE Joint Observation Mission was assembled, with OSCE supplying observers and specialists and UNMOT contributing experts and logistics to the long-term observer teams. IFES formed its own observer teams to monitor Election Day polling in Dushanbe, Khojand and Kurgon-Teppa.

The CCER submitted a draft document entitled "50 Questions and Answers" related to the elections and intended for use by candidates, parties, election officials, and voters. IFES agreed to help print and distribute the documents nationwide as part of its ***pollworker training and voter education initiatives***.

In early January, IFES Election Dispute Adjudication Consultant Lamar Cravens arrived in Dushanbe to develop a Training Manual for ***resolution of election disputes*** in Tajikistan. Together with ABA/CEELI, IFES assisted in the training of judges in resolving electoral complaints by the mechanism outlined in the new election law, and provided each judge with a "how to" handbook containing all relevant legislation, including the election laws and criminal code. Cravens further recommended that judges from each region of Tajikistan be sent to a training conference in Bishkek for a similar project being sponsored in Kyrgyzstan by IFES, ABA and the Judicial Training Center. IFES and ABA discussed plans to facilitate this exchange, pending approval of the Head of the Supreme Court of Tajikistan.

IFES Voter Education Specialist Joaquin Bernardo arrived in January to begin the electronic and print ***voter education project*** for the parliamentary elections. During this time IFES also began working closely with the CEER to develop Public Service Announcements for television and radio, sponsor a televised debate involving representatives of political parties, print posters emphasizing the importance of voting, and prepare a "party perspectives" bulletin in which all political parties were asked five identical questions. The bulletin, which also included general election information, was printed and distributed to voters' households. Bernardo reviewed all drafts for the television and radio spots and contacted a TV company in Khojand to clarify details of one proposal of cooperation. He also designed initial poster schematics in congregation with Frank Vassallo and completed design and painting of the logos for the posters.

Also in January, IFES, together with local NGO partners *SHARQ*, *Traditions and Modernity*, and *Modar* submitted a proposal to USAID and the U.S. State Department to conduct ***training of political party and independent candidate observers***. Given the absence of regulations permitting independent domestic observers, focus of the project was modified to increase the professionalization of "partisan" electoral monitoring in the hope that overall transparency would be heightened. IFES began preparing an observation handbook to use in possible training sessions in February prior to the Majlisi Oli elections.

Due to lack of a signed Memorandum of Understanding by late January, the **voter registration project** was discontinued. The CCER shared the draft MoU with several governmental ministries (as they were mandated to do), with each of the ministries reviewing the document and placing unacceptable conditions on use of the computer center and voter's information. Having clearly pushed the CCER aside in the decision-making, it became clear to IFES that the project was unworkable at this particular time. A final report was prepared by IFES' Enrique Saltos that will form the blueprint for renewed discussions should the Government of Tajikistan become more receptive to the project in the future.

In preparation for February 2000 Parliamentary elections in Tajikistan, IFES undertook a widespread ***voter education campaign*** that included both print and electronic media outlets. Using printed media sources, 6,000 copies of a poster entitled "Secrecy of voting" and 6,000 copies of a poster explaining the voting process were printed and distributed. Each poster consists of the same text in Tajik, Russian and Uzbek. All of those materials were ready for distribution in the week before the elections.

IFES also produced six TV and six radio spots for the election, focusing on themes such as "Your vote is our children's future," "Your vote is protected," "Vote on February 27," and, "The future of Tajikistan is in your hands."

Finally, IFES produced a brochure on political parties, including the answers to five questions that were posed to each party. The questions were:

- What will be the top three (3) priorities of your political party in the next Majlisi Oli?
- How will you improve the lives of women and children in Tajikistan?
- What are the ways in which your party will encourage economic growth and thus create more jobs in Tajikistan?
- How will your party improve relations with Tajikistan's neighbors and work for regional stability?
- How will your party work towards national reconciliation if elected to the Majlisi Oli?

The questions were given to each party, and then several days were given for each party to submit their response. The responses were included in the pamphlet for mass distribution.

During the month of February 2000, IFES/Tajikistan completed the final draft of the ***polling station procedures manual*** and submitted it to the CCER. Pursuant to the request of the CCER, 3,100 copies of the manual were printed (containing both Russian and Tajik translations). The CCER cooperated in distributing the manual to all its polling station committees. Reports from UNMOT, OSCE and JEOMT confirmed that the manual was in wide use on election day. IFES/Tajikistan staff also observed the manual at the polling stations visited on polling day.

On February 24, 2000, IFES and the American Bar Association's CEELI program co-sponsored a training seminar in Khojand regarding the election laws of Tajikistan, specifically those governing the ***adjudication of election disputes***. The seminar was conducted by Justices Israilov and Khodjaeva of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan. Approximately 35 judges from the Leninabad region and 15 representatives of the regional Department of Justice attended the Khojand training seminar.

Mourodjon Radjabov, Chairman of the Leninabad Regional Court, Justice Israilov and Justice Khodjaeva offered opening comments, followed by training sessions aimed at familiarizing judges in attendance with the processes for submitting and appealing an alleged electoral violation. According to the laws of Tajikistan, complaints must first be brought to the local election commission before appeals can be made to the Central Election Commission and, finally, the Supreme Court. Judges also discussed the sometimes-overlapping jurisdictions between the courts and the election commissions. The participants also discussed more unusual problems with interpreting election dispute legislation. For instance, Justice Israilov stated that persons taken into custody should forfeit their right to nominate a candidate or be nominated only when they are charged with especially grievous crimes. In all other cases the defendants shall have equal rights to nominate and be nominated. At first sight this provision of the Tajik election law may seem to contradict the Tajik Constitution, Article 27, paragraph 4, which states that persons sentenced to imprisonment by a legally binding court verdict shall not have electoral rights (i.e. to elect and be elected). According to Justice Israilov, that provision was included in the Tajik election law due to the unstable post-war situation in the republic.

On February 27, 2000, ***elections*** were held for the Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli. IFES mobilized a team of observers from its expatriate and local staff to monitor elections in Leninabad Oblast, Khatlon Oblast, and regions near the capital Dushanbe. While several violations occurred in the processing of voters as well as the counting of votes, election day generally proceeded smoothly and was free from violence. The People's Democratic Party dominated the party list and single mandate elections, and easily placed the largest number of candidates in the new parliament, followed by the Communist Party and Islamic Renaissance Party, which had two candidates placed. At several polling stations IFES-trained students conducted "exit interviews" of voters to determine whether or not they had seen the IFES voter education spots. Results later showed that the spots, which aired on state television, had garnered a wide viewership and were considered to have been informative as to the new voting process.

Elections to the 33 member Majlisi Milli of the Majlisi Oli (National Assembly) were held on March 23 in Dushanbe and all oblasts. These elections were conducted by representatives of oblasts Majlisis and the Dushanbe City Majilis. After the second round of Elections to the Majlisi Namoyandagon (Assembly of Representatives), new elections were called in three regions: Khorog, Khojamaston and Kofarnikhon, which took place in April.

