



**HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA**

**ADVANCING CANADA'S ROLE IN
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC
DEVELOPMENT**

**Report of the Standing Committee on
Foreign Affairs and International Development**

**Kevin Sorenson, MP
Chair**

JULY 2007

39th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

has the honour to present its

EIGHTH REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), and the motion adopted by the Committee on May 10, 2006, your Committee has undertaken a study of Canada's role in international support for democratic development and has agreed to report the following:

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Our Committee has worked diligently over many months studying the many facets of democratic development. An important conclusion of our report calls for a substantial change in the way Canada contributes to democratic development in the world. The creation of a new foundation to carry out our nation's democratic development efforts is the most significant recommendation resulting from our deliberations.

Our Committee was advised from all corners that Canada has a great contribution to make in terms of democratic development around the world. In Canada, Europe and America those we met working on democratic development underlined their respect for Canada's capabilities in this field and encouraged us as they acknowledged that we have some comparative advantages and we can do more.

From this study our Committee has discovered the special talent that Canadians offer the international community. This reputation positions the Government of Canada to make a substantial contribution to the struggle for democratic development around the world in the coming years. Hopefully, the Committee's report will serve as a reference point for Canada taking advantage of the opportunity we have to make a difference in the world.

On behalf of the Committee, I want to thank Dr. Gerald Schmitz, the Principal Analyst from the Parliamentary Information and Research Service of the Library of Parliament, for drafting our report and navigating through numerous submissions, extensive evidence and related documents that were consulted. I also express our appreciation for the dedication of our Clerk, Angela Crandall for coordinating the testimony of the many witnesses who appeared before our Committee, and for organizing our two international fact-finding missions for this report. Thanks are due as well to Analyst James Lee and others from the Library of Parliament for background support during the study.

Kevin Sorenson

Chair

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Canada should continue to provide assistance to democratic development abroad, based on a broad conception of democracy that includes attention to the system of governance as a whole, the full range of international human rights — including socio-economic and cultural rights — and the full participation of citizens, including the most disadvantaged, in the processes of democracy. Over the long term, Canadian policy on support for democratic development should also aim to improve the quality and sustainability of democracy in the recipient countries.

Recommendation 2

Canada should invest more in practical knowledge generation and research on effective democratic development assistance. This should be available to inform the work of the Canadian government itself — notably involving DFAIT's Democracy Unit and CIDA's Office of Democratic Governance — and that of other donors as well as of non-governmental practitioners. To that end, several options should be considered for supporting independent research in a coordinated way that can benefit policymakers and practitioners. These options could include a Democracy Partners Research and Study Program under the International Development Research Centre along the lines suggested by the Parliamentary Centre and a centre for policy in democratic development along the lines suggested by George Perlin.

In particular, policy-relevant research should focus on issues of continuing critical importance in the democratic development field, notably:

- The need for local leadership of the democratization process and attention to the local dimensions of democratic development;**

- The need to ensure that democratic development is affirmed as a universal right and value consistent with the International Bill of Human Rights;
- The need to integrate democratic development assistance within the larger processes of social and economic development in other countries, and to a poverty reduction agenda in those countries receiving ODA;
- The need to benefit from the experience and expertise of non-governmental organizations active in the field of democratic development assistance;
- The need to improve the coherence and coordination of democratic development assistance both within donor countries and on a multilateral basis;
- The need for more regular, and realistic, evaluations of the effectiveness of democracy assistance funding and the need to evaluate in a more regular and realistic manner the effectiveness of the democratic development assistance strategies being pursued.

Recommendation 3

Given the weaknesses that have been identified in evaluating the effectiveness of Canada's existing democracy assistance funding, the government should commission an independent evaluation within one year of all public funding provided for this purpose, with the results to be tabled in Parliament and referred to this Committee. The proposed evaluation could be undertaken by an independent panel of experts selected following consultations with all parties in the House of Commons and the approval of this Committee.

Recommendation 4

Increased Canadian public-sector support for independent research and knowledge generation on effective democratic development assistance, as addressed in Recommendation 2, should encompass staying abreast of the activities of other donor countries, including of their NGOs and experts in this field, and continuous learning from their experiences.

Recommendation 5

The independent evaluation of all existing Canadian public funding for democratic development proposed by the Committee in Recommendation 3 should include a complete picture of what is being done, by what organization, for what purposes, and according to a common understanding of what is considered to be democratic development assistance. This complete picture should be seen within the larger framework of the official development assistance policy pursued by Canada.

Recommendation 6

The independent evaluation of existing Canadian democracy assistance funding that we have proposed in Recommendation 3 should include an assessment of those sectors in which Canadian democracy aid has been most effective, and in which Canadians have the greatest capacity to contribute their skills.

Recommendation 7

In terms of actually deploying Canadian expertise abroad, the evaluation should ascertain whether there is coherence among all publicly funded activities being undertaken by Canada.

Recommendation 8

In addition, recognizing that global needs in this complex field are vast, the evaluation should provide some indication of which countries might most benefit from a concentration of Canadian efforts.

Recommendation 9

Accompanying its comprehensive written response to the recommendations in this report, the Government should outline a comprehensive “whole-of-government” and “whole-of-Canada” policy framework on Canadian support for international democratic development. This framework should as a minimum:

- **Commit to making support for democratic development a key priority of overall Canadian international policy;**
- **Set out a broad conception of democratic development and common Canadian policy objectives in this field;**
- **Commit to providing multi-year funding sufficient to address those policy objectives and to finance the instruments chosen to implement them.**

Recommendation 10

The government should ensure that all government activities in the area of international democratic development are carried out on a coherent basis.

Recommendation 11

The government should ensure that CIDA, through its Office of Democratic Governance, makes available to Canadians as much information as possible on what CIDA funding is accomplishing in the area of democratic development. Moreover, the government's plans for the independent evaluation of Canada's aid program should take into account the Committee's recommendations calling for a comprehensive independent assessment and evaluation of all existing Canadian support to democratic development.

Recommendation 12

The government in consultation with all parties in the House of Commons should establish an arms-length Canada foundation for international democratic development or equivalent having the following key elements:

- **The foundation should be established by Act of Parliament and, while maintaining its independence from government, should report to Parliament annually through the Minister of Foreign Affairs;**
- **There should be a multi-year commitment of resources to the foundation sufficient to put Canada among the world leaders in the field, with funding provided either by annual appropriations or as a one-time endowment;**

- The foundation should be governed by a board of directors appointed by government on the basis of all-party consultations;
- The foundation's board should be representative of the Canadian community of practice on democratic development, should include representatives of Canada's democratic institutions and political parties, which could be current or former Members of Parliament, and could include some representatives from countries in which Canada has major democratic development assistance programs;
- The president of the foundation and the chair of its board should be chosen by the board itself not by the government.

Recommendation 13

The Canada foundation for international democratic development should be a participant in the enlarged Democracy Council as discussed in Chapter 6 and should co-sponsor with the Council at least annually a public conference on Canada's approach to democratic development.

Recommendation 14

The Canada foundation for international democratic development should also be the means to support the generation of better knowledge and evaluation to assist the work of the community of practice. It would provide funding to a centre for policy in democratic development as suggested in chapter 2, preferably operating as a subsidiary part of the foundation. Furthermore, the Canada foundation for international democratic development and the Democracy Council should collaborate on a public website which would make available to Canadians information resources on important issues in democratic development, the results of relevant research findings, country strategies, and evaluations of the effectiveness of Canadian democratic development assistance.

Recommendation 15

The Parliament of Canada, following consultations with all parties represented in the House of Commons, should consider setting up a centre for multi-party and parliamentary democracy, with a parliamentary mandate and with funding provided through the arms-length Canada foundation for international democratic development. Such a centre should start with modest funding and be re-evaluated after two years. Following that, the centre might be able to program on a multi-year basis similar to that of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, ultimately aiming to reach a level comparable to the NIMD. The board of the centre would include representatives from all parties represented in Parliament.

Recommendation 16

As part of advancing democratic development, Canada should provide more support for civil society-based initiatives from the local to the global level that utilize Canadian civil-society experience and that aim to increase grass-roots citizens' participation and strengthen democratic accountability.

Recommendation 17

Canada should support expanded democratic development initiatives in the areas of education at all levels, exchanges and training, provided that the specific programs can demonstrate their effectiveness and sustainability over the longer term. Further examination and funding should come through the independent Canada foundation for international democratic development that we have proposed.

Recommendation 18

Canada should provide more support for freedom of the press through the development of free and independent media as part of democratic development, paying particular attention to strategies for, among others: assisting such media in contexts where they are under pressure; reaching as many people as possible including in rural and under-served areas; harnessing Canadian expertise in this area and exploring the potential of new affordable communications technologies. Increased

funding should come through the Canada foundation for international democratic development on the basis of a rigorous assessment of project proposals as to their effectiveness and sustainability.

Recommendation 19

The independent evaluation of all Canadian support for democratic development that we have recommended should also assess the effectiveness of multilateral channels to which Canada provides funding. That evaluation should guide appropriate funding levels.

Recommendation 20

Recognizing that the future challenges of democratization processes involve governance at the level of international organizations, as well as in national and local settings, the Canada foundation for international democratic development should include these dimensions within its mandate, and should consider related proposals for support from Canadian non-governmental bodies and civil-society groups working in this area.

Recommendation 21

As part of the essential role of a reformed and strengthened United Nations in global democratic development, the Parliament of Canada should give favourable consideration to the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly.

Recommendation 22

In light of the establishment of the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) as part of UN reform proposals in 2005, Canada should consider whether to become a donor to UNDEF.

Recommendation 23

Taking into account the expertise and experience on democratic development that has been accumulated by Canadians working in this field through multilateral

organizations, Canada should make an effort to tap into this pool of knowledge in furthering its own approach to democratic development.

Recommendation 24

Canada should ensure that it engages in democratic development assistance with the benefit of detailed realistic country assessments that include the identification of credible and accountable local partners who must drive forward the democratization process within their countries. The preparation and updating of such objective assessments could be undertaken by an arms-length centre for policy in democratic development (as discussed in Recommendations 2 and 14) funded through the Canada foundation.

Recommendation 25

Canadian support for legitimate local democratic efforts within authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes will require detailed and updated knowledge of the circumstances for democracy assistance in the countries in which Canada chooses to focus its efforts. Objective country assessments could be undertaken by an independent centre for policy in democratic development as funded through the Canada foundation for international democratic development that we have proposed.

Recommendation 26

Canada should work towards effective strategies that link democracy-building and peace-building in emerging democracies under situations of conflict or post-conflict. These strategies should pay particular attention to Canada's role in supporting the development of sustainable governance institutions and processes, including those of sound public administration, functional political parties and parliaments.

Recommendation 27

Recognizing that the circumstances of "failed" or "fragile" states are the most difficult and complex for democratic development interventions, Canada should concentrate its

efforts in countries where it is already heavily invested with much at stake, and where it is capable of making a difference by sustaining high levels of democracy- and peace-building assistance over long periods of time.

Recommendation 28

There is at the same time a consequent need for more and better applied knowledge and learning based on independent realistic and updated country assessments. The Canada foundation for international democratic development through the centre for policy on democratic development that the Committee has suggested should be involved in the preparation of such assessments.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With this report containing 28 recommendations, the Committee sets out a comprehensive and forward-looking agenda to advance Canada's role in the promotion of democratic development internationally. We believe that Canada should become among the world leaders in a growing field of international policy that is as necessary to the future of global order as it is challenging in implementation.

To achieve this goal for Canada will take more than just incremental steps — a few add-ons; a little more funding here and there. It will require some new directions and new instruments. Chief among these is an arms-length Canada foundation for international democratic development as proposed in Recommendation 12, the centrepiece of Chapter 7, the longest in the report.

At the same time and as importantly, the Committee has not rushed to this conclusion without taking into consideration the full body of evidence before us, and making the thorough examination that such a complex subject, and Canada's role therein, deserves. When we propose new directions in Part III, it is on the basis of an analysis that continues to build through each chapter of the report.

In Part I, the Committee addresses the daunting global context for supporting democratic development, acknowledging that this context — and indeed the objective of “democracy” itself — remains historically contested and uncertain terrain. We also underline that, while our focus throughout this report is on *democratic* development, there is a strong positive relationship to a larger international development vision reflecting Canadian values and long-term interests.

Strengthening Canadian support for democratic development is part of strengthening Canadian international development assistance as a whole. Moreover, our first recommendation argues for a Canadian approach to democratic development that is based on a broad conception encompassing governance systems, international human rights, conditions for the full participation of citizens, and the quality and sustainability of democracy in recipient countries.

Chapter 2 then delves further into the analysis of democratic development assistance and identifies five critical issues that donors must confront: local leadership and governance dimensions; the advancement of democratic development as a global, not Western-imposed endeavour (taking into account recent “pushback” against external support for democratic development in some parts of the world); the relationship of democratic to socio-economic development and poverty alleviation; the lack of coherence and coordination of democracy assistance, both within and among donor countries; the persistent deficit of policy-relevant knowledge and evaluation of the effectiveness of democracy aid.

The Committee argues, in Section 2.1 of this chapter, that Canada can help lead in addressing the knowledge and evaluation gap that pervades the entire field of democratic development. Accordingly, in Recommendation 2, we call for more Canadian investment in this area, and suggest options that could include a new research program under the auspices of the arms-length International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and a centre for policy in democratic development as proposed by Professor George Perlin.

Going to the effectiveness issue, the Committee, in Recommendation 3, calls for an independent evaluation of all existing Canadian public funding for democratic development purposes, and suggests that this evaluation could be undertaken by an independent panel of experts selected following consultations with all parties in the House of Commons and the approval of the Committee.

In Chapter 3, which draws on highlights from the Committee's extensive international meetings in Europe and the United States, the Committee argues that Canada should make a point of continuously learning from the experiences of other donors, and that we are well placed to do so. We note the remark made to us by one of the world's leading experts, Thomas Carothers, in Washington D.C., that Canada has an opportunity to benefit from avoiding the mistakes of others. To do so requires the capacity to keep abreast of and analyse what others are doing. In Recommendation 4, we underline the need for continuous learning in this regard.

Before proceeding further to outline new Canadian initiatives, the Committee in Part II of the report takes full account of the existing Canadian role in democratic development. In Chapter 4, we review the evolution of Canadian involvement to date, notably including the parliamentary impetus behind the creation of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (now known as Rights and Democracy). We also survey Canadian support to democratic development provided both bilaterally and multilaterally. That includes that most recent initiatives of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which provides the bulk of governmental assistance, although we also observe the difficulty in getting a firm handle on the funding numbers.

In Recommendation 5, therefore, the Committee argues that the independent evaluation of all Canadian funding for democratic development should include a clear complete picture of what is being done, by whom, with what objectives, and according to a common understanding of what constitutes democratic development assistance.

Leading into Part III, Chapter 5 looks at Canadian capabilities and potential comparative advantages that can be applied to the promotion of democratic development. The Committee notes the Canadian strengths that have been developing in such areas as elections, parliamentary strengthening, judicial reform, police training, anti-corruption activities, local governance, among others. We acknowledge the work of the independent, non-profit agency CANADEM in building up a growing roster of Canadian expertise for international assignments.

At the same time, we express concern that the “Deployment for Democratic Development Mechanism”, that CIDA’s new Office of Democratic Governance is currently putting in place, be coherent with CANADEM’s relatively low-cost operations. In Recommendations 6, 7, and 8, the Committee proposes that the independent evaluation of all Canadian support for democratic development we have called for include an assessment of where this support has been most effective and where Canada has the greatest potential to contribute, as well as of the coherence among publicly funded activities by Canada, and of which countries might benefit most from a concentration of Canadian democratic development assistance.

While Chapter 5 acknowledges the good work already being done by Canada, it points to something missing:

It is the question of overall impact and visibility that lingers. On the one hand, we are told that Canada is well-regarded internationally, that Canada has something special to offer, that there are skilled Canadians interested and involved in this field; on the other that Canadian support spread thinly in many places often receives little notice, and that Canada is still punching below its weight in this field.

Part III of the report aims to address this through a series of recommendations that call for significantly upgrading Canadian support for democratic development at the level of policy, funding, and institutional instruments.

In Chapter 6, the Committee calls for making democratic development a key Canadian international policy priority through a comprehensive and coherent “whole of government” and “whole of Canada” policy framework that includes a commitment to multi-year funding. As well, the government should ensure that CIDA provides as much information as possible on results achieved through its Office of Democratic Governance and is scrutinized through the independent evaluation of Canadian aid. This chapter also looks at the future of an enlarged “Democracy Council” process, arguing that it should evolve in connection with the new institutions the Committee proposes in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7 is where the Committee, following attentive analysis of sometimes conflicting testimony, makes several major proposals for establishing new institutions that we believe will make Canada a truly serious, not just a minor, player in international democratic development. We argue that “an incremental sprinkling of resources across an array of small organizations” will not be good enough. In Recommendations 12 through 14, the Committee provides the details for the establishment of an independent Canada foundation for international democratic development following consultations with all parties represented in the House of Commons. Like the IDRC, it should report annually to Parliament through the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and it should also be given resources “sufficient to put Canada among the world leaders in the field.”

In the Committee’s view, the Canada foundation could work as part of a reformed Democracy Council process to provide for regular public input, the wide sharing of

information and research findings, and the generation of better knowledge and evaluation of effectiveness through a centre for policy in democratic development as already suggested in Recommendation 2. The centre would operate as a subsidiary of the Canada foundation.

The Committee believes that the new Canada foundation should have a broad mandate to assist increased democratic development initiatives, particularly in “areas where Canadian support to date has been lacking or insufficient: developing a role for political parties and strengthening the contribution of parliamentarians; expanding the role of civil society, education, and of independent, free media.”

To that end, in Section 7.1 of Chapter 7, the Committee provides a way forward for developing a role for Canadian political parties and strengthening the role played by Canadian parliamentarians. We do so taking into full account the critical issues surrounding political party development aid, as well as those related to effective practices in parliamentary strengthening. We examine the examples of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support, and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), the latter having been positively cited as being one which may be most applicable to Canada.

The Committee also takes note of the quite different proposals for involving political parties and parliamentarians that have been put to us by the Parliamentary Centre and Rights and Democracy. At the same time, we observe that in all the international cases referred to, “the initiative for a body supporting political party development as part of democratic development has come from the legislators and parliamentarians themselves.” In Recommendation 15, we therefore propose that the Parliament of Canada, following consultations with all parties, consider setting up a centre for multi-party and parliamentary democracy funded through the independent Canada foundation for international democratic development. Such a centre would start small and be re-evaluated after two years, but could ultimately aim to reach a level comparable to the well-regarded NIMD.

In Section 7.2 of Chapter 7, the Committee addresses expanded support for Canadian civil-society, educational, and media initiatives which could come through the Canada foundation for international democratic development. In Recommendation 16, we recognize that civil-society initiatives utilizing Canadian experience can take place from the local to the global levels of governance, and that funding criteria should include the objectives of increasing grass-roots citizens’ participation and strengthening democratic accountability.

In Recommendation 17, the Committee calls for additional support to “the areas of education at all levels, exchanges and training, provided that the specific programs can demonstrate their effectiveness and sustainability over the longer term”. In Recommendation 18, the Committee calls for enhanced support to free, independent media, notably in contexts where such media are under pressure, in rural and under-served areas, and in terms of new affordable communications technologies. Again,

we express the caution that project proposals be subject to rigorous assessment criteria that consider effectiveness and sustainability factors.

Canada, of course, cannot go it alone in this international field. Chapter 8 therefore considers support for democratic development delivered through international organizations and multilateral channels. In Recommendation 19, the Committee argues that multilateral funding should be part of the comprehensive independent evaluation of the effectiveness of existing Canadian funding that we have called for in Recommendation 3, and that this should guide appropriate funding levels. In Recommendation 20, the Committee recognizes that there are multilateral democratization initiatives also taking place involving Canadian non-governmental and civil-society organizations, and that funding for these should be considered by the independent Canada foundation for international democratic development.

At the global level, Chapter 8 gives particular attention to democratic development within the United Nations system. Part of this involves trying to make the UN itself more accountable to elected representatives and not only state governments. The Committee, in Recommendation 21, therefore supports the concept of establishing a UN Parliamentary Assembly.

The other dimension is UN activities supporting democratic development, notably by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs, which are already strongly supported by Canada. However, the Committee observes that Canada has not so far joined most of its G7 partners in contributing to the voluntary UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF), which was created as a UN reform initiative arising from the September 2005 UN Summit. As indicated in Recommendation 22, we believe that Canada should consider whether to become a donor to UNDEF.

A final important point of Chapter 8 is to recognize the striking numbers of Canadians who are working abroad on democratic development through multilateral channels, often in positions of influence. While this is admirable and useful, the Committee, in Recommendation 23, argues that greater effort needs to be made to tap into this pool of knowledge and experience to help further Canada's own approach to democratic development.

In Chapter 9, the last of the report, the Committee surveys Canada's role in supporting democratic development in contexts that are both very different and difficult — in the “hard cases” that are facing the international community. We believe that to have a reasonable chance for positive impact, Canada must focus its efforts and acquire detailed knowledge of local circumstances in recipient countries on the basis of objective credible analysis. In Recommendation 24, the Committee suggests that such detailed and realistic country assessments could be prepared by a centre for policy in democratic development funded through the Canada foundation for international democratic development (recalling Recommendations 2 and 14).

The Committee recognizes that Haiti — the subject of a prior Committee report, *Canada's International Policy Put to the Test in Haiti* (December 2006) — and Afghanistan, the subject of ongoing Committee study, will be among the recipient countries requiring such assessments, noting the major Canadian investments and interests that are at stake in those two countries, and the fact that they are among the hardest of the hard cases in terms of democratic development assistance.

In Sections 9.1 to 9.3 of this final chapter, the Committee looks briefly at Canada's potential role in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian contexts, in emerging democracies and post-conflict societies, and in so-called "failed" or "fragile" states, taking into account that these categories may be overlapping and that no easy answers should be expected.

In Recommendation 25 dealing with authoritarian contexts, the Committee argues that Canadian support for legitimate local democratic efforts will require detailed and updated country assessments. In Recommendation 26, dealing with emerging and post-conflict contexts, the Committee calls for strategies that link democracy-building with peace-building, and that give attention to the development of sustainable governance structures, including at the levels of public administration, political parties, and parliaments.

In the most difficult, and unfortunately increasing, contexts of "failed" or "fragile" states, Recommendations 27 and 28 call for concentrated high-level commitments that are sustained over long periods of time. Again, the Committee underlines the need for better, applied context-specific knowledge and learning based on "independent realistic and updated country assessments." And again there is a role here for the independent Canada foundation for international democratic development that we propose.

In sum, the Committee affirms that Canada can and should become a larger and smarter player in international democratic development, fully recognizing that this is one of the most challenging fields of international engagement today and in the future. We believe that, with the addition of several new instruments, Canadians possess the requisite expertise, experience and resolve to make a leading positive contribution that fully realizes our capabilities and potential comparative advantages. The Committee has come to this conclusion after a thorough considered analysis. All of our recommendations are directed towards the achievement of this goal.

PREFACE

On May 10 2006, the Committee agreed to “carry out a major study of democratic development in the fall of 2006.” To that end, we began our public hearings with an appearance by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Peter MacKay, on September 27 2006. The Committee also heard from the Minister for International Cooperation, Hon. Josée Verner, on October 18 2006, and from the president of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Robert Greenhill on March 1 2007, which was our last hearing of the study.

Beyond these meetings with Canadian government officials, the Committee heard a wide range of testimony from knowledgeable witnesses in the course of over a dozen public hearings in Ottawa, as well as receiving a number of written submissions. In addition, the Committee undertook two international study trips to learn from the experiences of other donors and from international experts. These were to Europe (the United Kingdom and the four Nordic countries of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark) in October 2006, and the United States (Washington D.C., and New York, notably to the United Nations) in February 2007. We thank all of those who contributed to our study for the quality of their presentations.

While the idea of Canadian support for democratic development originated from parliamentary discussions during the mid-1980s (see chapter 4), this Report is the first comprehensive report on the subject to have been undertaken by a parliamentary committee. This is an important subject that has been overdue for such scrutiny and serious examination by Canadian parliamentarians.

All parties are agreed that now is the time for Canada to move forward significantly in the challenging area of international democratic development, and to bring an approach to this complex field that reflects Canadian values and interests in the world. The Committee’s report takes into account the critical issues that need to be faced by providers of democracy assistance and key lessons that have been learned. It also takes into account and builds from existing Canadian experience and expertise.

The Committee’s report strikes a bold new direction for Canadian policy. Going beyond the status quo, it is not satisfied with only a few small changes. We propose substantial innovations which we hope will gain the support of the government and Parliament. We are confident that Canada can become among the world leaders in democratic development. Canadians, we believe, are up to the challenge.

PART I — THE CHALLENGES OF PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN TODAY’S WORLD

We need to be a lot clearer about what we mean by democratic development and good governance. We need to understand why we’re doing it, and we need to learn and apply what we’ve learned. ... good governance does not drop from the sky; it is not a gift; it cannot be imposed. Good governance is unlikely to flow from a collection of disparate, time-bound projects offered by a dozen ill-coordinated donors. It cannot be transferred holus-bolus like pizza from a delivery truck. It must be earned and learned, not just by those for whom it is intended but by those who would help them. Effective application of the full governance agenda as we now understand it is still pretty much undocumented, untested, and uncoordinated. And it is far too young for dogmatism and certainty. It is old enough, however, that mistakes should not be repeated, and it is important enough that lessons, both positive and negative, should be documented, learned, remembered, and applied.

- Ian Smillie, development consultant¹

The challenges of attaining sustainable human development for the whole of the world’s growing population are daunting on many fronts. As development thinking continues to evolve, it now includes attention to the democratic and governance dimensions of development as essential to its progress. The role of development assistance from outside donors is being challenged at the same time as to its quantity, quality, and effectiveness. And this is especially true of assistance to the democratic and governance elements of international assistance which are the subject of this report.

The Committee believes that Canada should contribute more to tackling such challenges both overall and in the particular case of democratic development. We stand by our report adopted unanimously on June 9, 2005 — and concurred in unanimously by the House of Commons on June 28, 2005 — which called both for planned increases in official development assistance (ODA) to 0.5% of GNP by 2010 and 0.7% of GNP by 2015, and for a legislated mandate for Canadian ODA.² Along with that, we believe that Canada should substantially increase its commitment to supporting democratic development. The Committee emphasizes that such an increase should in no way come at the expense of support for other areas of development related to achieving the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the world community in 2000.

The idea of assisting democratic development internationally is appealing but not self-evident as to definition or realization. In Chapter 1, the Committee therefore reviews the state of democracy and democratization, going on to draw out the connections between democratic development, universal human rights, improved governance, socio-economic development and poverty reduction. The Committee calls for a Canadian approach to promoting democratic development in other countries that is based on a broad conception of democracy that includes attention to its quality and sustainability.

Chapter 2 reviews the global field of democracy assistance and addresses the key critical challenges facing all providers of democracy assistance. Prominent among those are the large deficits which persist in terms of context-specific knowledge and credible evaluation of the effectiveness of assistance. The Committee suggests ways in which Canada might exercise leadership in this area. In Chapter 3, the Committee draws on insights from its meetings outside Canada with European, American, and multilateral donors, as well as with international experts, to enrich the learning process, that as Ian Smillie pointed out to us, is so needed in this field.

