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DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

April 1999

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION
This guide is intended to help USAID field staff make informed decisions with regard to developing political party development assistance activities. It analyzes a history of USAID involvement in this area and outlines lessons learned to be incorporated into future programming.

Comments regarding this handbook and inquiries regarding USAID's ongoing work in the area of political party development assistance should be directed to

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ABOUT THE DG OFFICE
The Office of Democracy and Governance is the U.S. Agency for International Development's focal point for democracy and governance programming. The DG Office's role is to provide USAID and other development practitioners with the technical and intellectual expertise needed to support democratic development. It provides this expertise in the following areas:

C **Rule of Law**
C **Elections and Political Processes**
C **Civil Society**
C **Governance**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

USAID POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID political party development assistance is designed to facilitate the democratic process in newly democratizing countries, rather than to influence specific political outcomes. Promoting and strengthening the broader political process through political party development assistance require long-term support for specific organizational, behavioral, and governance aspects of democratic parties, rather than the pursuit of short-term electoral goals. Within this long-term, process-oriented framework, USAID political party assistance has three goals: 1) the establishment and organizational development of viable, competing democratic parties at national, regional, and local levels; 2) the provision of organized electoral choices to citizens through political parties; and 3) the democratic governance of societies facilitated by political parties in government and opposition. These aims fall within USAID's democracy assistance mandate and represent manageable, neutral, and efficacious objectives for political party development support.

During the past decade of USAID political party development assistance, political parties and their leaders in more than 50 countries have benefited from technical assistance and training activities provided principally by USAID's key implementing partners, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). As USAID experiences in political party development assistance have multiplied, patterns of support have emerged. Reflecting the aforementioned goals, the three core areas of political party assistance programming include organizational development/institutional capacity building, development and mobilization of citizen support for political parties and their candidates, and the strengthening of political parties in government. Of these three focus areas, programming in organizational development is most prevalent. In addition to the substantive foci of political party assistance, regional patterns of political party development support have also emerged. To date, political party development assistance programming has been undertaken in all regions of the world, but is most prevalent in Europe and the New Independent States (ENI) and Africa (AFR) regions.

The Office of Democracy and Governance (the DG Office) is committed to political party development assistance as a crucial element in developing and sustaining democratic societies throughout the world. In light of past assistance programming, this technical publication is offered to USAID personnel as well as to the wider audience that shares USAID's interest in and support of political party development assistance. In the course of USAID political party development work over the past decade, four specific programming concerns have been identified as requiring attention throughout the process of designing and implementing political party development assistance activities. These concerns are the degree of inclusiveness of programming regarding eligible political parties, the degree political party development assistance may influence the domestic affairs of a country being assisted, the degree such programming directly or indirectly influences the outcome of elections, and the timing of such programming.

Political party development assistance provided by USAID through its implementing partners is constrained by a variety of policy statements and federal statutes. As a result, political party programming must address the aforementioned concerns. Regarding inclusiveness, program implementers should be as transparent and inclusive as possible when soliciting parties to participate in assistance activities. Not all parties are eligible for assistance, however. Parties must demonstrate adherence to democratic policies and operating principles. When dealing with governing or ruling parties, such parties must support free, fair, and open elections and may not suppress democratic competition or inhibit the abilities of opposition parties to organize and mobilize political support. Regarding the need to avoid interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states, political party development program implementers must be clear in the criteria used to select political parties to participate in program activities and must adhere to domestic laws and regulations regarding assistance to political parties. Training activities should address the roles of political parties in governance and opposition in a generic fashion without regard to specific party policies and platforms.

In order to avoid directly or indirectly influencing the outcome of elections, political party assistance activities should be executed in an inclusive fashion and in an equitable manner and should not include direct financial or in-kind support to individual political parties. Finally, the timing of political party assistance activities may raise concerns of undue influence on the electoral process. In order to avoid such conflicts, party development programs should be concluded roughly one month prior to an election. The only exception to this limitation is distinctly non-campaign training such as party pollwatcher training, which may continue up to election day. It is important to begin political party development programs well outside the context of an election and to develop an exit strategy during the initial planning stages of such programming.

We hope that this document provides the reader with a clearer understanding of the substance and breadth of USAID political party development assistance, the statutory and policy constraints on such USAID-supported programming, the methods and approaches to political party assistance programming by the key implementing partners, IRI and NDI, and the limitations and possibilities for future political party development assistance around the world.

I.   INTRODUCTION

Political parties and their roles in democratic development have changed significantly in the past two decades, both in industrialized western democracies and in newly developing democratic nations. While the changes have resulted in a weakening of the connections between citizens and the state, there remains widespread consensus that political parties are essential elements in democratic societies.

More than 50 years ago, E. E. Schattschneider stated bluntly that

> Political parties created democracy and that modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties. As a matter of fact, the condition of parties is the best evidence of the nature of any regime. The most important distinction between democracy and dictatorship can be made in terms of party politics. The parties are not therefore merely appendages of modern government; they are in the center of it and can play a determinative and creative role in it.[1]

Much more recently, Alan Ware viewed political parties as pervasive elements in contemporary societies:

> In contemporary states it is difficult to imagine there being politics without parties. Indeed, in only two kinds of states today are parties absent. First, there are a few small, traditional societies, especially in the Persian Gulf, that are still ruled by the families who were dominant in the region they control long before the outside world recognized them as independent states. Then there are those regimes in which parties and party activities have been banned; these regimes are run either by the military or by authoritarian rulers who have the support of the military.[2]

Finally, in a recent conference convened by the National Endowment for Democracy's International Forum for Democratic Studies, many of the world's leading political parties scholars and practitioners gathered in Washington, DC to "address the current and future prospects of political parties." The conference participants took a critical look at the state of parties in industrialized western democracies as well as in newly democratizing countries around the world. The prevailing view of conference participants was articulated by Juan Linz:

> Today, in all countries of the world, there is no alternative to political parties in the establishment of democracy. No form of nonparty representation that has been advocated has ever produced democratic government. Thus we are faced with a world of democracies based on parties.[3]

Not all participants, however, were convinced that political parties are necessary for democratic development. Phillipe Schmitter provided the most succinct critical assessment:

> Political parties are not what they used to be. They no longer structure electoral choices as clearly and decisively, command citizen attachments as passionately and persistently, form governments with as much discipline and distinctiveness, or aggregate interests as widely and explicitly as they once did. Clearly, political parties everywhere, both in the industrialized countries and in the developing world, are becoming less and less able to perform these core

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[1]E.E. Schattschneider, *Party Government* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1942), p. 1.

[2]Alan Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.1.

[3]International Forum for Democratic Studies, *Political Parties and Democracy: Conference Report*, (Washington, DC: National Endowment for Democracy, November 1996), p. 4.

functions. In short, they are no longer indispensable for the consolidation and perpetuation of democracy.[4]

Some analysts would argue that Schmitter's description of the weak state of political parties makes the most compelling case for strengthening political parties in order to promote democracy. But detractors of political party development assistance argue that the decline in parties reflects trends that are not likely to be reversed: the rise of civic groups that carry out tasks traditionally associated with political parties and changing modes of communications that alter the frequency and type of interaction between party officials and citizens.

Since the late 1980s, USAID, through a variety of democracy programming mechanisms, has focused increased attention and resources on the development and institutionalization of political parties in newly democratizing nations around the world. As crucial political institutions in democratic societies, political parties serve to organize, aggregate, and articulate the political interests of citizens in the political arena. Unlike social movements, voluntary associations, interest groups, or other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), political parties have responsibilities for fielding candidates for elective office and, in turn, for governance of the political system or for providing "loyal opposition" to the party or parties in power.[5]

USAID has funded political party development activities in more than 50 countries, accounting for more than $45 million in support during the past four years (FY 1994-FY 1997). While USAID support for political party development represents less than 3 percent of overall democracy and governance funding and well under 20 percent of elections and political processes funding during the past three years, these political party activities are often the most closely scrutinized by the Agency and by the relevant funding and oversight committees in Congress. This scrutiny is due in large part to the overtly political nature of political parties. Since these institutions do have the responsibilities for governance or opposition in political systems, any assistance provided by USAID to these entities may be viewed as undue interference in the domestic political affairs of sovereign countries.

Due to the salience of political party development activities within the Agency

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[4]International Forum for Democratic Studies, *Political Parties and Democracy: Conference Report*, (Washington, DC: National Endowment for Democracy, November 1996), p. 3.

[5]The idea of political parties serving as a loyal opposition to the government in power was first articulated in the British House of Commons in 1826 by John Cam Hobhouse: "It was said to be very hard

on His Majesty's ministers to raise objections to this proposition. For his own part, he thought it was more hard on His Majesty's opposition (a laugh interrupts) to compel them to take his course." The phrase was immediately taken up in the debate and continued to be used thereafter. While the phrase was introduced in the 1820s, it was not until the passage of the Second Reform Acts of 1867 and 1868 that a true organized party opposition was formed. With the broadened enfranchisement of male working-class property owners and the development of a strong and disciplined two-party system within the British Parliament and throughout the country, Her Majesty's loyal opposition truly became the alternative (or shadow) government. In the contemporary context of developing political parties in newly democratizing countries, it is especially difficult to organize nascent political parties and their representatives in elective offices into either coherent governing party coalitions or organized party opposition forces.

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and the increased attentiveness of external political actors, it is worthwhile to assess the history and current state of political party development programming funded by USAID. The analysis begins in Section II by situating political party development within the overarching democracy strategy of USAID. Political parties can play crucial roles in consolidating democratic principles in transitional societies. It is important that USAID missions are aware of these roles as parties may serve as organizing and mobilizing institutions through which other democracy and governance activities may flow. In addition, it is important to note that political party development programs, while often undertaken in conjunction with election-specific activities, should be viewed as long-term democratization efforts as political parties in transitional and newly democratized societies may fulfill important non-electoral functions. After establishing the place of parties in democratic strategic planning, the broad goals of political party development will be outlined and linked to the strategic objectives for elections and political processes assistance in Section III.

Following the review of USAID's goals in this area, Section IV will present and analyze completed and ongoing political party activities funded by USAID in the 1990s in order to discern common themes and patterns of political party support globally and within particular geographic regions.

In Section V, existing USAID policy statements regarding political party activities and programs will be presented and assessed. In addition to Section 116(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and its subsequent amendments, there are several policy statements that constrain

political party development assistance by USAID. Then clear guidelines for the implementation of political party development assistance within the current USAID policy framework will be presented.

Finally, attention will turn in Section VI to the implementing partners who carry out virtually all the political party development work of USAID—the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI). These two nonprofit NGOs were formed with the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in 1983. Each institute derives the bulk of its funding from USAID, but also receives direct support for political party development activities from NED. The relationship between these two funding sources—USAID and NED—will be explored in Section VII.

The paper concludes with a synopsis of USAID's experiences in political party development and lessons learned.

II. POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRATIC STRATEGIC PLANNING

A. Why Parties Matter

One of USAID's six strategic goals is building sustainable democracies—as an end in itself and because it is a critical element in promoting sustainable development. This goal is achieved through the establishment of democratic institutions, free and open markets, an informed and educated populace, a vibrant civic society, and a relationship between state and society that encourages pluralism, participation, and peaceful conflict resolution. The promotion of democracy is a long-term process that will require sustained commitment, and timely and politically adept interventions.[6] The development and institutionalization of competitive political parties serve this strategic goal well. USAID support for political party development fosters the consolidation of democratic principles in disparate societies around the world. Political parties can play a variety of important roles in the democratic consolidation:

Expression and Choice: Democratic parties and party systems provide citizens with choices in elections. As individual democratic political parties field candidates for elective offices, they seek to represent

and express the collective interests of their constituents. Expression of distinct sets of constituent interests in the electoral process results from the competition between parties in a party system. As multiple parties attempt to represent the interests of their constituents, they provide voters with alternative policies and candidates that represent the essence of democratic choice and accountability. If the party system is dominated by one party, then choice and, therefore, expression become limited.

Electoral Competition and Political Dialogue: In competing for office and governing, political parties and their representatives play a crucial role in framing public policy choices, structuring electoral competition, and shaping political discussion among citizens. How parties perform the roles of mobilizing public support, developing policy agendas, and debating and formulating public policies will determine the legitimacy and sustainability of democratic rules and norms. In emerging democracies, political parties and their elected representatives are the primary political actors responsible for legitimizing and sustaining the laws and norms that govern political participation and competition.