In March 2000, IFES Legal Consultant Lamar Cravens completed work on the Tajik and Uzbek language versions of the ***election adjudication training booklet*** "A Reference and Training Manual for the Resolution of Election Disputes in Tajikistan." IFES/Tajikistan arranged for the printing of the summary in the following quantities: Russian version-350 copies, Tajik version-

130 copies and Uzbek version-20 copies. The summary booklet and appendix of laws and legislative norms were delivered to the Supreme Court in April. The Manual, prepared as a reference document for judges and lawyers, was completed in Russian language prior to the February Elections and used as a basic reference guide for training judges in Dushanbe, Kurghon-Teppa and Khojand in a series sponsored by IFES and ABA. Select representatives from Tajikistan also participated in joint training seminars with their Kyrgyzstani counterparts in Bishkek organized by IFES/Kyrgyzstan and ABA. The final training materials, which included a complete set of elections and constitutional laws relevant to the adjudication of disputes process, were made available by IFES in three languages in Tajikistan, both in hard copy and CD-ROM format. A complete set was later presented to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Ubaidullo Davlatov at a formal ceremony in April.

Results of IFES' ***election day survey*** to measure the impact of the electronic and print media voter education project (analyzed in March 2000) indicated that a good deal of voters, selected at random, either read, viewed or heard information on the election process or on political parties that helped them make a more informed decision on election day. IFES and the First Press Club of Dushanbe collaborated on a survey of voters across the country on February 27 during the first round of elections to the Majlisi Namoyandagon. In all, 5,550 voters were interviewed, with 79% indicating that they recently watched television. Of that number, 96% (3,807 persons) described seeing one or more of the IFES-produced television public service announcements, with the episode titled "Voting Girl" mentioned by 96%, "Children of Tajikistan" mentioned by 95%, and "Informed Voter" by 94%. Slightly less than half of the respondents indicated that they recently listened to the radio, with 23% (513) describing one of the IFES-produced radio public service announcements. Some 1,929 respondents answered that they recently read newspapers, with 90% describing that they had seen voting and political party platform information sponsored by IFES. A total of 1,438 respondents recalled seeing posters at polling stations, with 99.5% describing one of the IFES-produced posters. Television was, as expected, the most popular medium of information conveyance, and the most accessible.

Conclusion

Technical election assistance efforts began in earnest in mid-1998 and covered the gamut of topical areas: election law development, grievance adjudication, voter education, candidate training, election observer training, voter registration and pollworker training. Prior to those efforts IFES undertook a constitutional development project that set the stage for election assistance efforts. As in the case of the political party program, success of IFES technical election assistance efforts cannot merely be judged based upon the results of the February 2000 national parliamentary elections. Though those elections certainly had flaws and significant issues, major strides were made in preparing for the elections, including creation of a new and improved election law (with IFES and other international assistance), better informed voters and better trained election officials and judges. A foundation for professionalism in the conducting of elections was created that will hopefully carry over into future elections. Some efforts undertaken by IFES appeared to exceed the capacity of government acceptance, including the voter registration project. This initiative highlighted the fact that more time is needed to develop a culture of elections and governmental openness that is enjoyed in the west. But the tools for conducting fair elections were created, and it was IFES's hope that the will on the part of the CCER and government would match the level of effort put forth by IFES and other international

partners for future elections. Under its new Cooperative Agreement, IFES maintains the possibility of conducing limited assistance efforts in the sphere of election system improvement, should the government demonstrate the willingness and commitment to implement change.

B. Political Party Development

The International Foundation for Election Systems embarked on a program of political party development after the Peace Accords were signed in June 1997. The political atmosphere in the country at that time was very uncertain, with the process of national reconciliation getting off to a hopeful though guarded beginning. IFES, with the support of USAID and the U.S. Embassy/Dushanbe, pledged to contribute programs to bolster the building of a multiparty democracy through support for an open discussion involving all political parties and movements. The largest challenges included getting the main party, the People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan, to support in practice the rights of the other parties. Perhaps even more fundamental to the development of political parties was the process of re-registration, which served as the single greatest hurdle for the proliferation of "formal" political interests in the country. IFES approached the project of political party development by first assessing the state of the parties/movements and their needs, looking ahead to the eventual parliamentary elections as mandated in the Peace Accords. Thereafter, IFES continued to work on building working relationships among parties and assisting them in their ongoing development.

In May 1998, Jack Martin completed Phase One of IFES's ***Political Party Assessment*** by formally meeting with representatives of twelve major parties and movements. Martin obtained general information on membership, platforms, and organizational capacity. The meetings were designed to take place in advance of a two-person IFES party assessment team scheduled to visit the country at a later date.

Many of the smaller parties and movements were to be located later in Phase Two of the assessment, as some operated underground and required special means to find. At that time, IFES had hoped to spearhead an international assessment team to revisit the major parties as well as meet with minor ones. Many of those "minor" parties were focused around a single charismatic leader, and it was IFES's view that their chances of competing prominently and effectively in the elections, if there were able to solve registration issues, appeared dubious at best. Phase Two of the IFES Political Party Assessment was delayed due to security concerns inside the country, and the mission was tentatively rescheduled for later in 1998.

In August 1998, IFES Regional Project Manager Tom Leckinger spoke with UN Special Representative for Tajikistan Jan Kubic to outline plans for cooperative efforts on a ***political party development assessment mission***, an election law drafting seminar, and the drafting of a new constitution, a project initially begun at the IFES-sponsored constitutional development workshop in March 1998. Ambassador Kubic welcomed a continued partnership between the UN, IFES, and OSCE, and was looking forward to a long and fruitful relationship.

In June 1999, a Consultative Council was created by a number of Tajikistani Political Parties to meet on a regular basis and develop strategies for promoting their activities to the electorate. IFES/Dushanbe, as part of its commitment to encouraging development of all political parties,

began making preparations to host ***regular meetings of party leaders*** to develop outreach initiatives, define platforms, and prepare strategies for the upcoming elections to the Majlisi Oli. All work was to be done on a non-partisan basis, with all parties invited to participate.

On August 25-26, IFES Program Officer Anthony Bowyer participated as part of a four-person team representing the Marshall Center, OSCE and IFES at a ***training seminar for leaders of political parties*** in Tajikistan. The event was co-sponsored by Marshall Center, OSCE, and the United States Government.

The objective of the two-day seminar was to create a working dialogue among party leaders with the hopes of promoting trust and cooperation. In the daily morning sessions, the international team of presenters delivered lectures on various topics and themes directed at development of a multi-party system. Bowyer delivered three lectures: the first on *How to Build and Maintain a Democratic Party System*, followed on the second day by *Developing a Checklist for Building Political Parties* and *Using Social Survey Data to Understand Trends in Public Opinion*. Drs. Roger Kangas and David Blair delivered additional lectures on the roles of political parties in Central Asia and how to develop techniques of negotiation.
The seminar marked the first time that representatives of all the major parties had participated in a joint discussion of this type since the previously-banned parties were re-registered a couple of weeks prior. The participants and organizers recognized significance of such event and acknowledged the seminar as a step forward in democratic party development.