CHAPTER 1 DEFINING DEMOCRACY, DEMOCRATIZATION, AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT — A CANADIAN APPROACH

From its Greek origins³ to modern times, democracy has been both an evolving and quintessentially contested concept in the history of political thought.⁴ Apart from the brief Athenian example from antiquity, it is only since the 18th and 19th centuries (the French and American revolutions) that democracy has been considered in a positive light⁵, only since the 20th century that universal suffrage became the standard for electoral democracy⁶, only since the mid-20th century that democracy has been linked to universal rights⁷, and only in the 21st century that democracy in at least a minimal sense has been enjoyed by a majority of the world's population.⁸

The advance of democracy continues to be an uneven, complex continuing process, sometimes beset by setbacks or retreats. In a seminal formulation, the American political scientist, Samuel Huntington, has postulated that we are in a “third wave” of global democratic expansion that began in the 1970s, and accelerated with the end of the Cold War, but which continues to face challenges in many regions.⁹

Others such as British theorist, Laurence Whitehead, characterise that past half century as one of growing international pressures to democratize by harder or softer means — from varied forms of diplomatic persuasion to democratic conditionalities (on aid, trade, financial concessions, and membership eligibility in some multilateral organizations), to intervention by force (whether UN-mandated or not). He sees four main types of modern internationally influenced democratic transitions: “Democratization through decolonization”; “New democracies eligible to join the European Union (EU)”; “democratization processes following military defeat”; “Democratizations under United Nations or international auspices.”¹⁰

Professor Diane Éthier of the University of Montreal also pointed the Committee to international factors in identifying three main democratization strategies used by outside actors since the Second World War: “control, that is the imposition of democracy on a country by foreign authorities”; “conditionality”, which can be positive (tied to assistance in some way) or negative (involving sanctions or other measures of censure); and “one based on incentives. Under this strategy, a country might freely receive different forms of assistance or other types of advantages to encourage it to implement or consolidate a democratic system.”¹¹ She was sceptical of the effectiveness of democratization strategies, noting that “democracy imposed by foreign authorities only developed or flourished in countries which had already achieved an advanced level of social and economic modernization when the foreign powers intervened”¹², that political conditionality has really only worked in the case of accession processes to the European Union, and that the evidence of positive results from other forms of support remains weak. She concluded:

Democracy is a domestic affair par excellence. Although the more forcible strategies, like control and conditionality, are more effective than incentives, their success depends either on favourable economic, social, political and cultural conditions in the target countries or on the creation of those conditions through massive investment and judicious and targeted interventions over a long or very long period of time.¹³

This cautionary scepticism about external interventions on the side of democracy is not unusual among analysts. Professor Bruce Bueno de Mesquita of New York University told the Committee that “the record of exporting democracy since World War II is not a good record”, although his colleague Professor George Downs allowed that, with less baggage than the great powers and more responsive flexibility than large international organizations, “Canada has a better prospect of being successful than the UN or the United States.”¹⁴

And yet, by all accounts democracy *has* made remarkable progress since the Second World War. Moreover, the aspiration to genuine democracy is one that is almost universally shared by the world’s peoples. The troubling news is that virtually all analysts also agree that the continued forward march of democracy is no sure thing, and that in the current environment retreat is threatening progress. The annual Freedom House survey “Freedom in the World 2007” released in January 2007 included an essay by Arch Puddington “Freedom Stagnation amid Pushback Against Democracy”, noting that the number of countries designated as “free” has failed to increase for nearly a decade and that authoritarian tendencies have increased in many regions.¹⁵ The *Economist’s* latest annual review *The World in 2007* suggests that “the spread of democracy has stalled”, for reasons including an anti-American backlash since the Iraq war and the fact that “many autocrats preside over energy-rich states and have been strengthened by high oil prices.” Nine of ten countries on its democracy index “watch list” are in the negative category. Yet the *Economist* conclusion remains hopeful:

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to be too pessimistic. Democracy as a value retains strong universal appeal. Creating democracy by external intervention has not gone smoothly. But trends such as globalisation, increasing education and expanding middle classes favour its organic development. These underlying forces suggest that any retreat from democracy will be temporary.¹⁶

It is important to recognize at the same time that democracy is at issue within developed countries too, as well as at the global level, hence the talk of “democratic deficits” in many places. The most recent triennial world congress of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) was on the theme “Is Democracy Working?” — a question not a statement. One address to that conference, by Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), which the Committee met with in Stockholm, Sweden, put the case in the best light:

Today, more people than ever before are governed by elected representatives. Democracy — the idea that people have the right to control their government and that a government is legitimate only if and when it is controlled by the people — has acquired an almost unique global hegemony, hardly matched by any other worldview in modern

history. It transcends cultures, religions and languages; it takes multiple forms and survives in the most inhospitable environments. Democracy is an expression of the very basic human quest for freedom and dignity and of the understanding that these values need to be shared.¹⁷

The democratic aspiration may be worldwide, and democracy may have attained the status of an international normative framework, as Warren Allmand and Fergus Watt argued to the Committee.¹⁸ Yet democracy is always a developing work in progress. Another IPSA presentation by the noted Latin American scholar of democratic transitions Guillermo O'Donnell captured an essential aspect of all democracy as a constant progressive striving:

[D]emocracy always projects both hope and dissatisfaction. Because it is founded on various dimensions of citizenship and the intrinsic dignity of human beings that these dimensions bring about, democracy always, remains an open horizon. This projection toward the future, toward a better future, is the genie that has come out of the bottle and has spread throughout the world as never before. This projection toward an unending and undefined, yet always promising and risky future, runs essentially contrary to all forms of authoritarian rule. ... we must consider that democracy is and always will be in some kind of crisis. It is constantly straining its citizens from a more or less satisfactory present towards a future of yet unfulfilled promises and capabilities.¹⁹

George Perlin, citing O'Donnell in a similar vein in an opening paper presented to the February 15 "Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development", also observes that: "There is no overarching theory of democratic development against which to measure progress."²⁰

How then to define democracy and democratic development? For the purposes of democracy support policy, that should also mean giving attention to the *quality*, *consolidation* and *sustainability* of democracy, if the goals of long-term democratic development are to be reached.

Professor Perlin argues that a fully developed democracy represents a normative ideal, and it is clear that we wish to support "liberal" forms of democracy. He provides detailed tables of elements and indicators of liberal democracy and of the conditions necessary to achieve and sustain liberal democracy. Using a narrower definition, democracy scholar Larry Diamond defines the key elements of liberal democracy in brief as encompassing "not only electoral competition for power but also:

- Freedom of belief, expression, organization, and demonstration;
- Protection from political terror and unjustified imprisonment;
- A rule of law under which all citizens are treated equally and due process is secure;

- Political independence and neutrality of the judiciary and of other institutions of “horizontal accountability” that check the abuse of power;
- An open, pluralistic civil society;
- Civilian control over the military.”²¹

More ambitiously, Warren Allmand referred the Committee to the ten indicators for evaluating democracies developed by Canada’s International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD, now known as Rights and Democracy), of which he was president: “firstly, free, fair, and regular elections, including a multi-party system; second, full respect for all human rights, including minority rights and gender equality; three, full respect for the rule of law; four, an independent judiciary; five, an independent legislature; six, an equitable distribution of wealth; seven, control of the military and police by the civil authority; eight, public accountability and an ongoing process for consultation; nine, transparency and access to information; and ten, a free and active civil society.”²² In Stockholm, Sweden, headquarters of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the Committee heard from IDEA staff about the methodology of its democracy assessments which are not just externally formulated but attempt to arrive at a shared understanding that involves civil society in the countries concerned and that gauges citizens’ perceptions. This is as part of its mandate to contribute to sustainable democracy around the world by improving the quality and effectiveness of democratic practices worldwide.²³

Mr. Allmand added: “It is our view that you can’t have democracy without human rights, and you can’t have human rights without democracy. Human rights and democracy always advance together.”²⁴ Gareth Evans, President of the International Crisis Group, has argued that “democracy is best conceptualized as a human rights issue”, in part because: “This enables the promotion of democracy world-wide to be credibly portrayed as a genuinely *universal* value, rather than just a Western hang-up, and (while not pretending that “universal human rights” is an easy sell in many parts of the world) that is helpful in terms of getting buy-in.”²⁵

It is worth recalling that the report which led up to the Canadian government’s creation of ICHRDD in 1988 used an emphatically participatory and rights-based concept of democracy:

The notion of democracy we have adopted, and which we believe must define and inspire Canadian assistance in this area, is quite simply the participation of citizens in decision-making which affects their lives. The ultimate objective is to assist the population to develop the ability to intervene on its own behalf in the decision-making process at the local, regional and national level and to assist the public powers to create institutions to safeguard the rights and liberties of citizens.²⁶

According to a discussion paper prepared for Canada’s Democracy Council in 2006:

The decision to focus on the rights and political engagement of citizens was anchored not in the promotion of a particular Canadian brand or model of democracy or development, but rather in principles contained in the International Bill of Rights. This unites the two principal strands of the liberal democratic tradition: on one side, the centrality of participation in shaping and legitimating decision-making processes and the formation of government itself; on the other, a rights “platform” to support and protect the role of individuals in the democratic process.²⁷

This broadly human rights-based approach to democracy goes well beyond Freedom House’s criteria for an “electoral democracy”²⁸ and also somewhat beyond the “full democracy” postulated by The Economist Intelligence Unit’s 2006 “index of democracy”. The EIU observes that a “key difference in the various measures of democracy is between “thin” or minimalist ones and “thick” or wider concepts, which may “include aspects of society and political culture in democratic societies.”²⁹ The EIU’s democracy index is “based on five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. The five categories are interrelated and form a coherent conceptual whole. The condition of having **free and fair competitive elections**, and satisfying related aspects of political freedom, is clearly the basic requirement of all definitions.”

The EIU opts for a relatively “thick” concept for full democracy, arguing that “a healthy democracy requires the active, freely chosen participation of citizens in public life. Democracies flourish when citizens are willing to take part in public debate, elect representatives and join political parties. Without this broad, sustaining participation, democracy begins to wither and become the preserve of small, select groups.”³⁰ The EIU’s other categories are in descending order, “flawed democracies”, “hybrid regimes”, and “authoritarian regimes”. (Incidentally, Sweden ranks first among the full democracies on the EIU’s index of 167 states and territories³¹; Canada ranks 9th and the United States 17th.³²)

Globally, the breakdown can be seen in the following table³³:

Democracy index 2006 by regime type

	Countries	% of countries	% of world population
Full democracies	28	16.8	13.0
Flawed democracies	54	32.3	38.3
Hybrid regimes	30	18.0	10.5
Authoritarian regimes	55	32.9	38.2

While the EIU’s concept of full democracy is broad and deep — “At the same time, even our thicker, more inclusive and wider measure of democracy does not include other aspects — which some authors argue are also crucial components of democracy — such as levels of economic and social wellbeing.”³⁴

This is an important consideration when it comes to the parameters of “democratic development” and the boundaries of Canadian support for it. As already noted, the statutory mandate of Rights and Democracy explicitly includes a basis in international human rights standards that includes economic, social and cultural rights. Its president, Jean-Louis Roy, reaffirmed that in his testimony when he noted that members of his institution “have a vision of democracy that has as one of its essential elements all of the human rights that are recognized under international law and by the United Nations, as well as by governments that have signed and ratified the international instruments. ... Democracy must from now on be identified with full recognition of political rights and the accountability that goes along with it, of course, but also recognition of social rights and economic rights.”³⁵

Other witnesses made similar points. Edward Broadbent, the first president of Rights and Democracy, stated that “our foreign policy must help the development of democracy, and this should be done by persuasion, trade, and aid, and by the development of globally enforceable human rights law.”³⁶ John Foster of the North-South Institute argued “that democracy is best expressed in a human rights framework, and that those rights included social, economic, and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights.” He urged more donor support for effective civil society organizations and networks in that regard.³⁷ Gerry Barr, speaking on behalf of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, directly connected democracy support to poverty reduction: “Democratic development very often goes to the role of citizens’ organizations and social movements in the fight against poverty. ... It’s when we get to this development vision side of things that issues such as the role of citizens, their social movements, the way in which aid can be used to mobilize people’s participation, come increasingly to the fore; it’s where democratic development arises.”³⁸

Thomas Axworthy, of the Queen’s University Centre for Democracy, referred to both rule of the people and rights of the people as twin principles of democracy, and to a broad developmental transformative agenda beyond basic procedural minimums, citing positively an early Canadian study of democratic development.³⁹ Other witnesses linked democratic development to an expansive agenda of governance and civic participation. The submission of the Canadian Bar Association argued that: “Canada’s efforts to promote democracy will be most successful if its assistance is centred on supporting good governance, which includes a significant focus on building the rule of law.” It continued that decisions on democracy support should be approached “principally through the lens of development”, citing Nobel prize winner Amartya Sen that “development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states.”⁴⁰ (In his opening presentation to the Committee, Foreign Affairs Minister Peter Mackay also cited Sen to the effect that “the most striking feature of the 20th century was the rise of democracy as the pre-eminently acceptable form of governance. Democratic governance has been accepted as a universal norm.”⁴¹)

George Perlin of Queen's University saw a converging consensus around a broad definition for democratic development covering a broad governance, human rights and development agenda:

I understand democratic development to be activity that is aimed at creating systems of governance organized around the values of freedom, equality, and justice that are embedded in the liberal democratic foundations of our own system. I stress that we are talking about an entire system of governance. ... the compass for assistance to democratic development has a very wide scope and an a wide array of objectives and types of activities. ... I've identified 50 different kinds of objectives to which democracy assistance has been applied.⁴²

Roel von Meijenfeldt, Executive Director of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, told an audience at DFAIT in January 2007 that:

Democracy assistance should use a much wider democracy concept than is often the case. ... While progress has been achieved in establishing the formal attributes ("hardware") of democratic societies, key challenges remain to be addressed in terms of consolidating the process and building a "culture" of democracy. This opens a broad agenda for various actors who are directly or indirectly involved in the democratisation process. It implies a focus on the "legitimacy" of government (beyond elections); the norms and attitudes towards the public good; the political society, including the empowerment of parliaments and political parties; and innovative ways to ensure transparency and accountability.⁴³

In her testimony Minister of International Development Cooperation, Josée Verner, indicated that the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) sees four essential elements to democratic governance:

The first is the existence of freedom and democracy based upon strong electoral, legislative, and party institutions that are rooted in a supportive democratic culture including an active civil society and vibrant, free media.

The second is the rule of law, with fair and effective laws, accessible and timely legal institutions, and an impartial judiciary.

The third is the presence of human rights practices and institutions within the State and held to account by an active civil society.

And finally, the fourth is public sector institutions that manage the economy and public funds and deliver key social services such as health and education effectively — and without corruption.

This is an enormous project.⁴⁴

The Committee agrees that a broad conception of democratic governance, and of democratic development overall, presents a daunting set of challenges for future Canadian policy in the area of democracy support. We also agree with witnesses, including ministers,

that our assistance should consider all aspects of such a wide ranging and forward-looking agenda of democratic development. In this way, the Canadian approach to democracy promotion will be definitively connected to a global development vision consistent with Canadian values and long-term interests.

Recommendation 1

Canada should continue to provide assistance to democratic development abroad, based on a broad conception of democracy that includes attention to the system of governance as a whole, the full range of international human rights — including socio-economic and cultural rights — and the full participation of citizens, including the most disadvantaged, in the processes of democracy. Over the long term, Canadian policy on support for democratic development should also aim to improve the quality and sustainability of democracy in the recipient countries.

Notes to Chapter 1

- 1 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 39, February 1, 2007, p. 10.
- 2 Available online at:
<http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/cmte/CommitteePublication.aspx?COM=8979&Lang=1&SourceId=120069> .
- 3 Democracy comes from the Greek words “demos” (people) and “kratia” (power). However it was considered by great Greek philosophers, notably Plato, as one of the worst forms of government — rule by the mob that would degenerate into tyranny.
- 4 This point has been made by Laurence Whitehead in *Democratization: Theory and Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), who also observes that democratization is “a long-term, complex, dynamic and open-ended process” (p. 201).
- 5 On the struggle towards democracy from ancient to contemporary times see John Dunn, *Democracy: A History*, Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2005.
- 6 In Canada, women only received the right to vote in 1917, and Aboriginal Canadians in 1960.
- 7 Not a single country in 1900 would qualify as a democracy by today’s United Nations human rights standards as expressed in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and especially Article 25 of the subsequent International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which affirms that:

Every citizen shall have the right and opportunity ... without unreasonable restrictions: (a) to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (b) to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors ...

Some scholars have argued that the “right to democracy” has now become an international legal norm. (Cf. Thomas Franck, “The Emerging Right to Democratic Governance,” *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 86, January 1992, pp. 46-91; Roland Rich, “Bringing Democracy into International Law”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 12, No. 3, July 2001, pp. 20-34.) Indeed, in 1999 the UN Commission on Human Rights, now the Human Rights Council, passed a resolution on “Promotion of the Right to Democracy”. (Peter Burnell, ed., *Democracy Assistance: International Cooperation for Democratization*, London: Frank Cass, 2000, p. 20.) In 2000, world leaders in the UN Millennium Summit Declaration agreed to “spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law”. (See also UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2002; UNDP Governance Centre, Oslo, “Why Governance Matters in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals”, in International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, *Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide*, Stockholm, International IDEA, 2005, Chapter 4.)
- 8 According to the Economist Intelligence Unit’s sophisticated “index of democracy” prepared for *The World in 2007*, which distinguishes among “full democracies”, “flawed democracies”, “hybrid regimes”, and “authoritarian regimes”: “More than half of the world’s population lives in a democracy of some sort, although only some 13% reside in full democracies.” (Laza Kekic, “The Economist Intelligence Unit’s index of democracy”, 2007, p.2 (available online at http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY_INDEX_2007_v3.pdf...)
- 9 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, OK and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991. The two previous democratizing “waves” were in the 19th century and in the post-World War Two years following the establishment of the United Nations and the independence obtained by many former colonies. The Arab world has so far proved most resistant to the third wave. See Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway, eds., *Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy in the Middle East*, Washington D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005. On the continuing challenges facing democratization in other regions, see, for example, Stephen Brown, “Foreign Aid and Democracy Promotion: Lessons from Africa”, *The European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 17, No. 2, June 2005, pp. 179-198.
- 10 See Laurence Whitehead, “Freezing the Flow: Theorizing About Democratization in a World in Flux”, *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 1 No. 1, July 2005, pp. 3-4.
- 11 House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, *Evidence*, Meeting No. 34, December 5 2006, p. 1.
- 12 Ibid.

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- 13 Ibid., p. 4.
- 14 Meeting at Canada's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New York, February 8, 2007.
- 15 Available online at: http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/press_release/fiw07_overview_final.pdf .
- 16 Laza Kekic, "A pause in democracy's march", *The Economist: The World in 2007*, pp. 59-60.
- 17 "Institutions and Beyond: Making Democracy Sustainable", Paper presented to the Plenary Session "Is Democracy Working?", International Political Science Association World Congress, Fukuoka, Japan, July 11, 2006, p. 2.
- 18 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007, p. 9.
- 19 Guillermo O'Donnell, "Crisis in Democracy and in Democracies", *Participation*, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 7-8; see also O'Donnell, "The Perpetual Crises of Democracy", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 18, No. 1, January 2007, pp. 5-11.
- 20 Perlin, "A working definition of democracy", February 15, 2007, p. 1. This, and other presentations to the Conference, are included in George Perlin and Bernard Wood, Co-Chairs Report on "A Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development", A collaborative learning event sponsored by members of Canada's Democracy Council, released in April 2007 and available online at: <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/library/democratie-en.asp> .
- 21 Larry Diamond, "A Report Card on Democracy", Special to the *Hoover Digest*, 2000, No. 3 (available online at <http://www.hooverdigest.org/003/diamond.html>).
- 22 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007, p.9.
- 23 Presentation to the Committee by IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden, October 12, 2006. For more on IDEA's state of democracy assessment methodology see <http://www.idea.int/democracy/index.cfm> .
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Gareth Evans, "Promoting Democracy: What We Have Learned", Presentation to an American Enterprise Institute Symposium "How Much do we Really Know about Democracy Promotion?", Washington D.C., September 19, 2006, p.1.
- 26 Cited in Gerald Schmitz, "The Role of International Democracy Promotion in Canada's Foreign Policy", Institute for Research on Public Policy, *Policy Matters*, Vol. 5, No. 10, November 2004, p. 15.
- 27 "Elements of Democratic Governance: Discussion Paper", Ottawa, June 2006, p. 5 (available online at <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/cip-pic/library/Discussion%20Paper%20-%20Elements%20of%20Democratic%20Governance.pdf>). The International Bill of Rights comprises the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and both the International Protocol on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- 28 These are: "a competitive, multiparty political system; universal adult suffrage; regularly contested elections conducted on the basis of secret ballots, reasonable ballot security and the absence of massive voter fraud; significant public access of major political parties to the electorate through the media and through generally open campaigning." (Cited in Kekic, "The Economist Intelligence Unit's index of democracy", op.cit., p.1).
- 29 Kekic, op.cit., p.1.
- 30 Ibid., p.2.
- 31 Micro-states are excluded from the EIU's index.
- 32 Ibid., Table 1, Economist Intelligence Unit democracy index 2006, p.3.
- 33 Source, ibid., Table 2, p. 6.
- 34 Ibid., p. 2.
- 35 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 3.
- 36 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p.10.
- 37 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006, p. 2.

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- 38 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 12.
- 39 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 11. The study he referred to is the bilingual book by Gerald Schmitz and David Gillies, *The Challenge of Democratic Development: Sustaining Democratization in Developing Societies*, Ottawa: The North-South Institute, 1992. It argues forcefully for a participatory, developmental and human rights-based approach to building and sustaining democracy.
- 40 Canadian Bar Association, "Sustaining Democracy through the Rule of Law", January 2007, pp. 1-2. (See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007, p. 1.)
- 41 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 17, September 27, 2006, p. 2.
- 42 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, pp. 1-2.
- 43 Roel von Meijenfheldt, "Beyond euphoria: new challenges for democracy promotion", Lecture delivered to DFAIT, Ottawa, January 10, 2007, p. 7.
- 44 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 1.

CHAPTER 2 THE RISE OF DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE: CONFRONTING KEY ISSUES AND PROVIDING CANADIAN SUPPORT FOR ADDRESSING THE KNOWLEDGE AND EVALUATION GAP

As was observed at the beginning of Chapter 1, democracy has historically been a contested concept and one that continues to be in a state of evolution, including within our own societies. A similar observation applies to the controversial experience of “democracy promotion” by external state actors, which is essentially a post-Second World War phenomenon. The main reservations that have been expressed concern whether:

- “Democracy promotion” becomes seen as a country narrowly trying to “export” its particular model of democracy as the “best”, when we know that democratization must be an inherently indigenous process.
- “Democracy promotion” becomes narrowly associated with the great-power or national security interests of a particular state or group of states that are rich and powerful in the international system.
- “Democracy promotion” becomes perceived as a form of “neo-colonialism” or coercive imposition of “foreign” ideas by more powerful on less powerful states. This is especially controversial if military intervention is involved.

The Committee is aware of these concerns which we elaborate further in this chapter’s review of key critical issues facing democracy assistance providers. We have also been careful in Chapter 1 and Recommendation 1 to outline a Canadian approach, consistent with Canadian values, that speaks to democracy assistance in *global developmental* terms. Supporting and nurturing such democratic development recognizes that it should be done in ways that fully respect the need for democratization processes to be domestically-led and not driven by outsiders. When we speak of assisting or promoting democratic development, that is what we have in mind.

Supporting democratic development is now a large-scale endeavour undertaken by most Western aid donors. This is in part because it has become associated with a wide agenda that includes promotion of human rights and the rule of law, good governance, development effectiveness, and peacebuilding. Democratization itself entails many elements. As Peter Burnell points out:

Democratization is not just a movement towards, and the building of, a democratic state — something that involves legal-constitutional principles and formal institutional structures — but also the development of a particular kind of political society, a plurality of competing political parties and appropriate styles of leadership. Attitudinal and behavioural dimensions (that is to say the cultural aspects) and forms of (civic) education are also included, as is the objective of an increasingly active and democratically-oriented civil society. The reach extends beyond central government and national politics to regional or provincial levels, the municipalities and local councils. This means that in total democracy assistance is multifaceted. Potentially it is an enormous undertaking.⁴⁵

Interestingly, the post-Second World War origins of modern democracy assistance lie in a country that was democratized following military defeat. Germany's "Stiftungen" or political party-related foundations led the way in devoting substantial funding to democracy support as well as promoting German interests and contacts abroad. By the 1990s, they had "resident representatives in more than 100 countries and field offices in some of them for well over 30 years."⁴⁶

In the United States, major initiatives did not begin until the late 1970s, although participatory politics was added as an official foreign assistance goal as early as 1966. A number of measures linking foreign aid and human rights were pursued during the Carter presidency. The Reagan administration made democracy promotion a primary goal of U.S. foreign policy, even if this was criticized as motivated by Cold War ideology and national security interests. Congress became heavily involved with the establishment in 1983 of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Partly inspired by the German example, it is a government-supported but private non-profit body which makes grants to implementing agencies that include the two major U.S. party foundations, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the International Republican Institute.⁴⁷ In 1984, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) opened an Office for Democratic Initiatives. The Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, and Canada also pursued democracy assistance initiatives during the 1980s. Canada's role since the 1980s will be examined in detail in Part II.

Before the end of the Cold War, Germany and the U.S. had already developed well established and extensive programs of political development aid. But it was during the 1990s that the field of democracy support experienced explosive growth. Burnell attributes this mainly to four factors⁴⁸:

- First, new opportunities for democratization arose from the end of the Cold War and dissolution of the Soviet Union. And with no economic or strategic challenge from a Communist bloc, Western states could add new political conditionalities to their development aid programs, as well as offers of democracy assistance.

- Second, democracy and human rights promotion offered a compelling and relatively low-cost rationale for foreign aid at a time of public scepticism about its benefits and flagging budgets. Supporting democracy was an attractive new mission for aid policymakers.
- Third, there was increased demand for democracy assistance as a result of growing pro-democracy movements in a number of regions. Political reformers often looked to Western sources of support.
- Fourth, there was “a sea change in the way we think about the relationship between economic development and political development.” Increasingly they were seen as interrelated, with democracy not a “luxury” but a positive factor in growth and development. International financial institutions such as the World Bank discovered better governance to be a crucial factor in development performance. (The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, created to assist the post-Communist transition countries of eastern and central Europe, made multiparty democracy an explicit criterion of its lending.)

One might add as a further factor the expanded grounds for international human rights and humanitarian interventions, including those related to “human security” and the “responsibility to protect”. It has become accepted that the interests of the international community are involved when human rights and political freedoms are not respected. Many donor states and international organizations have increasingly recognized their roles and responsibilities in supporting and safeguarding democracy. Some organizations require commitment to democracy as a condition of membership.

In conducting an international survey of democracy assistance in 2003, George Perlin outlined numerous donor activities under the rubrics of good governance, human rights, democratization, and civil society.⁴⁹ Professor Perlin estimated total global public-sector spending on democratic development as being in excess of \$US 3 billion, with amounts in individual donor states ranging up to 11% of official development assistance (ODA) and averaging about 6%.⁵⁰ However, the numbers game, depending on what is counted as democracy assistance (under “democracy promotion”, “democratic governance”, “democratic development”, or some other broad “good governance”, human rights and rule of law category), indicates a wide range upwards of that. Most recently, Professor Perlin has indicated: “No one knows for sure how much money is being spent. The most careful analyses estimate annual public sector spending in the range of \$US 8 to 9-billion. Private entities are an additional source of funding with expenditures at least in the range of \$700 million.”⁵¹

Minister for CIDA, Josée Verner, told the Committee in October 2006 that CIDA, the largest source of Canadian funding, spent over \$375 million on “democratic governance” programs in 2005, broken down by sector as accountable public institutions (46%),

freedom and democracy (40%), human rights (8%), and rule of law (6%).⁵²) Other figures suggested to the Committee since that testimony indicate substantially larger amounts. According to updated information received by the Committee from CIDA President Robert Greenhill on March 21, 2007, planned CIDA spending on democratic governance in 2006-2007 was \$466 million, but “for planning purposes” peace and security expenditures were added to give a total of \$584 million, or 21% of the Agency’s aid program. We will return to this uncertainty about the exact size of CIDA’s contribution in Chapter 4.

A 2005 study done by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) in 2005, using the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) category of “participatory development and good governance”, indicated that over the previous 15 years up to 10% of overall ODA has been devoted to democratic development support broadly defined.⁵³ Recently, a discussion paper prepared for the European Council of the European Union (EU) suggested even higher donor figures:

Though not always easily to identify as democracy assistance, the total volume of EC [European Community] support for democracy , human rights, judicial reform, governance and civil society during the period 2000-2004 is in the region of US\$4.5 billion, complemented by nearly \$9.5 billion from EU Member states. The EU total of about \$14 billion compares with a total of about \$10.5 billion for the US, \$1 billion for Canada.⁵⁴

This indicates a comprehensive global figure of US\$25.5 billion over the first five years of this century, or an average of over \$5 billion annually. The United States is by far the largest single-country donor, followed by Germany. (Using a narrower political calculus, Canadian Leslie Campbell, Senior Associate and Regional Director of Middle East and North Africa programs of the Washington-based National Democratic Institute, has indicated a figure of US\$1.5 billion in total U.S. support for the political aspects of democracy promotion, noting as well that just one of Germany’s six political foundations spends €120 million, or about C\$185 million, annually. In testimony before a Canadian Senate committee, he opined that Canada’s contributions in this regard are “even small compared to the Netherlands or Sweden.”⁵⁵)

However encompassing or restrictive the definition of democracy assistance, it is evident that very substantial amounts of ODA are now being spent in this area by Western donor governments as a whole. And with that, increasing questions are being raised about the nature and effectiveness of this aid. What are the better ways to provide democracy support that works? As Minister of Foreign Affairs Peter MacKay has himself stated: “Both the legitimacy and the effectiveness of democracy promotion depend very heavily on how democracy assistance is delivered.”⁵⁶ That concurs with the five principles cited by a leading expert in the field, Gordon Crawford, for guiding the efforts of external actors to engage positively in ‘democracy-building strategies’ — “country authorship; democratic dialogue; participation and inclusion; legitimacy; commitment” — and his conclusion that:

The latter two principles, legitimacy and commitment call on the democracy promoters to make sure that their approach is both genuine and serious, and not blighted either by

association with regime change or by a rhetoric-reality gap. The first three principles, country authorship, democratic dialogue and participation and inclusion, pertain to the manner in which democracy is promoted, suggesting that democracy cannot be exported and that it is essential that external support for democratic reform is in accord with the very principles and processes of democratisation itself.⁵⁷

The Committee agrees. But such principles raise the question of how they are to be applied in practice. Accordingly, the following elaborates on some of the critical issues overall that must be addressed by policymakers in this field, and leads up to how the continuing knowledge gap on achieving effective democratic development might be addressed by Canada.