Aggregation and Articulation of Societal Interests: Unlike social movements or interest groups, political parties are institutions that seek to represent more than a single, narrow interest in a society. In democratic political systems, parties organize and channel collective societal preferences in ways that enable greater responsiveness and reduce the threat that interest group demands made on the state will be able to capture state institutions and cripple the public policy making process. In

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[6]*USAID's Strategies for Sustainable Development: Building Democracy*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, January 1994), p. 2.

aggregating and articulating party programs, political parties provide coherent and manageable political cues to citizens who might otherwise be overwhelmed by the complexities of public policy making.

Political Socialization: Democratic political parties socialize citizens to democratic values and behaviors. Parties are often responsible for mobilizing voters for elections, integrating new constituencies into the political system, and generating support for or opposition to public policies under debate. In performing these functions, political parties help to socialize citizens to the practices of a democratic system. Even more directly, in many democratizing systems, parties are responsible for civic and voter education programs that seek to facilitate the political participation of increasing numbers of citizens. Finally, political parties may socialize rather than galvanize political conflict. Broad-based political parties allow for societal conflicts to be debated widely, cutting across ethnic, tribal, regional, or religious lines.

Leadership Selection and Governance: Democratic parties select the candidates who will ultimately fill elected posts. The strength of political parties and their elected representatives in providing coherent, programmatically-based political leadership in the organization and operation of government or opposition mitigates personalistic political tendencies and ensures greater continuity, both in terms of leadership and public policy making.

These roles are central to the establishment and maintenance of stable democratic societies. When political party systems fail to perform these functions, the very survival of democratic political systems is threatened. Ultimately, issues of political competition, democratic expression, and political choice—the key components of any democratic society—revolve around political parties.

B. Constraints on Political Party Development

Optimally, political party development assistance should serve to strengthen the capacities of political parties to perform each of the aforementioned roles. Unfortunately, political environments within newly democratizing countries are not always conducive to facilitating political expression and choice, competition and dialogue, aggregation and articulation of interests, political socialization, and leadership selection and governance. It may well be that there does not exist the political space or political will necessary to organize political competition in the form of political parties. Further, based on experiences with political parties, citizens may not view such institutions as legitimate means for expressing political choices.

Citizens might also question the value of political parties. Citizen disaffection with politics can be more a reflection of declining living standards, for which institutions like political parties are held responsible, than the lack of outreach of political parties to constituents. It is not self-evident that parties that make an effort to be more responsive and representative are necessarily more effective government administrators. In fact, the converse can be true. Moreover, encouraging parties to engage in more effective organizational techniques—a typical development program—will not necessarily create

political systems with greater political and civil liberties.

At base, there must be some degree of demonstrable political will, either among the citizenry or at the elite levels of society, in order for political party development to serve democratic ends. Without such willingness to use political parties as legitimate means of political expression, the probability of success of party programming is greatly diminished. It is vital that USAID missions assess the political environments closely in order to identify the potential avenues of opportunity for political party development programming. As a result, such programming may reflect receptivity at the grassroots level to party development or focus on organizational development assistance at the party leadership level.

C. Regional Perspectives on Party Development

In addition to the general constraints on political party development, it is also important to note that political parties may adopt democratic roles in societies throughout the world in ways that may or may not mirror the American or other traditional western democratic experiences with political parties. In some countries and regions of the world, the vitality of party politics far surpasses that of the United States. In other nations and regions, parties are nascent or are poorly developed over time. Attentive to these significant differences, USAID has undertaken political party development activities in all regions of the world, but most prominently in Europe and New Independent States (ENI), Africa (AFR), and to a lesser extent in Latin America (LAC) and Asia and the Near East (ANE), as will be presented in Section IV.

In each region, the roles of political parties in facilitating democratic development are different, but equally important.

In the post-communist democracies across Eastern Europe, political parties are slowly emerging as key elements in democratic societies. Assessing political party development in this region, Herbert Kitschelt writes:

> If democratic governance is about establishing linkages of accountability and responsiveness between citizens and competing elites, democracies must create organizational vehicles that overcome problems of collective action and social choice. Problems of collective action occur in citizens' demand and politicians' supply of candidates for representative office. By pooling resources in a party, candidates can more effectively address electoral constituencies. Efforts to overcome collective action problems thus warrant investments in organizational infrastructures that coordinate politicians and voters. Social choice problems result from the complexity of political agendas. Modern democracies build on the principle of territorial representation through electoral districts, not the functional representation of policy areas and sectional interests. In legislatures, representatives are asked to take policy positions on an uncertain and indefinitely variable set of issues that are placed on the agenda. Under conditions of high issue complexity, democratic politics can prevent the problem of "chaos" in social choice procedures only by investments in consensus building across representatives who agree on complex bundles of policy choices over which they establish a common preference ordering. Party formation is the most prominent democratic mode of crafting such policy bundles. In the electoral competition, parties present them to voters as party 'programs...' In post-communist democracies, no other vehicle of interest aggregation than political parties is in sight that

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would address problems of both collective action and social choice.[7]

The roles of political parties in democratic transitions in Africa are more varied.

Africa is the latest of the world's major regions to be hit by democracy's 'third wave.' Widespread popular protests, stimulated by broad based internal dissatisfaction with authoritarian, 'neopatrimonial' regimes and the spread of democratization in other world regions, have resulted in transitions to democracy, at least to the point of holding elections, after limited resistance from existing authoritarian regimes in most countries and extensive resistance in a few. The process of transition has varied among countries in ways that can be explained primarily by variations in socioeconomic conditions, institutional legacies, and balances among political forces. Many analysts have argued that political parties play a crucial role in democracy, democratic transition, and democratic consolidation, although there are disagreements about the nature of that role and how much it varies in the different stages of the democratization process. Parties were central actors in the transition from colonialism to independence in Africa. Consequently, attempts to reinvigorate democracy in this region, whether after the fall of specific military regimes from the late 1960s through the 1980s or as part of the general democratization trend of the 1990s, have inevitably involved the establishment of new parties.[8]

As a result of the neopatrimonial heritage of most African nations, however, African transitions have tended to produce similar kinds of party systems consisting of a proliferation of organizationally weak parties, overshadowed by one or two dominant parties.[9]

Throughout Latin America, political parties have, with varying degrees of success, sought to become legitimate, institutionalized political actors in democratic political systems. Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully argue that the institutionalization of party systems is crucial to the process of democratic consolidation in the region.

Parties are in one regard even more important in Latin America than in most established democracies, where parties are more organized and institutionalized. The state has had a pervasive influence in Latin American development, and, at the same time, mechanisms for influencing the polity from society, interest groups and social movements, are generally weaker than in the advanced industrialized democracies. For this reason, obtaining access to state power is more important in most of Latin America than it is in the advanced industrialized democracies. In most of Latin America, political connections are needed to gain access to state privileges and favors. Although parties usually do not themselves directly control state resources and privileges, they are stepping-stones to power.

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[7]Herbert Kitschelt, "The Variability of Party System Development in Post-Communist Democracies: A Sketch," paper delivered at the Conference on Political Parties and Democracy, International Forum for Democratic Studies National Endowment for Democracy, Washington, DC, November 18-19, 1996, pp. 1-2, 18.

[8]See James R. Scarritt, "The Role of Political Parties in African Democratization," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Francisco, CA, November 23-26, 1996, p. 1. For assessments of "third wave" transitions, see Guillermo O'Donnell and Phillipe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*,

(Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991). See also, Scott Mainwaring, "Party Systems in the Third Wave," *Journal of Democracy*, (July 1998), pp. 67-81.

[9]For more detailed analysis of neopatrimonialism in Africa, see Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transition in Africa," *World Politics*, (October 1994), pp. 453-489.

Because parties control access to policy-making positions, the way they function is a key in affecting the performance and viability of Latin American democracy.[10]

In the Middle East and throughout Asia, political party developments have been less systematic, as have democratic transitions more generally. In these regions of the world, as well as in other regions to a lesser extent, the growth of Islamist parties has been pronounced. There is ongoing debate regarding the relationship between political Islam and democratic consolidation. Regardless of one's perspective, however, the breadth of integration of Islamist values and practices into the lives of its adherents has consequences for the political systems in which they live.

> The comprehensiveness of the pattern of social, political, and economic care built by the Islamists means that it is not unusual to talk of a structure of a state within a state. This underlines the strength of Islamist political parties, in terms of enhancing their social and economic credibility, as well as in turn, boosting their political stature.[11]

The growth of political Islam, along with the development of other religion-based political parties in these regions and around the world is yet another important factor to consider in the process of democratic consolidation. Today, Islamist parties are competing with secular parties in a growing number of countries around the world. In Asia, secular parties are thriving in Muslim societies such as Pakistan and Bangladesh as well. It is interesting to note that in decades past there was a popular perception that Latin American culture, particularly with its strong Catholic value system, was incompatible with democratic political values. With this in mind, it is important not to rush to judgment regarding the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Rather, attentiveness to the development of political Islam throughout the world, particularly as manifest in Islamist parties, is in order.

In these four developing regions, political parties have proven to be vital elements in the development and consolidation of democratic political systems. While these institutions may be found in various stages of development, may perform different roles in various regions of the world, and may not mirror the American or other western experiences, political parties are serving political systems well in pursuing the path toward democratization.

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[10]Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully, "Introduction: Party Systems in Latin America," in Mainwaring and Scully, eds., *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*, (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 4.

[11]Azza M. Karam, "Islamist Parties in the Arab World: Ambiguities, Contradictions, and Perseverance," *Democratization*, (Winter 1997), p. 168.

III. GOALS OF USAID POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT

Establishing democratic institutions, free and open markets, an informed and educated populace, a vibrant civil society, and a relationship between state and society that encourages pluralism, participation, and peaceful conflict resolution—all of these contribute to the goal of building sustainable democracies. USAID's Strategic Framework, adopted in 1995, identifies four strategic objectives for the democracy sector: a) strengthened rule of law and respect for human rights; *b) more genuine and competitive political processes*; c) increased development of a politically active civil society; and d) more transparent and accountable government institutions.

The overarching goals of USAID political party development assistance are related to facilitating the democratic process in newly democratizing countries, rather than influencing specific political outcomes. Promoting and strengthening the broader political process through political party development assistance require long-term support for specific organizational, behavioral, and governance aspects of democratic parties, rather than the pursuit of short-term electoral goals. Within this long-term, process-oriented framework, there are three goals of USAID political party development assistance: 1) the establishment and organizational development of viable, competing democratic political parties at national, regional, and local levels; 2) the provision of organized electoral choices to citizens through political parties in elections; and 3) the democratic governance of societies

facilitated by political parties serving as managers and organizers of government and opposition. These aims fall within USAID's democracy assistance mandate and represent manageable, neutral, and efficacious objectives for political party development support.

A. Organizational Development of Political Parties

USAID and its implementing partners have targeted significant resources to the institutionalization of political parties in democratizing countries around the world. The development of the organizational capacities of democratic political parties serves the long-term goals of sustainable democratic development. Organized and institutionalized political parties perform the basic but important roles of political representation, conflict resolution, interest aggregation, citizen mobilization, and political leadership. When political parties fulfill these functions, they serve to organize political choices for voters, to shape the policy dialogue, and to maintain political continuity in transitional societies. Past and ongoing USAID programs in this area have provided training and expertise in organizational development and party building for hundreds of political parties around the world. Future activities and programs focusing on the institutionalization of political party organizations should concentrate on the development of party organizations beyond the next election and should seek to build parties not only at the national level, but at the regional and local grassroots levels as well. In this area, conflicts arise regarding the degree of inclusiveness of political parties participating in USAID party organizational training activities and which parties are

"genuinely committed to democratic processes."

B. Political Parties as Linkages Between Citizens and Government

Beyond the organizational aspects of political parties, these political institutions must have some meaning in the electorate as organizers and synthesizers of political dialogue. Political parties must attract voters with programmatic messages that distinguish one party from another. Collectively, competing political parties produce and sustain viable party systems. The electoral viability of multiple political parties is a crucial element in sustaining democratic governance. USAID programs should facilitate party systems consisting of multiple, democratic, and well-organized parties. Political party assistance in this area should serve to ensure that a number of parties are sufficiently organized in a party system to provide broad political representation and meaningful alternatives in elections and in governance, that opposition parties are not suppressed, and that there is consensus regarding the legitimacy of democratic electoral competition. In this area, conflicts arise regarding the levels and types of support that constitute direct or indirect influence on the outcome of an election as well as the timing of assistance programs.