In August 1999, in cooperation with the Dushanbe-based NGO *Traditions and Modernity*, IFES completed preparations for the first in a series of five-day seminars designed to increase women's involvement in politics and civil society. IFES co-sponsored the series, called the "School of Political Leadership for Women," with the Academy of Educational Development/Global Training project. Behzod Mingboev began preparations in July, when he met with Margarita Khegai to discuss the seminars in Kurghon-Teppa on August 5. By the end of the year, IFES, along with partners *Traditions* and *Modernity,* completed the seminar series in Kurghon-Teppa and Tursun-Zade. The series featured presentations by Presidential Legal Advisor Khalifabobo Khamidov, Deputy Head of the Constitutional Court Zafar Aliev, IFES Project Manager Tom Leckinger, and Drs. Alla Kuvatova and Margarita Khegai of *Traditions and Modernity*.

In September 1999, the Consultative Council of Political Parties of Tajikistan, an organization created by a number of Tajik political parties for the purpose of developing strategies for promoting their activities to the electorate, presented its position on *Majlisi Oli* decisions and proposals to the Constitution. All work done was on a non-partisan basis with all parties invited to participate. Among other things, the Consultative Council submitted an Appeal to the Supreme Court asking it to lift a ban on the Agrarian Party.

In October 1999, IFES Political Party Development Expert Philip Griffin arrived in Dushanbe to begin the next phase of IFES' political party development project in Tajikistan. Griffin held introductory meetings with representatives of the Democratic Party (Teheran and Almaty platforms), the People's Democratic Party, Movement of National Unity and Revival, Agrarian Party, Socialist Party, National Movement *Jumbish*, La'li Badakhshan, and others to solicit their

ideas and thoughts on the state of multi-party democracy in Tajikistan and to invite them to participate in a dialogue that sought to expand on the semi-regular meetings between party officials held throughout the Fall. Central to Griffin's strategy had been to engage members of both pro-governmental and opposition parties to discuss foremost issues of registration and access to sources of communication, and help further develop and solidify the cooperative relationship between competing parties established in August at an event sponsored by the Marshall Center (a training event that included participation by IFES Acting Project Manager Anthony Bowyer).

Using specific needs as identified by the party representatives themselves, Griffin was charged with developing a manual specifically geared to the developmental needs of the political parties in Tajikistan. Foremost among the needs identified by Griffin, Bowyer, and IFES' project team in Tajikistan was the necessity to develop party platforms and messages and improve communications capacity. A daunting task faced by parties, particularly those considered belonging to the opposition camp, had been to consolidate their support and spread information through electronic media sources. Limited access to such sources hampered these parties to reach a wider audience of potential voters. Griffin was able in his initial meetings to offer some suggestions on how members of competing parties could combine efforts to conduct future voter outreach events by employing the First Press Club, a Dushanbe-based media outlet which assisted IFES in its voter education project for the September 27 ***Constitutional Referendum***. First Press Club is a respected, non-partisan source of information, which held regular press conferences and briefings, and served as an ongoing source of information on political and electoral issues.

Efforts and attention of the political parties was concentrated primarily on the November 5, 1999 presidential election in Tajikistan, though all parties were eagerly awaiting the expected release of a draft election law governing the parliamentary elections scheduled for February 2000. Despite challenges in registration issues of political parties and, specifically, of opposition candidates vying to compete in the presidential poll, the parties remained committed to seeking a viable alternative that would allow them to fully compete in the parliamentary elections. The division of the Islamic Renaissance Party into three factions further complicated the party landscape and added a touch of uncertainty to the approach which opposition parties would take for the February elections, underscoring the need to hold regular discussions and developmental sessions among the party and faction leaders.

Philip Griffin tapped into the parties' interest to expand their contact and discuss themes of mutual concern, such as party and candidate registration, voter outreach and the election law. Griffin proposed a series of working roundtables on these and other themes, with members of the each party's hierarchy participating.

Also in October, the IFES-sponsored ***"School of Political Leadership for Women"*** seminar series conducted by local NGO partner *Traditions and Modernity* concluded with events in Kulyab and Khojand and the seminar in Khorog rescheduled. The events brought together women's leaders at the regional level to develop strategies and generate interest among women to participate in the political process. The series was conducted across Tajikistan and has focused on stimulating initiative not only for women to participate as candidates in parliamentary

elections scheduled to take place in 2000, but also in bodies of local self-administration. The events offered women leaders the opportunity to enhance contact with each other as well as, in many cases, the work of their individual NGOs.

In November 1999, Philip Griffin met with leaders of several political parties to discuss issues related to the election law and forthcoming parliamentary elections. The passage of the new Constitution in September mandated the creation of a new parliament consisting of two houses, with seats to be filled via party list voting and proportional representation. Given the new apparent emphasis on the part of the Government of Tajikistan and the Committee on National Reconciliation (CNR) to foster multi-party democracy, political parties have had to focus on issues such as registration, platform development, and voter outreach strategies. In late November, Griffin and IFES Project Manager Frank Vassallo finalized arrangements to conduct an election law round table involving representatives of all political parties, along with journalists and other observers. An agreement was reached with the Tajik First Press Club to provide media exposure for the event, which would be used as an opportunity to discuss views on the recently released draft election law. Additional topics of concern included provisions for the inclusion of domestic election observers, the situation with independent media, and the role of religion in the State and elections. The discussion was expected to serve as an opportunity for those not involved in the drafting of the election law to raise critical points of concern for consideration.

In December, Philip Griffin led a group of Tajik political party leaders to Moscow on the IFES-sponsored ***Election Observation Mission*** for the Russian Federation Duma elections. Ten officials from a variety of Tajik political parties participated in the study tour, including officials from pro-government parties and those supporting the United Tajik Opposition. During their stay in Russia, the group learned new techniques in campaign management and planning as presented by IFES/Moscow consultants and officials from Russian political parties during a tour of the State Duma. IFES and Russian party officials and journalists also discussed issues of message development, communication planning, voter education, and press strategies in the Russian context that could be selectively applied in Tajikistan. On election day, the group divided into teams to observe at polling stations around Moscow. After the election, the Tajik representatives attended a Russian Daily Press Conference and reviewed their field experiences before returning to Dushanbe.

As a follow-up to the study tour, IFES organized in a ***Post-Election Observation Round Table*** and Press Event at the Hotel Dushanbe on December 28. Participants included the Tajik observers who participated in the trip, press representatives and representatives of international organizations including IFES. The forum provided the opportunity for all those who observed the Russian parliamentary elections to share their views (both positive and negative) with the media and for the media to respond with questions for the observers. The meeting also provided the opportunity to discuss the lessons to be learned from the Russian elections and their applicability to the upcoming Tajik elections. With the assistance of the Law and Democracy Center, IFES was able to secure the participation of Viktor A. Zavialov, the Russian Deputy Chief of Mission and Head Elections Officer at the Russian Embassy and Colonel Oleg Grozny, Officer in Charge of voting for the 201st Russian Motorized Division and Russian Border Forces. Dr. Ashurboi Imomov, Head of the Constitutional Law Department at the University acted as moderator. Elena

Dektriyeva, Head of the Law and Democracy Center and Election Observer for IFES in Azerbaijan and Latvia gave a short presentation at the event, which was hosted by the First Press Club of Dushanbe.

