

August 10, 2005

Dear Ambassador:

On behalf of the Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD), the Democracy Coalition Project (DCP), Freedom House, Participa, and the United National Development Programme (UNDP), we are writing to ask you to support our request to address the UN Democracy Caucus meeting that will be held in New York following the UN General Assembly Summit.

Having been engaged in the Community of Democracies (COD) since its June 2000 inception in Warsaw, Poland, this small group of NGOs has a long record of involvement in both the governmental and non-governmental processes of the COD. We played a key role in advocating for the creation of the UN Democracy Caucus and have participated regularly in Convening Group meetings.

Increasingly, government commitment to working with NGOs is becoming the norm at the UN. Indeed, the importance of this cooperation was recently underscored in the April Santiago Ministerial conference of the Community of Democracies, as well as by the UN Secretary-General in his report "In Larger Freedom". To this end, we value our good working relationships with the Ambassadors of the Convening Group and UN Democracy Caucus. We enjoyed a close relationship with Chile as the recent chair of the COD process and we now seek your support in securing an active role for civil society within the COD as it evolves under the leadership of Mali, and within the proposed UN Human Rights Council.

On behalf of our respective organizations and for the NGO community in general, we would like to be able to address the UN Democracy Caucus meeting that will be held in New York following the UN General Assembly Summit meeting from Sept 14-16. We would like to speak about the experience of the UN Democracy Caucus to date, and to discuss the important role it will have in shaping key UN reforms, such as the proposed UN Human Rights Council. We hope that such an intervention will lay the foundation for a more institutionalized NGO-Government interactions within the UN Democracy Caucus forum.

I know that practical arrangements for the UN Democracy Caucus meeting have not yet been finalized, but we hope that when the Convening Group takes up this issue in the next weeks, that you will lend your support to this request.

Sincerely,

Richard Rowson
President, Council for a Community of Democracies

Theodore Piccone
Executive Director, Democracy Coalition Project

Jennifer Windsor
Executive Director, Freedom House

Carl Gershman
President, National Endowment for Democracy

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