C. Political Parties as Organizers of Government and Opposition

To date USAID political party assistance programs have paid less attention to the role of political parties in governance or in opposition. While significant work has been done with parties in strengthening the legitimacy of the broader political and

electoral processes through training of party pollwatchers in election monitoring and in involving political parties in electoral law reform efforts, significant legislative party building activities have been undertaken in only a handful of countries. Although the DG Office and USAID missions in all regions currently support extensive legislative strengthening programs through mechanisms managed by the DG Office's Governance Team, the foci of these programs are most often structural and institutional in nature rather than political. Future programming in this governance area as well as in post-election assistance programming through Elections and Political Processes Team mechanisms, namely the Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPPS), should incorporate programming activities that support the development of political parties within the political institutions of democratic governance.

IV. USAID EXPERIENCE IN SUPPORTING POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT

Since it began its support of political party development in Hungary in 1989,[12] USAID has supported the development of democratic political parties in more than 50 countries through country-specific programming as well as through regional political party training and assistance programs. In LAC, USAID has conducted political party development activities in Haiti, Nicaragua, and Paraguay. In addition, a regional political party conference held in Chile attracted party leaders from 14 Latin American countries. In ANE, USAID has provided political party assistance in Cambodia, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, and Yemen.

While political party assistance in the LAC and ANE regions has been comparatively limited, USAID support for political party development in AFR and in ENI has encompassed a wide variety of countries in different stages of democratic transition. In AFR, USAID has conducted political party programs in Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, and Zambia, as well as regional party conferences. In the ENI region, USAID party assistance programs were implemented in Albania, Armenia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania,

Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia. An ENI regional party conference was held in 1998.[13]

While the political environment varies country to country, USAID-funded political party development assistance may be categorized generically across countries and regions. Broadly defined, the political party assistance activities undertaken by USAID and its grantees may be organized under the classic tripartite conceptualization of political parties—parties as organizations, parties in governance, and parties in the electorate.[14] In surveying the various USAID political party development programs implemented throughout the world,[15] there is disproportionate attention paid to the organizational aspects of party development as virtually all party programs have some organizational component included, followed by assistance targeted at party development in the electorate and party assistance in governance. Within the roughly 20 categories of assistance

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[12]David Breg, *USAID Political Party Development Activities*, (Washington, DC: CDIE/DI/RRS, U.S. Agency for International Development, March 1996), p. 5.

[13]*Political Parties Matrices: Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe/The Former Soviet Union, and Asia and Near East*, (Washington, DC: Management Systems International, Inc., 1998); and David Breg, *USAID Political Party Development Activities*, pp. 1-2.
[14]The tripartite conceptualization of political parties in the United States was first presented by V.O. Key, Jr. More recently, Paul Allen Beck and Frank Sorauf have incorporated this framework into their popular political parties textbooks; see Paul Allen Beck and Frank J. Sorauf, *Party Politics in America*, 7th ed., (New York: HarperCollins, 1991); and Paul Allen Beck, *Party Politics in America*, 8th ed., (New York: Longman, 1996).
[15]*Political Parties Matrices: Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe/The Former Soviet Union, and Asia and Near East*, (Washington, DC: Management Systems International, Inc., 1998).

programming found in the three broad areas, there is widespread application of each type of program across regions. For each area, specific programs are presented along with the countries in which such programming has been implemented. Overwhelmingly, these activities take the form of training seminars and conferences, targeting party leaders, elected representatives, and candidates who represent a diverse range of political parties. Such activities may also involve the training of trainers in order to implement programming to a wider range of participants within each country. On occasion, training may be targeted at a particular political party when attempting to reach and train party leaders in a serial manner.

A. Implementing Partners

To date, virtually all of USAID's funding for political party development has gone to the two U.S. political party institutes, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). The extensive experience the two institutes have with political party development work offers a wealth of insights into the opportunities and challenges of work in this area.

IRI and NDI, as political party institutes, devote a significant amount of their program activities to working with political parties internationally. IRI focuses on political party and parliamentary development work with a primary focus on grassroots training. These activities are components of programs specifically for parties, elections, and parliamentary programs. NDI's overall portfolio is somewhat more mixed, with political party work being roughly matched by its other activities in the areas of civil

society, legislative strengthening, local government, elections, and civil-military relations combined. Much of the NDI and IRI programming is based on political assessments conducted prior to developing program strategies.

The institutes rely primarily on funding from USAID, with more limited funding provided by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).[16] Occasionally they are also able to fund political party programs using nongovernmental sources such as private donations and foundation funding. NED funding is valued by the institutes because it represents a stable, if relatively small, source of funds that can be drawn on relatively quickly. In contrast, USAID funding is valued because it tends to allow for larger and longer-term party development programs. But both institutes express frustration with the long period of time it can take to secure USAID funding in general. Several individuals also cite the field activity monitoring by USAID missions as less-than-desirable in capturing the impact of long-term assistance to political parties. The DG Office can serve as a resource to provide assistance on resolving issues related to the implementation and monitoring of democracy-governance activities.

Despite their reliance on federal funding, both institutes view themselves essentially as NGOs and emphasize the critical importance of maintaining some distance from the U.S. government. This distance is needed so that the institutes are not perceived to be pursuing a narrow, bilateral

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[16]Well over 75 percent of the annual budgets of IRI and NDI are derived from USAID grants and cooperative agreements.

U.S. government agenda. In addition, this allows them to draw upon foreign political leaders and other trainers who would most likely not be willing to participate in programs perceived to be orchestrated by the U.S. government. The degree to which IRI and NDI emphasize their party affiliations depends on the country and the situation. In general, IRI emphasizes its ties to the Republican party somewhat more than NDI emphasizes its ties to the Democratic party. However, there are times when NDI also emphasizes its connection to the Democratic party.

IRI works in fewer countries than NDI; typically it works in countries it views as being strategically important to U.S. national foreign policy interests. NDI tends to work more broadly. Since 1992, most of IRI's and NDI's political party work has been concentrated in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and southern Africa. This is a reflection of the needs that have arisen from the political changes in these regions, the significance of these regions to the United States, and the availability of USAID funding for democracy building.

To date, NDI has done relatively less party development work in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. One reason for this is the assessment that many parties in Latin America and Asia are not seriously committed to reform. In addition, there are comparatively fewer resources available for political party assistance work in these regions. NDI has of late been more focused on key elections in West Africa, working with parties in governance programs in southern Africa and with civil society organizations (CSOs) through citizen participation programs. While the absence

of long-term funding for Asia and Latin America programs has kept NDI working on a smaller scale, it plans to focus more on parties in these regions in the future.

IRI has not done a significant amount of party work in Asia, Latin America, or Africa either, but for somewhat different reasons. Most notably, IRI appears to prefer to focus on countries that are transitioning out of authoritarian systems, which limits its possibilities in Asia and Latin America. While several countries in Asia, including China, Indonesia, and Vietnam, carry significant weight in terms of U.S. foreign policy, IRI has opted to focus upon other types of programs that are more acceptable to the ruling regimes. These have included programs to support local elections in China and parliamentary programs in Vietnam.

The two institutes have also taken somewhat different approaches to working in closed or pre-transition political systems. For instance, IRI has undertaken programs with government bodies, including parliaments and electoral commissions, in strategically important authoritarian countries in order to promote political or economic liberalization and has undertaken programs working against authoritarian governments, in Cuba and Burma, for example. NDI, however, has been unwilling to undertake programs in authoritarian countries, preferring to limit its work in such environments to strengthening civil society groups or other recognized advocates of democracy.

Another subtle but significant difference between the two institutes is the degree to which they see themselves as "international" or "American" organizations. It appears that IRI prefers to remain essentially "American" while NDI emphasizes its "international"

character and orientation, although IRI, in recent years, has begun training and hiring more non-Americans as field trainers. Several of NDI's senior staff members and a number of its field representatives are non-Americans, while the majority of NDI's international trainers and election monitors are non-American. In addition, NDI is in the unique position of having observer status in three of the four political party internationals.[17] This participation in the internationals links NDI to a global network of party leaders, and gives it credibility with member parties that might otherwise be suspicious of an American organization funded by the U.S. government. Both institutes have pursued regional party-to-party linkages through regional party programming funded through the CEPPS mechanism, managed by the DG Office.

Finally, it is worth noting that in countries where both IRI and NDI work, their presence alone sets a positive example on several different levels. First, it is a sign of U.S. engagement and willingness to provide assistance. Second, it can serve as an example of the feasibility and benefits of bipartisanship. Third, the institutes themselves provide examples of how NGOs can be independent from but work in cooperation with U.S. government agencies. There are potential downsides to dual

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[17]Party internationals are worldwide organizations of national and regional political parties with similar policies and values. Currently there are four democratic party internationals: The Christian Democrat International, the International Democrat Union, the Liberal International, and the Socialist International. See National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, *Political Parties and the Transition to Democracy*, (Washington, DC: NDI, 1997), Appendix I.

programming with IRI and NDI, however. First, there is the potential for duplication of effort. Second, there may less than cooperative relations between the two grantees as each seeks to develop parties in its own way. Both of these potential problems can be averted by attentiveness to program descriptions as well as coordination of activities by USAID mission staff. A fuller discussion of the activities carried out by USAID's two principal implementing partners will follow in Section VI.

B. USAID's Political Party Assistance

As previously mentioned, USAID's political party assistance to date has concentrated on three aspects: organizational, electoral, and government/political processes. This section will detail specific programs that have been implemented using each of the foci, and in which countries they have been applied.

1. Organizational Focus

The following activities, while having implications for party developments in the electorate and, to a lesser extent, for the governance role of parties, are largely focused on the organizational aspects of party development and institutionalization.

1. Political party planning: strategic planning, development of research skills for planning purposes (surveys/focus groups)

Country programs: Benin, Haiti, Hungary, Lithuania, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Yugoslavia

2. Organizational development: party building, professionalization,

training in organizational management

Country programs: Albania, Benin, Cambodia, Croatia, Malawi, Mongolia, Mozambique, Paraguay, Russia, South Africa, Ukraine, Zambia

3. Local/regional party organization: organizational linkagesSnational-local, coordination of organizational activities, programs

Country programs: Botswana, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Zambia

4. Resource development: allocation of budgetary resources within party organizations

Country programs: Armenia, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia

5. Message development: policy agenda formation, party image building, party platform development

Country programs: Benin, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Central Asia Regional Program, Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, Guinea, Haiti, Latvia, Macedonia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Russia, South Africa, Yugoslavia, Zambia

6. Membership recruitment: membership development, membership management, volunteer recruitment, volunteer management

Country programs: Armenia, Benin, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Hungary, Latvia, Yugoslavia, Zambia

7. Fundraising: the financing of party/candidate campaigns, campaign finance laws

Country programs: Haiti, Hungary, Latin America Regional Program, Malawi, South Africa, Yugoslavia

8. Media relations: media training, developing messages for media coverage

Country programs: Armenia, Haiti, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malawi, Mozambique, Slovakia, South Africa, Zambia

2. *Electoral Focus*

The activities identified below seek to assist political parties in linking their organizations and their attendant messages to potential constituencies in the electorate.

1. Communications strategies: communications skills, party outreach, intraparty communications

Country programs: Angola, Benin, Bosnia, Cambodia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Macedonia, Mongolia, Paraguay, South Africa, Yugoslavia

2. Voter participation: voter identification, voter mobilization, voter contacting, get-out-the-vote efforts

Country programs: Africa Regional Program, Angola, Armenia, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Haiti, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Russia, South Africa, Yemen, Yugoslavia

3. Campaign strategy/planning: campaign management, administration

Country programs: Albania, Armenia, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Malawi, Mongolia, Mozambique, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Ukraine, Zambia

4. Candidate recruitment: candidate selection, candidate training, leadership training

Country programs: Africa Regional Program, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Haiti, Latin America Regional Program, Latvia, Macedonia, Namibia, Nepal, South Africa, Ukraine

5. Grassroots outreach: grassroots participation, grassroots mobilization, door-to-door canvassing

Country programs: Angola, Benin, Bulgaria, Haiti, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Yugoslavia, Zambia

6. Women and youth: programming targeted at mobilizing and training women and youth in political party activism

Country programs: Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Latin America Regional Program, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Ukraine, Zambia

3. *Governance/Political Process Focus*

The final area of political party assistance includes those activities with implications for governance or for the democratic political system of each country.