In January 2000, Philip Griffin, IFES Political Party Expert, delivered a presentation at a training session sponsored by NGO partner *Traditions and Modernity*. The program focused on training women candidates in how to prepare for the February parliamentary elections, and was an extension of the IFES – Traditions and Modernity 1999 "***School of Political Leadership for Women***" project. Griffin's presentation, "The Elements of a Campaign Plan," was followed by a spirited question-and-answer session. Additional training sessions continued up until the elections. Phil Griffin finalized details of a three-city political party/media relations round table series that took place in early February. The Tajik "First Press Club" facilitated media coverage and the participation of journalists in the sessions, which discussed how parties can use their rights under the law to conduct voter outreach through television and radio. Dr. Muzaffar Olimov was selected to chair the Dushanbe session, with Dr. Asherboi Imomov serving as moderator for the Kurghon-Teppa round table. USAID and the U.S. Embassy were apprised of progress in organizing the events.

On February 5, 2000 IFES sponsored a ***political party forum*** at the Hotel Dushanbe, with a follow-on session held on February 7, 2000 in Kurghon-Teppa. All six registered political parties were represented at the event, including Saifullo Safarov, Deputy Chairman of the People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT). The participation of the PDPT was noteworthy, because from a political standpoint the PDPT would seem to have little to gain from an exchange with the other political parties. By participating, the PDPT was sending an important positive signal to international observers of the democratic process in Tajikistan. (UNMOT, OSCE & JEOMT). In attendance from the diplomatic community were representatives from the US, Indian, and Turkish Embassies, along with German Ambassador Meyer.

A representative of Tajik State Television (TVT) approached Project Manager Frank Vassallo and Philip Griffin at the end of the event and requested that IFES sponsor a debate between the parties on TBT television. This idea came to fruition when the candidate debate was conducted and aired on the English-language news in a 7:30 a.m. program on TVT. The following day, a 10-minute summary of the debate was aired in Tajik. One week later, a second round of debates was televised during the week before the elections. Several private television stations also aired the debate.

In March 2000 Philip Griffin and Bahriddin Sharipov, in cooperation with other local and international partners, assessed the needs of the ***post-election party development*** environment. Since only three of six parties succeeded in placing candidates into the Majlisi Namoyandagon, it was conceded that given the importance of maintaining political dialogue in the country, programs would have to continue in order to keep the "outside" parties actively engaged in the political process. Griffin and Sharipov met with Dr. Muzaffar Olimov of the Sociological Research Center *SHARQ* to discuss producing a directory of new members to the Majlisi Oli. It had become clear that issues surrounding professionalization of the new parliament would become a top programming priority, including the formation of parliamentary blocs. Phil Griffin noted references to these efforts during his attendance at the opening session of the Majlisi

Namoyandagon in March. IFES continued to discuss how to best implement programs to develop parliamentary structures and help outside parties remain constructively engaged in the political process with USAID and the U.S. Embassy.

In May of 2000, IFES worked with the Marshall Center and the OSCE to conduct a ***two-day conference titled "Political Parties in the Post-election Environment."*** IFES Consultant Philip Griffin and Program Officer Anthony Bowyer led the discussion from the IFES side. IFES special guest Oleksandr Lavrynovych, a deputy in the Ukrainian Supreme Rada, was invited as keynote speaker and featured discussant. The event included representatives of three kinds of political parties/movements as defined by the recent parliamentary elections: those who competed and won seats in the new parliament (People's Democratic Party, Communist Party, Islamic Renaissance Party); those who had fielded candidates but failed to win either via party list or single mandate constituency (Socialist Party, Democratic Party, Party of Justice *Adolatkhoh*); and those on the "outside" who were unable to compete in the elections due to various reasons, such as non-registration. This latter group included smaller parties and movements such as *La'li Badakhshan*, *Rastokhez*, the Labor Party, and others. The event was designed to provide the first post-election forum of discussion for the various parties and movements, and both joint and group discussions were held. The joint discussions provided a look back at the elections and sought to identify the weaknesses of the process and how to correct them for future elections. Also discussed was how, given the polarization of political views in the country and the need for a professional parliament to recognize the interests of the entire population, the "winning" and "losing" parties could work together. Most important of all was the need to provide a means for the outside parties and movements to express their views to the new ruling parliament. Working coalitions were discussed, both among the new parliamentary parties and with those on the outside.

The party representatives were divided into two groups on the second day of the conference to analyze more specific needs, which addressed the critical issue "What's next?" This question varied based on which group a party was a part of; the three parties placing candidates in office had to now contend with how to work together and govern, while the three who fielded candidates but did not place any into the parliament had to develop strategies to maintain their political profile in the intervening years between national elections and work to remain viable political entities on a national scale. For the other, smaller parties and movements, the question became one of merely continuing to exist. This included dealing with membership and registration issues.

The parties and movements found the conference useful, and linkages were strengthened as a result of the interaction. Of particular note was the coalition established by the "third tier" parties and movements, with four of them developing a draft charter at the conference. This "Coalition" named itself *Harakat* and advocated fair elections in Tajikistan. Eventually the group, led by Rafjullo Zairov and Shakhurjon Hakimov, among others, adopted the name "Social Democratic Party of Tajikistan." By the end of the Cooperative Agreement as well as the No-cost Extension, the SDPT had attempted no less than five times to register officially. Though the fledgling party would face registration difficulties due to Ministry of Justice regulations, it represented the first major attempt of outside parties and movements to unite in an attempt to provide an alternative political voice. Though issues of multi-party, representative democracy persist in Tajikistan, the

efforts of the Social Democratic Party, initiated at the IFES-Marshall Center-OSCE conference, represented a courageous step forward in the attempt to build a sustainable, multi-party democracy.

In August 2000, Philip Griffin received a letter of appreciation from the Majlisi Oli on behalf of IFES for its role in sponsoring a ***series of television programs*** titled "Society, Law and Democracy." Working with NGO partners Mediopolis and The Law and Democracy Center, IFES sponsored a series of broadcasts that included interviews with parliamentarians on subjects such as political party development, women's issues and education themes. Programs in August included "Priorities of budget planning in the Majlisi Oli," "International relations of the Republic of Tajikistan," "The youth of Tajikistan and its role in the democratic processes of Tajikistan," and "Parliament and the people." All televised discussions included appearances by parliamentary deputies and ministerial-level officials from the Presidential Apparatus, in addition to academics and members of NGOs. The broadcasts were aired tape-delay on regional television, and featured an exchange of information on the work and opinions of parliament, political parties, and other critical issues facing the country. The objective of the series was to provide direct information to viewers about the political process and the workings of elected officials and others in government in order to better connect citizens with the governing process.

Also in August, representatives from political parties, local NGOs, international organizations, diplomatic missions, independent observers and mass media participated at an IFES-sponsored ***round table*** in Dushanbe to discuss the role of political parties and movements in democratization of society. Officials representing several Tajikistani political parties engaged in a useful, spirited discussion and expressed their points of view on the process of democracy development in Tajikistan, the prospects for ongoing multi-partyism, party traditions, and the "negative" influence of some traditions on the ongoing national reconciliation process (regionalism, inexperience and weakness of executive authorities, etc). The discussion was marked by openness on the part of all participants. IFES Political Party Consultant Philip Griffin encouraged the party representatives to voice their opinions, and several proceeded to criticize the elections (both presidential and parliamentary) and insist on direct elections of local Hokims. Though there remained acute differences in philosophy among party representatives, it was agreed that such forums provided an excellent opportunity to exchange views in an open environment free from excessive control and intimidation.