1. Local leadership of the democratization process is crucial, as is the local dimension of democratic governance.

There is near consensus that democracy cannot be implanted from outside (except in very exceptional circumstances). Democratization is a long, difficult, and inherently indigenous process — one that should be supported but not imported from abroad. As Vidar Helgesen of International IDEA has put it: “Democratic political change does not happen by dropping supposedly independent technical institutional solutions from outside, be they in the form of constitutions, elections, or political party systems. Sustained democratic politics results from changes in the space and the climate for debate that can give local flavour and meaning to institutions, even if they are substantially inspired by experiences from abroad.”⁵⁸ IDEA’s approach to democracy assessment takes into account citizens’ views within countries and also stresses the importance of local government for democratic development. Gordon Crawford argues that democratic reform processes must be locally-driven and that this is better expressed as country “authorship” rather than “ownership”. As he puts it:

The rationale for domestic authorship of donors’ country assistance strategies is that local perspectives provide a better understanding of the distinctive problems of democratic reform faced in a particular context. Essentially, external actors must listen to local voices. These will be plural voices. There will be different and even contradictory voices, but such processes of deliberation and debate are themselves fundamental to what democracy is about.⁵⁹

A leading critical analyst of democracy assistance, Thomas Carothers of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, identified “greater localism” as one of the main improvements along the democracy promotion “learning curve”, adding that “increasing localism in democracy aid requires changing the mindset of providers away from the view that democracy building is something ‘we’ do to ‘them’, toward the idea that it is something people in other countries do, sometimes with our help.”⁶⁰ Roel von Meijenfeldt, executive director of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, noted in a January lecture at Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT): “Ghandi already observed that: ‘the spirit of democracy cannot be imposed from without. It must come from within. For democracy to become consolidated, it has to grow

from within countries, step by step institutionalizing and constructing the political processes, corresponding to the values which are intrinsic to plural democracy.”⁶¹ Former Canadian MP, Ross Reid, has offered the further thought that: “Local practice is often the best place to start. We too often reject traditional processes as failures or in the name of modernity and try to deny societies of processes already in place and often best suited to their needs.”⁶²

Witnesses before the Committee were in strong agreement with these views. As Paul Larose-Edwards of CANADEM put it succinctly, paraphrasing the statement that “all politics is local” — “All democratic development is local” — ... even though Canada can and should assist, the future of any democratic development lies with the local civil societies and governments in question.”⁶³ This was recognized by Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay when he told the Committee:

We should start by acknowledging that democracy is not something that outsiders can impose; it is part of the logic of democracy that it needs to be chosen and pursued by citizens themselves. Citizens around the world aspire to democracy, and assistance provided by outsiders should be driven by its recipients.⁶⁴

The indigenous and context-specific nature of democratic development was also stressed by Jean-Louis Roy of Rights and Democracy: “A number of national and international institutions working in the development field have recently understood that it was absolutely necessary to have staff members who speak the language and are from countries in which those institutions are active. Some work can only be done from inside the country, not outside.”⁶⁵ The submission from the Canadian Bar Association listed “local engagement and ownership” among its “best practices in promoting the rule of law”:

Projects and programs supported by Canada must engage all stakeholders, be responsive to local needs, and have ownership or they are likely to fail. Local expertise must be consulted and involved in all stages of the planning, implementation and monitoring process. The most successful approach is one where local actors and decision-makers are empowered to make choices.⁶⁶

Emphasizing localism in even more specific terms, Thomas Axworthy outlined as one of the lessons from case studies undertaken by the Queen’s University Centre for the Study of Democracy that: “Local government, municipalities, is the building block of democracy. ... In democracy transitions we tend to almost instantly race towards national elections. In virtually every study I have looked at, I’m convinced that the investment in local municipalities, local government, and local elections, is the way to allow the arts of democracy to foster and build.”⁶⁷ The testimony and submission by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities added detail to what is already being done in partnerships with local entities in other countries and outlined its proposal for a further five-year CIDA-funded “Global Program for Local Governance.”⁶⁸

Some witnesses keyed on the role of local civil society in democratic development. John Foster also testified as to how international civil society networks, such as Social

Watch, can provide support to that all-important local level: “With regard to local government, Social Watch India is a particularly salient example of how civil society is essential to the construction of democracy from the ground up.”⁶⁹

The message overall was that locals, not outsiders, should always drive the democratic development process. Based on his experience with Rights and Democracy, Ed Broadbent put it bluntly that: “At no time should the priority of agendas for any category of rights implementation by a developing country be determined by outsiders, whether these outsiders be other NGOs or established democratic governments.”⁷⁰

2. Democracy promotion objectives remain contested, especially when they are associated with the strategic interests of powerful Western states. Moreover, strategies are needed that take into account the recent pushback against democracy assistance providers. Democracy promotion must be seen as a global endeavour.

The suspicions aroused by association with donor national security, economic or other interests are especially true of the pro-democracy interventions of the United States and other big powers, leading to charges of a return to “neo-colonialism” in the application of Western models of democracy. In the case of U.S. policies toward the Middle East, there is a controversial connection between democracy promotion and the “war on terrorism.”⁷¹ Some argue that the unfortunate consequences of the Iraq war have set back the cause of democracy promotion more generally.

However, a significant pushback against democracy assistance from outside sources goes back to the 1990s and well beyond just U.S. policies. As described by Carl Gershman (president of the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy) and Michael Allen:

The backlash against democracy promotion is largely a by-product of the proliferation of so-called hybrid regimes in the aftermath of democracy’s third wave. The third wave has not been followed by a reverse wave of authoritarianism, but it has left behind many stalled or failed transitions. In these cases, autocrats have either replaced reformists after a brief interval of unsuccessful democratization, or have held on to power while accepting superficial liberalization and a modestly more open political space for democratic opposition. Hybrid regimes often retain certain formally democratic procedures, including relatively free (if not fair) elections, and permit civil society organizations to function and receive foreign assistance. But the underlying political realities are manipulated elections, a weak parliament, an overweening executive branch, state-controlled media, rampant corruption, and no recourse to an independent judiciary.⁷²

In some cases, legal restrictions are being placed on the activities of NGOs and on foreign funding. According to Gershman and Allen, democracy-assistance organizations “are finding it necessary to invest more time and effort in quasi-diplomatic activities; explaining their programs to local authorities; providing guarantees — through communication and transparency — that their work has no partisan or oppositional agenda; and engaging members of ruling parties in programs. Confidence-building

measures of this kind may help to insulate democracy-assistance programs from political pressures and give a degree of protection to local activists while preserving the integrity of the relationship between international NGOs and their local, grassroots partners. Another way to insulate democracy assistance from political pressures is to strengthen its international and multilateral character.”⁷³

The internationalization of democracy promotion, beyond the foreign policy objectives of any single state, is strongly backed by other analysts and Committee witnesses. Apart from democracy promotion groups needing “to refine strategies for pushing back against pushback”, Thomas Carothers concluded in testimony before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that: “If a ‘freedom agenda’ is to be effective, it must not be a U.S. agenda but a global one.”⁷⁴ Other American analysts have called for a global coalition of democracies.⁷⁵ With the negative experience of the Iraq case in mind, Gersham and Allen assert that “regime change” —

is not the goal of democracy promotion, nor is supporting free, fair, and competitive elections its only dimension. Democracy promotion also means strengthening independent media; promoting the rule of law and an independent judiciary; defending human rights and the fundamental freedoms of expression, conscience, and association; and supporting civil society, including women’s organizations, labor and business associations, and nongovernmental groups that educate citizens about democracy and empower them to participate in the political process and monitor government performance.

In June 2000, democracy promotion — understood as a cooperative international effort designed to strengthen these and other dimensions of the democratic process — received the endorsement of more than a hundred sovereign governments meeting in Warsaw to found the Community of Democracies.⁷⁶

Referring to the recent backlash against democracies, Professor Jeffrey Kopstein of the University of Toronto observed to the Committee: “In the past several years a new group of nations have formed what I would call a new authoritarian international.” This trend must be resisted since democracy promotion is not only in Canada’s national interests but in the global interest. He cautioned that “democracy promotion is not something that will yield rapid results. It should be a long-term multi-pronged policy that should mesh with the other tools of statecraft.” Beyond learning as much as possible from both European and U.S. experiences, he hoped Canada might also exert a leadership role multilaterally:

If we want to think big for a moment what I would propose is a caucus or a community of democracies, either within or outside the United Nations. Canada might potentially have great credibility in putting this forward. The UN itself is one venue for this, but it may be discredited regarding democracy promotion — we should be honest with ourselves — especially after the debacle with the Human Rights Council. An alternative,

one that I and many of my colleagues have been discussing for quite some time, is an attempt to breathe life into a formal organization, the Community of Democracies, which was initiated in Warsaw in the year 2000.⁷⁷

Other witnesses stressed that Canada should continue to pursue a distinctively multilateralist approach to democracy assistance. The Committee met with both UN and Community of Democracies officials in New York and Washington in February 2007, and we will examine multilateral roles further in chapter 8. Multilateralism was a factor in Canada's favour in a 2002 "defending democracy" survey produced by the Democracy Coalition Project created in 2001 under the auspices of the Community of Democracies. (The Committee met with the Project's executive director, and co-author of this study, Theodore Piccone, in Washington on February 6, 2007.) Canada was praised for its pluralistic "flexible and holistic approach to democratization". In the survey's sample of 40 donor countries, Canada was among only three (the others being the Netherlands and Sweden) to receive a "very good" rating on its "support of democracy abroad, as evidenced by its willingness to provide electoral assistance to fledgling democracies, to support grassroots democracy programs through bilateral aid and to criticize regimes engaged in the most egregious abuses of democracy. Canada has preferred to work through multilateral forums in these efforts, in the belief that a middle-ranking power acting unilaterally would have limited influence. Within these organizations, Canada has played a leadership role in encouraging electoral reform and democratic development."⁷⁸

3. Democratic development is linked to the processes of social and economic development as a whole. Support for democratization should be seen as positively correlated with efforts to reduce poverty and raise the capacities of all citizens to exercise their democratic rights.

In our first recommendation, the Committee advocated an expansive definition of democratic development that included progress on socio-economic human rights along with progress on the quality and sustainability of democracy. The connection between democracy aid, development, and tackling poverty was underlined by Minister of International Cooperation, Josée Verner, when she told the Committee that "because we have learned just how important democratic development is to the overall development agenda, we will be doing more of it. In future, all of CIDA's major country programs will assess and support democratic governance... Democratic governance is essential for progress in developing countries and for ending poverty in the long run."⁷⁹ The accompanying written submission of CIDA affirmed up front: "Democratic governance is essential for poverty reduction and long-term sustainable development. CIDA's work in this area aims to make states more effective in tackling poverty by enhancing the degree to which all people, particularly the poor and marginalized, can influence policy and improve their livelihoods."

A number of witnesses called for a holistic approach to democracy building and societal development. For example, former Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, and incoming president of the Washington-based IFES (formerly the International Foundation

for Electoral Systems), Jean-Pierre Kingsley told the Committee: “What is needed is support for the entire process of democracy building and for the system as a whole, based on each country’s values, history and culture.”⁸⁰ Other witnesses, including the Canadian Bar Association, argued strongly for seeing democratic development and poverty-reducing development as complementary, not either/or sequential processes. Bernard Wood made similar points to the Ottawa “Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development” sponsored by the Democracy Council in February 2007:

For once and for all, it is important to get beyond “sectarian” arguments and build a synthesis of approach and strategies to advance economic and social development and democracy in tandem...

Sustainable democratization requires parallel progress on expanding equity and opportunity, as well as participation, to give all a sufficient stake in the democratic project.⁸¹

Two witnesses took a somewhat different and more sceptical view of the prospects for any sustainable democratization occurring in low-income societies. Jeffrey Kopstein, of the University of Toronto, described the “especially poor countries” as “the toughest nuts to crack”. He went on to state: “In political science, we have very few findings to report to you. We have two. The first is that democracies don’t fight each other. The second is that countries that become democracies tend to stay democracies if — and there’s a big if — they have a gross domestic product per capita in excess of \$6,000 in 1993 dollars.”⁸²

Professor Diane Éthier was even more definitive in discounting the possibility of democratization occurring in countries that have not already achieved a certain level of development —

For more than 50 years now, all theories on democracy have supported the view that democracy cannot flourish in a poor and underdeveloped country. This means that socio-economic development and democratization cannot be achieved simultaneously, as democratization is born of socio-economic development.

I believe experts would say that if you want to help countries become democracies, first help them achieve economic and social development, and later you will be able to focus on establishing democratic political institutions.⁸³

In fact, the Committee’s research reveals that matters are more complicated than that, and that democracy may even be an important factor in creating the conditions for development and poverty reduction to occur. The detailed empirical work of the Economist Intelligence Unit undertaken for The World in 2007 concludes that: “The relationship between the level of development (income per head) and democracy is not clear-cut. There is an apparent association, although even in the full democracy category there are a few that are not rich OECD countries.” Moreover, “the direction of causality between democracy and income is debatable. The standard modernisation hypothesis that

economic development leads to — and is a necessary pre-condition for — democracy, is no longer universally accepted. Instead it has been argued that the primary direction of causation runs from democracy to income ...”⁸⁴

The latest thinking of development agencies, practitioners and analysts of democracy assistance also supports the view that democratic progress is, or at least ought to be, integral to the overall development and poverty reduction process. This is particularly true if one agrees with former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan when he stated on October 30, 2006 that “democracy is a universal right that does not belong to any country or region, and that participatory governance, based on the will of the people, is the best path to freedom, growth and development”.⁸⁵ In a major policy speech delivered just a few days earlier, Hilary Benn, the UK’s Secretary of State for International Development, affirmed that:

Development, if it is to mean anything... has also to be about what Sen calls the “freedoms to”: the freedom to choose — to choose people to represent your views; the freedom to make your views heard; to associate freely with others; to join a political party or a trade union; the freedom to worship and practice your own religion. If you ask poor people, they’ll tell you how much these things mean to them. ... I want to argue that it is democratic politics, and yes, it is indeed democracy, that is how we achieve these things. Development has to be about getting the politics right because development and progress cannot be achieved if the political system excludes the majority and denies them their birthright.⁸⁶

Roel von Meijenfeldt of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy made a similar argument when speaking in Canada in January 2007:

Amartya Sen was one of the first to challenge the old paradigm that countries have to develop economically first before they become fit for democracy with a new paradigm that countries become fit (economically speaking) through democracy.

For example, the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation, Mrs Agnes van Ardenne, recently cited a number of academic studies ... [including a book *The Democracy Advantage* co-authored by Morton Halperin], that democracies and democratizing countries outperform their authoritarian counterparts on the full range of development indicators. It led her to conclude that democracy is a condition for development. Based on statistical analysis over the past 40 years, there is no evidence of an authoritarian advantage when it comes to economic growth. Democracies have a 30% positive edge. Poor democracies have been much better at avoiding economic disasters.⁸⁷

Thomas Carothers, of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, with whom the Committee met in Washington D.C., concludes in his seminal book *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, that “democracy promoters should push to build a relationship between aid for democracy and the larger, more established world of aid for social and economic development. Most democracy promoters believe that economic development and democratization reinforce each other. They have not, however, made many efforts to connect their work to other parts of the development picture.”⁸⁸

Carothers goes on to argue that extra attention should be devoted to the links between democratization and socio-economic development, between democratic development aid and other kinds of development aid. He indicates that more work is needed on making critical connections between the two involving “citizens’ participation”, including of the poorest people, and also on “the role of women in democratization”.⁸⁹ Jean-Louis Roy of Rights and Democracy was among other witnesses who referred to this gender dimension. Rights and Democracy’s presentation also noted the striking demographic social trends that must be taken into account by democracy assistance today and in the future. “Two billion people will be born in the next 20 years, 90 percent of them in the south of the world.”⁹⁰ Mr. Roy added to the Committee:

I believe we have to recall something that we all know — sometimes, it is better to repeat things — that half, or exactly 50% of the world population, is under 25 years of age. There are 1.2 billion humans between the ages of 10 and 19. In all those countries where we work, in all those countries in the South, populations will increase over the next few years, and the dominant age group will be composed of people between the ages of 10 and 25. **We have to speak to these young people about democracy, we have to find innovative means and have real programs to give them.**⁹¹

As a last point, Carothers cautions that achieving both democracy and overall development demands more than assertions or declarations of good intent. The Committee agrees with his assessment that: “This is a potentially rich area of inquiry, holding out the tantalizing but formidable challenge of creating a synthesis of political and socioeconomic development work”.⁹² Aiding democratic development can and must be allied to achieving effective pro-poor development assistance as a whole. In this way, democracy need not take a back seat in the development endeavour.⁹³

4. Democratic development assistance still lacks coherence and coordination by donor countries, both internationally and within the donor countries themselves. This weakness must be addressed by democracy aid providers.

Notwithstanding the expressed preference for approaches to democracy promotion that are multilaterally coordinated (or at least compatible with each other), this is still rarely achieved in practice. As described by George Perlin: “Complexity on the delivery side of democracy assistance is widely described by service providers in the field and aid recipients as having serious negative consequences... there are no concerted country strategies. Aid is delivered in bits and pieces, reflecting the preferences and specific competencies of donors... some forms of aid are offered by multiple donors (duplication of programming), while areas of important need get no support.”⁹⁴ Professor Perlin added in his testimony to the Committee that donors need to make sure that their own programs are more coherent, and that Canada could lead by example:

Another criticism of work in this field is fragmentation of effort by donors' lack of coherence in the programs taken into particular countries. We could do work in Canada to develop strategic plans for democracy assistance in the particular countries where we want to intervene. Again, I stress that in my view there's a need for a kind of whole-of-

governance strategy based upon research on the peculiar circumstances of a particular country: its characteristics, where it stands in the process of democratization, where it's coming from, and what kind of experience it had before entering into the process of attempting to develop democracy.⁹⁵

Minister of International Cooperation, Josée Verner, acknowledged that one of the lessons that CIDA has learned from its activities in the field is “that achieving democratic governance is a complex, knowledge-based endeavour. It requires a comprehensive strategy and vision. It also requires a concerted and coordinated effort — nationally and globally.”⁹⁶

Several witnesses, notably Thomas Axworthy, David Donovan, and Kevin Deveaux, urged the Committee to consider a more centrally coordinated approach to democratic development support by Canada which would involve the establishment of a new institution. Other witnesses advocated more modest ways of achieving greater coordination among existing Canadian bodies doing democratic development activities, leading to greater impact overall. In our view, both are needed. We will examine this question in much more detail in Chapter 7 of Part III of this report on new directions for Canadian policy.

At this point, we want to point out that coherence and coordination remain issues that democracy aid providers still need to address. This is just as true for the United States, with its much greater levels of funding and array of agencies. Thomas Melia (deputy executive director of Freedom House and professor at the Georgetown University Walsh School of Foreign Service), with whom the Committee met in Washington, has observed that there is in the US:

A rather decentralized, cooperating community of several thousand men and women — inside and outside of the U.S. Government, working in an array of government agencies, multinational bodies and private organizations, centered in the U.S. though extending through a variety of multinational networks around the globe — who have in the past 20 years or so developed experience (and in some cases real expertise) in programs and policies that can contribute to democratic development in other countries.

There is, however, no “command and control” center of the democracy promotion policy, no single place where overarching strategy is developed or coordinated, even within the sub-community that is the United States Government. Over the years, there has been regular communication and mostly fruitful cooperation between this array of actors, inside the U.S. Government and outside it, Americans and non-Americans. Most of the practical cooperation emerges tactically, “on the ground,” in urgent situations where a variety of actors are active and the needs of the potential beneficiaries in a dynamic, fast-moving situation require that would-be providers of assistance find a way to cooperate. They often do find ways to do so, but experience indicates that it is much more difficult (indeed, it has proven to be impossible in any meaningful way) to achieve strategic cooperation or convergence on approaches to democratization more broadly... there are recurring efforts to impose coherence, yet none have succeeded to date.⁹⁷

Ian Smillie, of Partnership Africa-Canada, told the Committee that: “Good governance is unlikely to flow from a collection of disparate, time-bound projects offered by

a dozen ill-coordinated donors”⁹⁸ At the same time, he cautioned that more coherence and coordination are not sufficient to produce better outcomes without more shared learning in such a complex field of policy.

Some critics of Canada’s approach to governance lament the absence of coherent policies tying all aspects of the agenda together. A patchy, project-by-project approach with no obvious central policy and no central management, they say, is unlikely to yield coherent results. This may be true, but given the overwhelming size of the governance agenda, and the limited track record in its promotion by any donor, healthy doses of humility and caution are warranted, along with a good set of brakes in the expectations department. Given the complexity of the challenge, a case can be made for selective interventions in concert with other donors, aimed at learning what works and what does not. The apparent absence in Canada, however, of a place where the lessons can be rolled up, spelled out, shared and remembered, works against the learning that is so badly needed in this field.⁹⁹

5. The effects of democracy assistance in general and of specific democratization projects and programs are not easily evaluated. Moreover, there is often little attempt at donor evaluation. Greater effort is needed to pursue realistic results-based objectives, to learn from ongoing donor experience in practice, and to conduct research with a view to making democratic development aid more effective.

Writing in 1999, Thomas Carothers, concluded that:

Of the many facets of democracy aid, evaluation has advanced the least. Democracy programs present a challenge for evaluators because of the difficulty of agreeing on precise criteria of success in the political domain and of establishing clear causal links between specific projects and larger political trends. In most cases, during the 1990s democracy promoters either did not evaluate their programs at all or commissioned superficial evaluations by investigators lacking real independence. Only in the past several years, with the end of the post-1989 honeymoon for democratization and growing pressure to justify budgets, have aid providers begun to take the subject of evaluations more seriously.¹⁰⁰

Carothers was sceptical of the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID’s) efforts to introduce “results-based” management and quantifiable performance measures into the field. “The laborious, inflexible nature of the system leads to projects that are designed to fit the system — to produce ‘good numbers’ — rather than to fit the needs of democratizing countries.”¹⁰¹ And he was also very realistic about potential aid results.¹⁰² Commenting on the situation five years later, Carothers did not see much improvement, stating that “even though democracy promotion activities keep multiplying, the amount of distilled, accumulated, and organized knowledge about this domain remains quite limited... overall, democracy promotion remains remarkably understudied, and the gap between what we want to accomplish and what we really know about how to accomplish it remains dauntingly wide.”¹⁰³

Other analysts, who have looked closely at this issue, have reached similar conclusions. For example, Andrew Green and Richard Kohl underline this growing gap when they observe: “The emergence of democracy assistance as a key element of foreign aid since the mid-1980s has matured into a topic for donor agencies of all types around the world. What is lacking from this progress, however, is a credible body of research analysing the impact of democracy assistance.”¹⁰⁴

The Committee believes that Canada can and should make an important contribution in this area, as outlined in the next section of this chapter.

2.1 Canadian Support for Addressing the Knowledge and Evaluation Gap

Witnesses had quite a lot to say about the perils of evaluation and the persistence of knowledge gaps. Professor Diane Ethier stated bluntly: “There are limits to the USAID evaluations because there aren’t enough experts going into the field, and they only stay for three weeks, which isn’t long enough, and they don’t meet with enough local stakeholders. So the USAID evaluations could be better, but at least they are better than what CIDA is doing, which is no evaluation.”¹⁰⁵ This may be somewhat overstated. CIDA President, Robert Greenhill, told the Committee that CIDA does do program evaluations, often country-wide, which are public, and has a department responsible for evaluation and audit. In addition: “After putting a new emphasis on accounting, we’ll also have a chief audit executive, who will conduct audits for me on specific programs in order to ensure that the money is being well spent.”¹⁰⁶ (At the same time, Ian Smillie cautioned the Committee against what he called the “fog” of “results-based programming... This has become a kind of programming tyranny, one that has led CIDA and its grantees into an excess of planning and risk aversion, in what is essentially an emergent and risk-prone business.”¹⁰⁷)

In its October 2006 written submission to the Committee, CIDA also offered the following “lessons from experience”:

- Strengthening democratic governance is neither simple nor quick. It involves the development of skills, processes, and institutions while promoting and consolidating the complex interconnection between law, rights, administration, and politics.
- Progress demands a strong sense of universal values underlying democratic governance and the political will to put them into practice.
- Development partners don’t want foreign models, they want practical knowledge.

- Donors are more successful when they are knowledgeable about how democratic governance operates and when their assistance is focused and adaptable to local circumstances.
- Assistance efforts are more effective when they extend beyond events, such as elections, to processes, institutions, and the surrounding democratic culture.

Beyond CIDA, the Canadian-based International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Rights and Democracy) is subject to statutory five-year evaluations that are referred to Parliament, though these have rarely received much political attention.¹⁰⁸ In Europe, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy seems to be the most advanced in terms of its commitment to regular evaluation of its country programs.¹⁰⁹

The problem remains that too little is known about what really works and in what specific contexts. George Perlin told the Committee “that there is a significant need for research on how to maximize the effectiveness of democracy assistance. We don’t have effective tools for evaluating democracy assistance. We have tools for evaluating how we manage projects, but we don’t have categories of analysis or tools for doing the research we need to deal with and to establish desired outcomes.”¹¹⁰ He added, “... I think we could contribute something by Canada becoming a centre of research.”¹¹¹ In a subsequent submission to the Committee, Mr. Perlin elaborated on the issues of chronic lack of coordination, strategic planning, and of knowledge of lessons learned, noting as well that “assessments of needs should be based on comprehensive country-centred plans reflecting evaluations through systematic research in which local experts are active participants.”¹¹²

The Committee is intrigued by Mr. Perlin’s suggestion that Canada could take a lead role internationally in addressing these problems through setting up a “centre for policy in democratic development.” As he outlines it:

The Centre’s broad objective would be to promote more effective policy and delivery practices. It would do this both by example through its contribution to Canadian policy and administrative practices and by providing resources to support reform of international policy and practices. Among other things its activities would include:

- Establishment of an international data base of programs and projects that could be used by donors and practitioners to facilitate coordination of their activities;
- Establishment of a data base of lessons learned;
- Creation of assessment protocols and instruments that would help build an international body of knowledge about lessons learned;

- Creation of comprehensive democratic development strategies for the countries in which Canada is delivering assistance, employing research teams that paired groups of local and international experts, including representatives from other donors working in those countries;
- Provision of assistance for creation of similar country-centred strategic plans for other countries where intervention is occurring;
- Provision of support to academic research on policy and best practices for the delivery of assistance to democratic development;
- Establishment of training programs for administrators and practitioners that would provide them with the knowledge they need to make effective strategic decisions.¹¹³

Mr. Perlin stated that the proposed Centre “could be established either as an agency within the executive branch or an arms-length agency reporting to Parliament through a Minister, as IDRC [International Development Research Centre] does.” The Committee’s strong preference would be for an arms-length body conducting independent research that is accessible to both those working within and outside of governments. Moreover, public funding for this activity should also come through instruments that, like IDRC, can be independent of government.

We note that Canada has had a successful internationally-recognized experience in its creation (in 1970) of the Ottawa-based IDRC which seeks out the participation of developing countries in tackling their own knowledge needs. As its president Maureen O’Neil emphasized to the Committee, “research in developing countries can foster democratic development.”¹¹⁴ She elaborated that “research is the foundation for open inquiry and debate”, that it “expands the range of practical solutions to enduring problems”, that it “helps hold governments to account”, and that it “is the basis for evidence-based policy-making.”¹¹⁵ Yet she concluded tellingly that: “Democracy assistance policies should be based on sound research, but rarely are.”¹¹⁶

Ms. O’Neil noted that IDRC has worked cooperatively with the Parliamentary Centre and other members of the existing “Democracy Council”¹¹⁷ in this regard, about which we will have more to say in Parts II and III of the report that are devoted specifically to Canadian policies. At this point, we note the relevant recommendations put forward by Robert Miller, president of the Parliamentary Centre. In his testimony of October 2006, he called for “the government [to] invest in building a network of Canadian centres of excellence in international democratic development. An initiative of this kind would invest in competitively selected Canadian organizations to strengthen their capacity to innovate, apply, and share knowledge in key areas of democratic development.”¹¹⁸ In a further written submission to the Committee, the Parliamentary Centre proposed that the government fund a “new Democracy Partners Research and Study Program” and give IDRC a mandate “to design and run a program of this kind.”¹¹⁹ In making this proposal,

the Parliamentary Centre had in mind that knowledge must be “locally owned” — “developing countries need to strengthen their capacity to support study and undertake research that is grounded in local realities.”¹²⁰

So we come back to the first crucial issue we identified in democracy assistance of the need for local engagement. Canadians can help to provide assistance, but as Paul Larose-Edwards put it: “If you want anything to be sustainable, you’d better be training the locals.”¹²¹ The Committee notes as well that the transfer of knowledge to the local level was one of the early lessons of Thomas Carother’s “learning curve”:

Democracy promoters must help recipient countries better understand and use democracy aid. ...Locally oriented methods of design, implementation, and evaluation are a step in the right direction. Yet they have an effect only project by project. Democracy promoters must mount efforts that tackle the subject as a whole... Donors need to make information about their democracy programs much more widely known and available in recipient countries, in the local language, fully explaining what programs are being carried out for what purposes and with whom.¹²²

In short, there remains a large unfinished agenda of key issues that must be confronted in order to move forward in the field of international democracy assistance. All of these require greater knowledge from the donor to the local level. The need for such knowledge crosses all types and fields of democracy support, including those involving parliaments and political party development which the Committee will address in detail in Chapter 7.