1. Legislative party building: party transitions in government, organizing political opposition in government

Country programs: Africa Regional Program, Burundi, Hungary, Malawi, Mongolia, Morocco, Paraguay, South Africa, Zambia

2. Legal framework: electoral law reform, constitutional framework, ballot security/fraud

Country programs: Africa Regional Program, Burundi, Central Asia Regional Program, Haiti, Macedonia, Malawi, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa

3. Coalition building: inter-party relations in legislatures

Country programs: Bulgaria, Georgia, Lithuania, Malawi, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Russia, Slovakia

4. Party pollwatcher training: election monitoring

Country programs: Africa Regional Program, Angola, Bosnia, Burundi, Cambodia, Croatia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Macedonia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Yemen, Zambia

V. GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF USAID POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORT

A. USAID Policy Statements

Currently, political party development work undertaken by USAID and its grantees is shaped by statutory language found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, several broad Agency policy guidelines relating to democracy and governance assistance, and guidance on political party assistance provided by the DG Office and its Elections and Political Processes Team.

1. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, Section 116(e)

Section 116(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act authorizes development assistance (DA) support "for studies to identify, and for openly carrying out, programs and activities which will encourage or promote increased adherence to civil and political rights," thereby allowing DA funding for democracy and governance assistance, including political party assistance. Section 116(e) concludes, however, with the following caveat: "None of these funds may be used, directly or indirectly, to influence the outcome of any election in any country." Section 116(e) is more broadly applied to any democracy and governance support provided by USAID.

2. USAID Policy Paper: Democracy and Governance

The first contemporary USAID policy statement on political party assistance was issued in 1991 as *USAID Policy Paper: Democracy and Governance*:

> First, USAID assistance for democratic political development must in principle be provided to the full range of groups genuinely committed to the democratic process. Where a USAID program involves assistance for labor unions, other advocacy groups or (in rare instances) political parties, this must be provided without reference to specific policy positions taken by competing candidates or parties (so long as those positions are not themselves anti-democratic). Assistance should be offered equitably to all groups committed to the democratic process, regardless of their specific platforms or programs. In this sense, USAID assistance must be nonpartisan. The focus of the Democracy Initiative is on democratic political development, not on promoting particular outcomes to political debates in recipient countries. This is true even when the domestic political debate is critical of the United States.
>
> In any specific case, the boundary between permissible nonpartisan support for the democratic process and any inappropriate activities must be clear, broad, and unassailable. It is the responsibility of USAID field staff and regional bureaus to ensure that all USAID activities conform to the requirements of law and are demonstrably above accusations of inappropriate and unwarranted interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states. Justifications based on narrow or technical reasons will not be sufficient to guard against possible abuse or to ensure that the Democracy Initiative is a legitimate development program.[18]

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[18]*USAID Policy Paper: Democracy and Governance*, (Section III: Objective and Scope of the Democracy Initiative, Handbook 1), (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, 1991), pp. 12-13.

3. USAID's Strategies for Sustainable Development: Building Democracy

The *Building Democracy* policy guidance, issued in 1994, identifies the broad parameters of democracy programming, but also offers specific guidance for political party assistance:

> The specific types of democracy programs undertaken or supported by USAID will depend upon the social, political, economic, and cultural realities of a country, including the initiatives taken by its citizens, and upon available resources. In sustainable development countries, and to a lesser extent, transition countries, democracy programs will form part of an integrated country plan, which will have both short-term and long-term objectives. In countries with limited USAID presence, democracy programs will focus on discrete objectives, e.g., supporting non-governmental organizations.
>
> USAID's democracy programs will support... political parties and other national mechanisms of political expression in a strictly nonpartisan manner and, consistent with statutory limitations, in a manner that does not influence the outcome of an election.[19]

4. Technical Annex C: Democracy

This guidance elaborates on the *Building Democracy* guidance cited above as well as the guidance presented in the Democracy and Governance Policy Paper; it seeks to aid USAID personnel in the selection of democracy activities from among programmatic alternatives. Regarding elections and political processes

programming, *Technical Annex C* provides the following guidance:

> In designing electoral assistance programs, the following points should be kept in mind: ...effective participation by political parties is critical to the success of an electoral process, although USAID must be particularly scrupulous in avoiding even the perception that it is favoring a particular candidate or party through the provision of financial or technical assistance.[20]

The annex concludes with democracy program options; for political parties programming the following options are presented: organizational training, election preparation training, delineating the role of political parties in government and opposition, and training local leaders for competitive electoral politics.

5. Managing Democratic Electoral Assistance: A Practical Guide for USAID

While the bulk of this guide is directed at elections assistance, there is specific guidance regarding political party development assistance.[21] Political party development assistance

> Is a politically sensitive undertaking, as it is anticipated that it can easily become partisan and

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[19]*USAID's Strategies for Sustainable Development: Building Democracy*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, January 1994), pp. 4-5.

[20]*Technical Annex C: Democracy*, (Washington, DC: Office of Democracy and Governance, U.S. Agency for International Development, 1995), pp. 12, 26.

[21]The *Managing Democratic Electoral Assistance: A Practical Guide for USAID* manual is currently being substantially revised, updated and expanded to include more detailed coverage of political party development assistance and will also be linked to the Managing for Results framework provided by the DG Office. The new *Elections and Political Processes Manual* and supplementary materials will be disseminated in 1999.

so reduce the benefits which derive from nonpartisanship. On the other hand, political party development is essential to effective elections in the sense that many parties need to learn how to formulate policies, propagate them, select candidates, and prepare for varying roles of victor, loser, or coalition partner.... Any assistance to political parties should be in compliance with the following restrictions: I) By law, USAID assistance may not be used to influence the outcome of any election; ii) Any direct or indirect support for campaigns for public office is strictly prohibited; iii) Where USAID funded assistance is provided to political parties or groups in civil society that have political missions, it must be completely nonpartisan, impartial, available to all parties or groups genuinely committed to the democratic process, and provided without reference to specific policy positions taken by competing candidates or parties; iv) Assistance must be intended to promote or strengthen the democratic process as opposed to bolstering a particular party, coalition, or alliance; v) Any assistance should be provided equitably to all groups committed to the democratic process, and channeled through 'other appropriate institutions' such as the Democratic and Republican party institutes,[22] with minimal direct USG involvement consistent with appropriate oversight; vi) USAID funds must not be used for the financing of campaigns or candidates for public office; vii) USAID funds must not be used for any payments to individuals that are intended to influence their votes; viii) USAID funds must not be used for any direct contribution to a political campaign, or for any salary, wage, fee, honoraria, or similar payment to any candidate, political party leader, or campaign official; ix) USAID funds must not be used for any public meetings that endorse or feature a candidate for public office; and x) USAID funds must not be used for any private polls designed to help political campaign strategies in favor of any candidate, party or alliance.

The section of the guide relating to political party development concludes with the following guidance:

> Working with political parties has to be done in a transparent way which ensures to the satisfaction of all that courses, seminars, etc. are open to all parties and that the process is primarily aimed not at strengthening individual political parties but at enhancing the election process and the post-election management of legislative affairs. It is best left to NGOs to implement; but to the extent that they make use of USAID money, the stress on a nonpartisan approach must be clear.[23]

The political party assistance guidelines outlined above provide further clarification of what USAID-funded programs can and cannot undertake in supporting political party development. They reiterate the rule that USAID work exclusively with political parties committed to the democratic process and the requirement that, within that group of parties, USAID assistance has to be nonpartisan in nature. But more specifically, the guidelines also begin to draw distinctions between what constitutes acceptable party assistance and what constitutes prohibited means of influencing the outcomes of elections, such as direct financial support for campaigns or political candidates (ii, vi, and viii), financial support to buy votes (vii), funds for partisan meetings and rallies (ix), or partisan technical support (x).

Nevertheless, several important questions regarding the implementation of political party assistance remain unanswered. First, there is the question of how one determines

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[22]The two party institutes are NDI and IRI; these 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, created with the NED in 1983, and their roles in political party assistance will be discussed in detail in Section VI.

[23]David Hirschmann, *Managing Democratic Electoral Assistance: A Practical Guide for USAID*, (Washington, DC: Office of Democracy and Governance, U.S. Agency for International Development, 1995), pp. 39-41.

what constitutes a democratic party or a party adhering to democratic processes. A second, related question is, if USAID eliminates particular political parties from its political party assistance programming, are not the targeted funds indirectly influencing the outcomes of elections? Implicit in the aforementioned USAID guidance on the distinctions between democratic parties that could receive technical assistance and anti-democratic parties that could not is the conclusion that USAID is supporting the broad outcome of the electoral process—democratic governance. Thus, the phrase, "leveling the playing field," has often meant improving the chances of democratic parties over anti-democratic parties, assuming that all democratic parties are assisted equally.

A third question is more technical in nature. While several of the restrictions listed above, such as the prohibition on campaign contributions and the use of USAID resources to influence voters through direct payments, are explicit, the more general prohibition of indirect or direct support for campaigns is less clear. What activities, in fact, constitute unacceptable direct or indirect campaign support or technical assistance? As was discussed in Section IV, USAID has provided technical assistance to political parties in areas such as voter identification and mobilization, message development, platform writing, and candidate training. While such programming is being offered to all democratic parties, these activities are essentially campaign support and assistance. The next sub-section offers guidance on answering these questions by addressing some key implementing concerns: inclusiveness, interference in the domestic affairs of

sovereign states, electoral influence, and timing.

B.   Specific Implementation Concerns

The USAID policy statements and guidance on political party assistance, presented in Section V(A) above, are the core directives for political party programming. As was mentioned there, these statements and guidance do not fully address the nuances of party assistance in the wide variety of political contexts present today. Rather than opt for a country-by-country approach to guidance for implementation of these policies and guidance, however, the DG Office seeks to address the various questions and issues that have arisen in the context of political party development programming and to provide guidelines for program implementation that, while not universal in scope, will be applicable to the most often encountered problems in party assistance.

Reviewing the specific language presented in the policy statements and guidance, several key phrases emerge as the most important and controversial elements of political party assistance policy. First, Section 116(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act prohibits the use of development assistance funds "directly or indirectly, to influence the outcome of any election in any country." Second, the 1991 *Democracy and Governance Policy Paper* states that party assistance should be "offered equitably to all groups committed to democratic processes," and that such assistance should not represent "inappropriate and unwarranted interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states." Further, the *Building Democracy* guidance states that party assistance programs should be implemented "in a strictly nonpartisan manner." More specifically, *Technical*

Annex C states that program implementation "must be particularly scrupulous in avoiding even the perception that it is favoring a particular candidate or party" when providing party assistance. Finally, the *Managing Democratic Electoral Assistance* manual provides specific prohibitions for political party assistance. USAID party assistance may not provide

> 1) Direct or indirect support for campaigns for public office, 2) financing of campaigns or candidates for public office, 3) payments to individuals that are intended to influence their votes, 4) any direct contribution to a political campaign, or any salary, wage, fee, honoraria, or similar payment to any candidate, political party leader, or campaign official, 5) funds used for any public meetings that endorse or feature a candidate for public office, and 6) funds used for any private polls designed to help political campaign strategies in favor of any candidate, party or alliance.

These key provisions have generated conflicts in political party assistance programming and implementation in four broad areas: the necessary levels of inclusiveness in selecting party participants, interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states, the electoral influence of party programming, and the timing of political party assistance.

1. Inclusiveness

There are three main areas of concern with the issue of inclusiveness: 1) working with parties that are genuinely committed to democratic processes, 2) leveling the political playing field, and 3) choosing viable democratic parties. The first concern lies at the heart of political party assistance. As stated above, party development programming should be provided only to parties that support the democratic process;

in no cases should party assistance be provided to anti-democratic parties or organizations that promote violence. In order to comply with these standards, USAID missions and their partners must differentiate between those democratic parties eligible for assistance and those anti-democratic parties that should be excluded from assistance. The party institutes tend to use internal party democracy as a means of evaluating support for the democratic process. In its *Political Parties and the Transition to Democracy* primer, NDI outlines several necessary conditions for democratic parties:

> A party's commitment to democratic principles should be reflected not only in its written constitution, but also in its day-to-day interaction between leaders and members. That is, a party must be committed to practicing democratic behavior. A democratic party will allow members to express their views freely, promote the membership of women, encourage participation by all members, be tolerant of different ideas, abide by agreed upon rules and procedures for decision-making, and hold leaders accountable to members and supporters.[24]

While these are important criteria for judging internal organizational democracy, the policy mandate addresses commitment to the democratic process, which is captured only in part by measures of internal party democracy. In fact, there is significant empirical research on political parties and political organizations that demonstrates that truly democratic principles are rarely adhered to in organizational governance. In fact, USAID provides significant, direct organizational funding to NGOs all over the world, yet has no fixed standard for internal

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[24]*Political Parties and the Transition to Democracy*, (Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, 1997), p. 5.

organizational democracy as a condition of funding. More important to the issue at hand is whether the political party supports the broader democratic process. In democratic societies, organizational democracy is a moot issue as long as citizens are able to join and quit political parties without negative consequences. If citizens feel they are not being represented within the organization or party, they will leave and the organization will suffer the consequences of decreased financial and electoral support.