An IFES-planned ***Political Party Study Tour*** to Munich proved to be the most significant event on the November 2000 agenda of IFES/Tajikistan. Philip Griffin, the IFES Political Party Development Specialist, coordinated the event with German, American, and Tajik officials, along with Dr. Roger Kangas of the Marshall Center and AED representatives. During the tour ten political party representatives were trained how to use best management practices within their parties and develop cooperative strategies with their regional branches. The group also spent a day at the Bavarian Parliament, meeting with Peter Hufe, a deputy from the Social Democrat party (SPD), and Markus Sackmann, a Christian Social Union (CSU) party deputy, who discussed their activities as legislators, as well as regional versus national priorities in terms of legislature and politics. Tajikistani participants also met with two representatives of the Free Democrat Party (FDP), Isa Berndt and Wolfram Rohde-Lidenaurr, who explained the role of the FDP in Bavarian politics. The FDP was represented in the National Parliament and the Munich

City Council, but did not have seats in the Bavarian Parliament. Furthermore, the group had an opportunity to discuss issues of environmentalism, political organizing as an outsider, and the transition of a movement/party into a parliamentary faction with the deputies of the Green Party, Susanna Tausendfreund and Josef Duerr.

In the city of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Tajik party representatives visited the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, attending seminars and two presentations on political parties and the role/background of the Center and participating in the exercise on regional versus national issue prioritization. Tour participants also discussed the role of local issues in the political process, taxation, and local financing with the Mayor of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Mr. Neidlinger.

Discussions and assessment sessions during the tour showed that Tajik tour participants were satisfied with a wide range of issues they learned about political party development and with the level of interaction with various political leaders. Upon the return to Dushanbe, Philip Griffin organized a Political Party Tour Press Conference, which was attended by the Indian and OSCE ambassadors, along with representatives of UNDP, UNTOP, and U.S., Turkish, German, and Russian embassies. The results of the Political Party Tour seemed to impress IFES' local and international partners. Marc Gilbert, OSCE Ambassador, and Bernie Ryan, Legislative Liaison at ABA/CEELI, wished to discuss continued cooperation with IFES.

Conclusion

IFES embarked on a project of political party development with the intention of helping Tajikistan make a successful transition from a one party-ruled state in the midst of civil conflict to a multi-party democracy undergoing national reconciliation. Results of the first post-conflict national parliamentary elections in February 2000 cannot be used as the exclusive barometer for success of multi-party democracy in Tajikistan, however, for many other factors have to be taken into account. The fact that a multi-party election was held in an atmosphere free from violence should be considered a major success and outweigh the fact that the election was held over one year late. IFES projects contributed greatly to the development of the political parties, though much more work remains to be done. The training in preparing for elections was preceded by an exclusive party-by-party overview shared with the international community, the result of a series of one-on-one meetings by IFES consultants. IFES projects were geared towards the parties as a whole, and to individual parties who sought out IFES's advice and consultation. Thought the PDPT remained dominant in the country, other parties gained a foothold or the hope for future election success. Informational outreach programs exposed the population to the platforms and personalities of the parties, and study tours exposed party representatives to international practice. Developing strategies to move into the future became the cornerstone of IFES's party work after the elections, and trainings in key areas of development of party infrastructure would go on to form the basis of continued IFES work in this sector under a new Cooperative Agreement beginning in the autumn of 2000.

C. Civic Education

At the conclusion of the February 2000 parliamentary elections, IFES began to work in the area of civic education, specifically as related to high school students. In April 2000, IFES, together

with local NGO partner SHARQ, conducted a series of ***Focus Groups*** of high school students and teachers in three regions to assess the level and adequacy of the instruction of civics as a part of the school curriculum. The project was conducted under the CEPPS funding mechanism, and results showed the need and great desire for improved teaching materials to be produced. Overall levels of knowledge of democracy were relatively higher in Dushanbe than in outlying regions, though overall students did not demonstrate an advanced knowledge of concepts such as voting rights, forms of governance, human rights, and other subjects. It was with this evidence that IFES embarked on a program to implement a student's high school civics textbook as part of a course on democracy and civics. IFES also planned other student activities such as Student Action Committees, Student Local Government Day, and Democracy Summer Camps. While some of these initiatives were initiated under a subsequent Cooperative Agreement, their roots were laid beginning in the spring of 2000.

During the month of July 2000, IFES Consultant Philip Griffin began to meet with representatives of local NGOs to solicit input on the proposed ***IFES textbook project*** for high school students in Tajikistan. Griffin met with several academics as well to gage interest in possible authorship of individual textbook chapters. The book was to be modeled after a similar textbook prepared by IFES for use in Kazakhstan.

In August 2000, IFES/Tajikistan cooperated with OSCE's regional office in Khojand on conducting a ***Civic Education Summer Camp*** for university students in Leninabad Oblast. The aim of the Camp was to motivate university students to become proactive by providing them with information and active instruction in the principles of civil society, democracy, elections and civic responsibility, and to foster dialogue and debate on subjects presented to ensure active participation of the students during the Camp and beyond. An active, grassroots approach was included to stimulate the students' interest in civil society and to encourage students to apply what they learned at their home schools in the fall.

The Summer Camp was designed to bring together university students of different backgrounds for a period of six days. The week's schedule was divided between civic education and leisure activities. The OSCE office supervised the program, which was held at a summer resort in Kara-Kum. The event represented the second in a series of three Summer Camps organized and conducted by OSCE. This was the first summer camp co-sponsored by IFES, which contributed project resources and methodological approaches in support, based on similar experience with conducting Summer Camps in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Also in August, IFES Civic Education and Gender Consultant Lori Handrahan arrived in Dushanbe to meet with government officials and representatives of local and international NGOs in connection with ***IFES' textbook and civics course project.*** Handrahan and Project Assistant Moukim Mallaev held a series of meetings to discuss viability of the textbook initiative and how it fits into the overall scheme of civics and democracy education in the country. It was determined that efforts have been made to coordinate and strategize a unified approach to curriculum and textbook development among international donors and the Ministry of Education. The efforts of the World Bank, the Soros Foundation and the Aga Khan Foundation were cited as particularly significant in the sphere of education-sector development for primary and secondary school students. Based on discussions, it was determined the IFES project of introducing a civics

and democracy textbook for 11th grade students has a niche in Tajikistan. The need for such information was solidified following results of a series of Focus Groups conducted by IFES in May, in which teachers and students alike cited the lack of textbooks specifically focusing on Tajikistan's particular developmental history. The project, subject to ultimate approval of the Ministry of Education, was well received by other international partners, with whom IFES pledged to coordinate on an on-going basis as the project gains momentum.

IFES/Tajikistan submitted a formal Civics and Democracy Textbook/Course Development proposal to the Ministry of Education for review. The Ministry forwarded the proposal to the Institute of Pedagogy for discussion and evaluation. The Institute of Pedagogy granted initial support for the IFES proposal and submitted a Letter of Support to the Ministry of Education. A meeting was scheduled with the Ministry in September to further discuss the project.

In October 2000, a series of meetings with representatives of local NGOs and government officials were held to gain additional support for the ***secondary school textbook and civics course initiative***. IFES/Tajikistan met Mrs. Goulchera Nosirova, the head of the Tajikistan Center for Civic Education, who expressed interest in working with IFES. As one of the most active organizations in the country, the Center for Civic Education had already translated (into Tajik) and published numerous books about civic democracy and conflict resolution, and was involved in the reconstruction of village schools. Due to a broad and active profile of the Center for Civic Education, IFES was very interested in discussing a formal partnership with Mrs. Nosirova and began negotiations with the Center.