An important point to emphasize is that, whatever the amount of resources that Canada commits to democratic development in future, and concomitant with the new Canadian initiatives which we will put forward in Part III of this report, it is essential to strengthen the knowledge base about the most effective uses of democracy assistance funding. We agree with George Perlin that Canada can and should lead in that regard.

Recommendation 2

Canada should invest more in practical knowledge generation and research on effective democratic development assistance. This should be available to inform the work of the Canadian government itself — notably involving DFAIT’s Democracy Unit and CIDA’s Office of Democratic Governance — and that of other donors as well as of non-governmental practitioners. To that end, several options should be considered for supporting independent research in a coordinated way that can benefit policymakers and practitioners. These options could include a Democracy Partners Research and Study Program under the International Development Research Centre along the lines suggested by the Parliamentary Centre and a centre for policy in democratic development along the lines suggested by George Perlin.

In particular, policy-relevant research should focus on issues of continuing critical importance in the democratic development field, notably:

- The need for local leadership of the democratization process and attention to the local dimensions of democratic development;**
- The need to ensure that democratic development is affirmed as a universal right and value consistent with the International Bill of Human Rights;**
- The need to integrate democratic development assistance within the larger processes of social and economic development in other countries, and to a poverty reduction agenda in those countries receiving ODA;**
- The need to benefit from the experience and expertise of non-governmental organizations active in the field of democratic development assistance;**
- The need to improve the coherence and coordination of democratic development assistance both within donor countries and on a multilateral basis;**
- The need for more regular, and realistic, evaluations of the effectiveness of democracy assistance funding and the need to evaluate in a more regular and realistic manner the effectiveness of the democratic development assistance strategies being pursued.**

The Committee acknowledges that Canadian support for international democratic development has progressed considerably since its beginnings in the 1980s. We will elaborate further on this evolution in Chapter 4. At the same time, the testimony of witnesses clearly indicates that there is a need for a thorough review of all existing Government of Canada funding for the purposes of democratic development, most of which ultimately comes through the CIDA budget. Lack of credible evaluation has been identified as a particular weakness. We therefore believe that there is a need for a comprehensive *independent* evaluation of this current funding and its effectiveness.

One way to do this would be to convene a small independent panel of experts chosen following consultations with all parties represented in the House of Commons and approval by this Committee. The mandate of the independent panel should be to investigate all channels of funding as to their effectiveness in achieving their stated objectives, and to advise on which types of Canadian assistance have proved to be most effective, and where Canada can have the most positive impact. We will refer to this again

in several subsequent recommendations. The Committee suggests that the timeline for the report of the independent panel be one year and that the report be tabled in Parliament and referred to this Committee.

Recommendation 3

Given the weaknesses that have been identified in evaluating the effectiveness of Canada's existing democracy assistance funding, the government should commission an independent evaluation within one year of all public funding provided for this purpose, with the results to be tabled in Parliament and referred to this Committee. The proposed evaluation could be undertaken by an independent panel of experts selected following consultations with all parties in the House of Commons and the approval of this Committee.

Notes to Chapter 2

- 45 Burnell, ed., *Democracy Assistance: International Cooperation for Democratization*, 2000, p. 13.
- 46 Ibid., p. 36.
- 47 For the context surrounding the creation of the NED see Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*, 1999, pp. 30ff.
- 48 Burnell (2000), pp. 39ff. On the justification for increased assistance to democratic development as part of international assistance, see also George Perlin, "International Assistance to Democratic Development: Some Considerations for Canadian Policy Makers", Background paper for research meeting on Good governance and aid effectiveness, Ottawa, IDRC, March 2005, pp. 2-6.
- 49 George Perlin, *International Assistance to Democratic Development: A Review*, Institute for Research on Public Policy Working Paper Series no. 2003-04, 2003, Table I "Program Objectives and Activities in the Area of Democracy Assistance", pp. 12-13 (available online at www.irpp.org).
- 50 Ibid., p. 13.
- 51 George Perlin, "Finding a path to more effective democracy promotion policies", submission to the Committee of March 5, 2007, p. 1, footnote 2.
- 52 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 1, and written submission from CIDA.
- 53 Massimo Tommasoli, "Democracy Building and the Political Dimensions of Development", in IDEA, *Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide*, 2005, pp. 29-30.
- 54 "The EU Approach to Democracy Promotion in External Relations: Food for Thought", Council discussion paper democracy promotion, June, 21 2006 (available online at: <http://www.democracyagenda.org/modules.php?mop=modload&name=Upload&file=index&op=show&mid=2>).
- 55 Testimony of Leslie Campbell before the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Issue No. 12, February 21, 2007, p. 26. Mr. Campbell had been scheduled to meet with House Committee Members in Washington during meetings on February 5, 2007 but had to be in Iraq instead due to the deaths of four NDI staff there.
- 56 Notes for an Address by the Hon. Peter MacKay to the Democracy Council's Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development, February 15, 2007 (available online at: http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/current_discussions/democracy_dialogue-en.asp).
- 57 Gordon Crawford, "Facilitating Democratic Reforms: Learning from Democratic Principles", presentation summary to the "Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development", Ottawa, February 15, 2007, p. 6.
- 58 Helgesen, "Institutions and Beyond: Making Democracy Sustainable", 2006, p. 5.
- 59 Crawford, op.cit, p. 2
- 60 Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*, 1999, p.339.
- 61 Roel von Meijenfeldt, "Beyond Euphoria: new challenges for democracy promotion", Lecture delivered at DFAIT, January 10, 2007, p. 14.
- 62 Ross Reid, Notes for the Panel on "Democratic development in different contexts: challenges, opportunities and lessons learned", presented to the "Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development", Ottawa, February 15, 2007, p. 1.
- 63 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 23, October 24, 2006, p. 1.
- 64 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 17, September 27, 2006, p. 3.
- 65 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 5.
- 66 "Sustaining Democracy through the Rule of Law", January 2007, p. 6. See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007.
- 67 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19 October 4, 2006, p. 12.
- 68 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 42, February 27, 2007.

- 69 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006, p. 2 As described by Dr. Foster, the Social Watch coalition in India “is an alliance of civil society organizations, not a separate organization. It works both at the national and state level and addresses national, regional, and local governance issues. In its objectives it states that it ensures that civil society organizations and citizens are critically engaged in the process of governance to make democracy more meaningful and participatory. Monitoring the institutions of governance will make them accountable and transparent. They’ve picked up on four key instances of governance: Parliament, the executive and its execution of public policy, the Supreme Court, and instances of local self-government. They do this through a perspective of social development and citizens’ accountability.” (Ibid., p. 1) On the issues facing civil society’s role more generally, see Report on Wilton Park Conference S06/10 in association with the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard University, “Strengthening Democratic Governance: The Role of Civil Society”, June 2006 (available online at: <http://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/documents/conferences/WPS06-10/pdfs/WPS06-10.pdf>).
- 70 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 10.
- 71 See Thomas Carothers “Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror”, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2003. See also Carothers, “The Backlash Against Democracy Promotion”, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2006. (available online at: <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/backissues/decade/2000> .) On Muslim suspicions of U.S. strategy in the Middle East see Carrie Wicksham, “The Problem with Coercive Democratization: The Islamist Response to the U.S. Democracy Reform Initiative”, *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 2004, Article 6.
- 72 Carl Gershman and Michael Allen, “The Assault on Democracy Assistance”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 17, No. 2, April 2006, p. 37 (available online at: <http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/gratis/Gershman-17-2.pdf>). The Economist Intelligence Unit’s 2006 democracy index lists 30 “hybrid regimes”, including Russia, Haiti, and Iraq. Afghanistan is still listed among the 55 “authoritarian regimes” on the index. (See Table 1, “Economist Intelligence Unit democracy index 2006”, op. cit., pp 4-5.)
- 73 Ibid., p. 47.
- 74 Thomas Carothers, “Responding to the Democracy Promotion Backlash”, U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing, June 8, 2006 (available online at: <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=18416&prog=zgp&proj=zdr1.zme> .)
- 75 Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, “Democracies of the World , Unite”, *The American Interest Online*, Winter Issue Preview, 2007, available online at: <http://www.the-american-interest.com/ai2/article.cfm?id=220&Mid=7>.
- 76 Gershman and Allen, op. cit., pp. 49-50.
- 77 Ibid., p. 4. The Committee met with Richard Rowson, President of the Council for a Community of Democracies in Washington D.C. on February 6, 2007.
- 78 Robert Herman and Theodore Piccone, eds., *Defending Democracy: A Global Survey of Foreign Policy Trends 1992-2002*, Democracy Coalition Project, 2002, cited in Schmitz, “The Role of International Democracy Promotion in Canada’s Foreign Policy”, 2004, p. 42 (available online at: <http://www.irpp.org/fasttrak/index.htm>). The Committee met with Theodore Picone, Executive Director of the Democracy Coalition Project, and also the representative of the Club of Madrid in Washington D.C., on 6 February 2007 in Washington D.C. He noted that a new study is forthcoming on the 40 countries examined in the 2002 survey.
- 79 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 2.
- 80 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 26, November 1, 2006, p. 11.
- 81 Bernard Wood, “Some Possible Starting-Points”, Panel on “Democratic development in different contexts: challenges, opportunities and lessons learned”, Ottawa, 15 February 2007, pp. 3-4 (emphasis in original). As Zehra Arat also argues: “A modern democracy ... to sustain its legitimacy, should pursue policies that respect and protect the civil and political rights of its citizens and provide effective responses to their social and economic needs. A balance in the government’s performance in these two areas is crucial to the destiny of democratic political systems.” (*Democracy and Human Rights in Developing Countries*, iUniverse Inc., Lincoln, NE, 2003, p. 6.)
- 82 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 4 October 19, 2006, p. 9.
- 83 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 34, October 5, 2006, p. 7.

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- 84 “The Economist Intelligence Unit’s index of democracy”, 2006, pp. 2 and 6. Cf. Dani Rodrik and Roberto Rigobon, “Rule of law, democracy, openness, and income: estimating the interrelationships”, *Economics of Transition*, Vol. 13 No. 3, 2005; Daron Acemoglu et.al., “Income and democracy”, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper No. 11205, March 2005.
- 85 Cited in von Meijenfeldt, “Beyond euphoria: new challenges for democracy promotion”, p. 3.
- 86 Hilary Benn, “Making politics work for the poor: democracy and development”, Speech at Demos, Westminster Hall, October 23, 2006, p. 2 (available online at : http://www.demos.co.uk/files/File/HB_speech_-_final.pdf).
- 87 “Beyond euphoria: new challenges for democracy promotion”, p. 3. Cf. Morton Halperin, Joseph T. Seigle, and Michael M. Weinstein, *The Democracy Advantage: How Democracies Promote Peace and Prosperity*, Council on Foreign Relations, New York: Routledge, 2004.
- 88 Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*, 1999, p. 344.
- 89 Ibid., pp. 345.
- 90 “Promotion and Protection of Democracy: Policies and Perspectives for the 21st Century”, written presentation of Rights and Democracy accompanying President Jean-Louis Roy’s oral testimony, October 2, 2006, p. 17.
- 91 *Evidence*, Meeting No.18, October 2, 2006, p. 4. emphasis added.
- 92 Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, p. 345.
- 93 See also Carothers, “The Sequencing Fallacy”, *Journal of Democracy*, January 2007.
- 94 Perlin, “International Assistance to Democratic Development: A Review”, 2003, p.19
- 95 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 2.
- 96 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 2.
- 97 Thomas O. Melia, “The Democracy Bureaucracy: The Infrastructure of American Democracy Promotion”, A discussion paper prepared for the Princeton Project on National Security, Working Group on Global Institutions and Foreign Policy Infrastructure, September 2005, p. 9 (available online at: http://www.wvs.princeton.edu/ppns/papers/democracy_bureaucracy.pdf). See also, Melia, “The Democracy Bureaucracy”, *The American Interest*, Vol. 1, No. 4, Summer 2006, pp. 122-130.
- 98 Ian Smillie, “Good Enough Governance?”, written submission to the Committee, January 2007, p. 3. See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 39, February 1, 2007.
- 99 Ibid., pp. 2-3.
- 100 Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve*, pp. 339-40.
- 101 Ibid., p. 340.
- 102 As Carothers put it: “On the whole, democracy programs are at best a secondary influence because they do not have a decisive effect on the underlying conditions of the society that largely determine a country’s political trajectory — the character and alignment of the main political forces; the degree of concentration of economic power; the levels of education, wealth, and social mobility; the political traditions, expectations, and values of the citizenry; and the presence or absence of powerful antidemocratic elements.” (Ibid., p. 341.)
- 103 Carothers, “Introduction”, *Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion*, Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004, pp. 2-3.
- 104 Andrew T. Green and Richard D. Kohl, “Challenges of Evaluating Democracy Assistance: Perspectives from the Donor Side”, *Democratization*, Vol. 14, No. 1, February 2007, p.163.
- 105 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 34, December 5, 2006, p. 5 (emphasis added).
- 106 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 43, March 1, 2007, p. 13.
- 107 Smillie, “Good Enough Governance?”, submission of January 2007, p. 2.
- 108 The Committee did hold one hearing on the third of these evaluations. See *Evidence*, 38th Parliament, 1st Session, Meeting No. 17, December 15, 2004.

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- 109 As an NIMD publication states: “The IMD is aware that it operates in a professional field - democracy assistance - for which there are few textbooks available. For this reason, the IMD is putting much emphasis on regular external evaluation of its programmes. External evaluations are available for the Mozambique, Guatemala, Bolivia and Ghana programmes. The IMD management strongly encourages a learning attitude, within the operations of the IMD and is keen to share lessons learned.” (*Support for Political Parties and Party Systems: The IMD approach*, The Hague, n.d., p. 13; available online at: http://www.nimd.org/upload/publications/2005/supporting_parties_the_imd_approach.pdf.)
- 110 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 2.
- 111 Ibid.
- 112 Perlin, “Finding a path to more effective democracy promotion policies”, submission to the Committee of March 5, 2007, p. 2.
- 113 Ibid.
- 114 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 1.
- 115 Ibid., pp. 1-2.
- 116 Ibid., p. 2.
- 117 As of February 2007, the Democracy Council, set up as an “informal forum” in 2005, had eight members. Besides DFAIT and CIDA, these include Elections Canada, the Forum of the Federations, the IDRC, the National Judicial Institute, the Parliamentary Centre, and Rights and Democracy. (Source: Background Note prepared for the “Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development”, February 15, 2007.)
- 118 Ibid., p. 11.
- 119 “Strengthening Canadian Leadership in Democracy Promotion”, submission to the Committee from the Parliamentary Centre, January 11, 2007, p. 6.
- 120 Ibid.
- 121 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 23, October 24, 2006, p. 2.
- 122 Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, 1999, pp. 346-47.

CHAPTER 3 LEARNING FROM THE COMPARATIVE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER DONORS

I never find anything other than complexities.

David French, Chief Executive, The Westminster Foundation¹²⁴

It is important to get democracy assistance back in the realm of being a universal public good.

Mark Salter, Senior Programme Officer, Democracy Building and Conflict Management Programme, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)¹²⁵

Democracy promotion ... is not about top-down social engineering.

David Lowe, Vice-President, Government and External Relations, National Endowment for Democracy¹²⁶

What we do is try to help people figure it out for themselves.

Christopher Sands, Centre for Strategic and International Studies and International Republican Institute¹²⁷

Democracy is something that happens every day of the week.

Carolyn McAskie, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, Peacebuilding Support Office¹²⁸

Canada has its own particular experience of working for democratic development abroad, as we will review in the next part of this report. There is no one “best” foreign or international model that can simply be grafted on to that experience. At the same time, the comparative experience of other donors can enrich the knowledge base from which Canadian policy development in this area can draw. The Committee was unable to visit democracy promotion institutions in Germany and the Netherlands, although we are familiar with them. We did have direct meetings with democracy assistance agencies and experts in four Nordic countries and the United Kingdom in October 2006, and in the United States (Washington D.C. and New York) in February 2007. That included meetings with multilateral organizations — the Commonwealth Secretariat, International IDEA, and the United Nations.

The meetings we had outside Canada impressed on the Committee the growing range and scope of activities in this field, as well as the many varieties of channels whereby funding for democracy assistance is being delivered. It is not our intention to describe all of these in detail — such information can be found in the analytical literature and on agency web sites¹²⁹ — but rather to highlight some points that may contribute to Canadian policy reflection. Our concentration in this chapter will be with European and American donors, as multilateral approaches will be the subject of Chapter 8.

An important point to make at the outset is that there is a wide consensus on the critical issues facing democracy promoters that were dealt with in Chapter 2. Donors may be responding to these issues in different ways, depending on their distinctive institutional histories and levels of resources. They may have different working definitions of what is “democratic development”, or what CIDA categorizes as “democratic governance”. But all are aware of the global challenges and are seeking to increase their effectiveness in providing democracy aid.

When it comes to the U.K. and the Nordic countries, it must be noted that they have achieved ODA/GNI (Official Development Assistance/Gross National Income) ratios that are considerably higher than Canada’s overall level of development assistance (which was 0.34 % in 2005 and 0.30% in 2006; the average country effort was 0.46% in 2006)¹³⁰. In fact, the European Union as a whole has pledged to reach the UN 0.7% target by 2015, with some individual member countries aiming to achieve it before 2015. Three of the four Nordic countries we visited have already exceeded that target. Finland’s ODA percentage is the exception, having slipped from 0.47% in 2005. We were told that it should be at 0.43% in 2007¹³¹; however, DAC figures show a further slippage to 0.39% in 2006. Finland has pledged to meet the 0.7% target in 2010. The United Kingdom’s ODA ratio was 0.48% in 2005, rising to 0.52% in 2006. The UK Government has also formally pledged to meet the 0.7% target by 2013.¹³²

In Denmark, which is committed to maintaining an ODA/GNI ratio of 0.8% (this is the 2006 figure; it had been at 1.0% prior to a change of government in 2001), the Danish government’s *Commitment to Development* plan for 2007-2011 stresses increased support for Danish democratic development, good governance and anti-corruption efforts in poor countries. In 2007, the amount of one billion kroner for this area (C\$192 million), about 10% of ODA, is to increase by \$500 million kroner (C\$96 million).¹³³ It is noteworthy that the Danish aid agency DANIDA is no longer a separate organization but has been fully integrated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Denmark also has no political party foundations or independent democracy promotion institutions.

Danish aid tends to be focused, long-term and results-driven, with fully two-thirds of Danish aid going to Africa. Mr. Johnny Flento, Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Africa Department, told the Committee that their aid approach stresses decentralization to the field, local ownership and local democracy. Governance is also a decisive factor in

choosing Danish program countries. However, he acknowledged that among donors to Africa there remain “double standards” at play in regard to making ODA conditional on human rights and democratic governance standards.¹³⁴

Dr. Neil Webster, Head of Department, Development Research: Poverty, Aid, Politics at the Danish Institute of International Affairs observed in a presentation to the Committee that there have been considerable successes in support for participatory democracy but there is still a major problem of linking the local to the national level in a way that empowers all citizens, including the weak and marginalized sectors of society.

Dr. Webster underlined three areas of promise and one warning:

- 1) positive movement on fiscal decentralization and involvement of local people in budgeting processes;
- 2) civil service reform moving towards accountable service delivery;
- 3) movement from local participatory democracy to representative national democracy, giving voice to those who have traditionally been excluded. This must include looking at the role of political parties.

The area of concern was that DANIDA has a tendency to take “a too principled approach” in applying conditionality too strictly. One must be careful about simply withdrawing aid, and also be pragmatic in tackling issues like corruption. It is important not to jeopardize long-term institutional development especially in fragile states. Donors need to recognize that contexts vary greatly and to be able to identify the “drivers of change” in each. There is a question of how much donors trust the political choices made by other countries. But with democracy goes respect for the outcomes of participatory decision-making processes. Democracy can be a way to achieve poverty reduction. It must also be recognized that it can spark contestation and conflict.¹³⁵

In Finland, development aid has always been integrated within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Finnish ODA is very concentrated in eight bilateral program countries. Like Denmark, Finland’s ODA does not have a legislated framework, but this is being sought by the advisory Development Policy Committee (which has representation from all political parties), and would include the 0.7% target, which is supported by three parties. It was also pointed out that in 2006 Finland celebrated the 100th anniversary of its parliament achieving universal suffrage.

With respect to Finnish ODA democracy and governance programming, officials referred to the handbook *Thinking Strategically About Democracy Assistance* that was published by the ministry in November 2001.¹³⁶ They indicated that it was in the process of being updated in line with cooperation in this area at the EU level and the EU’s governance initiative, drawing on lessons from all member states. About 10% of Finnish ODA goes

towards governance activities broadly defined, including for budget support and local cooperation funds. As part of the effort of institution-building, there is a North-South program where Finnish local authorities collaborate with local governments in developing countries. There is also an active program in Afghanistan, although it is not yet considered to be a long-term partner country.¹³⁷

Significantly, the Committee was told by members of the Development Policy Committee, that although the idea of political parties being involved in democratic development had been publicly controversial, since 2005 a working group has been established, “Political Parties of Finland for Democracy”, or “Demo Finland”, which is supported by very modest government funding — €200,000 annually in 2006 (about C\$310,000) but expected to increase during 2007.¹³⁸ At present, Demo Finland works mainly in Tanzania — cooperating with the Tanzanian Centre for Democracy — and Nepal. Projects aim to promote dialogue, good practices, women’s participation in decision-making, and civic education. The concept of Demo Finland arose out of a 2004 government white paper which affirmed that:

Respect for human rights, equality in society and between the sexes as well as the advancement of democracy are the prerequisites for development. Facilitating and encouraging conditions for the functioning of a multiparty system and parliament creates a favourable ground for the development and establishment of democracy. The Government is looking into ways of increasingly making use of the experience and participation of Finnish parliamentarians and political parties.¹³⁹

Significantly, as well, after some debate it was decided that Demo Finland should follow a multi-party approach (similar to the Netherlands Institute of Multiparty Democracy, NIMD), rather than a “sister”-party or party-to-party model (akin to German, Swedish, or American party foundations or institutes). As one member of the Development Policy Committee put it: “The Dutch model suits us best because it follows a multi-party approach.”¹⁴⁰ The NIMD was also mentioned by several witnesses, including the renowned expert Thomas Carothers in Washington D.C,¹⁴¹ as one that might be the most applicable for Canada should the Canadian government and Parliament’s political parties decide to become involved in the political party aspects of democratic development. We will examine this further in Chapter 7 of the report which includes a section specifically devoted to the role of political parties and parliamentarians in democracy assistance.

In Sweden, which has committed to reach to reach an ODA/GNI ratio of 1.0% (it was 0.92% in 2005 and rose to 1.03% in 2006 according to DAC figures), the Committee was told about the very strong public support for ODA and the strong involvement of the parliament and civil society. Indeed Sweden’s adoption of a legislative government-wide framework for policy coherence around the goals of equitable and sustainable development followed a two-year parliamentary commission process. Aid to democratic governance has accounted for about 10% on Swedish ODA, and it is expected that the new government elected in the fall of 2006 will give more attention to these issues. One challenge identified by Ministry for Foreign affairs officials is “to identify agents of change.” In the case of a notable target, Belarus, Sweden will be working through media and political

parties.¹⁴² Significantly, Sweden's development agency, SIDA, which accounts for 50% of ODA spending, channels 30 million krona (C\$4.6 million) annually — an amount expected to increase — to Swedish political party foundations, with the budget for this allocated according to the number of seats each party receives in parliament.

The Committee was told by SIDA officials that the agency takes a rights-based approach to development. The three main areas of democratic governance assistance are: public-sector governance and public administration; legal sector reforms; democratic institutions and culture including at the local level. One of the challenges is that progress is not just a matter of finding a technical or institutional fix. A deeper analysis is needed of power relations, both formal and informal. A second challenge is implementing the Paris agenda on aid effectiveness and donor coordination.¹⁴³ A third is establishing a rights-based chain of accountability for citizens. And a fourth is achieving results-based management of programs through the use of appropriate evaluation indicators. The assessment of democratic outcomes is very difficult but necessary.

Sectors of democracy programming were outlined in regard to:

- Parliamentary strengthening. This includes involving parliaments in budgetary matters and other instruments of development planning such as in the preparation of the poverty reduction strategy papers (that are used by the international financial institutions). Activities are both bilateral and multilateral, using international parliamentary networks. The Swedish parliament is also “twinned” with parliaments in Vietnam and East Timor.
- Support for elections. SIDA is trying to work on a long-term basis on election management and issues of civic and voter education. Work in Kenya was cited.
- Support to political parties. This dimension began in 1996 and was made permanent in 2002. SIDA works through seven political party foundations, following the German model of individual party foundations rather than the Dutch model of one multi-party foundation. A major evaluation of political party support will be carried out in 2009.

The Committee did not have time to meet with representatives of these party foundations. However, we did have meetings with senior staff of the Stockholm-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), a knowledge-based inter-governmental institution which aims to “transform research findings into practical tools” and which has a close relationship with Canada's International Development Research Centre.¹⁴⁴ One of IDEA's three areas of focus in 2006 was political parties and participation (including women in politics); the other two being electoral processes and democracy building and conflict management. We have already referred to IDEA's participatory democracy assessment methodology in Chapter 1. In Chapter 7, we

will return to IDEA's findings on political party development as presented by Roger Hällag, its head of programme for political parties.¹⁴⁵

Norway, like Sweden, enjoys very high levels of public support for ODA, which is expected to reach a level of 0.97% of GNI in 2007 (it was 0.93% in 2005 and 0.89% in 2006), equivalent to about C\$3.5 billion. One of the primary goals of Norwegian aid is “to contribute towards promoting peace, democracy and human rights”, and governance is one of five areas of concentration. Broadly defined, governance accounts for about 18% of ODA.¹⁴⁶ In a meeting with members of the Storting (Parliamentary) Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, it was observed that there is considerable debate over ODA priorities — where does Norway have the most competence and comparative advantage? — over aid effectiveness, and over the challenges being faced in Afghanistan in combining the military element with development aid.

There was considerable discussion with the Committee of the challenges of promoting a multi-party system and how to build in accountability elements. There has been disagreement among the parties in Norway on how to provide party aid, with a division between those parties (such as Labour) that have established international party support networks and smaller parties which do not have this advantage. Nonetheless, a fledgling all-party Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support has been created. Acting Chair, Ms. Marit Nybakk explained that it is important to have such a mechanism to be able to support political parties abroad for the purposes of training, organizational capacity building, increasing the role of women, etc. Officials of the Foreign Affairs ministry and NORAD emphasized the importance of it being an arms-length mechanism. The guidelines for it suggest that a competitive process be used for the funding of project proposals from political parties, and that there also be support for joint projects. This funding remains a very small part of democratic governance assistance. There is still debate in Norway on the best way to provide support through political parties. The previous strategy of support for democratic development did not include this element. NORAD's thinking is to do it a little bit and to “outsource” it to embassies. Party support is a difficult area that demands that one be careful and proceed with caution.¹⁴⁷

The Committee did meet directly with officials of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support, where we were told the Centre became a permanent body in 2006 after beginning as a pilot project in 2002. Projects are small given that the Centre's funding is only €600, 000 (C\$857, 000) in 2006, increasing to €850,000 (C\$1,215,00) in 2007.¹⁴⁸ It is important to note that the Centre was established at the request of all seven parties represented in the Storting. We will return to this in Chapter 7.