As a result, the evaluation of support for democratic processes should be framed by the following set of questions:

1) Is the party, both in rhetoric and practice, committed to democratic principles, both organizationally[25] and programmatically?

2) Does the party leadership engage in elections and use democratic institutions and rules to further its political agenda?

3) Are party platforms and party leadership chosen and/or validated democratically by party rank-and-file membership?

4) Has the party and its leadership agreed to respect the outcomes of the electoral process?

5) Does the party leadership have a history of engaging in violence or in attempting to undermine or overthrow democratic institutions?

6) If the party (and/or its leadership) does have a history of violence and anti-democratic behavior, has the current party leadership made credible renunciations of past anti-democratic behavior, backed by actions that demonstrate democratic transformation?

7) Does the party have ties to violent groups or organizations?

8) Does the party obey political party, election, and campaign laws?

9) Does the participation of the party help level the playing field?

These questions should be applied to all parties in country. Parties that are determined to be anti-democratic are therefore ineligible to receive direct or indirect USAID assistance. Beyond these broad evaluative questions, special attention should be given to the democratic nature of governing political parties. When evaluating governing or ruling parties, additional questions should be addressed:

1) Does the governing party adhere to open, free, and fair elections standards?

2) Does the governing party attempt to use governmental power to suppress democratic competition through control of media, electoral administration, or other institutions?

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[25]Organizational democracy should be broadly interpreted. The freedom of citizens to enter and exit political party membership ranks or to vote for or against party candidates without political or economic sanctions is the key criterion for organizational democracy. Virtually all political organizations are governed oligarchically; pure organizational democracy is unattainable in organizations of any significant size.

3) Does the governing party inhibit the abilities of opposition parties to organize and mobilize political support?

4) Does the governing party control the election administration infrastructure?

Finally, USAID may wish to make exceptions for inclusion of individual party leaders. Individuals or factions within a political party or movement that has been determined not to meet democratic standards may be included in larger multi-party forums if the individuals or factions have made clear and distinct renunciations of the parent party and have also demonstrated that they have distanced themselves from the core party leadership and its anti-democratic philosophies and activities. In addition, it should be determined that the participation of these individuals and/or factions can serve to influence their parties or have a broader impact on party democratization.

Once the democratic nature of parties is assessed, the question of inclusion again must be addressed. It is often the case that not all democratic parties are in need of USAID party assistance. Well-organized, democratic, competitive political parties with extensive organizational infrastructures and an organized and active citizen membership should not be the targets of party assistance. In seeking to develop competitive political party systems, USAID programming should be targeted at those parties that are struggling to be competitive and institutionalized. Often discussed as leveling the playing field, USAID programming should target challenging parties rather than entrenched, dominant parties with broad-based support. With finite

resources, USAID party development efforts should be geared at getting the most bang-for-the-buck; therefore, programming should serve the broader goal of strengthening the democratic political and electoral processes by expanding the party system beyond the dominant party or parties.

Related to this issue is the determination of viability of nascent political parties. Concerns about sustainability obviously affect party assistance. In many democratizing countries, new political movements have emerged that either lack significant organizational bases or represent only a narrow sector of society. Often under the direction of a single leader or small cadre of leaders, these movements or factions fall short in the areas of sustainable organizational infrastructure and broad support base typically associated with political parties. USAID support for these incipient, single-person or single-issue movements raises issues regarding the sustainability of assistance to nurture the development of such groups and the risk of fragmenting the political arena. In addition, parties or movements with such limited organizational bases increase the risk of unaccountable, arbitrary, or even authoritarian politics by leaders.

Nevertheless, in some instances, where the political system is emerging along with these movements following a prolonged period of authoritarian government or conflict, these personalistic, small movements may represent the main democratic alternatives to more powerful authoritarian parties. Thus, where possible, USAID party development programming should avoid providing assistance to personalistic or single-issue parties. In cases

where there are few alternatives, assistance should focus on forging a broader coalition of groups and strengthening the organizational viability of parties, individually or as a merged political front of parties.

2. Interference in the Domestic Affairs of Sovereign States

Related to the issue of inclusiveness, the omission of certain political parties, particularly governing parties and/or communist parties, may lead to charges of intrusion into the domestic affairs of sovereign states by the omitted party or parties. As USAID party development programming at the organizational and electoral levels often strengthens and facilitates democratic forces within newly democratizing nations, a ruling party may feel the work of NDI or IRI represents undue influence on its political system, just as ruling parties or coalitions may be affronted by international donor support of CSOs that may be critical of their governments. The recent work of IRI in Russia with the Russia is Our Home party in an area of the country dominated by the Communist party is illustrative of this problem. The Communist party attempted to challenge the work of IRI before the Central Election Commission on the grounds that IRI attempted to influence domestic politics by strengthening the organizational capabilities of a rival party. The commission found no violations of Russian law on the part of IRI. In these instances, the party institutes must be able to demonstrate clearly their reasons for selecting only one or a few parties with which to work. At the same time, they must be cognizant of existing laws and regulations regarding external support for political parties. While

USAID programming includes reform of electoral and party laws that are restrictive and that inhibit free and fair competition of ideas and candidates through political parties, USAID will not fund programs and activities that are in direct violation of existing domestic laws.

In addition to lack of inclusiveness as an element of interference in the domestic affairs of a country, the USAID party building programs within governments also represent a potential area of excessive interference as the party institutes work with political parties within legislatures in order to provide internal coherence to both governing and opposition parties. Such activities should include training in the roles of political parties in organizing the government and opposition in a generic fashion, rather than specific policy-related activities.

Further, the work of NDI, IRI, and the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) with electoral administration agencies that are directly tied to the governing party or parties may also be viewed as undue influence on the domestic political system by opposition parties. In these instances, it must be clear that the efforts of the party institutes and IFES in particular to work with electoral commissions that are not independent of the governing party or parties serve as checks and reforming elements on the political system rather than as legitimizing efforts for partisan regimes. In these instances, IFES and the party institutes should work in concert, with IFES working with the governing party and its institutions of electoral management and NDI and IRI working with opposition parties, as was the case in Slovakia in 1998.

3. Electoral Influence

The strong language included in *Technical Annex C* cited above, together with the six areas in which USAID direct party assistance may not be used in relation to influencing the outcome of an election, directly or indirectly [Section 116(e)], constitutes the broad guidelines for limiting political party development activities in the electoral context. Current USAID policies draw clear distinctions between the direct financial support for NGOs, CSOs, or interest groups on the one hand and political parties on the other. As the former types of entities have no formal responsibilities for governance nor for political opposition within government, USAID civil society programming includes direct financial grants to organizations and, in some instances, total financial support of NGOs and interest groups. Conversely, political party support should not take the form of direct financial support to party organizations as such grants, while nominally targeted at building organizational infrastructures, may be directed at specific elections and candidates. As a result, political party programming in the electoral context "must be particularly scrupulous in avoiding even the perception that it is favoring a particular candidate or party" through direct financial support. Political party programming should not result in direct financial benefit to any single political party in the political system within which USAID programming is undertaken.

Party support programming in this area is least likely to run afoul of the Section 116(e) limitation when it is carried out in an inclusive fashion, administered in an equitable manner, and does not include direct financial or in-kind support to individual political parties.

4. Timing

The final issue to be addressed in these guidelines is the timing of political party assistance programs. This issue is directly related to the indirect or direct influence of the outcome of an election discussed above. In order to remain above reproach from internal political forces within countries in which programming is undertaken as well as from U.S. interests attentive to the internal politics of these nations, USAID programming should conclude or revert to clearly non-campaign activities within 30 days prior to an upcoming election. Workshops, training sessions, and other activities, particularly those targeted at only a select number of parties, should not appear to be directly connected to impending elections. One exception to this provision is training for party pollwatchers. Since this activity serves to legitimize the electoral process and no direct or indirect electoral benefits are accrued by individual political parties or candidates, training of party pollwatchers may take place up to election day. Another exception would involve the conducting of multi-party forums in the context of conflictual electoral environments, wherein USAID-supported forums serve to promote political dialogue across political parties and to facilitate free and fair elections.

The more general timing issues of when to begin political party assistance programs as well as the development of an exit strategy to conclude political party assistance are equally important. Political party assistance programming should be viewed as a series of interrelated activities. A full-service party

development plan incorporates each of the major substantive areas presented earlier: organizational, electoral, and governmental. The timing of the implementation should not be dictated by the electoral calendar. In fact, putting off planning of party development activities until even the year before an election places undue and unnecessary burdens on program implementers to achieve multiple results simultaneously. Optimally, party organizational strengthening work should begin well outside the context of an election. In fact, such programming may begin as post-election assistance in the aftermath of a less than successful performance by democratic parties. Organizational work in this context differs little from civil society organizational work that seeks to develop grassroots membership support. Of course, USAID treats CSO support quite differently from party support work as CSOs and NGOs more generally may receive direct support from USAID, while political parties may not.

Outside the immediacy of an election campaign, party leaders are more attentive to training focused on organizational sustainability and membership recruitment. As political party leaders develop organizational skills, the logical progression of programming is to prepare political parties for elections. Like the organizational aspects of party development, the menu of training options outlined above is extensive. Even within the electoral context, the earlier the commitment to programming support the more comprehensive the training and assistance may be. Again, six months before an election is too late to begin extensive electoral work with political parties. Unfortunately, long-term planning for comprehensive political party development

is difficult, particularly in competition with other programming in the elections and political processes field. Nonetheless, USAID missions should regard political party programming as a central element in their democracy and governance strategies.

Perhaps the least programmed area of political party development is strengthening political parties in their roles as organizers of government or opposition in government. This area is worthy of increased attention for, as democratic parties begin to find electoral success sufficient to capture the support of a majority of citizens, they are immediately thrust into the position of governance with all of the attendant responsibilities. So, too, democratic political parties outside the government or ruling coalition have the responsibility of providing loyal opposition to government. Disorganized and ineffectual opposition strengthens the will of the government. Whether undertaken as post-election assistance or programmed outside the context of elections, party strengthening in governance is a crucial element to political party development programming.

Concluding political party assistance is often as difficult as determining when and where to start. Optimally, an exit strategy should be developed during the initial planning stages of political party assistance programs. While USAID missions are constrained by the annual review and appropriation processes, programming should not be solely driven by the fiscal year calendar. Election calendars may or may not be useful demarcations in party assistance planning. If a mission is undertaking election-specific party assistance, then perhaps programming should conclude following the elections. In the best of

situations, the relative progress of the parties in achieving organizational sustainability, electoral success, or competent governance skills should be factors to consider when deciding to conclude such programming. To the extent possible, the party institutes should strive to link the parties with which they are working to larger, regional or global party networks so they may continue to receive information, guidance, and support after USAID funding concludes. In addition, there should be continual coordination with other international donors that support political party development as USAID is not alone in supporting the development and sustainability of democratic political parties.

While there are far more constraints on the use of USAID funds for party assistance than on any other international governmental or nongovernmental entity, the support of party development by USAID represents the most significant single source of party assistance globally. It is incumbent upon USAID missions as well as NDI and IRI to plan party development programs thoughtfully and implement these resulting activities effectively.

VI. IRI AND NDI: POLITICAL PARTY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS[26]

This section describes in greater detail USAID's political party development programs carried out by IRI and NDI, as the two key partners implementing USAID political party development assistance. It draws on the institutes' reports to USAID and on conversations with institute and USAID staff members and with other regional specialists and political scientists. It includes a discussion both of the institutes' "core" political party development work, with a focus upon the three areas: enhancing electoral competition, developing broad-based, viable, and internally democratic parties, and participating effectively in governance. Additionally, the section examines "supplemental" work with parties in a number of other important areas.