In order to formulate a clear understanding of Tajikistan's needs in the sphere of civic education, IFES staff members attended sessions of the Educational Reform Conference, visited schools, and met with representatives from the World Bank, NGOs and various educational establishments. It was anticipated that IFES would soon name a committee of academics and scholars to oversee adaptations to the draft secondary school civics and democracy textbook. An organizing committee consisting of education experts would be created to guide the project through the approval process with the Ministry of Education and monitor its eventual implementation. IFES continued to discuss the textbook and course methodology with the Academy of Science's pedagogical faculty, which had been involved in other civic education projects in the country.

With the arrival of the new IFES Civic Education Consultant, Gregory Stephenson, in December 2000, IFES/Tajikistan intensified its activities in the area of ***curriculum development***. A number of meetings were held during December with leading education experts in order to secure their support and advice. IFES met with Munira Innoyantova, State Education Advisor to the President. She recommended IFES NGOs that IFES/Tajikistan may want to consider working with in the future, and named possible candidates for contributors to the textbook and the Senior Advisory Board members. She suggested Numon Naymatov from the Academy of Sciences to be used as a government resource for the textbook production and also requested to see a copy of civic education text from IFES/Kazakhstan "Textbook for Secondary Schools in Kazakhstan".

In an effort to finalize the contents of the civic education textbook, a meeting was held with Dr. Zioyev, Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy. Dr. Zioyev demonstrated much enthusiasm

for the textbook project and submitted two more chapters to be added to the textbook's contents. Calendar year 2001 saw IFES use the remainder of its No-Cost Extension Cooperative Agreement funds in development of the civic textbook for Tajikistani high school students. In March 2001, IFES sent civic education expert Simon Jenkins to Dushanbe to take over the ***textbook project***, and after extensive research (including use of Focus Group results on student and teacher preferences in the area of civic education study, a project funded via CEPPS), it was decided to adopt a civics textbook for 9th grade students instead of 10th and 11th graders, as was done by IFES in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The reason for the change was primarily due to a large number of girls dropping out of school after the 9th grade. Jenkins worked to secure support from the Ministry of Education, which proved to be no easy task since while there was a coalition of supporters outside the Ministry, it was critical for the project's success to obtain Ministry's approval. Other factors also had to be considered, including the relationship of the Ministry to other international partners, such as Soros/OSI and the World Bank, both of whom had already initiated pilot textbook projects. IFES pursued a working relationship with both of these organizations as well, and secured a promise from the World Bank on sharing its pilot schools. Soros/OSI proved an uncertain partner, though great efforts were undertaken to create an IFES project that complimented what Soros/OSI was attempting to do at the 8th grade level.

By late summer of 2001, progress had been made in the development of the ***textbook***, with writers and contributors formally identified, chapter outlines created, and student exercise book parameters defined. A copy of a draft student exercise book was shared with USAID. Simon Jenkins took a scheduled departure and IFES made plans for his return in late August. Several outstanding issues remained prior to the book being launched in the Fall of 2001 in a pilot program. One was the formal signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between IFES and the Ministry of Education, a necessary pre-requisite as viewed by the IFES side. The MoU was to have been preceded by IFES's formal registration with the Ministry of Justice, a necessary pre-requisite on the Tajik side. Additional issues of translation, printing and overall formatting were to have been resolved thereafter, though the events of September 11 brought in-country work on the project to a halt. Jenkins' return trip was delayed by almost three months, though editing on the book continued by Jenkins and others. The September 11 events forced IFES to operate its office remotely in terms of project management, though local staff remained in Dushanbe. The crisis ultimately resulted in the delay of the pilot phase of the project until 2002. Though a draft textbook was nearing completion by the end of 2001, with the accompanying teacher's manual and student exercise handbook also in draft final form, the pilot ultimately had to be put off. However, with funds identified in the Cooperative Agreement and earmarked for development, the materials themselves were in a final state of preparation and ultimately ready for a 2002 introduction. The project continued with funds identified under the new Cooperative Agreement.

Conclusion

While efforts in the first 2+ years of the Agreement concentrated on election preparations and political party development, the latter part of the Agreement as well as the No-cost Extension saw funds spent on civic education projects, namely the student civics course and textbook. Originally envisioned as a relatively straightforward adaptation of a similar IFES textbook developed in Kazakhstan, the Tajikistan textbook experienced an extended period of

development due to the unique and special conditions in the country. Focus group results combined with the research of a series of IFES consultants led to the conclusion that the book and course needed to be targeted to younger students, and be based more on student interactive exercises rather than straight text complimented with exercises. The approach was discussed with USAID, and the regional mission in Almaty as well as the Tajikistan country representative were kept aware of the change in approach. The events of September 11, 2001 forced a different kind of delay on the project, but IFES was hopeful and confident as funds were expended and the year drew to a close that a pilot project, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and other international partners, could successfully be undertaken in 2002.

IV. MATERIALS PRODUCED

- Constitutional Development in Tajikistan Seminar Materials, March 1998, (Russian, English) -- AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST IN IFES/WASHINGTON, D.C. or IFES/ TAJIKISTAN
- Preliminary Assessment on Political Parties (1998)
- Analysis of Political Party Legislation in Tajikistan (2000)
- Comprehensive Proposal for Electronic Voter Registration, October 1999
- Brochure "50 Questions and Answers about Elections" (together with CCER), December 1999, (Russian, Tajik)
- Student Local Government Day Manual for Mentors and Government Officials (Tajik)
- Secondary Civic Education and Gender Report (2000)
- Political Party Development Interim Report (October 1999-March 2000)
- Political Party Platforms: Majlisi Oli Elections (February 2000)
- Elections in Democratic Societies: Working with Mass Media (2000)

<u>For February 2000 Parliamentary Elections:</u>

- Election Dispute Adjudication Manual, (Tajik and Uzbek)
- Reference and Training Manual for the Resolution of Election Disputes in Tajikistan (English)
- Polling Station Procedures Manual for Election Observer, 2000, (Russian, Tajik)
- Poster "Secrecy of Voting" -- AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST IN IFES/ TAJIKISTAN
- Poster "The Voting Process" -- AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST IN IFES/ TAJIKISTAN
- Manual for Election Observers, 2000, (Russian, Tajik)
- Pollworker Training Manual (Russian, Tajik)
- IFES/Tajikistan sponsored a series of television shows and interviews with members of political parties in the year 2000. IFES cooperated with the Law and Democracy Center and the NGO "Mediapolis" to produce the series, which visited Dushanbe, Khatlon Oblast, Leninabad Oblast, and the Garm area of the Karategin Valley. The shows were televised nationwide. Videotapes of each program were produced and are -- AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST IN IFES/WASHINGTON, D.C. OR IFES/TAJIKISTAN.
- 6 television public service announcements-- AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST IN IFES/ TAJIKISTAN
- 6 radio public service announcements-- AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST IN IFES/ TAJIKISTAN

V. IMPACT & EVALUATION

IFES worked in three major sectors during this agreement: technical election assistance, political party development, and civic education. Efforts during the early portion of the agreement were geared toward preparing for the first post-civil war national elections in Tajikistan, including work on constitutional reform. Trainings for candidates, parties, election officials and judges were conducted in advance of the elections. While the elections themselves, if evaluated critically against international standards, did not measure up, they nonetheless represented a major step forward in the county's history. Election day was largely devoid of violence, and equally marked by great enthusiasm on the part of voters, many of whom had never before voted in a meaningful election.