While in Oslo, the Committee also met with officials of the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM), which was the inspiration for Canada's CANADEM, about which we will have more to say in Part II of the report. NORDEM was created in 1993 by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a project of the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights at the University of Oslo. At the time, it was the first such program in the world, in order to respond to the need for qualified personnel,

available on short notice, for assignments which promote democracy and respect for human rights. NORDEM's main function is to recruit and train personnel for secondment to international organizations working to promote democracy and human rights. NORDEM has a roster of 250 experts and has carried out 1,700 assignments since 1993. It has developed the first manual in human rights fieldwork (1997, revised in 2001), participated in developing election observation methodology, and produced guidelines for observing electronic voting.¹⁴⁹

Turning to a larger donor country, the United Kingdom, the Committee met with David French, Chief Executive of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and also the Chair of its Board, Labour M.P. Hugh Bayley, in the context of another meeting with the Chair and members of the UK Parliamentary Select Committee on International Development. The WFD was created in 1992 as a government-sponsored body but with a high degree of independence. It reflects a partnership of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) with British political parties, in which 50% of funding goes to the parties to undertake party-to-party assistance.

According to Mr. French, the WFD is explicitly about political development and is comfortable with the political sensitivities involved. The involvement of political parties came as an initiative from backbench parliamentarians. There is a strong echo of the core funding to political party foundations provided by the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy; however, on a much smaller scale. As well, the WFD allows currently active politicians to be involved and does not have any country offices. The WFD is seeking to deepen its relationship with the Department for International Development (DFID) in light of its July 2006 white paper *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Governance Work for the Poor*¹⁵⁰ which launched a £100 million (C\$212 million) democracy fund. At present, however, none of this funding can go towards political party development, a fact with which the WFD disagrees.¹⁵¹

Mr. Bayley noted the WFD's funding — £4.1 (\$8.7 million) in 2005-2006 — is very small compared to the amounts spent by DFID on governance, which are set to increase in line with the governance emphasis in the July 2006 white paper. DFID's support for good governance is broader than a political democracy focus. But as the Chair of the Select Committee, Liberal-Democrat M.P. Malcolm Bruce, remarked, "good governance is sustained by good democracy". The WFD's niche role is in supporting party-to-party development, and it is seeking additional funding from the FCO and DFID for special projects, for example in Sierra Leone. We will have more to say about the WFD approach in chapter 7.

More broadly, our meeting with members of the Select Committee indicated all-party support for the UK's legislated mandate for ODA — the *International Development Act* passed by Parliament in 2002¹⁵² — as a result of a deliberate decision in 1997 to give a strong identity to DFID separate from that of the FCO. Moreover, it was noted that the UK government has committed to reaching the 0.7% target by 2013 (it was at 0.52% in 2006). In terms of the approach to democratic development, Mr. Bayley made the point that it

cannot be reduced to a single template of electoral democracy. It must involve local networks and communities, giving the example of Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This is so that “democracy can be developed, experimented with and built up from the base”. Labour M.P. Anne McKechin added that an important question is: “How do we establish direct links between the poorest citizens and the state?” In her view it is not by imposing our structures on complex local realities and it also means being sensitive to the gender dimensions of democratic development.¹⁵³

Democracy assistance is situated within the UK’s broader international development agenda. One of nine strategic international priorities affirmed in the FCO’s 2006 *Active Diplomacy for a Changing World* is “promoting sustainable development and poverty reduction underpinned by human rights, democracy, good governance and protection of the environment.”¹⁵⁴ The FCO has an Office of Democracy and Good Governance, the policy of which states, inter alia, that the United Kingdom lobbies governments that do not use democratic practices or processes, and supports those states that are attempting to adopt democratic institutions and complete democratic transitions, emphasizing the representation and participation of the poorer segments of society.¹⁵⁵

Most of the UK’s democratic governance assistance is channelled through DFID — as is the case for Canada with CIDA. We have already referred in Chapter 2 to International Development Minister Hilary Benn’s October 2006 speech on the subject “Making politics work for the poor: democracy and development”.¹⁵⁶ But as Peter Owen, Senior Governance Advisor in the Policy Division of DFID remarked to the Committee: “There isn’t a cookbook about how to do this.”¹⁵⁷ In elaborating DFID’s approach, officials stressed the importance of understanding the political dynamics in each context, including at the local politics level, and of conducting regular country governance analysis. One must work to find the key drivers of change in each society, though it is also necessary to be careful about which NGOs to work with. It was mentioned that DFID has abandoned strict conditionality in its programming, except for an emphasis on poverty reduction, human rights, and sound financial management. DFID also makes use of governance indicators such as those produced by the World Bank. However, these have to be used carefully and adapted to make them home grown to each context. Very long-term time frames are often involved in bringing about governance changes at the societal level.

DFID’s written submission to the Committee included a section on “Lessons we’re learning” which made the following points:

- Good governance is not just about governments;
 - It’s also about political parties, parliament, the judiciary, media, civil society and the private sector;
- “Freedoms to” are part of development;

- Real democracy seems to “lock in” other developmental gains;
- Finding and designing the right interventions needs a **good understanding of context**;
- And **prioritisation**.¹⁵⁸

Before considering the large and complex U.S. case, mention should be made of the growing European Union (EU) role. The 1993 Treaty on European Union sets the development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as an explicit objective of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.¹⁵⁹ Subsequently, the EU established the European Initiative for Democratisation and Human Rights (EIDHR) with the aim “to promote human rights, democracy and conflict prevention in third countries by funding activities pursuing these goals.”¹⁶⁰ The annual budget of the EIDHR is about €100 million (C\$155 million) and it funds projects in over 30 countries.¹⁶¹ Roel von Meijenfeldt, Executive Director of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, referred to the following recent EU-level developments in a presentation circulated to the Committee in January 2007:

- The Policy Unit of the Council of Ministers of the EU, in conjunction with the European Commission produced a first discussion paper on the subject of EU democracy promotion in July 2006 under the title: *The EU Approach to Democracy Promotion in External Relations: Food for Thought*, [<http://www.democracyagenda.org/modules.php?mop=modload&name=Upload&file=index&op=getit&fid=15>.] The paper is currently discussed within the EU Council by the Peace and Security Committee of the EU Member States;
- Members of the European Parliament established a Democracy Caucus that meets to advance EU democracy assistance;
- The European Parliament accepted in December 2006, following extended negotiations with the European Commission and the Council, a new Regulation for a financing instrument for the promotion of Democracy and Human Rights Worldwide, which includes an opening for assistance to political party development; ...
- An initiative has been taken for the establishment of the *European Foundation for Democracy through Partnership* [<http://www.nimd.org/upload/eurodemofoundation.doc>.] that should operate independently from the EU institutions with core functions such as

becoming a knowledge hub for activities related to European democracy assistance and with a grant-making capacity that can respond in a flexible and responsive manner to opportunities for advancing democracy.¹⁶²

Turning to U.S. institutions, these are large in size and funding, as befits the world's superpower, but which come with considerable disadvantages as well as advantages. U.S. net ODA was only 0.22% of GNI in 2005 according to OECD/DAC figures, though this represented a rise of 36.5% in real terms, totalling US\$27.6 billion, and was the highest level since 1986. However, the U.S. ODA/GNI ratio has again slipped back to 0.17% in 2006. With respect to democracy support, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is the world's largest implementer of democracy programs, with a fiscal year 2006 budget for this purpose of US\$833 million.¹⁶³ In addition, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) established in 2004 to administer the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), budgeted at US\$1.5 billion in 2005, explicitly links the provision of ODA to "good governance" practices by recipient countries. At the same time, Thomas Carothers observed to the Committee that, after the huge expansion of democracy assistance since the 1980s, along with a consensus that it goes together with economic development, there is now a "greater state of controversy and debate" than in the past 20 years. "The subject is in a state of change" in the wake of Iraq and a broader pushback against democracy promoters (e.g., in Russia).¹⁶⁴

In the Committee's meetings with Paula Dobriansky, Under-Secretary, Democracy and Global Affairs, U.S. Department of State, and other senior executive branch officials¹⁶⁵ — which were conducted under Chatham House rules — there was an evident awareness of the critical issues facing democracy promotion today. Significantly, Ms. Dobriansky, whose title was changed in 2005 to explicitly include democracy, is also Executive Director of the Democracy Promotion Advisory Committee to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. For example, it was mentioned that in linking democracy and development¹⁶⁶, people in recipient countries must perceive that democracy delivers positive results. Democracy work must be context-specific rather than a transplanted model and local communities matter greatly.

Reference was made to the backlash against democracy in some countries (regression in Russia, the challenge of China) and to making more use of the Community of Democracies and looking for effective strategies. There was also mention of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, with assistance to education reform, parliaments and political parties, and to MCC compacts involving homegrown projects with education in the forefront, mostly in the Muslim world working through NGOs. As for parliamentary assistance, the demand must come from indigenous parliaments themselves, though perhaps there could be an international secretariat to facilitate inter-parliamentary assistance.

Allusion was made to the inherently risky nature of democracy promotion and to the challenge of getting all U.S. agencies to follow a coherent direction. There seem to have been some tensions between the State Department and USAID. Achieving coordinated

country strategies is still difficult and must happen in the field. Indeed, in a separate meeting on February 6, 2007, Thomas Melia, Deputy Director of Freedom House mentioned his work on the U.S. “democracy bureaucracy”, to which we have already made reference in Chapter 2, and in which he analyzes the new initiatives of the Bush administration that have included a bigger role for the State Department.¹⁶⁷ In his view, there is an “increasingly cluttered array” of programs that is “not getting reconciled”. Even the Pentagon is getting into nation-building with little political oversight.¹⁶⁸

In the Committee’s meetings with senior officials at USAID on February 5, 2007, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Paul Bonicelli stated that: “We see democracy promotion as very much a development exercise”. Yes, there has been some backlash, but “it is impossible to have good governance without democracy”. He acknowledged that there has been a reform process underway within USAID with a view to better overall coordination of responsibilities.¹⁶⁹ Legislators should be involved in that. U.S. ODA has set goals to meet five main objectives: peace and security, governing democratically and justly, investing in people, economic growth, humanitarian assistance.

The Office of Democracy and Governance has programs dealing with elections, rule of law, civil society, and promoting good governance. USAID has also established an “Office of Military Affairs” to deal with increasing linkages between security and development. Maria Rendon, of the Office of Democracy and Governance, explained that synergies with democratic governance are being acknowledged down to the field level and that Secretary Rice is trying to coordinate U.S. efforts overall.

Gerald Hyman, a consultant to the Agency¹⁷⁰ and former director of its Office of Democracy and Governance, underlined that democracy aid is part of ODA and there must be recognition that the governance element is essential (citing the case of Haiti). Democracy is not just instrumental but is a right and value in itself. Mr. Hyman stressed that there is a role for Canada in places like Cuba where the U.S. carries a lot of counter-productive baggage. Yes, there are concerns about China’s influence and Russia’s pushback, but there are also successes in Eastern Europe. There is a need for a “united front of democratic countries”. Cooperation with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is part of that. He acknowledged that Canada can do things that the U.S. cannot.

Mr. Bonicelli pointed to the importance of “developing capacity at the local level”. He mentioned the Office of Transition Initiatives which helps local partners advance peace and democracy in priority conflict-prone countries. He also addressed the need for assessments and evaluations, which includes accountability for multilateral funds. The U.S. is working with the UN Democracy Fund. However, multilateral coordination is still a rarity.

On February 5, 2007, the Committee also met with senior representatives of the the National Endowment for Democracy (NED, <http://www.ned.org/>), and two of the major organizations which receive funding from it, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI, <http://www.ndi.org/>), and the International Republican Institute

(IRI, <http://www.iri.org/>).¹⁷¹ The Committee has already referred to these in Chapter 2. We note here that the party-affiliated institutes, NDI and IRI, have a combined annual budget (US\$200 million) that is much more than the NED's annual Congressional appropriation of approximately US\$80 million, making the total resources expended by the NED "family" truly impressive.

Vin Weber, a former Congressman and Chair of the NED's Board, told the Committee that it has a broad mandate going much beyond elections — "We always talk about the preconditions for democracy" — and looks for practical partnerships with other donors and in recipient countries. Mr. Weber also alluded to the fact that the NED is trying to respond to the pushback against democracy promotion that has occurred in recent years. NED's Vice-President for Government and External Relations, David Lowe, noted it publishes the *Journal of Democracy* and sponsors the World Movement for Democracy (<http://www.wmd.org/>). As he put it: "We believe strongly that this [democracy promotion] is a global movement." Democracy support should not be about pushing any one country's national interest. The problem of donor duplication can be mitigated by working through international networks, such as the World Movement.

Ivan Doherty, Director of Political Party Programs at NDI, pointed out that although it is associated with the Democratic Party it tries to work across the political spectrum, and with three party internationals, as an international organization with 60 field offices around the world. NDI works in multi-party contexts and it is also doing work on pro-poor development issues that are linked to democratization processes. Responding to a question about the role of parliamentarians, Mr. Doherty urged that more politicians get involved in political development work.

Christopher Sands, an associate with the smaller IRI, which works only with the conservative party international network, talked about unrealistic local expectations and the need to teach others how to use democratic institutions, as well as the importance of working with locals and "not exporting our model". He also mentioned IRI's involvement in voter education programs. Mr. Sands was very positive about Canada doing more in the field given its special experience with party formations and with federalism.

In discussions with the Committee, Mr. Weber observed the unfortunate conflation of democracy promotion with Iraq in many people's minds. He cited a recent survey showing that only one in three Americans now think that democracy promotion is a good idea. Mr. Doherty agreed that democracy promotion has become harder to do. But he saw Iraq as an aberration, and not yet a lost cause. NDI continues to work in Iraq with some 300 local and international partners. The attempt is at long-term engagement. Mr. Sands agreed that the road to democracy in places like Iraq and Afghanistan is a long one. Democracy is not something that can just be "put in the microwave". Mr. Lowe said that the NED's work is not about regime change. And despite the pushback, many local organizations in democracy-challenged countries still appreciate NED's support.

Mr. Sands noted that one of the challenges in developing democracies is to instill an appreciation of the role of “loyal oppositions”. This may be an area where Canadian practices can help. Moreover, Canada can bring an approach that the U.S. as a superpower cannot. Mr. Lowe agreed that the Canadian voice would be “tremendously helpful”. Mr. Weber pointed to the importance of doing things that are adapted to the level of socio-economic development in each country. Interestingly, in a subsequent meeting in New York with Richard Haass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations (and former director of policy planning at the U.S. State Department), he expressed the view that “not enough emphasis is put on the economic side of democratic development.” Moreover, in affirming that arms-length foundations like the NED can do things that governments — especially U.S. government — cannot, he added that Canada is also in a good position to do things that the U.S. cannot. “You are not radioactive in ways that we are,” is how he put it.¹⁷²

An especially valuable independent perspective on U.S. democracy assistance efforts was provided to the Committee by two internationally-recognized experts at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Thomas Carothers, its Vice-President for Studies — International Politics and Governance, and Marina Ottaway, Director of its Middle East Program.¹⁷³ Mr. Carothers observed that in Washington democracy promotion has become much more a point of contention, among both Republicans and Democrats. Realists are resisting the ambitious goals of idealists and ideologues. There is especially sharp debate over President Bush’s “freedom agenda” in the Middle East. Is bringing democracy to the region even the right goal, or is it that the methods used have not been the right ones?

As to how to best fund democracy promotion, this is still an open debate involving the State Department, USAID, and the NED group (which overall receives less than 10% of its funding from government sources). Each instrument has been shown to have advantages and disadvantages. In cases such as Iran, U.S. strategic interests come to the fore. More generally, Mr. Carothers sees USAID being brought more under the purview of the State Department.

According to Mr. Carothers, democracy aid targeting dictatorships has so far been very ineffective. The fact is that the more open the society, the more democracy aid can work. The easy cases have been done, and now we are down to the hard cases. That is one reason there is much uncertainty about potential outcomes. Moreover, democracy promotion has become a crowded field leading to an unsolved problem of donor coordination. Donors also need to carefully assess their entry point in providing democracy assistance, moving beyond a focus on elections.

Ms. Ottaway observed the paradox that the Middle East needs democracy promotion the most, but it is also in this region that it has been the least successful. She bluntly stated that “the democracy promotion agenda of the Bush administration is dead.”

The big rhetoric has been toned down. The pressure on autocratic governments “has disappeared” in favour of stability first, and the autocrats know it (citing Egypt as a case “going from bad to worse” in democracy terms).

Programs continue under the Middle East Partnership Initiative and there are lots of traditional projects happening at the base. But even if these are pretty good, they will not make much of a difference on the overall democracy scale. There is a “lack of clarity” in U.S. goals for the region, and a lot of confusion following the victory of Hamas in democratic elections in the Palestinian Territories. U.S. political party development aid has tended to focus on the secular, liberal parties, but these “have absolutely no organization.” The political process in Arab countries is still one in which “parliaments are pretty irrelevant”, and strong executives confront Islamist parties. This poses huge dilemmas, since pressures for democratic change must come from inside. Nothing will be simple. According to Ms. Ottaway, we need to understand that the particularities of each country require different strategies. We also need to understand the support for Islamist parties, taking into account that the Islamist movements have very strong women’s organizations. Ms. Ottaway noted that when we talk of “civil society” we need to consider more than the NGOs supported by the West.

Asked about his advice for future Canadian policy, Mr. Carothers stated that it is “very important that other countries [than the U.S.] step forward and that “Canada has a unique role to play.” This is especially so as the U.S. has stumbled in its promotion of democracy. With regard to getting into the business of political party aid, Canada may have an advantage in being able to learn from the mistakes of others’ experience. It need not be stuck in what he referred as the old model of party aid. A good example to follow might be the approach of the Netherlands Institute of Multiparty Democracy. We will return to this subject in Chapter 7.

With regard to differences of approach between European and American donors, one Canadian witness, Professor Jeffrey Kopstein of the University of Toronto, contrasted in particular the EU post-1989 approach in Eastern Europe, which he saw as concentrating on state-building from the top, with the U.S. emphasis on “bottom-up” change through civil-society actors. As he put it:

If we look at the EU top-down model... it works beautifully for countries that have a chance to join the EU, but it is all but powerless in other parts of the world that will not be joining the EU anytime soon. The bottom line is that, to date, apart from enlargement, the EU does not have a viable democracy promotion model.

Canada should draw lessons from the strengths and weaknesses of both the EU and the U.S. approaches. We should proceed on both fronts, both in supporting civil society and NGOs on the one hand, and in using the powerful tools of intergovernmental and multilateral institutions on the other. It is important to remember that democracy promotion does not preclude contact with undemocratic regimes. But it is crucial, at the same time, to get the message right. That will be the central challenge for any Canadian government.¹⁷⁴

In testimony before a Canadian Senate committee, Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General of International IDEA with which the Committee had meetings in Stockholm in October 2006, also made the following noteworthy comment:

Canada has a very good potential of bridging what is today a considerable gap between American and European approaches. Looking at democracy approaches from the U.S, the European approach is toothless. Looking from Europe, the American approach is counterproductive. This is not a productive situation. There is a need to look into ways of bringing these together because if democracy promotion by the main donor countries is to be effective, they should have more or less the same approaches. Canada, with its good neighbourly relations with the U.S. and with a high degree of credibility both with multilateral institutions and in Europe, could certainly play a role in that.¹⁷⁵

In covering a lot of ground, this chapter shows that European and American democracy assistance activities — even those which are more established and/or heavily funded than those of Canada — continue to be in a state of evolution. In such a complex, risky field, they have not necessarily found the “answers” which Canada can simply apply. Indeed, as some of the above comments indicate, these other donors would welcome a greater contribution from Canada which is seen as having positive assets to bring to what should be a global endeavour.

Moreover, the Committee takes to heart Thomas Carothers’ remark that Canada has the opportunity to benefit from the mistakes of other donors in moving towards best practices in existing and new fields of democratic development endeavour. To do so will require systematic attention to what those other donors are doing. Accordingly, as part of making Canadian assistance more effective, the Canadian policy community should make it a point to learn from their experiences.

Recommendation 4

Increased Canadian public-sector support for independent research and knowledge generation on effective democratic development assistance, as addressed in Recommendation 2, should encompass staying abreast of the activities of other donor countries, including of their NGOs and experts in this field, and continuous learning from their experiences.

Notes to Chapter 3

- 124 Meeting with the Committee, London, England, October 11, 2006.
- 125 Meeting with the Committee, Stockholm, Sweden, October 12, 2006.
- 126 Meeting with the Committee, Washington D.C., February 5, 2007.
- 127 Meeting with the Committee, Washington D.C., February 5, 2007.
- 128 Meeting with the Committee, New York City, February 7, 2007.
- 129 One recent Canadian source that includes a limited international survey is Thomas Axworthy, Leslie Campbell, and David Donovan, *The Democracy Canada Institute: A Blueprint*, Institute for Research on Public Policy Working Paper , 2005-02, May 2005. Background information on all significant country and multilateral donors was made available to the Committee in September 2006.
- 130 The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD keeps track of all ODA spending by OECD member countries. It now uses Gross National Income, rather than Gross National Product in its proportional measurements. Percentages reflect net ODA levels according to the latest available DAC information released on April 3, 2007 which covers 2006 and 2005. Further details are available online at: http://www.oecd.org/document/17/0,2340,en_2649_201185_38341265_1_1_1_1,00.html .
- 131 Meeting with Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials, Helsinki, October 10, 2006.
- 132 As noted in a meeting with members of the UK House of Commons Select Committee on International Development, London, October 11, 2006.
- 133 Information received from Canadian ambassador Fredericka Gregory, Copenhagen, October 9, 2006.
- 134 Meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Copenhagen, October 9, 2006.
- 135 Summary of oral presentation, Copenhagen, October 9, 2006.
- 136 The full document is available online at http://www.cajpe.org.pe/mat_bol/Docs/Thinking_strategically_about_democracy_assistance.pdf .
- 137 Meeting with Ministry for Foreign Affairs officials, Helsinki, October 10, 2006.
- 138 Information received from Demo Finland executive director Sari Varpama, March 2007.
- 139 Cited in information provided by Demo Finland, October 10, 2006.
- 140 Meeting in Helsinki, October 10, 2006.
- 141 Meeting at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 5 February 2007. Dr. Carothers is the Endowment's Vice-President for International Studies — International Politics and Governance, as well as being the founder and director of its Democracy and Rule of Law Project. Among his many publications on democracy promotion, his most recent book is *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., 2006.
- 142 Meeting at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm, October 12, 2006.
- 143 Details of the OECD Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness are available online at: http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,2340,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html .
- 144 Presentation to the Committee by IDEA, Stockholm, October 12, 2006.
- 145 Mr. Hällag also provided Committee members with an October 2004 paper by Thomas Carothers, "Political Party Aid" that was prepared for SIDA.
- 146 Meeting with officials of the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Oslo, October 13, 2006. This includes things such as good governance in the resource management area under the "oil for development" ODA priority. The 18% is not broken down further to democracy assistance specifically. However it includes support for parliaments and elections. The example was given of support for female candidates in Malawi. Another example was of NORAD cooperation with CIDA on anti-corruption programs.
- 147 Meetings in Oslo, October 13, 2006.

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- 148 Information provided at meeting in Oslo, October 13, 2006.
- 149 Presentation by Ms. Siri Skare, Project Director, NORDEM, Oslo, October 13, 2006.
- 150 Available online at <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/wp2006/whitepaper-printer-friendly.pdf> .
- 151 Meeting with David French, London, England, October 11, 2006.
- 152 Available online at: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/20020001.htm> .
- 153 Meeting with the UK Parliamentary Select Committee on International Development, London, October 11, 2006.
- 154 United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Active Diplomacy for a Changing World: the UK's International Priorities*, March 2006, <http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/fullintpriorities2006.pdf>.
- 155 United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Democracy and Good Governance," <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1070037618836>
- 156 See chapter 2, endnote 87.
- 157 Meeting with DFID officials, London, October 11, 2006.
- 158 DFID presentation, London, October 11, 2006 (emphasis in original).
- 159 See European Commission, "Promotion of Human Rights and Democratisation in the European Union's External Relations", http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/human_rights/intro/index.htm .
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 Ibid, and European Commission, "About the EIDHR", http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/eidhr/index_en.htm .
- 162 Roel von Meijenfeldt, "Beyond Euphoria: new challenges for democracy promotion", Presentation at DFAIT, Ottawa, January 10, 2007, p. 18.
- 163 Information received by the Committee in February 2007 from Dr. Paul Bonicelli, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance.
- 164 Meeting at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., February 5, 2007.
- 165 Meetings at the U.S. Department of State, February 5, 2007. The other officials were: Barry Lowenkron, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour; Stephen Krasner, State Department Director of Policy and Planning; Scott Carpenter, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near East Affairs; Betsy Whitaker, Deputy Assistant Secretary (Canada and Mexico), Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs; and Mike Kozak, National Security Council Senior Director for Democracy, Human Rights and International Organizations.
- 166 See the public speech of Under-Secretary Dobriansky, "Emerging Experience: How Political Democracy and Economic Development are Mutually Reinforcing", Remarks at a Freedom House Symposium on Democracy and Development: Maximizing Performance in Two Dimensions, January 19, 2007 (available online at: <http://www.state.gov/g/rls/rm/79316.htm>).
- 167 A short version was published in the Summer 2006 issues of *The American Interest* under the title "The Democracy Bureaucracy" (available online at: <http://www.the-american-interest.com/ai2/article.cfm?id=75&Mld=4>). The long version, "The Democracy Bureaucracy: The Infrastructure of American Democracy Promotion", was done as a September 2005 discussion paper for the Princeton Project on National Security, Working Group on Global Institutions and Foreign Policy Infrastructure, available online at: http://www.wws.princeton.edu/ppns/papers/democracy_bureaucracy.pdf
- 168 Roundtable at the Canadian embassy, Washington, 6 February 2007.
- 169 On the democracy promotion front, the Committee was given a copy of USAID's December 2005 strategy paper, "At Freedom's Frontiers: A Democracy and Governance Strategic Framework" (available online at: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/0512_democracy_framework.pdf).

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- 170 Hyman is currently Senior Advisor and President of the Hills Program on Governance, Centre for Strategic and International Studies.
- 171 Roundtable at the Canadian Embassy, Washington, February 5, 2007.
- 172 Meeting at the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, February 7, 2007.
- 173 Meeting at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, February 5, 2007.
- 174 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 14, October 4, 2006, p. 4. See also Kopstein, "The Transatlantic Divide over Democracy Promotion", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 2, Spring 2006, pp. 85-98.
- 175 Testimony before the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Evidence*, Issue No.11, February 20, 2007 pp. 14-15.

PART II TAKING STOCK OF CANADA'S ROLE IN DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE

Before moving to the full range of the Committee's proposals for new and/or expanded directions in Canadian policy, it is important first to have a thorough appreciation of what Canada has been doing to date in terms of assisting democratic development, and of what Canada is capable of offering to this global endeavour.

Accordingly, Chapter 4 surveys both the genesis of Canadian support for democratic development during the 1980s — noting the crucial parliamentary role in this — and the subsequent evolution of Canadian policy and activity in this area up to the present day. While Canada has not yet reached the level of some other donors, there is a substantial base, both at the governmental and non-governmental level, which can be improved and built upon.

Chapter 5 then elaborates on the range of possibilities in terms of Canadian capabilities and potential comparative advantages in doing democratic development work. More public funding for this work will be necessary in order to significantly advance Canada's role, some of which can be done through governmental instruments. But there is still greater potential to be considered through the use of independent and arms-length instruments. In that sense, Chapter 5 leads into Part III of the report in which the Committee makes its core recommendations for strengthening Canada's contribution to international democratic development in terms of both Canadian policy and funding.

CHAPTER 4 REVIEWING THE PROGRESS OF CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT TO DATE

Canadian interest in using foreign policy instruments to advance the cause of democracy abroad was galvanized by the U.S. foreign policy debates of the late 1970s and early 1980s about interventions in other states (notably in Central America) on human rights and democracy grounds.¹⁷⁶ In 1983, the U.S. created the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) as an arms-length non-profit body funded through congressional appropriations, to support the development of democratic institutions in other countries.¹⁷⁷ The NED budget received from Congress in fiscal year 2006 was over US\$74 million. (The NED also receives about 3% of its financing from other sources, which included in 2005 the Embassy of Canada.) The Endowment has a grant-making relationship with four implementing agencies, which receive more than half of annual NED funds: the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI, loosely associated with the national Democratic Party), the International Republican Institute (IRI, loosely associated with the national Republican Party), the Center for International Private Enterprise, and the American Center for International Labour Solidarity. The budget of NDI alone surpasses that of the NED.¹⁷⁸ Noteworthy is that from the inception of the NED, it involved political parties in democratic development work.

The Canadian government was challenged to become similarly active in the field of democracy support by a 1985-86 parliamentary review of foreign policy. But at the same time, it was also advised to proceed with caution in pursuing a less aggressive and more multilateralist approach to both human rights and democracy promotion. The issue of involving political parties was deemed too sensitive and to this day, Canada has not been involved in political party development as part of democracy assistance. The following summarizes key stages in initial and increasing Canadian involvement in international democratic development.