A. Goals of IRI and NDI Political Party Development Programs

In line with USAID's aim to facilitate the democratic process in newly democratizing countries, the overarching goal of IRI and NDI political party development programs is to assist the development of political parties, and to a lesser degree, multi-party party systems that contribute to democratic politics and governance. Implicit in this is the belief that parties should be broad-based and internally democratic and have the skills

and organizational capacity to compete in elections, recruit and maintain members, communicate effectively, govern effectively, and serve as loyal opposition. In addition, they believe that party systems need to strike a balance between the need for representation of all major sectors, and the need for a level of cohesion and stability sufficient for effective governance. They also feel that this balance should be taken into account in party program design.

Reflecting this and USAID's emphasis on the organizational aspect of political party development, most IRI and NDI party programs seek to give parties the skills and organizational capacity they need to do the following: a) compete in elections; b) develop into broad-based, viable, and internally democratic organizations; and c) participate effectively in governance—either as the ruling party, as a member of a governing coalition, or as opposition. Some institute programs place special emphasis on coalition building, improving relations among parties, and promoting electoral/party law reform. A representative of IRI also pointed to the specific skill-based nature of programs, so as to ensure that participants are given essential know-how in a particular area and further guided through the application of their newly learned skills by continuous support through the course of a major event. This may, for example, involve a campaign training program, whereby local party leaders are trained in specific techniques and then supported in using those skills through their campaigns.

The institutes point to a variety of other objectives and desired outcomes of their party development programs. Such goals contribute to their stated commitment to creating healthy parties and party systems.

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[26]The author wishes to acknowledge the work of Benjamin Crosby, Nicole Dannenberg, David Timberman, and Mark Walker of Management Systems International in the preparation of this section.

In countries with a dominant ruling party, party development programs can help to "level the playing field" to enable greater political competition between parties. In countries with new or poorly institutionalized parties, party development programs can help to make them viable and effective participants in democratic politics and governance. In countries with unstable multi-party systems, party development programs can encourage parties to form coalitions or to merge. In polarized or conflicted countries, party development programs can reduce mistrust and conflict between parties and encourage parties to "play by the democratic rules of the game." Finally, in countries with institutionalized, but highly personalistic and hierarchical parties, party development programs can encourage greater participation and internal democratization.

B. Defining and Measuring Impact

Both IRI and NDI see the creation of electorally competitive parties as a means to an end, not an end in itself. While an important objective of the institutes' political party work is to make democratic parties electorally competitive, producing electoral victories does not fall under their direct mandate. Instead, NDI seeks to produce parties that have the ability to gain representation, that have a say in shaping policy, and that have a voice in public affairs. NDI staff also emphasize the importance of sustainability over election cycles and over periods of being both in and out of power. IRI views its goal as creating parties that have the depth of leadership and organization that will make them sustainable over successive election cycles. As an example of this, IRI emphasizes the importance of building second and third tier

party leadership and stable grassroots structures in its Mongolia program.

In some cases there have been "high impact" outcomes from party development programs. Examples include IRI's programs to aid democratic parties or coalitions in challenging non-democratic regimes in Mongolia and Bulgaria. In recent years, helping to create or sustain democratic parties in highly conflictual societies as in South Africa and strengthening moderate parties in highly polarized societies such as NDI's programs in Bosnia, Chile, and Poland have been timely and effective. In Poland, for example, NDI has worked since 1996 to strengthen party organizations at the local level. Local party branches have since developed and implemented action plans to recruit new members, raise funds, and improve communications with party headquarters. Women and youth have also come to play a more prominent role in party operations, including running as electoral candidates. The work has also resulted in a core group of Polish party trainers that are capable of continuing to provide party assistance.

Other less visible, but equally significant examples of impact over the long term include the following: 1) broadening the membership base of parties, including extensive training in polling techniques by IRI in Slovakia and door-to-door campaigning techniques promoted by NDI in Poland; 2) strengthening the links between party leaders and their members, including work by NDI in rural communities of Central and East Africa and by IRI in Lithuania, Mongolia, Nicaragua, and Yugoslavia; 3) increasing the participation of women, most notably NDI's programs in Kenya and Nepal and IRI's programs in

Angola, Cambodia, Russia, and Thailand; 4) fostering youth leadership, including several IRI programs in Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe as well as in Russia and Ukraine; and 5) improving the effectiveness of parties and coalitions in parliament, such as NDI's program in Georgia and IRI's programs in Mozambique and Angola.

The institutes make several points about gauging the impact of their party development programs. First, democratic development is necessarily a very complex and long-term process. It is unrealistic to expect too much from a program that is less than a year in duration or a series of successive short-term programs that do not allow for long-term planning.[27] Moreover, the impact of democracy programs often takes a number of years to become evident, is often difficult to quantify, and may come in unexpected ways. Particularly in the case of political party and electoral programs, pressure to demonstrate immediate impact can lead to politically inappropriate interventions. The importance of distinguishing short-term party development programs that are specifically designed in response to rapid transitions, snap elections, or other unexpected developments from those with the objective of long-term party development is integral to a clear analysis of party programs.

C. Which Models, Which Parties?

Apart from the availability of USAID and NED funding for political party assistance programs, there are two key substantive issues that shape the overall character of IRI and NDI programs: 1) the models of

political parties and types of political techniques used by the institutes; and 2) the inclusiveness or selectivity of participants in party development programs. Each of these issues is briefly addressed below:

1. Model(s) for Party Development

There are many good reasons for doubting the relevance and applicability of the U.S. model of political parties and of modern, high technology U.S. election campaign techniques for most new and low-income democracies. These reasons include the following: a) vastly different traditions and levels of socio-economic development and media penetration; b) the relative scarcity of other majoritarian presidential systems; c) the parliamentary, proportional-representation nature of many new systems, which makes for very different parliamentary dynamics and constituency outreach; and d) in most new democracies, party-list elections, making parties more important than individual candidates.

As a result, few foreign political parties actively seek to emulate U.S. parties. American campaigns are seen as being excessively personalistic and overly dependent upon purchased media. Furthermore, many U.S. campaign techniques are not seen as being applicable or affordable. At the same time, however, American techniques are widely regarded as being state-of-the-art and, therefore, are of general interest to some parties, especially those in wealthier European countries. A representative of NDI, for example, observed that most post-communist societies want the American experience and look to U.S. models focusing on personalized, grassroots political organizations. In these and other regions, many parties are

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[27]Typical USAID-funded programs range in length from six months to three or more years.

confronted by the seeming inexorable spread of mass media and political marketing. In addition, the widespread erosions of traditional social and political relationships due to rapid urbanization and economic change are at the forefront of the political arena. These changes make some, though certainly not all, "American" campaign techniques seem increasingly relevant.

The institutes readily profess their awareness of the limited applicability of contemporary U.S. models and modern techniques. They maintain that, in most cases, they consciously shy away from promoting the American model. This is not to say that some of the traditional American techniques of mobilization and electioneering are not applicable. In fact, many of the techniques taught by IRI and NDI for political organizing and campaigning are so basic as to be virtually universal. Even those techniques that are more distinctively "American" are generally modified so as to be relevant to local conditions. In addition, many of the NDI and IRI trainers are drawn from countries with political experiences and systems that are directly relevant to the country where the program is occurring. For example, NDI organized a program to bring Serbian opposition party leaders to Poland to receive advice and guidance from Polish party activists on their current political situation, based on the similar experiences of the Poles in recent years.

2. The Issue of Inclusiveness

A key intent of existing USAID guidelines on political party assistance is to ensure that U.S. government assistance does not promote certain candidates, parties, or policies at the expense of other democratic candidates or parties. Therefore, assistance should be made available to all political parties that are committed to the democratic process and should not be used to influence electoral outcomes, directly or indirectly; in addition, political party assistance should be neutral in terms of its political content.

IRI and NDI both subscribe to the principles of inclusiveness and nonpartisanship. IRI has a tendency to work with parties it regards as committed to democracy, and to exclude authoritarian parties; whereas NDI places greater emphasis on being more inclusive. There have been a number of instances when U.S. policy, political conditions, or programmatic considerations have caused one or both institutes to work with a narrower range of parties. Representatives from NDI and IRI offer a number of reasons for being selective when organizing political party assistance programs.

First, "leveling the playing field" in one-party dominant polities requires that the opposition parties receive all or most of the assistance. Second, although they may be non-violent and support electoral competition, there are parties that espouse views that are inimitable to pluralistic democracy. Included in this group would be certain ethnic, nationalist, and religious parties. Third, some formerly communist parties, although they claim to accept democratic politics and governance, have been unwilling or unable to reform essentially Leninist, top-down party structures. Fourth, in countries with a large number of parties, working with all or even most parties diffuses the impact of their assistance. Some parties (so-called "sofa" or "taxi cab" parties) are too small or unsustainable to warrant assistance. For

assistance to be effective, it needs to be focused on a limited number of viable, receptive parties. Finally, to be effective in their work with parties, the institutes' representatives must be trusted by the parties. The more parties the representatives work with, the less they are trusted by each party.

The institutes have exercised selectivity in several instances. Among them are NDI's program in Bosnia, where NDI works almost exclusively with multi-ethnic parties. The goal has not necessarily been for them to win, but rather for them to become strong enough to play a moderating role. In Croatia, NDI and IRI have concentrated on democratic opposition parties that have been disadvantaged and marginalized by ultranationalist sentiment and one-party dominance. And in Poland, NDI works with all parties, but primarily with the center and center-right in order to diminish factionalism. Other examples include South Africa, where IRI and NDI assistance, prior to the 1994 elections, was limited to parties and movements that had not previously competed in multi-party national elections and whose support was drawn from historically disenfranchised segments of the population.

NDI is open to working with former authoritarian and communist parties if they are determined to be committed to reform, such as those in Poland and in Hungary. An NDI representative pointed to the dilemma of working with post-communist parties, citing the all-too-common trend of post-communist parties bearing new hats and names but essentially maintaining communist party goals and platforms. IRI is less inclined to work with former communist parties.

In addition, an issue that frequently arises in African cases is the question of how to work with reformist elements or branches of otherwise undesirable large party machines. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire's PDCI party, a reformist branch broke off and formed its own separate party. Conversely, the question of whether to exclude non-reformist actors within those dominant parties is a prominent one. Such work must be undertaken with the utmost care and slow pace, with serious and consistent evaluative attention given to whether the program can make an impact on the status quo, or whether the task is too daunting.

In many situations, there are very compelling political reasons to work with all or most democratic political parties. But in some, but by no means infrequent situations, there are persuasive political and programmatic reasons for being more selective. In some of these cases, the issue is not so much whether or not to be selective, but how selective to be and based on what criteria. Both NDI and IRI conduct in-depth assessments to evaluate the general political conditions of a country, the democratic characteristics of political parties, and the organizational and political capacities of parties when designing their political party assistance programs. In rare instances involving the most politically charged environments, the decision-making processes regarding political party assistance programs are elevated to levels within the U.S. government above USAID mission jurisdiction. In these instances, the USAID mission and implementing partners often receive instruction and direction through ambassadorial channels. In a very few isolated instances in which the decision-making process included the State

Department and the ambassador, the party institutes have refused to accede to the direction of the ambassador regarding the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of party participation and have withdrawn their programs. As private, nonprofit institutions, it is within the rights of these institutes to reject support for political party programming.

D. Program Formats

Both institutes tend to use the same general types of programming formats, although the substance of their activities varies considerably. The types of formats most frequently used include multi-party training seminars and workshops, multi-party roundtables and conferences, single-party training seminars and workshops, single-party consultations, foreign study and/or training missions, and visits of international delegations.

These seminars, conferences, and workshops are conducted at the national, regional, and local levels. Most involve the participation of foreign trainers and resource people. Many training activities involve hands-on exercises including simulations and role playing. Many also use guides, manuals, check-lists, and other materials produced by the institutes. Frequently seminars and workshops are combined with individual or single-party consultations and training sessions.

There are some differences in emphasis with regard to program design both between and within the two institutes. IRI has tended to place greater emphasis on single-party seminars and workshops. NDI has emphasized the importance of building international, regional, and sub-regional

networks of democratic parties and CSOs, while IRI is beginning to place more emphasis on this approach. Within each institute, the varied character of programs reflects differences in conditions across regions, the priorities and perspectives of regional directors, and differences with regard to the availability of funding.

Both institutes increasingly are recruiting field staff with the expertise needed to address the specific needs of parties in a given country. As a result, these representatives are doing a larger share of the training themselves. Short-term international experts are still used to bring added expertise and prestige to programs, though the field representatives do the follow-on training after visits of international experts. IRI has, in the past, tended to use more American trainers and resource people, while NDI has tended to have more of a mix of American and non-American trainers. Both institutes are also placing greater emphasis on training local party activists so that training skills are transferred and will survive beyond the life of the institutes programs, including recent efforts of IRI directed at training local activists as trainers in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Russia, and South Africa.