IFES mobilized a total of four consultants to provide assistance in preparing for the election, engaging in such activities as voter registration, political party training for elections, voter education, and pollworker training. The vast amount of materials produced, including pollworker manuals, posters, videotaped programs, and other training manuals were accompanied by group training sessions. IFES observers, who fanned out across the country in support of the OSCE/UN observation mission in 2000, noted that IFES materials were present in most polling locations. Pollworkers reported that they had been trained in using the materials, and voters denoted (informally) that they were aware of the voter information materials that were created by IFES. Though overall the vote was marred by "traditional" violations of the election code (such as rampant family voting), inconsistent use of the voters lists, and confusion with the ballot-marking process, election officials, observers and voters alike appeared serious about their tasks and committed to moving forward. The fact that local precinct officials had any information to begin with (as supplied by IFES through the CCER) represented a positive step forward. In some cases the IFES pollworker manual was the only written instruction that election officials had received prior to election day, and served as a handy guidebook for consultative use.

Candidates, observers and party officials also reported feeling more aware of their rights under the election law. IFES worked to educate party representatives on the new proportional representation system of voting, a system that caused some confusion on the part of some parties and voters alike. IFES had experienced, in other countries, cases where observers and candidates did not know their rights under the election law, and IFES worked equally with observers, polling officials, parties and judges in order to explain the election law and the grievance adjudication process. Although relatively few cases were ultimately brought to the attention of the courts, judges indicated they felt much better prepared to address any potential complaints after having attended instructional sessions conducted by IFES and ABA/CEELI.

IFES also assessed the impact of its electronic and print media outreach efforts by recruiting and training a large group of university students to conduct a poll of voters across the country on election day. Voters who emerged from polling stations were asked whether or not they had been exposed to any of the IFES voter information spots (either printed or electronic) prior to the election. While the numbers of those reporting that they recalled the IFES-produced spots were not as high nationally as it was hoped, many voters in Dushanbe recalled seeing the spots to gain information about the election and cited the humorous interactions between characters as attention-grabbers. Future voter education efforts should continue to focus on television and

radio as the primary medium, given the broader reach of those outlets and a declining literacy rate in the country.

The political party development program broke new ground in that it was among the first attempts to engage the emerging parties on a collective as well as an individual basis in assistance efforts. IFES met with all of the political parties and movements to conduct interviews and gage receptivity towards assistance projects. Comparative information on each party/movement was compiled into a written overview and shared with USAID and the Embassy. IFES then conducted training seminars in cooperation with the OSCE and others to help the parties prepare for the first post-conflict multi-party elections. Though only six parties were registered to compete in the elections (with one later de-registered), and only three of those gained seats in the Majlisi Namoyandagon, it was the first multi-party election in the country's independent history and remains the only country in the former Soviet Union to have a legal, Islamic opposition party represented in the legislature. IFES paid special attention to training women's candidates to compete in the elections, given the decreased opportunities available to them since the fall of communism. The "School of Political Leadership for Women" project, sponsored by IFES and conducted through the NGO *Traditions & Modernity,* opened the door for women to prepare for and compete in the elections either as party-affiliated or self-nominated candidates.

IFES refocused its efforts after the elections on its civic education program, building on its expertise in the region to initiate a civics textbook project for high school students. IFES conducted research on the existing courses and materials in schools, and consulted with other international assistance providers to determine the best way to address the deficits in civics instruction for high school students. Drawing on results from focus groups conducted by IFES and *Sharq*, IFES targeted its program to upper-level secondary students and sought to design an activity-based civics textbook. By the end of the Cooperative Agreement the target age group had been modified to include 9th graders primarily due to the dropout rate of girls after that grade. The project was in development as IFES transitioned into a new Cooperative Agreement.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS & CHALLENGES

The attacks of September 11, 2001 and the proximity of Tajikistan to Afghanistan reinforced the need to promote democracy development and education for young persons, lest they fall under the influence of Islamic extremism. Elements of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which was alleged to have ties to the al Qaeda network, were (and still are) based in Tajikistan, along with supporters of the Hizb-ut-Tahrir movement. A staggering economy and limited job prospects have the potential to drive disaffected youth to anti-democratic institutions unless efforts are undertaken to encourage their active participation in the democracy-building process. IFES sees the youth-based civic education programs, stressing equality and tolerance, as essential in contributing to the democratic "literacy" of the next generation of Tajikistani citizens. Projects such as the textbook/course initiative, supplemented with the Student Action Committees, Democracy Summer Camps and Student Local Government Day program, will help to expose students to democratic governmental norms, civil society and civic responsibility while challenging them to regard critically the situation in their own country. Student activism is the goal of the project, whether it is through student volunteerism on a community level or active

participation in politics. An engaged youth is one which will hold leaders accountable and work to improve society through civil society and participatory governance. With the birth rate in Tajikistan increasing, and with young persons under 25 years of age already in the majority, it is more essential than ever that opportunities for peaceful and productive expression be provided on an equal basis to young women and young men. Under the next cooperative agreement IFES will work to fulfilling the above-mentioned programmatic activities under USAID direction, seeking out new opportunities as possible and appropriate.

The aftermath of the February 2000 parliamentary elections left all but the "elite three" parties in Tajikistan contemplating the future and pondering the prospects of their political solvency. Political party development goes far beyond helping parties and movements prepare for elections; IFES sees as a long-term commitment the need to provide guidance and instruction to parties to improve their communications and outreach abilities, strengthen regional party affiliates, enhance organizational and structural integrity, and help them remain politically viable and engaged in the national political debate. The acceptance of the Islamic Renaissance Party in the political landscape, cemented via the elections, was a landmark event though one that is in constant need of refreshing. There has been a proclivity among the PDPT to co-opt the other parties in power (IRP and the Communist Party) while actively discouraging the work of the Democratic and Socialist parties (and not allowing the registration of other, previously-banned parties or smaller movements). If this trend is to be reversed, the parties will have to command the tools and skills in order to not only remain politically viable but merely to maintain a legitimate stake in society. IFES particularly sees the need to conduct party training on a regional basis, which it started under this agreement. Topics should focus on outreach and party structure, as well as methods of promoting tolerance and peace-building while identifying and developing responses to the most pressing issues in society. Individual party representative and candidate training should be conducted later in the next agreement as a forerunner project to the next round of national elections.

Election assistance, while limited in the big picture by the weakness of the CCER and the dominance of overseeing institutions, will become a topical issue during the mid-to-latter portion of a future cooperative agreement. Traditionally, opportunities for electoral legislative or procedural improvement have been more possible in the year or two after an election has taken place. Though a national, state-sponsored program of electoral sector reform in Tajikistan is not necessarily envisioned, IFES and other international players should identify the available opportunities to promote change when the time presents itself, rather than pursue an aggressive strategy at the outset and further retard the process. If the CCER in itself may not be the vehicle for change, the parliament may provide the impetus for a debate on the election system, much as has been the case in Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan. Though the parliament is less oppositional and generally weaker than counterparts in those countries, it does have among its members representatives of opposition parties who may be in a position to press the case for election reform. IFES should continue to consider monitoring opportunities or promoting election law symposia and strategy sessions with the government, international community, and domestic watchdogs as equal and full players.