The June 1986 final report, *Independence and Internationalism*, of the parliamentary Special Joint Committee on Canada's International Relations, affirmed that political and human rights development should be part of international cooperation and called for the establishment of an "International Institute of Human Rights and Democratic Development." This proposal for an independent statutory arms-length body was strongly reaffirmed in the landmark May 1987 report of this Committee (then called the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade), *For Whose Benefit?*, which remains the only comprehensive parliamentary study undertaken of Canada's ODA policies and programs.

The Mulroney government responded favourably and appointed two special rapporteurs, Professors John Courtney and Gisèle Côté-Harper, to study the concept. Their summer 1987 report to the government urged adoption of a non-ideological approach, stating: "The notion of democracy which we have adopted, and which we

believe must define and inspire Canadian assistance in this area, is quite simply the participation of citizens in decision-making which affects their lives.”¹⁷⁹ Still, the rapporteurs were so wary of the contested connotations of ‘democracy’ that they recommended the new organization be called the International Centre for Human Rights and Institutional Development.¹⁸⁰ Their report stated as justification:

Many of our interlocutors, notably those working in the area of cooperation with developing countries, and those involved in the protection and promotion of human rights internationally, have cautioned us against the use of the word “democracy” and its derivatives in the formulation of the name and the mandate of an eventual institution. This terminology, they have reminded us, has acquired an ideological, political and cultural meaning which differs profoundly from one region of the world to another. Coming from a western industrialized country, it risks being interpreted as an intention to impose on our cooperation programs in this area our own concept of democracy. Others are concerned that it will be received as indicative of the philosophy of the present USA Administration. It seems to us indispensable to avoid any such ambiguity — ambiguity which would prevent, furthermore, many groups which could benefit from Canadian assistance from seeking such assistance.¹⁸¹

In the event, the government and the parliament of the day decided it was not necessary to throw the democracy baby out with the bathwater — that it was possible to refer explicitly to *democratic* development as a goal of universal human rights-based application. Accordingly, Parliament in 1988 passed legislation establishing an International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD, known today by its short form as Rights & Democracy), with a mandate anchored to the UN International Bill of Human Rights.¹⁸²

Funding for the Centre was set at \$5 million annually from the official development assistance budget. During some later years, the Centre’s parliamentary appropriation has been even less than that. In fact, the \$5 million level was not surpassed until 2005. (The total parliamentary allocation appears to be approximately \$8.8 million for the 2006-2007 fiscal year, with the total budget of Rights and Democracy currently just under \$10 million.¹⁸³) After considerable delay, the Centre opened its doors in 1990 with Hon. Ed Broadbent as its first president. During its first decade of existence, over 300 democracy assistance projects were supported in nearly 50 countries.¹⁸⁴ The Centre has had three presidents in its history, each of whom testified before the Committee in the course of this study.¹⁸⁵ As noted in Chapter 2, it is also subject to a statutory review every five years.¹⁸⁶

The establishment of ICHRDD (Rights and Democracy) was the main legacy of Canadian policy discussion of democratic development in the 1980s. From the 1990s to the present, other government-funded activities were initiated and/or expanded, involving in the case of CIDA’s own programming, much larger sums.

Before turning to CIDA, it is important to recognize the highly-regarded international role of Elections Canada, whose former head, Jean-Pierre Kingsley testified before the Committee twice in 2006.¹⁸⁷ During the 1990s, Elections Canada expanded its election

monitoring and electoral support activities, including entering into capacity-building agreements with Mexico and the Russian Federation. One of their documents states: "Since 1980, Elections Canada has organized some 400 international democratic development missions in 100 countries around the world."¹⁸⁸ According to a 2006 DFAIT briefing note, these included "missions with the UN, OAS, OSCE, the Commonwealth and *La Francophonie*. Some of Canada's most recent, high profile engagements in the area of democracy promotion have included election assistance in Iraq, Haiti, Afghanistan, the Ukraine, and the Palestinian territories. Afghanistan received a contribution of \$13M in support of Afghanistan's parliamentary, provincial and presidential elections."¹⁸⁹

As to the approach which has been taken by Elections Canada, Mr. Kinglsey told the Committee:

Pure observation is not the best way to deploy Elections Canada resources. Our strength lies in providing electoral support that addresses the longer process of democratization. We do this by working to build the capacity and the independence of electoral management bodies — by helping to design, development (sic), implement and strengthen electoral commissions, while respecting the cultures and histories from which they emanate. ... Not surprisingly, electoral assistance is also complex work.¹⁹⁰

Significantly, Mr. Kingsley added that: "With more money and people assigned to our international role, we would be able to accomplish much more. ... It is useful to reiterate that Elections Canada is an independent agency of Parliament. This independence provides us with credibility and effectiveness on the international scene."¹⁹¹

From the Government of Canada side, by far the major dispenser of democracy assistance funds has been CIDA, which became more engaged in projects of its own during the 1990s. In the early 1990s, it was still wrestling with defining its role in a growing field. A 1992 bilingual book on democratic development resulting from a study commissioned by CIDA suggested four main types of democracy aid, and a possible division of labour among governmental instruments, arms-length bodies like ICHRDD and Canadian NGOs, differentiating between institutional and state-building aspects of democratic development and more politically sensitive advocacy work. The book was one of the first in the field and was referred to positively by Thomas Axworthy in his testimony.¹⁹² The final two points in the book's executive summary were:

- There are four broad types of official development assistance (ODA) support for democratic institution building: strengthening state administrative capacity and bureaucratic expertise; strengthening the formal democratic structures, e.g., legislatures, judiciary, human rights commissions; strengthening civil society, e.g., development NGOs, micro-enterprises, rural cooperatives, credit unions, universities, the media, private entrepreneurs, human rights monitors; and strengthening political advocacy groups, e.g., for human rights, the environment, women's issues, indigenous peoples, land reform.

- There is some overlap, but a division of labour may evolve naturally among the relevant Canadian institutions capable of providing democratic development assistance: the Department of External Affairs and Elections Canada have already undertaken much of the electoral monitoring; the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development's (ICHRDD) semi-autonomous status makes it ideally placed to take on the more politically sensitive work with advocacy or "counter-consensus" groups; Canadian NGOs have built up partnerships with Third World NGOs and some are showing interest in advocacy work. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and perhaps the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), could undertake the bulk of state and formal democratic institutional development.¹⁹³

In 1996, an official framework was adopted, the Government of Canada Policy for CIDA on Human Rights, Democratization and Good Governance, which states:

Democratization builds the effective participation of individuals in decision making and the exercise of power in society, both through the formal processes of democracy, and through the organizations of civil society that give voice to popular concerns. Good governance ensures the effective, honest, equitable and accountable exercise of power by governments. ... CIDA does not seek to export particular Canadian institutions or practices; rather, the Agency seeks to work carefully and sensitively with those in developing countries who are best placed to achieve positive change."

We will return to developments at the federal government level in recent years. But first, it should be noted that Canada was also becoming more active at the multilateral level. (The Committee's analysis and recommendations on Canada's future role in international organizations are contained in chapter 8.)

After joining the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1990, Canada took a lead in the creation of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy in 1991, and later championed the Special Fund for Strengthening Democracy and the 2001 Democracy Charter. The Committee heard testimony from John Graham, President of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas, who was instrumental in initiating the work of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy. Mr. Graham noted that since 1990, the OAS has conducted over 80 election observations in 19 of its 34 members.¹⁹⁴ Subsequently, we also met with senior members of the OAS in Washington, D.C. on February 6, 2007. The Unit, now the Department for the Promotion of Democracy, has been headed by a Canadian Elizabeth Spehar since 1995. Canada has become the second largest contributor to the OAS (US\$9.2 million assessed contribution in 2004-2005, plus an additional voluntary contribution of \$9 million); however, the OAS budget for democracy promotion is still fairly small (\$3.5 million in 2006 from its own budget with an anticipated \$10-15 million in external funding¹⁹⁵).

In the Commonwealth context, the Mulroney government strongly supported the Harare Commonwealth Declaration in 1991 which pledged leaders to work with renewed vigour on “democracy, democratic processes and institutions which reflect national circumstances, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, just and honest government.”¹⁹⁶ In 1995 at Canada’s initiative, the Commonwealth heads of government created the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) to support, and where necessary work to restore, democratic constitutional rule in member states. The Committee met with the Commonwealth Secretariat in London on October 11, 2006, at which time Secretary General, Donald MacKinnon, noted work on democratic development in 45 countries, including a number of election observation missions in which Canadians have participated. Canada is also the second largest contributor to the Commonwealth (providing \$13.16 million to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation in 2005-2006).

Canada has also pressed to enshrine democratic principles in the work of *la Francophonie*, where it is again the second largest contributor (\$6.6 million in 2005-2006). A key milestone was the 1997 Hanoi Summit’s Charter of the *Francophonie*, which declared that the *Agence de la Francophonie* (since 1998 known as the International Organization of the *Francophonie*) must “support the efforts of member states and of the Secretary General to consolidate the rule of law and democracy and promotion of human rights.” The Bamako Declaration of 2000 explicitly committed the *Francophonie* to the defence and promotion of democracy, with work to be carried out by a division of the International Organization, the *Délégation à la démocratie et aux droits de l’homme*. Subsequently, the 2004 Ougadougou summit adopted a 10-year strategic framework to implement the Bamako Declaration commitments.

In the European and transatlantic context, mention should also be made of Canada’s involvement in the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The CoE, founded in 1949 to defend human rights, parliamentary democracy, and the rule of law, currently has 46 members. In 1996, Canada gained observer status at the Council, and in 1997 the Parliament of Canada achieved a similar status in the Council’s Parliamentary Assembly. The CoE has played an important role in the establishment of democracies across the continent, including by creating enforcing international human rights standards for all member states, providing technical assistance, monitoring compliance with stringent standards in the areas of human rights, democratic policy-making and elections, and creating parliamentary peer review and oversight mechanisms.

In the case of the OSCE — so named in 1994 emerging out of the Helsinki process of the 1970s; currently with 56 members including Canada and the United States — it has increasingly become a “human dimension” organization. In this regard, the OSCE actively supports the democratization process through its field activities — including election observation — and critically reviewing the records of participating states in its forums. Implementation of member-country commitments in this area is primarily coordinated and monitored through the Office of Democratic Institutions

and Human Rights (ODIHR), evolved from the Office for Free Elections established in 1990. Canada is involved as a full member, both at the inter-governmental level and within the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly. Canada's contribution to the OSCE was \$7.43 million in 2005-2006.

In 1997, Canada became a sustaining member of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) based in Stockholm, Sweden, providing funding of \$500,000 in 2005-2006. As the Committee was told during its meeting with IDEA's senior staff in Stockholm on October 12, 2006, IDEA is an inter-governmental organization with 24 members on six continents, and a global mandate to contribute to sustainable democracy by improving the quality and effectiveness of democratic practices worldwide.¹⁹⁷ IDEA works with 120 partner organizations, notably including from Canada, Elections Canada, CIDA, and the Forum of the Federations (in Sri Lanka). Canada has been represented on IDEA's Board by Maureen O'Neil, President of IDRC, and since the fall of 2006, Senator Hugh Segal. In May 2006, CIDA co-funded an IDEA conference in Ottawa on effective electoral assistance.¹⁹⁸

In 2000, Canada became a founding member of the Community of Democracies established at a meeting of 106 governments in Warsaw, Poland. As Richard Rowson, President of the Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD) told the Committee in Washington D.C. on February 6, 2007, the CCD prefers to think in terms of democracy "support" rather than "promotion". Its premise is that a concert of democracies can help to foster new democracies. In 2005, it established an International Centre for Democratic Transition in Budapest to help with the transfer of knowledge. The CD also has links to the UN system, and pushed to create a UN "Democracy Caucus" in 2004. It has also been involved in UN reform efforts, notably in regard to the Human Rights Council. The CD supports a global effort at "democracy education" and has convened a series of conferences to talk about strategies, including in the most difficult area of the Middle East. However: "There has never been a real civil society constituency for the CD." The CD has received a grant from the new UN Democracy Fund to enable it to establish regional networks that can seek out more NGO input. The CD sees itself as part of a global democracy movement of both governments and NGOs. There has also been established an international steering committee of the NGO Process of the Community of Democracies.

In terms of the United Nations, it has with Canadian support become increasingly involved in support in democracy assistance activities, principally through the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs, established in 1992, and the much larger funding of "democratic governance" support (\$US1.4 billion in 2005) by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).¹⁹⁹ Canada's overall assessed contribution to the work of UNDP was nearly \$120 million in 2005-2006, plus millions more for voluntary contributions to UNDP programs in different regions and countries including Haiti.²⁰⁰

The UN Secretary-General produced a 1996 report, *An Agenda for Democracy*, on support to new and restored democracies, and to date six International Conferences on

New and Restored Democracies have been held in close cooperation with the UN. The 2000 Millennium Declaration of world leaders included this pledge: “We will spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law ...” In 2005, the UN created a Democracy Fund (UNDEF) based on voluntary contributions from member countries (now 27, not including Canada, totalling US\$50 million, according to information received by the Committee at a meeting with UNDEF staff on February 7, 2007 in New York). The 2005 UN World Summit also led to the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission which will assist countries in transition from armed conflict to long-term reconstruction, establishing foundations for democratic development, including coordinating support for institution-building and reform, reconciliation, and electoral assistance.

The Committee had productive meetings with representatives of all these UN bodies in February 2007, and was particularly struck by the number of Canadians occupying senior positions in them. We will examine future UN roles for Canada in Chapter 8.

Returning to developments of recent years within Canada, in 2004 the Canadian government created “Canada Corps” under CIDA as a new vehicle to strengthen Canada’s contribution to human rights, democracy and good governance internationally. A Government of Canada April 2005 *International Policy Statement* (IPS) subsequently elaborated on the role of Canada Corps in its “Development” chapter, and also announced the establishment of a “Democracy Council” comprising government departments and organizations such as the Parliamentary Centre²⁰¹, the IDRC, the Centre for International Governance Innovation, Elections Canada, the Forum of Federations, and Rights and Democracy, to guide good governance policy making.” The IPS also mentioned cooperation “with the Federation of Municipalities to promote sustainable cities and strengthen local governance and capacity building in the developing world.”²⁰²

According to a February 2007 government background note, the Democracy Council currently consists of DFAIT, CIDA, Elections Canada, Forum of the Federations, IDRC, National Judicial Institute, Parliamentary Centre and Rights and Democracy. In terms of process: “The Council is comprised of Senior Executives of each organization, the Deputy Minister of DFAIT and the President of CIDA. The Council meets twice a year, while a Working Group of the Council, co-chaired by CIDA and DFAIT, meets monthly to support the Council’s activities and objectives.”²⁰³ We will address the Council’s role further in Chapters 6 and 7.

Other governmental and non-governmental Canadian agencies and organizations involved in aspects of democracy assistance abroad include: the RCMP; Department of Justice; Department of Finance (as the department responsible for international financial institutions including the World Bank, which has become a major funder of good governance programs, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which explicitly mentions human rights and multi-party democracy in its founding charter); the Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society (IMPACS), the Media and Democracy Group; the Canadian Bar Association; the Centre for International Governance Innovation

(CIGI); CANADEM (which maintains a roster of some 8,000 Canadian experts for international deployment); the World Federalist Movement — Canada, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The Committee has received testimony and/or written submissions from most of these organizations.

In mid-2006, DFAIT created a small “Democracy Unit” which appears to be mainly involved in policy development and coordination. However, as a 2006 DFAIT briefing note states: “The primary source of Canadian government funding for the promotion of democracy has been CIDA programming in the area of ‘good governance.’ In the period 1999-2004, funding in the area of good governance accounted for roughly 20%, or more than \$380M, of CIDA’s overall annual disbursements.”²⁰⁴ The 2005-2006 *Estimates Part III — Reports on Plans and Priorities for CIDA* define governance as one of the agency’s priorities as follows: “Promoting public sector reform and the rule of law; building democratic institutions and processes that represent and engage all members of society; supporting the increased promotion and protection of the human rights of men, women, boys, and girls by institutions, governments, and civil society organizations; and, increasing attention to conflict prevention, post-conflict reconciliation, peacebuilding, and security.”²⁰⁵

CIDA’s 2006-2007 Estimates continue to refer to a broad “governance” category, accounting for 21.1% of total planned spending or \$584 million. This is the figure given to the Committee by CIDA president in an information note dated March 21, 2007, and which comprises \$466 million for “democratic governance” and “for planning purposes, peace and security expenditures of \$118 million.”²⁰⁶ In terms of CIDA’s category of “democratic governance”, this is a significant increase from the total of spending for that in 2005-2006, which was given to the Committee as “over \$375 million” by both the Minister for International Cooperation, Josée Verner, in October 2006²⁰⁷ and CIDA President, Robert Greenhill, in March 2007.²⁰⁸ In updated information received from Mr. Greenhill on March 21, 2007, a more precise figure of \$376.7 million was given for democratic governance, or 14% of actual CIDA program spending in the 2005-2006 fiscal year.²⁰⁹

What is clear is that amounts devoted to democratic development/democratic governance by CIDA have increased significantly since 2005. But getting a handle on what CIDA is currently spending on democratic governance has proved to be more difficult than it should be. Depending on what is being counted, when, and in what category, noted development consultant Ian Smillie suggested to the Committee that it could be much higher:

[D]emocratic governance, which in the 2005-06 estimates for CIDA was \$565 million is \$900 million today, according to a CIDA document that I picked up the other day. That’s a 60% increase, which might be heartening in some ways, but it’s probably a coding issue. It’s probably the way the issue was coded before. If it’s not a coding issue, if it really is a 60% increase in funding, then that means significant decreases in other areas in a very short space of time, and an indication that, again, we’re not staying the course on some of the things we had in place.²¹⁰

The CIDA document in question, “Canada’s Aid Program”, dated January 29, 2007, in Annex B “Canadian Development Assistance Profile — Sectoral Priorities and Canadian Engagement” has a category called “Democratic Governance and Crisis Response”. The \$900 million figure in fact comes from the total allocated for this category, which is a very broad one including — freedom/democracy; public institutions; human rights; rule of law; conflict prevention; humanitarian assistance; peacebuilding. In several other charts in this January 2007 CIDA document, it is indicated that “democratic governance” accounts for 21% of current CIDA aid spending. This overall amount is broken down into: 46% for freedom and democracy; 38% for public institutions/anti-corruption; 8% for human rights; 7% for rule of law.

If one projects that 21% allocation forward into the 2007-2008 fiscal year — in which CIDA will receive \$3.049 billion according to the Main Estimates Part II released on February 27, 2007 — CIDA would spend \$640.329 million on “democratic governance” broadly defined in that fiscal year. Confusingly, however, the 2007-2008 Estimates Part III for CIDA released on March 30, 2007 do not appear to give an overall amount for democratic governance spending, although the document does state that “democratic governance will be integrated as a priority sector in all major country programs. Over the planning period, 23 per cent of programming to countries of concentration [the total figure for that is given as \$826.2 million] is expected to contribute significantly to democratic governance.”²¹¹

Added to the mix is that CIDA replaced Canada Corps with an Office of Democratic Governance (ODG) on October 30, 2006.²¹² CIDA President Robert Greenhill told the Committee that the Office includes a Deployment for Democratic Development Mechanism, “a multi-million dollar initiative which will help CIDA recruit and deploy the best and the brightest Canadian expertise in democratic governance and respond quickly to needs on the ground.”²¹³ In his testimony of March 2007, Mr. Greenhill further indicated that the Office was budgeted at \$40 million “for this year”, and that “the intent of the Office of Democratic Governance is explicitly to be providing additional funds to the already large amounts of money that we’re investing in CIDA and across the government on the issue of democratic governance.”²¹⁴

According to Mr. Greenhill, the Office of Democratic Governance is also intended to contribute to addressing part of the knowledge gap considered by the Committee in Chapter 2:

In a collaborative learning perspective, the Office has combined its strengths with those of the Centre for International Governance Innovation, or CIGI, in Waterloo, to create a knowledge exchange gateway for all stakeholders involved in democratic governance. This virtual governance village will attract the international community’s attention to Canada’s pool of knowledge, expertise and leadership in the field of democratic

governance promotion. It will improve the ability of decision-makers and practitioners to create policies and programs in developing countries based on evidence, and will facilitate the integration of that knowledge and innovative and effective practices.²¹⁵

Furthermore, the *CIDA Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008 — Estimates Part III*, released on March 30, 2007, outline quite extensive plans for the agenda of this Office:

The Office has promoted a whole-of-government approach by establishing framework arrangements with Statistics Canada and the Office of the Auditor General of Canada. It has also established mechanisms that facilitate greater coherence between Canadian and international organizations when sending election observers abroad.

Through its support to institutions such as the World Bank, the ODG is building the capacity of national statistics organizations and supreme audit institutions in numerous developing countries. It is also providing assistance to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) Human Rights Measurement Initiative and Carleton University's Country Indicators for Foreign Policy Project, both of which will provide accurate, timely and effective governance indicators for evidence-based programming. In addition, ODG is working to establish knowledge networks on democratic governance that strengthen collaboration, exchange and coordination between and among experts, both within and outside of the Agency.²¹⁶

Elsewhere in this Estimates document, it is stated that the ODG will also fund:

The Democratic Governance Fellows Program: This program will 1) provide "state-of-the art" thinking on issues and problems of democratic governance, trends and innovative approaches for effective practice; 2) develop working relationships between CIDA officials and leading Canadian and international expertise, particularly from developing and transition countries, as well as institutions working to promote democratic governance; and 3) provide expert input into the development, operation and evaluation of CIDA country programs in democratic governance.²¹⁷

Summing up, the Canadian government currently funds a myriad of democracy assistance projects and programs, both directly and indirectly, through Canadian government departments and agencies (principally CIDA), Canadian non-governmental organizations, arms-length institutions, and multilateral institutions. Indeed, CIDA's written submission to the Committee of October 2006, "CIDA and Democratic Governance", states that "CIDA works with more than a hundred partners", the majority of which are other government departments and Canadian organizations. We have attempted in an Appendix to this chapter to provide a schematic overview of the most significant players in Canadian democracy assistance in terms of bilateral ODA funding.

Notwithstanding all this activity and variable funding, some witnesses and other commentators have argued that Canadian support for democratic development remains too modest, diffuse and fragmented to be very visible internationally or to have had much cumulative effect. Canada is not seen as a major player even by those who admire its

approach. For example, Thomas Melia of the Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, and Deputy Director of Freedom House, mentioned to the Committee (meeting in Washington D.C., February 6, 2007) his participation in a 2002 *Defending Democracy* book which lauded the merits of Canada's approach to supporting democratization.²¹⁸ He then told the Committee that "probably more Canadians are working in U.S. and international organizations [on democracy support activities] than in Canadian organizations". Among the latter, "probably the best known asset is Elections Canada". Rights and Democracy "hasn't been that visible".

The Committee will have more to say about how to move forward from the current situation in Part III of our report on new directions for Canadian policy and funding, especially in Chapters 6 and 7. At this point, not least for the purposes of transparency and accountability, we believe it is necessary to have a more clearly established and evaluated baseline of the resources already being expended by Canada for the purposes of democratic development assistance.

Recommendation 5

The independent evaluation of all existing Canadian public funding for democratic development proposed by the Committee in Recommendation 3 should include a complete picture of what is being done, by what organization, for what purposes, and according to a common understanding of what is considered to be democratic development assistance. This complete picture should be seen within the larger framework of the official development assistance policy pursued by Canada.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 4 CANADIAN ACTORS AND BILATERAL ODA SPENDING ON “GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY”

Canada’s contribution to international democratic development involves dozens of organizations and hundreds or even thousands of Canadians working for government departments, NGOs or international institutions. The major players in this area are those that comprise the Democracy Council, which includes key government departments and arms-length organizations. While definitional issues make it impossible to arrive at an overall total for the amount spent in this area, the vast majority comes from government, specifically CIDA. The latest comparative figures it provided are from 2004-2005 and are represented schematically below¹. ODA reporting on “Government and Civil Society” released by CIDA in December 2006 suggests that of the \$359 million spent bilaterally by the Government of Canada in this area in fiscal year 2004-2005, some \$341 million or 95% was spent by CIDA.

CIDA is likely the largest source of funding for all the other Canadian organizations active in this area. A small unknown total amount comes from non-Canadian government sources. The Parliamentary Centre, for example, received about \$5.4 million of the \$6 million it spent in this area in 2006 from CIDA. The Parliamentary Centre also received nearly \$500,000 in that year from the World Bank Institute, the UNDP, the Austrian Development Agency and the Danish International Development Agency. In addition, “in-kind” contributions such as donated time mean that while CIDA provided the Federation of Canadian Municipalities with some \$12 million in 2006, the Federation estimated before the Committee that the actual value of the work it did in this area was about \$20 million.²

1 Source: CIDA *Statistical Report on Official Development Assistance Fiscal Year 2004-2005*, Table L, according to information received from CIDA on April 13, 2007.

2 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 4, February 27, 2007, p. 17.

ACTORS

Democracy
Council

CIDA

**CIDA
\$341 million**

- DFAIT
- ICHRDD
- IDRC
- Elections Canada
- Parliamentary Centre
- Forum of Federation
- NJI

**Non-
governmental
Partners¹**

**Other GoC²
\$18 million**

**Other
\$?**

Government
of Canada
(Fiscal Year
2004-2005)

FUNDING

Notes:

1. A sample of CIDA's Canadian partners in this area includes:

Aga Khan Foundation Canada	Equitas — International Centre for Human Rights Education
Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada	Federation of Canadian Municipalities
CANADEM	Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society
Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians	Institute of Public Administration of Canada
Canadian Bar Association	Institute on Governance
Canadian Comprehensive Audit Foundation	Inter Pares
Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)	
Canadian Crossroads International	International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Pearson Peacekeeping Centre
Canadian Executive Service Organization	Queen's University
Canadian Foundation for the Americas	Save the Children Canada
Canadian Institute of Planners	Tecsum Inc
CARE Canada	Université de Montréal
Centre canadien d'études et de coopération	University of Alberta – International Programs
Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute	University of Ottawa
Cowater International Inc.	World University Service of Canada
CUSO	
Development and Peace	
Ekos Research Associates	

2. Other Government of Canada (GoC) departments and statutory bodies include:

Auditor General of Canada	Justice Canada
Canadian Human Rights Commission	PWGSC – Consulting & Audit
Department of National Defence	Radio Canada International
Elections Canada	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Foreign Affairs and International Trade	Social Development Canada
International Centre for Human Rights and International Development Research Centre	Statistics Canada

Notes to Chapter 4

- 176 For a more detailed account of the evolution of Canadian support for democratic development see Gerald Schmitz, "The Role of International Democracy Promotion in Canada's Foreign Policy", Institute for Research on Public Policy, *Policy Matters*, Vol. 5 No. 10, November 2004 (available online at <http://www.irpp.org>).
- 177 For a detailed account of the creation of the NED and subsequent evolution of U.S. democracy promotion in the 1980s see Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, 1999, pp. 29-40.
- 178 The Committee met with senior representatives of the NED, NDI, and IRI in Washington D.C. on February 5, 2007. NDI's current annual budget is US\$120 million, and it has 60 field offices around the world. IRI has an annual budget of US\$80 million, with 48 field offices abroad. More information on all these entities can be found on their web sites.
- 179 Report of the Special Rapporteurs, Ottawa, n.d. p. 25.
- 180 Ibid., pp. 27ff.
- 181 Ibid., pp. 24-25.
- 182 The International Bill of Human Rights comprises the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its legal instruments, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights.
- 183 According to information received from Rights and Democracy in March 2007, this is made up of \$4.873 million from DFAIT and an additional contribution of \$3.930 million from CIDA; the latter amount being only finally decided in January 2007 (and therefore is not reflected in the CIDA 2006-2007 Estimates). When Rights & Democracy's president, Jean-Louis Roy, appeared before the Committee on Haiti, he gave the current parliamentary allocation as \$7.3 million and mentioned that the organization also raises funds from several other sources giving it an annual budget of "a little less than \$10 million". See *Evidence*, Meeting No. 14, June 21, 2006, p. 9.
- 184 For further information on and analysis of the Centre's role see Nancy Thede, "Human Rights and Democracy: Issues for Canadian Policy in Democracy Promotion", Institute for Research on Public Policy, *Policy Matters*, Vol. 5, No. 3, May 2005.
- 185 Ed Broadbent was succeeded by Warren Allmand from 1997 to 2002, when the current president, Jean-Louis Roy, took up the position. For their testimony see respectively: *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006; *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007; *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006.
- 186 The Committee held a hearing on the last five-year review at the end of 2004. See 38th Parliament, 1st Session, *Evidence*, Meeting No. 17, December 15, 2004.
- 187 On Elections Canada's role in Haiti see *Evidence*, Meeting No. 5, May 30, 2006; and overall in respect of democratic development *Evidence*, Meeting No. 26, November 1, 2006.
- 188 "Elections Canada on the World Scene: Sharing Experience with Developing Democracies," (available online at <http://www.elections.ca/content.asp?section=gen&document=ec90770&dir=bkg&lang=e&textonly=false>).
- 189 DFAIT, "Nurturing young and fragile democracies, building stronger democratic institutions," Briefing Note, April 2006.
- 190 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 26, November 1, 2006, p. 11.
- 191 Ibid.
- 192 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 11.
- 193 Gerald Schmitz and David Gillies, *The Challenge of Democratic Development: Sustaining Democratization in Developing Societies*, The North-South Institute, Ottawa, 1992, p.xv.
- 194 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 12.
- 195 See Andrew Cooper and Thomas Legler, *Intervention without Intervening: The OAS Defense and Promotion of Democracy in the Americas*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006.
- 196 Thirty years earlier, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker had played a significant role in the debate that saw South Africa leave the Commonwealth in 1961.