E. Principal Areas of IRI and NDI Program Activity

The majority of IRI and NDI party development programs are intended to assist parties in three critical areas following the tripartite conceptualization of political parties outlined in Section IV: a) competing in elections, b) developing into broad-based, viable, and internally democratic organizations, and c) participating

effectively in governance.[28] Given the concentration of the institutes' programs in these three areas, they can be considered the "core" of USAID-funded political party programming. Additionally, the institutes frequently undertake programs intended to do one or more of the following: a) facilitate coalition building; b) improve relations between or among parties; c) promote election and party law reform; d) increase the participation and leadership of women as political actors; and e) provide international exposure and support for fledgling democratic parties. In general, these can be considered "supplemental" activities, although in some countries they are central to the party development program. These "core" and "supplemental" programs are discussed below.

1. Core Programs

To date, IRI and NDI have concentrated on providing "how to" or "nuts and bolts" training to parties to enhance their electoral competitiveness and help them to become broad-based, viable, and internally democratic organizations. A third "core" program area of helping parties to play effective roles in good governance has had less emphasis in the institutes' overall programming. The three are closely related and frequently overlap, but are sufficiently different so as to warrant separate consideration.

a. Enhancing parties' electoral competitiveness

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[28]The tripartite conceptualization of political party assistance is used explicitly by NDI; see Lisa McLean, *Political Party Development*, (Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, 1996), pp. 5-6.

Elections are critical to democracy and parties are critical actors in elections. Parties competing in elections give voters a choice of representatives and policies. But for parties to want to participate in elections, they must feel that they can be competitive. And in order for them to accept the outcome, they must have confidence in the fairness of the electoral process. While elections are particularly important in transitional, new, or even relatively consolidated democracies, elections that are issueless, violent, or boycotted can seriously undermine the legitimacy of democratic institutions and leaders.

Elections are often the institutes' access point for working with and gaining the trust of political parties and their leaders. IRI and NDI programs to develop campaign skills for candidates within parties typically include training in the following areas: development and implementation of campaign strategies, public opinion polling, message development, communications and media relations, recruitment of party members and volunteers, fundraising, and the development and implementation of get-out-the-vote campaigns.

There is ample evidence that many campaign skills taught in institute-led trainings have been adopted and used effectively by parties around the world. In many cases it has led to more and better choices for voters and more issue-based campaigns. In some cases this type of programming has contributed to electoral victories by democratic forces; in others it has meant stronger than expected showings. This has been the case in particular with NDI's program in Bosnia and IRI's

programs in Mongolia, Romania, Russia, and Slovakia.

b. Developing broad-based, viable, and internally democratic parties

The ability to field competitive candidates in elections is an essential function of political parties, but it does not guarantee the development of broad-based, viable, or internally democratic parties. For this to occur, there must be an evolution from personalistic parties to more broad-based and institutionalized parties.

There are many challenges in the development and institutionalization of political party organizations. Party leaders may be more focused on winning elections than on building broad-based and sustainable parties. After elections, the organizational gains made during a campaign are often not maintained. Getting and maintaining the attention of party leaders when they are in government is a major challenge. It also may be difficult to persuade those leaders to view party development as something that has value separate from making parties electorally competitive. In turn, party leaders may be wary of making changes in their party's formal or informal procedures and structures if they might result in a weakening of their authority.

Many of the skills used in campaigns are also applicable to long-term party development. Additionally, IRI and NDI programs devoted to party development typically include training in the following:

C Drafting party by-laws and codes of conduct
C Building local party chapters
C Increasing and broadening membership leadership development
C Using polling, surveys, and focus groups
C Developing messages and platforms
C Communicating with members and the public
C Mobilizing resources and fund raising
C Enhancing internal party democracy

Examples of such programs include NDI's program in Poland and IRI's program in Ukraine, where activities have focused upon local party branches and contributed to both a "renewal of democratic parties" and a more stable party system. NDI's program in South Africa has an extensive constituency outreach component aimed at strengthening local party organs and improving local-center relations within the party, as well as providing techniques for outreach to the citizenry at large. IRI has conducted similar programs in Poland, Russia, and Yugoslavia. In Bosnia, NDI's program has contributed to the survival of multi-ethnic parties and has assured them a voice.

The development of regional and/or local party chapters has become a major aspect of most IRI and NDI party development programs. There are good reasons to emphasize the development of local party chapters: it broadens the organizational and geographic base of parties. Local chapters connect national leadership to the grassroots level and serve to contribute to the development of new party leaders. Local party leaders are often more receptive to training than national leaders, as party assistance is generally viewed as less "political" when it is out of the capital. But such localized work can also be expensive, requires a significant commitment of time, and involves a degree of trial and error. This is particularly true in rapidly changing

political environments. With regard to increasing and broadening membership development, most emphasis has been placed upon recruiting individual members as opposed to organizations or associations such as NGOs or unions. In many Central and Eastern European countries, such as Croatia and Macedonia, parties traditionally have separate youth and women's organizations. These cases have provided openings for work to expand those constituencies.

Leadership development is critical to the long-term success and sustainability of parties. One of the reasons many parties, especially those in Latin America and South Asia, have lost their popular appeal is because they are not generating new and effective political leaders. Leadership development must occur on both the national and the local levels. Women in politics programs often serve as an effective means by which to train new leadership. In addition, tapping into the vast pool of youth leadership—typically enormous populations in developing nations—can be a great resource for bringing about fresh new leadership. National party leaderships must have the depth to survive the high degree of turnover that characterizes many parties—particularly relatively new parties. Local level leadership development serves to both strengthen parties at the local level and broaden the pool from which new national leaders are drawn. For example, the next generation of leadership of the African National Congress in South Africa may well come from the provinces where IRI has conducted local political party programming. It is important that USAID programming continues to support new and innovative approaches to leadership

development in political parties, both within countries and at the regional levels.

Effective message development often leads to greater differentiation among parties. It tends to prompt parties to broaden their platforms and strengthens the links between parties and voters. In essence, it allows for party leaders to reach out to their constituents to discover what issues matter most to them, and create new platforms and campaigns based upon such popular opinion. The use of polling, surveys, and focus groups often helps to make parties more competitive and more responsive to members and the public. Moreover, in racially or ethnically divided societies, IRI and NDI have introduced polling as a way to show party leaders that citizens are concerned with issues other than race and ethnicity, thereby encouraging parties to broaden their platforms and constituencies.

The challenge of fundraising is a critical issue to parties in many countries, particularly in many low-income countries of Africa and South Asia. Ruling parties usually have access to government resources or funding from oligarches and/or big business. At the same time, in countries with a rapidly increasing penetration of the mass media, campaigns are becoming increasingly dependent upon expensive advertising, further increasing the significance of funding. But new or opposition parties frequently lack a stable or broad base of financial support. Inadequate funding can make it very difficult to contest elections or to build a national party. The absence of a broad funding base also gives greater influence to individuals and groups in the parties who do have money, thus reinforcing the tendency for personality-driven parties.

Both institutes assert that internal democratization is an important dimension of all of their party development programs. Typically their programs include components on how to make party by-laws, leadership, candidate selection, and other formal decision-making processes more democratic. But in the face of the possibility that party leaders will feel threatened by greater internal democracy, it appears that the institutes rarely press very hard for internal reform or make it a condition for their assistance. The institutes make a convincing case that "head on" assaults on the power of entrenched leaders usually are both ineffective and counterproductive. In addition, they correctly point out that there are other ways to enhance internal democracy, including making decision-making more bottom-up and participatory, improving intra-party communication and the flow of information, and broadening both the sources of and the control over funding.

Placed in the larger context of organizational development, however, internal democracy is a secondary concern as USAID civil society programming provides direct funding to CSOs without any fixed standard for internal democratic processes. Furthermore, in democratic organizational governance, the freedom to join or quit a political party or an interest group is the ultimate measure of democratic practices. A strict standard of organizational democracy would not be met by either of the two major parties in the United States.

c. Helping parties to participate effectively in governance

Both capabilities of parties and the character of the party system influence the quality of governance in a number of important ways. Parties must be able to participate effectively in governance, whether in an executive capacity, in parliament, in local government, or in the opposition. IRI and NDI programs intended to strengthen the ability of parties to play an effective role in governance include training in the following:

C   Coalition-building and inter-party relations
C   Understanding legislative and legal procedures
C   Creating effective legislative caucuses and committees
C   Interacting with advocacy groups and the media
C   Communicating with constituents and the general public
C   Training party members involved in local government
C   Training party representatives on role of opposition in governance

IRI and NDI have done relatively few programs on governance targeted explicitly to parties due to greater demands for election and general party development and the fact that governance programs usually have the legislative institutions as their primary focus, rather than parties within the institutions.

For example, IRI's post-election program in Mongolia and NDI's parties in parliament program in Georgia were effective and successful governance programs utilizing political parties as a major component of the activities. In both South Africa and Malawi, NDI's work with legislatures on constituency outreach has contributed to party-building. In addition, IRI training of local government counselors in the

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KwaZulu/Natal region of South Africa has enabled the development and implementation of effective economic development plans. Both institutes see the need for greater focus on governance in their party programs and greater focus on parties as actors in their governance programs.

2. Supplemental Program Activities

"Supplemental" program activities are activities that may be very important to the institutes' party development programs, but are not always included as part of the "core" party building programs. They tend to address the frequently situational needs of individual parties or are directed at affecting the broader political or legal environment in which parties operate. "Supplemental" programs include activities intended to facilitate coalition building, improve inter-party relations, promote election and party law reform, increase the participation of women and youth, and provide international exposure and support.

a. Coalition building

In many countries there has been a proliferation of political parties. Coalition building can enable small parties to create viable electoral blocs and frequently it is essential to governing in multi-party systems. Additionally, opposition parties may need to form coalitions to enhance their effectiveness. Because of this, the ability of parties to form and maintain coalitions can be very important to meaningful elections and effective governance.

While coalition building skills should be taught, it is important not to promote coalitions when conditions or circumstances are not conducive to such a process.

Excessive multi-partyism or fragmentation may be a post-transition phenomenon, a function of the electoral system, or a reflection of underlying social cleavages. In some post-transition countries, a large number of parties may form initially, especially as anti-authoritarian opposition movements become fragmented. It may be better to allow for a natural and more sustainable, if more gradual consolidation of parties through a series of elections. Moreover, there are also down sides to coalition building. In some African countries, coalition building between the government and the opposition may in fact result in cooptation of the opposition and a dangerous diminution of genuine multi-party politics.

Coalition building skills vary in breadth but include such activities as introducing models for joint decision-making and candidate selection, melding platforms, and responding to the needs of smaller coalition members. A number of IRI and NDI programs have emphasized coalition building in order to encourage a united opposition or in response to a fragmented and unstable party system, including IRI programs in Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovakia and NDI programs in Chile, Nicaragua, and Poland.

b. Improving inter-party relations

In new or fragile democracies, it is critical to be especially careful to avoid party-based violence and extremism, and to keep parties committed to competing within the democratic system. Reducing tension and mistrust between or among parties can be critical in conflict-ridden or post-conflict situations where parties have a history of fighting each other. This is also true in a

variety of other violence-prone situations characterized by extreme partisanship.

Programs to improve inter-party relations typically are carried out in the time immediately preceding potentially contentious or violent elections. But they also can be useful in tense post-election situations or when one or more parties are threatening to boycott parliament. Programs can include multi-party roundtables, efforts to get parties to adopt electoral codes of conduct, and seminars and study missions for parties that address procedural or policy issues that threaten a breakdown in the parliamentary process. For example, pre-election inter-party symposia conducted by IRI in Haiti helped in reducing violence during the election. In Yemen, NDI has played a mediating role, and, as a representative noted, "it is only under NDI's auspices that all parties will come together."

c. *Promoting election and party law reform*

Election and party laws are critically important to the functioning of parties in countries where a basic respect for rule of law with a functioning judicial system exists. Laws that determine the configuration of the electoral system are often embedded in or reflective of constitutional provisions; therefore, they are not frequently or easily changed. However, laws and regulations governing the administration and conduct of elections—such as the duration of the campaign period, rules governing parties and monitors, and regulations governing campaign expenditures—are acts of legislation or administrative regulations. The same is true for laws and regulations governing the formation, membership, conduct, and financing of political parties.