Working in Tajikistan consistently presents a challenge for those promoting democracy development. The civil war may be over, but the threat of instability remains very high, due in no

small part to the continued presence of non-Tajik Islamic extremists. Living conditions are difficult, and at times the government is reluctant to follow through on its commitments of cooperation (written or oral), or is plagued by basic disorganization and disarray. The key will be for funders such as USAID and implementing partners like IFES to be patient and resolute. Tajikistan, despite its ruinous, five-year civil war, has proven to be a country where projects can be implemented on a level unheard of in neighboring republics, perhaps due to the comparative weakness of governmental control over every aspect of daily life. Tajikistan has a fairly vibrant if underprivileged domestic NGO community, and a somewhat "freer" media environment. The education system is in disarray and looking for any assistance it can get. Even the nascent political party system can only improve once the government recognizes the positive role of constructive opposition. Opportunities may be limited in some areas, but carefully chosen ones are likely to have a positive effect and leave open the possibility of broader efforts down the road.

VII. CONCLUSION

The new Cooperative Agreement entered into in the autumn of 1997 offered IFES a unique opportunity to help build democracy almost from the "ground floor" in the aftermath of the signing of comprehensive Peace Accords in June of that year. Working with a variety of international and domestic partners as well as counterparts in the newly-formed government, IFES concentrated efforts initially on political party development and technical election assistance activities, with an eye towards the forthcoming parliamentary elections as mandated in the Accords. IFES felt an approach that provided structural and systemic assistance in the development of a culture of representative democracy would best support USAID objectives as well as help create, on a variety of levels, popular support and understanding of the democratic process.

A nationwide public opinion survey conducted by IFES in 1996 reinforced the belief that the population was committed to a form of multi-party democracy, though had little information on the political process. Thus, IFES projects supporting the elections and political party building efforts were undertaken to empower the general population with information about their rights as citizens and voters. As the focus of IFES activities in the post-election period moved to civic education and political party development, special efforts were undertaken to reach out to young persons and women to encourage their active interest and participation in the democracy-building process.

Despite numerous evacuations or setbacks in project implementation resulting from continued military activity or non-cooperation by the government, IFES persevered with its work and established a permanent presence in Tajikistan during the period of this Agreement. Many new partnerships were created that have borne positive and fruitful results, and as Tajikistan slowly grew into a more stable working environment, the prospect of continued success, at times in small steps, appeared encouraging.

While Tajikistan's democratic development remains very much a work in progress, IFES is confident that it has pursued the correct path in the course of its program from 1997-2001, particularly in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTION SYSTEMS

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

USAID Cooperative Agreement EE-A-00-97-00034-00
October 1, 1997 – September 30, 2002

ATTACHMENT: DISPOSITION OF EQUIPMENT AND DURABLE GOODS

Please note that all items on the attached equipment and furniture list, procured by IFES under Cooperative Agreement # EE-A-00-97-00034-00 for the Republic of Tajikistan, has been transferred to IFES's program in that country under new Cooperative Agreement #119-A-00-00-00039-00. All equipment and furniture listed therein will be used in support of IFES' ongoing assistance activities in the Republic of Tajikistan.

Tajikstan 7/14/99

Equipment

Control #	Category	Description	Model/Serial #	Date of Acquisition	Cost	Location	Condition
	Adaptor	Toshiba PA 2417U	941185684E			Dushanbe	
	AC Adaptor AD-150	Canon	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Adaptor	Transpower	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Bataries	Motorola	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Computer Desktop	Boston PC P-166	27	Apr-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Desktop	Samsung	720	Dec-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Desktop	Samsung	721	Dec-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Keyboard	Turbo-Trak	9712593601	Apr-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Keyboard	Amol	H 000819530			Dushanbe	New
	Computer Keyboard	Amol	H 000848936			Dushanbe	New
	Computer Laptop	Toshiba 1910	PA 1114V/ 11447722			Dushanbe	Good
	Computer Monitor	Boston PC	2J4V7700321	Apr-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Monitor	Energy	2J4V7700321s			Dushanbe	
	Computer Monitor	Samsung	H4YJ402065V	Dec-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Monitor	Samsung	H4YJ401985P	Dec-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Printer	HP DeskJet 560	C2168A				New
	Computer Printer	Canon BJ-10SX	PDG27035			Dushanbe	Poor
	Computer Printer	HP Deskjet 670	ES79N211FR	Apr-98		Dushanbe	New
	Computer Printer	Canon	PHY34975			Dushanbe	
	Computer Printer	HP Deskjet 692	SG7BC1F3PG	Dec-98		Dushanbe	New
	Charger	Motorola SPN4463A	97274-0093139			Dushanbe	
	220V Charger	Motorola	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Charger Power Supply	Motorola	N/A				
	Desktop processor	Boston	# 00027			Dushanbe	
	Extention cord	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Extra Battaries	Motorola	(822) /(818)			Dushanbe	
	Facsimile Machine	Panasonic	KX-F130 6ACF6229705	Feb-98		Dushanbe	New
	Mouse	Mitsoumi	9857860			Dushanbe	
	Mouse	Mitsoumi	9857860			Dushanbe	
	Mouse	Genius	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Modem	Intel 144/144e	1030 5854A			Dushanbe	
	Pager	Motorola Advisor Linguist	A03TQB5962AA/36		150	Dushanbe	New
	Radio	Motorola GP300	174FYG1733			Dushanbe	

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	Radio	Motorola GP300	174FYG1732			Dushanbe	
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T4311BX6HAKA051988	Jun-97	$165		Poor
	Telephone	VEF-Tranzistors	Tap-611				Good
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T2470B				New
	Telephone	Alcatel	2610 262642				Good
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T7050	1/8/98	$80		New
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T7050	1/8/98	$80		New
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T7050	1/8/98	$80		New
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T7050	1/8/98	$80		New
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T7050	1/8/98	$80		New
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T7050	1/8/98	$80		New
	Telephone	Panasonic	KX-T7050	1/8/98	$80		New
	Telephone Cellular	Motorola Micro T-A-C Ultra-Line/S6031A	E092ADC3 K#G L4			Dushanbe	Fair
	Transformer	SPN 4037A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	UPS Power Protector		SMT420T97221833A	Dec-98		Dushanbe	New
	UPS Power Protector			Dec-98		Dushanbe	New
	UPS Power Protector		NB9829060346	Jan-99		Dushanbe	New
	Desk	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Desk organizers	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Translation both	N/A	N/A	N/A		Dushanbe	
	Electric Tea Kettle	Sunny SC820	187			Dushanbe	
	Fry pan	Daewoo KFC 9510 G	7010100 363			Dushanbe	
	Jug Kettle	Nushi NS - 3200FL	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Safe	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Desk boxes	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Black chairs	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Desk lamp	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Table	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Sofa	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Dresser	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Bed	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	
	Heaters	N/A	N/A			Dushanbe	

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