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- 197 For a review of IDEA's first decade see *Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide*, International IDEA, Stockholm, 2005.
- 198 See Andrew Ellis, Paul Guerin, and Ayman Ayoub, *Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from Event-based Support to Process Support, Conference report and conclusions*, IDEA, Stockholm, 2006.
- 199 For a broad analysis see Edward Newman and Roland Rich, eds., *The UN Role in Promoting Democracy: Between Ideals and Reality*, United Nations University Press, Tokyo, New York, Paris, 2004. From the UNDP see also, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002.
- 200 Source: *Public Accounts of Canada 2005-2006*, p. 90.
- 201 The Parliamentary Centre was founded in 1968 with a mainly domestic mandate. However, since the 1990s it has become increasingly involved in international democracy assistance activities. It works with parliaments around the world to strengthen committee oversight and lawmaking, build the capacity of parliamentary secretariats, develop parliamentary performance and reporting systems, and more generally foster greater transparency and accountability in governance. The Centre received over \$5.8 million in government grants in 2005-2006.
- 202 Government of Canada, *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World—Canada's International Policy Statement*, April 2005, "Overview," p. 28.
- 203 "The Democracy Council" background note circulated at the conference organized under the auspices of the Democracy Council, "A Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development", 15 February 2007.
- 204 DFAIT Briefing Note, April 2006, op.cit.
- 205 CIDA, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2005-2006- Estimates Part III*, p. 20.
- 206 Information note to the Committee from CIDA President Robert Greenhill, and *CIDA Report on Plans and Priorities 2006-2007 — Estimates Part III*, p. 13.
- 207 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 1.
- 208 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 43, March 1, 2007,
- 209 See *CIDA 2005-2006 Departmental Performance Report*, p. 11.
- 210 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 39, February 1, 2007, p. 13.
- 211 *CIDA Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008 – Estimates Part III*, p. 16, available online at http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/0708/CIDA-ACDI/cida-acdi01_e.asp#s1 .
- 212 According to the testimony of CIDA President Robert Greenhill, Canada Corps, as structured, "was saddled with a multiple mandate that went beyond good governance and included youth mobilization as well as public engagement". *Evidence*, Meeting No. 43, March 1, 2007, p. 10.
- 213 *Ibid.* p. 12.
- 214 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 215 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 216 *CIDA Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008*, p.
- 217 *Ibid.*, p. 40.
- 218 See Robert Herman and Theodore Piccone, eds., *Defending Democracy: A Global Survey of Foreign Policy Trends 1992-2002*, Democracy Coalition Project, Washington D.C., 2002 (http://www.soros.org/newsroom/news/defendingdemocracy_20021031) We have already referred to this study in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 5 ASSESSING CANADIAN CAPABILITIES AND POTENTIAL COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES IN INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

It is clear that Canada has some well-established expertise in promoting some of the key elements of democratic governance, and that Canadian democracy itself has some unique strengths — e.g. the promotion of tolerance and the forging of a common identity across major cultural, linguistic and regional differences in Canada — to which some of our ‘niche’ expertise may be well placed to speak internationally. Canada is also perceived in manner that may, at certain times and places, make it a more trusted partner in delivering assistance that can be sensitive and highly political in nature. This would be further encouraged by an approach and largely demand-driven style in which Canadian organizations seek, in the main, to facilitate reform processes and to assist local actors in achieving their own agendas for democratic change.

Discussion paper prepared under
the auspices of the Democracy Council²¹⁹

The Canadian approach has two key elements. First of all, over the last twenty years we have developed a strong family of institutions doing this work. ... Secondly, we've developed over those years a distinct philosophy of cooperation. Canadians have a clear and distinct approach to cooperation that's appreciated by many of our partners. We support the efforts of people to strengthen their own democratic institutions; we don't attempt to export ours. We share our rich experience and ongoing struggles to reform and develop Canadian democracy, while acknowledging both our successes and our failures. We try to keep ideological baggage to a minimum, preferring results to rhetoric. Most importantly, we believe that democratic development should be practised democratically, between equals.

Robert Miller, President, The Parliamentary Centre²²⁰

[D]emocracy promotion is challenged by the growing perception in some parts of the world that democracy is not bearing fruit in terms of improving the day-to-day lives of the people. Setbacks will occur, but this does not mean we give up.

*In my view, there is no alternative to democracy. What is needed is support for the entire process of democracy building and for the system as a whole, based on each country's values, history and culture. **That moreover is our international trademark...***

former Chief Electoral Officer of Canada,
Jean-Pierre Kingsley²²¹

We should be able to provide the resources needed to empower partners. This is most often mentors, information, skills, knowledge or facilitation. Too often we substitute money for these things and are disappointed with the results.

As Canadians we bring values that are universal, welcome and valuable. Our institutions embrace respect, caring, inclusion, fairness and honesty.

While we seem frustrated with so many of our institutions they are the envy of many and an example to more. Our judicial system, public service, political parties, election systems, official language laws, free media, intergovernmental relations and above all our constitution are what make Canada envied and honoured around the world. ... In this area [of democratic development] few donors can provide the skills and experience that Canada possesses, it makes sense that Canada should make these a priority.

Ross Reid, former Progressive Conservative M.P.
and Deputy Minister to the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador²²²

Canada often prides itself on having a generally positive image abroad as well as playing a distinctive role and influence in international relations. Indeed, DFAIT recently held a public electronic discussion forum (open from January 22 to March 30) that was headlined: “A Uniquely Canadian Approach to Democracy Promotion”.²²³ Our first witness, Foreign Minister Peter MacKay contended that:

[Canada] enjoys some unique credibility and with it some unique opportunities. There is an enormous well of goodwill in the broader global context, and having outsiders assist us with democratic reform can be very sensitive. Therefore, Canada's reputation as a fair player confers clear advantages: we were never a colonial power; we do not have great power ambitions; our motives are not suspect; our agenda is not hidden; and as I said, there is a tremendous depth of goodwill for Canadians. It's partly because of our advocacy, but more so because of our active support for democratic values.²²⁴

The Minister went on to affirm the depth of institutional and individual experience and expertise that Canada offers to emerging democracies, and the accommodation of diversity that “brings Canadians, who are particularly sensitive to difficult cultural and social contexts, into a position of great ability to offer assistance.”²²⁵ Positive qualities have been ascribed to Canadian approaches in a range of democratic development fields from electoral assistance to police training, democracy education, human rights and rule of law promotion, governance reform and civil society support.

While there is a certain amount of optimistic idealism involved in this characterization of Canada's role—the proof, as always, will be in the practice and long-term results—the Committee's Canadian and international witnesses generally concurred that more involvement by Canada in these fields is welcome, and that Canada can bring some comparative advantages to the hard long-term work of supporting democracy internationally. Jennifer Welsh, with whom the Committee met in London in October 2006, concludes in a forthcoming book that notwithstanding all of the hazards and inherent riskiness of such work—underscored by Ian Smillie in his testimony to the

Committee²²⁶ — “good governance has been identified as an area where Canada’s experience, combined with its perceived reputation as an ‘impartial donor’, provide the country with a comparative advantage with respect to other actors.”²²⁷

George Perlin, in suggesting that Canada could lead in establishing a “training program for practitioners, for people who want to make careers in this field, in the delivery of democracy assistance”, added: “We’re widely seen to be more sensitive of distinctive conditions in recipient countries, more open to local advice and engagement, and more inclusive in our relations with partners.”²²⁸ One can also point to the success of CANADEM, “Canada’s Civilian Reserve”, a 10-year old government-funded but low-cost non-profit NGO that has built up roster of 8,000 Canadians qualified for international assignments, with several divisions for different types of civilian deployments. Executive Director Paul Larose-Edwards told the Committee: “Will we get better? Yes, we will, because there will be more and more Canadians that register with us. I predict that there will be anywhere from 25,000 to 35,000 people on that roster ten years from now, so we will continue to figure out how to do that with not too much money.”²²⁹

Mr. Larose-Edwards emphasized that expanding CANADEM’s roster is not about creating jobs for Canadians, but about finding the right people with the right skills to be able to develop local capacities in recipient countries. As he put it, the kinds of people we like to roster and send out are “not looking to make a career out of staying there for years on end; they’re looking to develop local capacity.”²³⁰ He gave an example of where the skills of both specialized experts and new Canadians can be utilized in very difficult contexts:

In Afghanistan, we’ve been involved there and sending people over for almost five years now, quite apart from identifying experts for activities in Afghanistan. We deployed police experts and some judicial experts there. We’re also a major route for DND to recruit what they call cultural interpreters. These are Afghan Canadians. We’ve got a roster of 200 Afghan Canadians registered with us and screened. So DND approaches us to pick up these individuals to deploy alongside Canadian troops as key force magnifiers out there.

This is actually a bit of a segue to something that we’ve been looking to do, where we can, with limited resources — tap into more of those new Canadians to draw on their skill sets for them to go back, not as returning Afghans or returning Congolese, but to go back as Canadians with a particular knowledge and awareness of local culture that those of us who are born and raised in Canada just couldn’t possibly have. So our Afghan Canadians have been a huge success story. The Afghan government has picked them up directly from us, DND, Foreign Affairs, and a raft of international organizations.²³¹

One matter that remains unclear to the Committee is how this established experience of CANADEM will relate to the new “Deployment for Democratic Development Mechanism” (DDD) which has been created under CIDA’s successor to Canada Corps, the Office of Democratic Governance, as described in Chapter 4. According to a CIDA description circulated to the Committee in January 2007, CANADEM will be eligible to bid

on the DDD contract. The bidding process appeared to be still underway when CIDA President Robert Greenhill appeared before the Committee in March 2007. As he told the Committee, the DDD:

[W]ill help CIDA recruit and deploy the best and brightest Canadian expertise in democratic governance and respond quickly to needs on the ground.

Right now, what happens is if within CIDA or another government department we identify a need from a country on a certain expertise...if a country comes to us and says they'd really like help in reforming their office of the auditor general, or they'd really like to establish an improvement in this or that area, actually calling upon and deploying that Canadian expertise can be cumbersome and lengthy. By having a democratic deployment mechanism, we'll be working with a Canadian partner — and this has actually gone out now through a request for proposal and through a competitive bid — to be able to quickly draw upon and provide the best thinking and the best Canadian expertise in these different areas of democratic governance.²³²

The CIDA Estimates Part III released on March 30, 2007 describe the DDD as follows: “This initiative will recruit and deploy Canadian democratic governance expertise in developing countries in response to requests from CIDA's geographic branches and in support of their development strategies. It will contribute to the expected results of these countries in the four elements of democratic governance, and in conflict prevention and peace building.”²³³ According to information received by Committee staff from Mr. Larose-Edwards on April 2, 2007, CANADEM did not receive the DDD contract. The Committee's main concern is that this new CIDA mechanism be coherent with what is already being done by CANADEM on an independent low-cost basis.

Police training, judicial reform, elections, parliamentary strengthening, anti-corruption activities, and local governance are among the specific democracy-building sectors mentioned by witnesses as areas of Canadian experience and competence. The RCMP's Raf Souccar, Assistant Commissioner, Federal and International Operations, mentioned contributions made in Kosovo, Jordan, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ivory Coast, Haiti and Sierra Leone. He told the Committee that:

Canada now has the ability to become proactive in its approach to international police operations, working with other government agencies in a whole-of-government approach through the identification of areas of strategic interests and the development of personnel with the competencies necessary to respond to the challenges of working in these environments. What this means for the RCMP and our police partners is that we are now in a position to develop a cadre of police experts ready for international deployments. Our roster of skill sets can match specialists with particular missions that call for their talents. The result will be that these men and women will be available for more rapid deployments than in the past, and perhaps best of all, deployments will reduce the burden on the domestic policing capability of our agency and its partners. ... Through their efforts abroad, Canadian police export Canadian culture, values, and an established model of democratic policing.²³⁴

Mr. Souccar also mentioned as lessons of experience that sustained development requires planning for long-term commitment, and that “successful security sector reform requires strategies that target the equal development of judicial, police and corrections capacity.”²³⁵ The Committee has made this point in its December 2006 report on Haiti.²³⁶

The Canadian Bar Association (CBA), in its testimony and submission to the Committee, noted that its International Development Committee “has delivered legal and justice reform and capacity-building projects in 29 countries across Asia, Africa, Central Europe, and the Caribbean.”²³⁷ In recommending that Canada engage all elements of the legal system in promoting the rule of law, the CBA argued that Canada should proceed cautiously and critically according to best practices that include local ownership and engagement, noted that legal transplanted from one country to another does not work” and that “it seems that the majority of justice system aid goes into Supreme Courts, law ministries and other places which have little or no impact on the lives of the poor and disadvantaged.”²³⁸ Nevertheless, the CBA concluded that Canada can bring positive attributes to the task:

Canada has both the expertise and the experience to take a larger role in promoting democracy and building the rule of law abroad. ... Internationally, Canada's bijudicial legal system (common law and civil law) is well-regarded and Canada's jurists well-respected. Canada's experience with participatory civil and criminal justice reform processes, land registry and aboriginal title issues, and restorative justice issues are all examples of the expertise we can share with the world. In addition, Canada has demonstrated the ability to work successfully in a field that requires significant political and cultural sensitivity. In short, with these assets working in its favour, Canada can and should do more.²³⁹

To take a specific example of Canadian judicial education expertise at work, University of Calgary law professor, and former chair of the board of Rights and Democracy, Kathleen Mahoney, told the Committee about a \$12 million judicial strengthening project in Vietnam of which she has been appointed the Canadian director:

What we're doing there is working very much step-by-step. It's a five-year project and right now it's in the needs assessment phase. I brought our overall work plan, which will have many, many outputs over the five years, everything from examination banks to codes of conduct, to textbooks on substantive issues, to pedagogical techniques and curriculum development for human rights seminars, involvement in civil society, techniques of doing that to assist the judges in developing understanding of ethnic minorities and their values and cultures, etc. So there's a whole range of activities and projects and outcomes that will occur over the next five years.

You see, one of the problems in this field so far is that a lot of judicial education has been very episodic. You go and have a conference for three days in some country in Africa and think when you walk away everything is going to change. It doesn't work that way. It's like educating anyone: you start off with curriculum and you have progress, development, you have evaluations and you have markers you're trying to achieve. So I think we're now into an era of a much more sophisticated approach to these issues.

I think we're seeing that the recipient countries are far more aware of how critically important the judiciary is, not just in the courtroom to dispense justice, but in developing public confidence in democracy. They're seeing the judiciary as an arm of it that must be developed along with governance structures in the mainstream.²⁴⁰

With respect to elections, in Chapter 4, we have already noted the internationally-recognized work of Elections Canada in nearly 100 countries since 1990. Former Chief Electoral Officer Jean-Pierre Kingsley elaborated on this in his testimony to the Committee:

Our activities range from sending a single expert to address one aspect of the electoral process to assembling multi-year, multi-country teams to undertake in-depth and ongoing analysis and assistance, to undertaking observation and accompaniment covering all areas of the electoral process. These initiatives have given us the experience that has proven instrumental in evolving a unique approach to international electoral assistance. Our approach is one of accompanying—therefore my use of the word “accompaniment”—electoral management bodies before, during, and after elections, and of helping them develop and strengthen institutional frameworks, skills, and autonomy, or independence, which are crucial building blocks to electoral democratic development.

This approach is an elastic model that allows for mutual learning.²⁴¹

Mr. Kingsley also agreed that basic civic education should become part of developing better electoral processes over the longer term. As he put it: “If we had a holistic approach to democratic approaches and to democratic development, we could start to address in a very significant way, at primary school and at high school, the flaws that need to be addressed in the electoral system or in the education system concerning elections.”²⁴²

Elections, of course, cannot achieve lasting results without development of the legislative bodies to which candidates for office are elected. Robert Miller, president of the Ottawa-based Parliamentary Centre emphasized to the Committee the key role of strengthening parliamentary institutions and of support from both government and the Parliament of Canada in that regard. As he testified, this means Canadian support for creating local capacity in the field. Speaking of the Centre: “Over the past 15 years, we have evolved into a Canadian-based international organization, with staff and offices delivering programs in many parts of the world. Leadership in the centre comes increasingly from people like Bunleng Men, who heads our program in Cambodia, and Rasheed Draman, who is director of our Africa program, based in our regional office in Accra, Ghana.”²⁴³

Mr. Draman, in a presentation to the February 15, 2007 “Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development”, gave an example of what is possible:

Under our Canada Fund [for Africa²⁴⁴] project — the Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program, working through networks clustered around the policy areas identified earlier, we collaborate with policy institutions and civil society groups in Africa, to design and deliver programs aimed at building the capacity of parliamentary committees in the area of poverty reduction. We create linkages between MPs interested in fighting corruption (through national chapters of the African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption — APNAC) and local chapters of Transparency International. These linkages have proved very useful in a number of countries.²⁴⁵

Mr. Draman went on to mention work on gender issues in the political process, and, in regard to parliamentary budget and financial oversight, the establishment in October 2006 of a Learning Centre in the Parliamentary Centre’s Ghana office, which over the coming years will be a “Centre of Excellence on Parliamentary Training”. Significantly, he strongly credited Canada as the source of external support because: “Canada has a huge political capital by way of reputation around the world. Unlike other donors, Canada does not have any ‘**baggage**’. Canadians are warmly welcomed wherever we go. We need to ‘spend’ this capital and make a difference around the world by being innovative, responsive and above all, take risks.”²⁴⁶

The Committee takes this latter point to heart, and indeed we had confirmation of the importance of the Canadian contribution from the evidence of a delegation of senior African parliamentarians in November 2006. Mr. Augustine Ruzindana of Uganda, Chair of the African Parliamentarians Network Against Corruption, told the Committee: “Without the input of Canadian aid, it would not have been possible. ... Canada is playing a useful role, at least with regard to the African continent, in strengthening democracy.”²⁴⁷ Mr. Steve Akorli, a retired parliamentarian who is Co-Chair of the Coordinating Council of the Africa-Canada Parliamentary Strengthening Program, added:

Canada has helped Africa a lot. ... [In regard to Ghana] it took a country like Canada to come to our aid in building our capacity. ... Ghana’s parliamentary capacity and oversight in the areas of financing and poverty-related issues has deepened a lot.

The issue of gender activism has been elevated to a level you cannot imagine. The civil society within Ghana has come up with what it calls a “gender manifesto”. It looks at what can be done for women, to move from where they are to where they can have access to land, credit, and things that will give them a bigger voice.

These are the offshoots of the democratic experiment we have done over the past 15 years. We are very grateful to Canada for it.²⁴⁸

In terms of supporting stronger parliamentary oversight and anti-corruption activities, our colleague John Williams M.P. — who is Chair of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) that was founded at a gathering in the Canadian House of Commons in 2002 — urged the Committee to emphasize the

importance of building parliamentary independence within partner countries. We will address strengthening the role of parliamentarians further in Chapter 7. As to GOPAC's work, Mr. Williams told the Committee:

GOPAC has one mission: to make parliaments more effective as democratic institutions of oversight of government. The organization has three pillars to support this mission statement. First is peer support for parliamentarians who are travelling the difficult and sometimes dangerous road of standing up against corruption. Second is education for parliamentarians. We send our young people to university to become lawyers, doctors, engineers, and accountants, but who trains the parliamentarians in the skills of oversight of government? Third is leadership for results. Talk is not sufficient. It is time that we as parliamentarians demanded accountability from our governments and took a leadership role in fighting corruption to ensure honesty and integrity in governance.²⁴⁹

In the area of improving local governance, which the Committee has already highlighted in Chapter 2, Canada has been active as well, notably through projects undertaken by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). As its acting president Gord Steves told the Committee: "We currently manage 10 programs in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Our annual program budget currently is \$12 million, which employs 35 staff. In 20 years, we've worked in 44 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and we are currently working in 18 countries as we sit here right now. We are involved with more than 2,500 municipal volunteers; currently 15 volunteer practitioners for each calendar day."²⁵⁰

The FCM, which is funded by CIDA, sees Canada as being an international leader in this field along with the Netherlands. According to Brock Carlton, Director of FCM's International Centre for Municipal Development, the attempt is to create long-term collaborative partnerships "supporting the strengthening of existing institutions and supporting their capacity to respond to the needs of their community."

Another element of this is the peer-to-peer. When we are working overseas we are not bringing development professionals who go to Uganda for two weeks, do a nice report, and then they're on an airplane to some other place for another report. We're bringing the folks who do the work here in Canada and they're volunteering their time to go and sit down with the folks who do the work in Kampala, Nairobi, or anywhere else where we're working. They're the people who really do the work. They are bringing the real Canadian experience. They're not saying, we do it in Canada the way it should be done and you should follow what we do. What they're saying is, we've got a certain experience and we in Canada have come to a certain place in our development because of that experience, and because it's so practical, we can work through and help solve your problems in your context in the way that makes sense in your community. It's very much a practitioner based approach.²⁵¹

The FCM also shared with the Committee its proposed "Global Program for Local Governance" (which would involve \$12 million annually for five years), and which has been the subject of "difficult conversations" with CIDA. As Mr. Carlton put it: "Currently we're working with CIDA on a variety of projects, but there's no continuity over the long term. Projects come, projects go, but there's no long-term strategy or long-term perspective on

how to engage the municipal sector in Canadian interest overseas.”²⁵² This seems to be a more general problem in the democratic development field. As Robert Miller of the Parliamentary Centre told the Committee: “Democracy is a complex of institutions, practices, values... that develop slowly. It follows that assistance to democratic development must go beyond the relatively short-term, project-by-project approach that has characterized international assistance in the past.”²⁵³

The Committee will address the elements of giving Canada the elements of an enhanced coherent and long-term strategic approach to supporting democratic development in Part III of this report. We will do so knowing that the above is far from being an exhaustive list of Canadian capabilities at work in the areas of democratic development. Indeed CIDA’s own written submission on “democratic governance” given to the Committee in October 2006 indicated a sample of numerous projects and programs in many countries — perhaps too many — carried out under its sub-sectors of “freedom and democracy”, “human rights”, “accountable public institutions”, and “rule of law”.

It is the question of overall impact and visibility that lingers. On the one hand, we are told that Canada is well-regarded internationally, that Canada has something special to offer, that there are skilled Canadians interested and involved in this field; on the other that Canadian support spread thinly in many places often receives little notice, and that Canada is still punching below its weight in this field.

The contradiction was particularly apparent in the testimony of Kevin Deveaux, then a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia, who has done extensive work with the U.S. National Democratic Institute and who in March 2007 has taken up a full-time position with the UNDP in Vietnam. In response to a question he told the Committee:

From my perspective and that of others in the field, Canadians are doing great work, and Canada has something to offer that no other country can. You'll be amazed at how many Canadians are doing this work, particularly for American organizations, because the Americans have a system that is very similar to maybe Latin America but isn't commonly used in Europe, or in Africa, or in Asia. Our system, our parliamentary system, is much more common, and Canadians have a much better opportunity, based on our experience politically, to provide input.²⁵⁴

Yet in earlier remarks he had bluntly stated:

One of the things I want to say from being in the field is that Canada is not a serious player in the area of democratization development. When you look at countries such as the United Kingdom with its Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the Americans with NED, NDI, and IRI, the Germans with their Stiftungs, and others, most people would say that Canada has not even begun to present itself at an international level in the areas particularly of parliamentary and executive and political party development.²⁵⁵

The Committee will return to this issue and propose its own solution in Chapter 7.

A further “serious player” issue has been the diffusion of Canadian assistance — too little aid dispersed over many places. As Mr. Deveaux expressed it: “I like the concept of Canada focusing on a few countries but investing significant funds in them. Again, from places like Kosovo and others, I can say that \$2 million or \$2.5 million Canadian can get you to be the most significant funder and can develop an impressive role for Canada in those countries. So instead of a scattergun approach where you may have 30 or 40 countries, I would recommend that the mandate be on intensive support for ten countries or so, so you end up having a significant impact in those countries.”²⁵⁶

The Committee realizes that making such choices will not be easy. But we believe that there is more background work on this which must be done in order that policymakers can make decisions based on the fullest information. Indeed, we note that the Discussion Paper prepared for the Democracy Council sets out a series of pertinent questions in this regard:

Identifying Canadian strengths or areas of comparative advantage might be done in different ways. One might ask: (1) what sort of experience and expertise has Canada accumulated through its aid programs and arms-length and other institutions, and where, in that regard, has Canada built expertise that perhaps distinguishes it from other countries? A second question might be: (2) What are the unique aspects or strengths of the Canadian democratic system itself and how are these aspects reflected or focussed in the kinds of assistance that Canada delivers? Another approach might be to ask: (3) Are there particular geographic regions or institutional fora in which Canada has particular strengths or advantages, or a history of positive engagement on which to build?²⁵⁷

Good questions, to which the Discussion Paper drops suggestive hints, but does not answer. The Committee believes that policy-relevant analytical work still needs to be done if the potential of Canadian capabilities and possibilities in democracy aid is to be more fully realized over the longer term.

Recommendation 6

The independent evaluation of existing Canadian democracy assistance funding that we have proposed in Recommendation 3 should include an assessment of those sectors in which Canadian democracy aid has been most effective, and in which Canadians have the greatest capacity to contribute their skills.

Recommendation 7

In terms of actually deploying Canadian expertise abroad, the evaluation should ascertain whether there is coherence among all publicly funded activities being undertaken by Canada.

Recommendation 8

In addition, recognizing that global needs in this complex field are vast, the evaluation should provide some indication of which countries might most benefit from a concentration of Canadian efforts.

Notes to Chapter 5

- 219 “Elements of Democratic Governance Discussion Paper, June 2006, p. 3 (available on-line at: <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/cip-pic/library/Discussion%20Paper%20-%20Elements%20of%20Democratic%20Governance.pdf>).
- 220 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 11.
- 221 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 26, November 1, 2006, p. 11, emphasis added.
- 222 Presentation to the “Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development”, 15 February 2007, p. 2. From 1994 to 2003, Mr. Reid served with the U.S. National Democratic Institute for International Affairs in Ukraine, Ghana, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.
- 223 For details see: <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/library/democratie-en.asp> .
- 224 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 17, September 27, 2006, p. 2.
- 225 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 226 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 39, February 1, 2007.
- 227 Jennifer Welsh, “Conclusion”, in Jennifer Welsh and Ngaire Woods, eds., *Exporting Good Governance: Temptations and Challenges in Canada’s Aid Program*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2007 forthcoming. Cited with permission of the author.
- 228 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 2.
- 229 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 23, October 24, 2006, p. 8.
- 230 This corresponds to a caution expressed by Jennifer Welsh about overseas promotion of good governance: “how can Canadian policy-makers guard against the more negative aspects of technical assistance — namely, the tendency among donors to advance opportunities for their own consultants, private sector and civil society actors, and academic experts?” (See Welsh, “Conclusion”, *op.cit.*)
- 231 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 23, October 24, p. 3.
- 232 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 43, March 1, 2007, p. 12.
- 233 *CIDA Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008 Estimates Part III*, p. 40.
- 234 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006, p. 11.
- 235 *Ibid.*
- 236 SCFAID, *Canada’s International Policy Put to the Test in Haiti*, Ottawa, December 2006.
- 237 “Sustaining Democracy through the Rule of Law”, January 2007, p. 1; see also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007.
- 238 *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
- 239 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 240 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 41, February 20, 2007, p. 3.
- 241 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 26, November 1, 2006, p. 10.
- 242 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 243 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 11.
- 244 The \$500 million Canada Fund for Africa, which comes under CIDA, was created by the Government of Canada following Canada’s hosting of the G8 Kananaskis Summit in 2002. For more details see: <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/canadafundforafrica> .
- 245 Rasheed Draman, Talking Points for Democracy Day, “Building Strong Democratic Institutions through Parliamentary Strengthening”, p. 1.
- 246 *Ibid.*, p. 2, emphasis in original.
- 247 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 27, November 7, 2006, pp. 1-2.

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- 248 Ibid., p. 2.
- 249 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007, p. 12.
- 250 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 42, February 27, 2006, p. 12
- 251 Ibid., p. 13
- 252 Ibid.,
- 253 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 11.
- 254 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007, p. 13.
- 255 Ibid., p. 10.
- 256 Ibid., p. 13.
- 257 "Elements of Democratic Governance Discussion Paper", June 2006, p. 15-16.