Design and reform of electoral systems, when opportunities present themselves, can be powerful tools for addressing the problems of fragmented or highly factionalized party systems. To date, the party institutes have been involved in electoral system design/reform only infrequently. Typically, programs such as these provide political leaders and decision-makers with information regarding models of electoral systems. IFES, an NGO that is linked to NDI and IRI through the USAID-funded CEPPS mechanism, does undertake significant programming in this area.

Fair election laws arrived at with the participation of all concerned parties are critical for legitimate elections. Legitimate elections, in turn, produce both credible victories and credible defeats. Of the two, credible defeats are probably more important in new democracies: the losers must accept the defeat. Credible defeats also stimulate leadership and policy changes within defeated parties. IFES frequently gives advice and comments on draft election and party laws; to a lesser extent, NDI and IRI provide assessments of electoral and party laws. The party institutes and IFES also encourage election commissions to consult with parties and citizens groups. Finally, it is also important to educate parties about their legal recourse, should meaningful channels exist, and to encourage advocacy for reform well in advance of elections. Examples of programs focused upon electoral law include NDI's 1992 program preceding the elections in Albania, where the institute worked with political leaders to "draft an accountable and inclusive" election law. In Senegal, NDI's support of election reform prevented a boycott of the election. NDI also worked with parties and NGOs in Bosnia to

advocate for electoral law reform. And in Russia, NDI conducted seminars and disseminated information on the election law. Similarly, IRI has conducted electoral law drafting programs in Cambodia, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Russia.

d. *Promoting the participation of women and youth*

Programs aimed at increasing women's political participation in emerging democracies have grown in strength and number in the past several years. In addition, there has been marked success with programs to tap into youth leadership for increased political activism. Such programs, often used as entrées to democracy assistance in countries at early stages of political development, are in many contexts essential to promoting an inclusive, representative democratization process.

Although women-in-politics programs vary widely in scope, from leadership and advocacy training to voter education to candidate training to "effectiveness in governance" seminars, all seek to address the concerns of particular political environments in enhancing the role of women in public life. This type of programming is an integral component of political party development assistance. Not only do women in politics programs work to strengthen political parties' constituent connection to the female half of the population, but they provide support for women to be leaders in their communities and to articulate issues of political concern through the competitive electoral process. Parties can only benefit from the contribution of women leaders as they strive to be more representative and influential

political institutions in democratizing societies.

While women-in-politics programs have previously been categorized as distinct and separate components of democracy assistance, their link to political party development is clear. Currently, both formal and informal barriers to women's full participation exist at both local and national levels in societies around the globe. Women and other previously excluded or marginalized political actors often benefit from programs specifically targeted at furthering their political skills and participatory capacities.

e. *Providing international exposure and contacts*

The two institutes also stress the importance of exposing nascent democrats to democratic practices and to connecting them to other democrats around the world. In Africa and the Middle East, there is a particular need to debate and understand democratic institutions and processes, to show models that can work in those regions, and to reassure traditional elites that they can survive democratic transitions. And, at the time of publication, in pre-transition countries like China and countries in the midst of democratic transitions such as Indonesia and Nigeria, struggling democrats value the knowledge, expertise, and solidarity that come from contacts with other democrats.

In Central and Eastern Europe, for instance, NDI has brought in leaders from other countries who have been through difficult transitions, such as Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians, to give guidance and support to leaders in countries going through

transitions. Similarly, NDI applied a similar approach in East and Central Africa. In that program, a delegation of several party international representatives was brought to speak at seminars in the Benin, Central African Republic and Congo-Brazzaville, in order to discuss concepts of Western democratic political thought. IRI has conducted regional programs in Central and Eastern Europe as well as in Russia through the Moscow School of Political Studies.

F. Synthesis of IRI and NDI Political Party Assistance

In reviewing the body of work undertaken by IRI and NDI during the 1990s, 10 general conclusions may be reached regarding the formulation and implementation of USAID-funded political party assistance. First, party assistance programs must be cognizant of and tempered by fundamental political, institutional, socio-economic, and cultural conditions that may limit the potential impact of political party training and technical advice. This is not an argument against political party programs; rather, it is an argument for well-designed, multi-dimensional, and long-term programs. Second, for party assistance programs to succeed, they must address both the needs of political parties, as determined by the party leaders themselves, and also encourage or push party leaders to look beyond traditional hierarchical organizational approaches or short-term needs, such as winning elections. Third, IRI and NDI party development programs have focused most often and had the greatest impact in situations where there have been major or partial political openings that allow new parties to emerge and face the challenge of contesting elections. IRI and NDI have been much less active in countries with established political parties

where the challenge is party reform, though this is changing in Latin America where both institutes have refocused their attention on political party development. Political party reform is destined to become a central challenge in future development programming as parties and party systems mature. Fourth, in recent years, there have been numerous examples of the institutes being more selective or less inclusive with regard to the parties with which they work.

Fifth, most IRI and NDI programs have focused on helping parties mount successful election campaigns. There are several reasons for this pattern of support: 1) elections have been key events in many regions over the last six years; 2) elections have been the primary concern of parties; and 3) USAID funding has been available for political party assistance in the context of upcoming elections. Assisting parties with election campaigns is usually a good starting point from which to work with parties on other issues. It is relatively easy to train a party cadre to run campaigns; it is a technical, time bound exercise with a set of techniques that are relatively universal and have clear criteria for evaluating success or failure. It is much harder to alter the organization and behavior of parties outside of elections. The challenge is to move from helping with election campaigns to long-term party building. It is not always easy to follow election-related party work with long-term party development work, however. Embassies and missions are more likely to allocate funding for elections assistance than for post-election political party development work, although both institutes have advocated a more continuous approach. After elections, winning parties are often less interested in party development while losing parties are often

dispirited and disorganized. Most campaign techniques, such as membership development and fundraising, can be employed to maintain parties after elections.

Sixth, working with parties on regional and local levels is key to long-term party development. Unfortunately, it is expensive, requires time and effort outside the capital, and involves a degree of trial and error, especially in rapidly changing political environments. Seventh, modern, advanced American techniques and models are of limited relevance to parties in most new or developing democracies. They need to be modified and combined with relevant grassroots, basic techniques and models. It can be important to show that Americans do not have all the answers to the problems facing parties and electoral politics. Similarly, training for party leaders in the United States may be very useful, but only if there are clear applications to their own party and/or electoral systems and such training is a productive addition to in-country training. Eighth, trust between trainers and party representatives is essential and takes time to develop. A good field representative can act as an intermediary among parties, between factions within parties, and between opposition parties and the government. Likewise, there needs to be trust between USAID and the party institutes. When USAID funds a party development program, its decision must be based on confidence in the implementing organization and should demonstrate some degree of flexibility when dealing with the implementing partners.

Ninth, in limited situations, the most effective way of reforming party systems may be to support the development of selected civil society and labor groups in the absence of viable competitors to established political parties. Such support may lead to the transformation of social movements into viable political parties, as was the case with the Solidarity Movement in Poland. And tenth, the concern with "U.S. intervention" in other countries' domestic politics must be anticipated and may be mitigated by the following actions:

C   Be transparent
C   Have a clear and defensible set of criteria for choosing which parties will receive assistance
C   Have both institutes work separately (with different parties) or together in country whenever possible
C   Emphasize training/technical assistance over material assistance
C   Adhere to a voluntary ban on formal training one month before an election, with the exception of party pollwatcher training, which may continue during the final 30 days of the election period

VII. FUNDING POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT: THE NED OPTION

Thus far, all of the political party assistance activities presented have been funded by USAID. There is another funding option, however, for political party development. The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) provides funding to the party institutes for party assistance programming in addition to direct assistance to NGOs around the world. In comparison to USAID support to NDI and IRI, NED support is much more limited. With an annual budget of approximately $30 million, funded through a line item in the United States Information Agency budget appropriation, NED divides roughly half of its annual budget equally among the four core institutes established with NED in 1983: IRI, NDI, the Center for International Private Enterprise, affiliated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the American Center for International Labor Solidarity, affiliated with the AFL-CIO. The other half of its annual budget is allocated to direct support of democratic NGOs and to organizational overhead. As a result, NDI and IRI each receives roughly $4 million from NED annually.

USAID has made special note of NED and its unique place in democracy assistance. From *Building Democracy*, cited earlier:

> USAID will ensure that its programs build upon, but do not duplicate, the important work undertaken by the National Endowment for Democracy. The endowment provides early funding to support activities that stimulate momentum for democratic change in pre-transitional and emerging transitional

environments. Its independence from the U.S. government provides for flexibility in programming and in establishing partnerships.[29]

In an assessment of the relationship between USAID and NED funding, initiated by concerns raised by the chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Benjamin Gilman, two key features of NED were highlighted:

> Its status as a private organization and its consistent focus on supporting nongovernmental efforts to advance democracy. The NED's independence from government enables it to pursue an innovative and risk-oriented grant strategy in a manner consistent with broad U.S. national interests. While the endowment consults on an ongoing basis with the State Department and with U.S. embassies abroad on programmatic matters, it is not an instrument for the direct implementation of U.S. foreign policy. At the same time, there are many instances where U.S. government programs have been able to replicate and expand upon innovative NED programs that have produced positive results. There are, of course, also a number of cases where NED supports organizations or initiatives whose independence from government, including the U.S. government, may be essential for their credibility in their own country and therefore for the successful implementation of the program.[30]

Regarding the use of NED funds for political party assistance programming, overwhelmingly the programs, activities, and direct assistance funded by NED in pre-

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[29]*USAID's Strategies for Sustainable Development: Building Democracy*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, January 1994), p. 4.
    [30]*A Review of Democracy Programs Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the National Endowment for Democracy*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, March 1, 1996), p. 2.

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transitional countries without USAID presence are targeted at NGOs rather than political parties. In these instances, the choice of countries within which NED funds activities is not constrained by Foreign Assistance Act human rights requirements for direct U.S. government development assistance. It is important for USAID missions to be aware of the NED option in political party programming. Democracy officers should confer with the DG Office as well as the implementing partners, IRI and NDI, to identify NED-supported activities in order to ensure that our activities are complementary.

Although the bulk of NED-funded projects is found in countries with USAID missions,[31] NED funding for democracy to NDI and IRI provides the party institutes with resources to undertake programs in countries without USAID presence or in countries with USAID presence, but without democracy assistance programming. Due to a variety of political circumstances, there are instances where official U.S. assistance is not practical or is prohibited. In these instances, NED is able to provide support to dissident movements. Prior to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, NED programming supported fledgling pro-democracy movements in several communist countries. NED has also been at the forefront in funding pro-democracy activities in Burma, China, and Sudan in recent years.

NED has funded NDI and IRI political party development programs in a number of countries as well as at the regional level; most activities are one-time programs of short duration. From 1990 to 1995, NED provided grants for single-event political party programs in 30 countries, with IRI and NDI each administering roughly half of the programs. Multi-year programs were undertaken in eight countries, while 16 regional conferences were held during this timeframe. In many instances, these small NED grant programs were continued with USAID support in subsequent years.

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[31]In FY 1994, the National Endowment for Democracy funded programs in 83 countries; in 74 of those countries, USAID also had democracy programs while in nine countries NED worked alone. See *A Review of Democracy Programs Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the National Endowment for Democracy*, p. 7.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

USAID's political party development assistance activities have been fashioned by a number of diverse influences. The first is policy guidance as detailed in a number of internally driven USAID publications, as well as by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

Then the Agency's long-term, process-oriented framework defines three key goals: 1) the establishment and organizational development of viable, competing democratic political parties at national, regional, and local levels; 2) the provision of organized electoral choices to citizens through political parties in elections; and 3) the democratic governance of societies facilitated by political parties serving as managers and organizers of government and opposition. These aims fall within USAID's democracy assistance mandate and represent manageable, neutral, and efficacious objectives for political party development support.

Since it began its support of political party development in Hungary in 1989[32], USAID has supported the development of democratic political parties in more than 50 countries through country-specific programming as well as through regional political party training and assistance programs. These practical experiences have contributed significantly to USAID programming in this area.

Building on the Agency's knowledge and experience base, future programming will require attention to four distinct concerns: inclusiveness, interference with the domestic affairs of a sovereign state, electoral influence, and timing. In considering and working to resolve them, the DG Office anticipates working even more closely with NDI and IRI to make the next 20 years as successful as the last.

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[32]David Breg, *USAID Political Party Development Activities*, (Washington, DC: CDIE/DI/RRS, U.S. Agency for International Development, March 1996), p. 5.

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