

September 23, 2003

To: Her Excellency Maria Soledad Alvear, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chile  
Chair, Community of Democracies Convening Group and the  
Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, India, Mali, Mexico, Poland,  
Portugal, Republic of Korea, South Africa, United States

Cc: The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Italy and Mongolia  
United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan

Re: **COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES AT THE UNITED NATIONS**

Over three years after the launching of the Community of Democracies, we continue to believe that an association of states acting jointly to protect and strengthen democracy and human rights around the world offers high promise for promoting democratic development and respect for human rights, and securing international peace and security. We also are convinced that the United Nations, as conceived by the UN Charter, remains a critical institution for securing this vision. The Community of Democracies (CD) should work with the relevant United Nations bodies and agencies to ensure the United Nations becomes the global forum for making respect for democratic principles the international norm.

Toward that end, we urge the Foreign Ministers gathered at the CD Convening Group meeting in New York on September 26 to take the following steps:

- Establish a permanent Democracy Group at the United Nations (UNDG) to promote the values of democracy and human rights within the UN system. The UNDG would convene to coordinate international support of member states' efforts to deepen democratic governance, reinforce human rights and promote democratic practices throughout the UN system.
- The UNDG should establish procedures to govern its activities. According to such rules of procedures the UNDG should be convened by the Chair of the CD Convening Group during the sessions of all the relevant bodies of the UN that deal with issues related to the promotion of democracy and human rights (GA, CHR, ECOSOC, etc.). Meetings of the DG also should be held on a regional basis, as an integral part of the regional implementation of the Seoul Plan of Action, and should be convened by the members of the Convening Group from each region.

- Agree that membership in the UN Democracy Group would consist of states formally invited to take part in the Community of Democracies meeting in Seoul as full participants. The Convening Group must be vigilant on an ongoing basis to apply its agreed-upon criteria for CD membership to ensure democratizing states are recognized and backsliding states are removed from the Community, as agreed in Seoul.
- The UN Democracy Group and the CD Convening Group should begin regular meetings this fall to consider the following specific issues:
  - A commitment to convene a meeting of the UNDG at the next session of the UN Commission on Human Rights to develop a common agenda of action items that strengthen the implementation and enforcement of fundamental political and civil rights through the body.
  - Support for tightening eligibility for membership on the UN Human Rights Commission to states that have demonstrated respect for democracy and human rights.
  - A coordinated response to Secretary General Kofi Annan's appeal for additional funding to the UN Electoral Assistance Division.
  - Collaboration with the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, currently chaired by the Government of Mongolia.
  - Endorsement of other democracy-related resolutions to be introduced at this fall's UN General Assembly.

Meeting in Seoul in 2002, governments participating in the Community of Democracies process agreed to take steps on a number of other issues important to the consolidation of democracy around the world. These issues include further improving collective responses to threats to democracy, promoting education for democracy, and reducing poverty. We believe the time is right to bring renewed attention and resources to these vital tasks. We urge the Convening Group to develop procedures for acting on these commitments in the months leading up to the next Community of Democracies gathering in Santiago in 2005. We also urge the Convening Group to consider expanding its membership to ensure that the group is even more broadly reflective of major democracies around the world.

Respectfully,

Madeleine Albright, former U.S. Secretary of State  
 Hon. Emma Bonino, Member of the European Parliament, Transnational Radical Party  
 John Brademas, President Emeritus, New York University  
 Lee Feinstein, Fmr Principal Dep. Director Policy Planning, Department of State  
 Morton Halperin, Director, Washington Office, Open Society Institute

Louise Kantrow, Executive Director, International League for Human Rights  
Don Kraus, Executive Director, Campaign for U.N. Reform  
Hryhoriy Nemyria, Chairman, International Renaissance Foundation, Ukraine  
Hon. Marco Pannella, Member of the European Parliament, Transnational Radical Party  
Amb. Alfred Moses, Chairman, United Nations Watch  
Ted Piccone, Director, Democracy Coalition Project  
Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch  
Richard Rowson, President, Council for a Community of Democracies  
Nancy Soderberg, Former U.S. Ambassador  
George Soros, Chairman, Open Society Institute  
Sergio Stanzani, President of the Transnational Radical Party  
Jusuf Wanandi, Chairman, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta,  
Indonesia  
Jennifer Windsor, Executive Director, Freedom House  
Professor Ahmed Ziauddin, Convenor, Asian Network for the ICC