PART III NEW DIRECTIONS FOR CANADIAN POLICY

At this point in time, there is a need for more effort and there is also need for new thinking and approaches in democracy promotion.

Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General, International IDEA²⁵⁸

In Parts I and II of the report, the Committee has tackled a range of conceptual and comparative issues in democracy support, as well as looking at the evolution of Canadian involvement in assisting democratic development and the assets that Canada can bring to this complicated field. We have argued that much more needs to be done to generate practical knowledge of what constitutes effective democracy assistance — ideally knowledge that is shared among donors and applied to practices that are better coordinated — as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of sums that are already being spent for this purpose.

The Committee also believes that Canada can and should be doing more to promote democratic development. In this part of the report, we therefore turn our attention to the questions of substantially upgrading both Canada's political commitment to democracy support and the financial resources which Canada devotes to democracy assistance activities in other countries, bilaterally and through multilateral channels. To that end, we propose at the government level the establishment of a comprehensive and coherent policy framework on Canadian support for democratic development as a Canadian international policy priority. We further propose the establishment of a major new arms-length Canada foundation for expanded international democratic development initiatives as a key recommendation of the report. We also address new Canadian actions in important sectors — including that of political party development — and in the different and difficult contexts for democracy support that challenge the resolve of all who are committed to advancing the cause of democratic development on a global basis.

CHAPTER 6 MAKING SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY A KEY CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL POLICY PRIORITY

The world needs more, not less, Canadian leadership and action with respect to international democratic development efforts.

Grant Kippen, former NDI director for Afghanistan²⁵⁹

Why should democracies bother with promoting their form of government in other parts of the world? The answer is not simply that it corresponds to our highest ideals of government, but also that it serves our national interests. Democracies are more peaceful. They govern their economies better, and they make better trading partners.

- Professor Jeffrey Kopstein²⁶⁰

[W]hat is the record of Western governments and international institutions? Despite all the policy statements and declarations, how serious are they about democracy promotion?... there is considerable evidence that the rhetoric about democracy promotion is not matched by the reality of actual support.

Professor Gordon Crawford²⁶¹

Canada has always paid lip service to the value of democracy promotion — what democracy has not? — but unlike trade promotion or the responsibility-to-protect principle, it has never been a fundamental of Canadian foreign policy.As in so many other areas of international policy, on democracy we talk a good game, but the Government of Canada has very limited capacity.

Thomas Axworthy, Chair, Centre for the
Study of Democracy, Queen's University²⁶²

As the Committee indicated in the report's first chapters, democracy promotion is not an uncontested foreign policy objective given the current controversies and challenges that surround it, notably in the Middle East. Although Foreign Minister, Peter MacKay, was confident that the "vast majority of Canadians will agree that democracy should be a high priority for our foreign policy"²⁶³, Jeffrey Kopstein acknowledged that "many Canadians tend to be wary of democracy promotion."²⁶⁴ We believe that support for international democratic development, using a universal human rights-based approach as we have defined it in Recommendation 1, will alleviate those concerns. **Democracy promotion in this sense can be compellingly affirmed to be in the Canadian and the global interest.**

Moreover, virtually all of our witnesses were positive about Canada's role in assisting democratic development. None argued that Canada should be doing less in this field. Many argued that Canada should be doing considerably more and we will examine their proposals for doing so in the next chapters, contributing our own ideas as well.

First, however, the Committee believes that there must be the political leadership in place and clear, coherent policy direction applied across the federal government. Mindful of the citation from Crawford above, that direction must not only be declaratory but must be manifested in concrete action in support of the stated policy goals.

The Committee agrees with Minister MacKay that: "Canada's commitment to democracy extends well beyond politicians, diplomats, and development experts. Democracy involves our whole society, all of Canada. From our universities to our faith-based organizations, from our professional associations to our political parties, we should mobilize Canadian society in promoting democratic values."²⁶⁵ At the same time, government leadership is essential since most of the funding for democracy support will be from public sources. Moreover, it is essential that the Canadian government speaks with one voice and conveys consistent messages in regard to democratic development. Uncoordinated or incoherent actions will weaken Canadian support for democracy abroad.

At present, Canada lacks a comprehensive policy framework on democracy assistance. It is our expectation that this report will spur the articulation of such a framework making support for democratic development a key priority of Canada's international policy.

Recommendation 9

Accompanying its comprehensive written response to the recommendations in this report, the Government should outline a comprehensive "whole-of-government" and "whole-of-Canada" policy framework on Canadian support for international democratic development. This framework should as a minimum:

- **Commit to making support for democratic development a key priority of overall Canadian international policy;**
- **Set out a broad conception of democratic development and common Canadian policy objectives in this field;**
- **Commit to providing multi-year funding sufficient to address those policy objectives and to finance the instruments chosen to implement them.**

At the government's own policy and program level, it should ensure that it has the means to respond effectively and coherently to the evolving challenges of democratic

development. At present, the government has a small Democracy Unit within DFAIT which was established in 2006. In keeping with the priority attached to democracy support as government policy, the Unit could be enhanced and represented at a higher level within DFAIT's policy planning structure. (It might also be advisable to create a policy coordination capacity within the Privy Council Office (PCO) in order to ensure there is coherence among all Canadian government activities in the area of democracy promotion.)

Most government funding for democratic governance programs currently comes from CIDA's budget. The Committee will propose a major new arms-length funding instrument for democracy support in the next chapter. However, CIDA will continue to be an important player in terms of democracy assistance programs. It has created an Office of Democratic Governance in October 2006, the functions of which were elaborated on by CIDA President Robert Greenhill in his testimony to the Committee in March 2007, and in the *CIDA Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008 — Estimates Part III*, as we have discussed in Part II of the report.

The Committee also takes note that Bill C-293, *An Act respecting the provision of development assistance abroad*, was passed on division by the Committee in December 2006, and passed third reading on division in the House of Commons on March 28, 2007. If this bill eventually becomes law, it will, for the first time, give a legislative mandate to CIDA. Bill C-293 makes poverty reduction a priority of Canada's ODA and also includes accountability elements. We have argued strongly in Chapter 2 that democratic development and poverty-reducing socio-economic development are integrally linked. Hence, under any likely future scenario, we do not foresee any conflict with democratic governance remaining part of CIDA's mandate.

With respect to strengthening the accountability of all Canadian aid, we note that the Government has underlined this aspect in budgeting an increase of \$900 million for foreign aid over the next two years. As the Budget Plan released on March 19, 2007 states:

[T]his Government will examine options to ensure the independent evaluation of our aid program, providing parliamentarians and Canadians with an objective assessment of the results we achieve with our international assistance. It will provide the knowledge to better understand the results we are achieving, so that the Government can make more effective choices about our aid spending. This Government will provide Canadians with reporting on a more frequent basis that is easier to understand, including report cards on our effectiveness in individual countries.²⁶⁶

In that context, the Committee believes that CIDA's Office of Democratic Governance should make available to Canadians as much information as possible on what CIDA funding is accomplishing in the area of democratic development. CIDA funding of what it categorizes as democratic governance should be part of the independent evaluation of Canada's aid program that the government has indicated it will undertake. Moreover, the government's plans regarding this independent evaluation should take into account the Committee's recommendations calling for a comprehensive independent assessment and evaluation of all existing Canadian support to democratic development.

Recommendation 10

The government should ensure that all government activities in the area of international democratic development are carried out on a coherent basis.

Recommendation 11

The government should ensure that CIDA, through its Office of Democratic Governance, makes available to Canadians as much information as possible on what CIDA funding is accomplishing in the area of democratic development. Moreover, the government's plans for the independent evaluation of Canada's aid program should take into account the Committee's recommendations calling for a comprehensive independent assessment and evaluation of all existing Canadian support to democratic development.

Finally, there is the question of the future role of the Democracy Council, which currently brings together senior executives of DFAIT, CIDA, and six independent arms-length bodies as already referred to in previous chapters. At present, it is a limited informal forum for the sharing of information and good practices among participants. How should it evolve? A background note prepared for the Council-sponsored "Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development" of February 15 2007 states that:

The Council is currently examining options to evolve into a more permanent structure that will facilitate the involvement from a wider Canadian community of practice in democratic governance. The Council will engage other democracy promotion organizations with the aim of enlarging the community of practice in this area.²⁶⁷

In terms of broadening the consultative aspect of the Democracy Council, the Committee was told by one witness, Fergus Watt of the World Federalist Movement — Canada, that : "We feel it is deficient because it doesn't involve a sufficient number of civil society organizations. ... To get critical feedback in a consultative process, you need to consult more than just the organizations that are also getting their funding from government."²⁶⁸

A January 2007 submission from the Parliamentary Centre suggested that the Democracy Council "should become a useful instrument for strengthening the Canadian voice and ensuring that it is heard internationally through the following developments:

- By expanding the membership of the Council to include the full range of Canadian organizations directly engaged in the promotion of democracy internationally;

- By having the Council convene public meetings of Canadian scholars, governmental and non-governmental experts, politicians and policy makers with international counterparts to promote understanding of the challenges of democratic development and define where Canada can provide leadership;
- By giving the Council the mandate and resources to support Canadian governmental and non-governmental engagement in international forums on democratic development.”²⁶⁹

The most extensive proposal on future development of the Democracy Council came from Rights and Democracy, the arms-length body established by Parliament in 1988. Their submission argued:

Between the status quo and the creation of a centralized system of democracy promotion, there is a place and need for dialogue and convergence between the Canadian government and independent or arm’s length institutions devoted to international democratic development. In the last year, such an initiative was put forward: the Democracy Council. Over time, this Council could be expanded, refined and developed along the following lines:

1. A consortium of independent and arm’s length Canadian institutions created by Parliament should meet two times a year with the following objectives:
 - To share information on their respective plan of action, research needs, best practices in knowledge creation and transfer, policy and institution development in order to further consolidate a common knowledge base, build strategic partnerships and convergence of action;
 - To define, when politically desirable and possible, convergent or joint programs for a given country or region;
 - To share information concerning national, regional and international development that may affect Canadian institutions or orient their activities;
 - To reflect on Canadian policies, objectives and priorities in the area of international democratic development and introduce joint proposals to the Canadian government.
2. **Two times a year, we propose that this consortium of independent or arm’s length institutions meet with Canadian authorities (interdepartmental committee or any other formula) with the following objectives:**
 - To share with government authorities the content of their work and recommendations;

- To be informed or planned governmental policies, objectives and priorities;
- To identify specific initiatives that call for urgent action;
- To contribute to policy coherence.²⁷⁰

The Committee agrees that an enlarged Democracy Council process could contribute to useful policy consultation, to greater coherence of efforts among Canadian organizations engaged in democracy support activities, and to more international impact. However, the Committee believes that this evolution should take place within the context of the establishment of a major new arms-length instrument for Canadian democracy support, to which we now turn.

Notes to Chapter 6

- 258 Testimony before the Canadian Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Evidence*, Issue No. 11, Meeting of February 20, 2007, p.7.
- 259 Brief to the Committee of October 9, 2006, p. 1.
- 260 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 3.
- 261 Crawford, "Facilitating Democratic Reforms: Learning from Democratic Principles", presentation summary to the "Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development", February 15, 2007, p. 5.
- 262 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 10.
- 263 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 17, September 27, 2006, p. 3.
- 264 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 3.
- 265 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 17, September 27, 2006, p. 3.
- 266 Government of Canada, *Budget Plan 2007*, p. 263, available online at: <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2007/pdf/bp2007e.pdf> .
- 267 "The Democracy Council", Background note circulated to the 15 February 2007 Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development, p. 1.
- 268 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2006, p. 16.
- 269 "Strengthening Canadian Leadership in Democracy Promotion", The Parliamentary Centre, Robert Miller, President, January 11, 2007, p. 4.
- 270 "Promotion and Protection of Democracy: Policies and Perspectives for the 21st Century", Presentation of Jean-Louis Roy, President, October 2, 2006, pp. 33-34, emphasis in original.

CHAPTER 7 MOVING CANADA'S DEMOCRACY SUPPORT TO A HIGHER LEVEL — ESTABLISHING AN INDEPENDENT CANADA FOUNDATION FOR EXPANDED INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES, NOTABLY IN THE AREAS OF POLITICAL PARTIES, PARLIAMENTS, CIVIL SOCIETY, EDUCATION AND MEDIA

[B]ecause Canada lacks a central democracy assistance organization, Canadians contribute to other organizations and other countries' aid and foreign policy objectives. This means that Canada is losing some of its best and brightest democracy practitioners, who therefore contribute primarily to U.S. or European foreign policy priorities...

A Canadian-based democracy institution, with its experience in a federal, ethnically diverse, multilateral, and bilingual country, would be welcome into the international democracy promotion community and would have a significant impact in assisting developing countries.

David Donovan, Research Director,
Queen's University Centre for the Study of Democracy²⁷¹

Canada has many unique things to offer. However, despite the wealth of talent... despite Canada's unique contributions, Canada's actual efforts remain disparate, underfunded and anonymous. Perhaps more importantly, there is little sense of Canadianness and almost no effort to promote [a] Canadian contribution to democracy promotion as part of Canada's international identity. ... I do not find that I have many Canadian counterparts. While it is admirable that Canada has exported so many individuals who thrive within international organizations, little or no credit accrues to Canada as a result of their activities.

Leslie Campbell, Senior Associate and Regional Director,
Middle East and North Africa Programs,
U.S. National Democratic Institute for International Affairs²⁷²

The Committee believes that Canada should be a major-league player in the provision of international democratic development assistance. Yet, while Canada's disparate efforts are often recognized by others, Canada is still not the large-scale actor that it should and could be in this field. As Professor Lisa Sundstrom of the University of British Columbia has put it:

Canada's role in support for democratic development overseas has been timid and small, but where it has been attempted, recipients of Canadian assistance have generally come away with positive impressions and an increased capacity to strengthen democracy in their local contexts. ... The key task before the Canadian government is to render that role distinctive, clear and less hesitant.²⁷³

The Committee has come to the conclusion that more is needed than incremental increases in support to an array of small organizations already operating in the area of democratic development, usually with CIDA funding. Furthermore, we believe that Canada should become active in sectors such as political party development where we have not been engaged to date, and should be more involved in expanded initiatives in other areas of democratic development through a funding channel that is at arms length from government.

The Committee acknowledges that many existing organizations are doing good work and that some witnesses have expressed reservations about the creation of any large new entity. For example, Rights and Democracy, which has an existing Parliamentary mandate as discussed in Chapter 4, argued:

[W]e strongly believe that a centralized system could become a bureaucratic monster, could undermine the existing plurality of approaches, dialogues and activities that together produce significant results with our partners and, ultimately, could undermine Canada's credit and credibility around the globe. I know no other country that has adopted such a centralized system. Before creating new institutions, existing mandates should be completely assessed and fully supported.²⁷⁴

In a further submission to the Committee in early April 2007, the current president of Rights and Democracy, Jean-Louis Roy, referred to a next statutory review of the organization in 2008 which he hoped would result in the "recognition of our institution as the central Canadian instrument for the promotion of human rights and democracy in the world." But at the same time he acknowledged: "In the past, I believe that our institution had dangerously neglected the democratic development portion of its mandate."²⁷⁵

Rights and Democracy's first president Edward Broadbent told the Committee that, instead of a new institution, more resources should be given to this arms-length institution with all-party support, and noted that during his tenure as president each of the political parties was represented on its board.²⁷⁶ In a subsequent November 2007 submission to the Committee, Rights and Democracy proposed to create a "special Political Party Development Unit" on a trial basis.²⁷⁷ Referring to both Rights and Democracy and CIDA's new Office of Democratic Governance, Ian Smillie stated that: "I've never understood why we need more institutions when we have institutions that are already there. If it's not doing the work that's wanted or needed, then it should be given the mandate and the marching orders to do it."²⁷⁸

Similarly, the Parliamentary Centre, a body with a long relationship to the Canadian Parliament, argued in a January 2007 submission to the Committee that the government should “invest carefully and strategically in strengthening the work already being done by Canadian governmental and non-governmental organizations. Better an improved policy than a new organization.” At the same time, the Centre proposed a series of policy initiatives: an expanded Democracy Council; a linkage of CIDA’s democratic governance work to sustainable human development; a Democracy Partners Research and Study Program; the establishment of “Democracy Canada Centres attached to some Canadian Embassies in countries or regions where the struggle for democracy is deemed to be especially important to Canadian interests”; making the Parliamentary Centre a “centre of excellence in parliamentary development”; creating a “Centre for Political Party Exchange” that would have its own board of directors while maintaining “a close working relationship with the Parliamentary Centre.”²⁷⁹

The Canadian Bar Association also argued in its submission to the Committee that: “No one organization can or should deliver international assistance in every field. In this respect, the best means for Canada to contribute to the overall international effort of democratic development would be to enhance the capacity of existing Canadian organizations to take on a greater role internationally. This also includes improving the knowledge and expertise within the Canadian government to produce effective programming in the rule of law area.”²⁸⁰

The Committee is mindful of these concerns and cautions that have been expressed. We certainly do not want to create some kind of all-encompassing “bureaucratic monster” that overlooks or replaces the work of existing Canadian organizations.²⁸¹ But, as part of increasing Canada’s overall international assistance, we do want to add significant new capacity to Canada’s contribution to international democratic development. Frankly, we are not convinced that minor modifications and additions to the status quo will do the job. As we have already noted, it concerns us greatly when we hear the following from a witness like Kevin Deveaux, a Canadian legislator with both extensive experience working internationally with non-Canadian organizations and familiarity with the Canadian organizations — “One of the things I want to say from being in the field is that Canada is not a serious player in the area of democratization development.”²⁸²

The Committee does not believe that an incremental sprinkling of resources across an array of small organizations will be good enough to make Canada a “serious player”, nor do we want to pick and choose among a plethora of proposals from different organizations asking for additional funding. We think that the allocation of resources for additional initiatives is best done through an independent expert assessment process carried out by a substantial new arms-length Canada foundation which we will propose specifically for the purpose of supporting democratic development in the field. We believe now is the time to move Canada’s efforts to this higher level.

Before elaborating on that, the Committee has received important related testimony observing that something is missing in Canada’s instruments to advance democracy, and

that this something extra should be independent from government. In one of our earliest hearings, Professor Jeffrey Kopstein told the Committee:

The government should probably not get involved directly in promoting democracy. It should probably get involved through the creation of something like a Canadian endowment for democracy, an arm's-length organization that would be... in effect, a crown corporation that would be separate from the ministries per se.²⁸³

The same day, the Committee heard detailed testimony from Thomas Axworthy arguing that: "Canada lacks a central democracy assistance organization. But Canada has a wealth of knowledge and professional expertise grounded in Canadian values that could make a real and meaningful contribution to democracy assistance initiatives." Mr. Axworthy's explained his proposal as follows:

A Canadian-based democracy institution — Democracy Canada — grounded in a federal, ethnically diverse, multilateral and bilingual country would be welcomed by the international democracy promotion community. This new institution should have the following features:

- Democracy Canada should be an independent organization reporting to and accountable to Parliament and a Minister. It should not be part of any department.
- The mission of Democracy Canada would be to promote and enhance democracy abroad. Democracy Canada would employ a network of experts to provide practical experience in areas of democratic development to their counterparts in partner countries. Democracy Canada's activities would focus on political party assistance, including training in campaigns, electioneering, and media relations, which would introduce a tool largely absent from Canadian foreign policy. Programs would also include enhancing democratic transparency, election monitoring, promoting civic participation (especially among women), and assisting in the building of democratic institutions.
- The focus on political party assistance, election preparation, training and mechanics would distinguish the Institute from the legislature mission of the Parliamentary Centre and the civic education mission of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development.
- The Board would consist of 12-15 members drawn from nominees of parties sitting in Parliament, international partners, and experts in democracy promotion. Replicating a successful aspect of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), one third of Democracy Canada's board would from international partners. The Board would have the fiduciary responsibility for Democracy Canada.
- The Institute would also be governed by an advisory Democracy Canada Council consisting of members from the democracy and governance community of Canada. An annual Democracy Canada conference would be held to bring

together the Canadian and international democracy assistance community to promote mutual learning, the dissemination of best practices, and to help coordinate Democracy Canada's future objectives and priorities.

- The Institute would develop its own programs and staff but also partner with others in the field. It should have an annual budget of \$50 million, both to fund worthwhile projects by its partners and to undertake its own activities. Democracy Canada would also be allowed to fund proposals for international work submitted by Canada's political parties, but it would not automatically allocate a portion of its funding through the existing party structure.
- Democracy Canada's permanent bureau staff, in addition to program coordination and management, would undertake a research function to gain an understanding of the local context of Democracy Canada's partner countries. To enhance its effectiveness, Democracy Canada would work with existing Canadian and international organizations such as the IDRC, as well as with organizations within its partner countries to inform its programs.
- Democracy Canada would coordinate Team Canada Democracy delegations around a key Canadian foreign policy objective. With Democracy Canada, coordinated assistance could be provided to a partner country, including elements of political party assistance provided by the parties, legislative assistance from the Parliamentary Centre, electoral assistance from Elections Canada, and so on. Democracy Canada would maintain the overall focus of the delegation, and would be responsible for democratization programs in the partner country.²⁸⁴

It should be noted that the "Democracy Canada" proposal was made with full knowledge of what is being done by existing Canadian organizations including Rights and Democracy and the Parliamentary Centre.²⁸⁵

On the rationale for creating a new institution with all-party support, Mr. Kevin Deveaux first acknowledged that "there are a lot of organizations within Canada that are receiving money from CIDA and from the government and that are doing good work."²⁸⁶ He then went on to argue forcefully:

Canada needs a funding agency that specifically deals with democratization, that would provide grants and funding to organizations, much as the National Endowment for Democracy in the United States, the NED, does....

I'd like to see something like the Westminster Foundation in the UK. Whereas the Germans and the Americans have moved to partisan-based groups, I would recommend a multi-partisan group like the Westminster Foundation, one that would create a situation whereby all the parties could come together to do executive, judicial, and parliamentary development, and election monitoring and political party development.

[Canada]needs a made-in-Canada approach to foreign policy. If we're going to do that, then we need democratization development. We need to be able to have the funding that gives us access to the higher levels within government, civil society, political parties, and the judiciary.

Finally, I would like to say that there are a lot of Canadians who are doing this work on a full-time basis. They're doing it for British organizations. They're doing it for American organizations. They're doing it for the UN. They're doing it for the Commonwealth. There is a vast array of Canadians who've built up a lot of experience in this area, and listening to them, talking to them, I know that they often say they wish they could do this for a Canadian organization, that they wish we could have a Canadian version of NDI or the Westminster Foundation.²⁸⁷

Mr. Deveaux added that there would be a role for "smaller contractors or subcontractors as well who could be involved in the process. And I think that is also something that would create competition and would allow for smaller organizations to have an opportunity to provide their expertise as well."²⁸⁸ In other words, the best proposals put forward from the non-governmental sector should be able to get support through this new funding agency.

Having reflected on this matter, the Committee does not suggest either simply following the Democracy Canada idea or simply copying a version of some other country's organization. But we do agree that a made-in-Canada approach to assisting democratic development requires that a major new arms-length funding instrument be established that is devoted specifically to that purpose. We are not firmly set on a particular name for it, but for the purposes of this report, we will refer to it as a Canada foundation for international democratic development (the "Canada foundation").

It is essential that the Canada foundation be fully independent of government, established by Act of Parliament after consultation with all political parties represented in the House of Commons. The Committee recognizes that the foundation will necessarily be primarily funded by public money (although it could also be permitted to raise money from other sources). Given that, along the lines of the IDRC, it should be accountable to Parliament through a minister — in this case the Minister of Foreign Affairs — who would table its annual report in Parliament. While we do not have a set amount of funding in mind (the world-renowned IDRC receives over \$100 million annually), we believe that it should be an amount sufficient to establish Canada as a world leader in the area of democratic development which, as we have underlined in Chapter 1, is integrally linked to the human development agenda as a whole. As far as the Committee is aware, other countries fund their democracy assistance organizations on the basis of annual appropriations. At the same time there should be a multi-year commitment made to the foundation, and the option should also be open to establish the foundation through a large one-time endowment.

As to the foundation's structure, it should be governed by a board of directors appointed by government on the basis of all-party consultations. In addition to being representative of the Canadian community of practice on democratic development, the board should include representatives of Canada's democratic institutions and political parties, which could be current or former Members of Parliament. As well, recognizing the international nature of this activity, as is the case with IDRC and Rights and Democracy,

the board could include some representatives from countries in which Canada has major democratic development assistance programs. The chair of the board and the president of the foundation should be chosen by the board itself not the government.

The foundation obviously should be a participant in the enlarged Democracy Council discussed in the previous chapter. It should co-sponsor with the Council at least annually a public conference on Canada's approach to democratic development. (The foundation could, of course, also convene other forums as appropriate on specific aspects of democratic development.) In addition, the foundation and the Council should collaborate on a public website which would make available to Canadians information resources on important issues in democratic development, the results of relevant research findings, country strategies, and evaluations of the effectiveness of Canadian democratic development assistance. In regard to generating better knowledge and evaluation that can assist the work of the community of practice, the Canada foundation could provide funding to a centre for policy in democratic development as suggested in Chapter 2, preferably operating as a subsidiary of the foundation.

Recommendation 12

The government in consultation with all parties in the House of Commons should establish an arms-length Canada foundation for international democratic development or equivalent having the following key elements:

- **The foundation should be established by Act of Parliament and, while maintaining its independence from government, should report to Parliament annually through the Minister of Foreign Affairs;**
- **There should be a multi-year commitment of resources to the foundation sufficient to put Canada among the world leaders in the field, with funding provided either by annual appropriations or as a one-time endowment;**
- **The foundation should be governed by a board of directors appointed by government on the basis of all-party consultations;**
- **The foundation's board should be representative of the Canadian community of practice on democratic development, should include representatives of Canada's democratic institutions and political parties, which could be current or**

former Members of Parliament, and could include some representatives from countries in which Canada has major democratic development assistance programs;

- **The president of the foundation and the chair of its board should be chosen by the board itself not by the government.**

Recommendation 13

The Canada foundation for international democratic development should be a participant in the enlarged Democracy Council as discussed in Chapter 6 and should co-sponsor with the Council at least annually a public conference on Canada's approach to democratic development.

Recommendation 14

The Canada foundation for international democratic development should also be the means to support the generation of better knowledge and evaluation to assist the work of the community of practice. It would provide funding to a centre for policy in democratic development as suggested in chapter 2, preferably operating as a subsidiary part of the foundation. Furthermore, the Canada foundation for international democratic development and the Democracy Council should collaborate on a public website which would make available to Canadians information resources on important issues in democratic development, the results of relevant research findings, country strategies, and evaluations of the effectiveness of Canadian democratic development assistance.

In the Committee's view, the foundation should have a broad mandate to assist new democratic development initiatives, based on the Canadian approach to democratic development that we have recommended in Chapter 1. In particular, the foundation should address several areas where Canadian support to date has been lacking or insufficient: developing a role for political parties and strengthening the contribution of parliamentarians; expanding the role of civil society, education and of independent, free media.

7.1 Developing a Role for Political Parties and Strengthening the Contribution of Parliamentarians — Creating a Canadian Centre for Multiparty and Parliamentary Democracy funded through the Canada Foundation

Political parties have long been considered essential to the process of democratic development, yet Canada has never been involved in aiding political party development. The Committee believes that this should change, with a new all-party instrument being created supported by the independent Canada foundation we have recommended. At the

same time, we are fully aware of the challenges of political party aid. Even as parties have proliferated in emerging democracies, Thomas Carothers observes in a new book, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, that: “Throughout the developing and postcommunist worlds, political parties are held in extremely low regard; in most of these countries they are the least respected or trusted of any public institution.”²⁸⁹

John Graham told the Committee:

Very troubling in Latin America is evidence that popular confidence in the democratic system is eroding. That has little to do with the electoral process and much to do with the failure of expectations engendered by the promotion of democracy in the eighties and the collapse of respect for political parties — a bad situation, as political parties are of course the indispensable machinery of democracies. Canada, especially through parliamentary networking and through the OAS, can do more to help parties and parliaments rebuild.²⁹⁰

Former Chief Electoral Officer, Jean-Pierre Kingsley, noted: “It is important to have coherent and well-considered approaches. The growing interest in supporting political parties, for example, needs to be considered carefully.”²⁹¹ He added in testimony: “The word of caution I was trying to sound is that others have attempted and others continue to support particular political parties when they’re abroad. ...If there’s a general approach and you get the expertise, but it’s shared equally amongst all of those who wish to participate, then that is what I would suggest might be the way to go.”²⁹²

Mr. Carother’s, with whom the Committee met in Washington, refers in his book to an evolution in party aid away from traditional single-party efforts towards a multiparty focus often involving “more systematic efforts to affect the overall party system in a country. These take the form of initiatives to foster horizontal learning among parties, to spread norms about good party behaviour within the political elite, to bridge the gap between parties and civil society, and to increase the role of women in politics. The growing field of programs aimed at party systems includes support for reforms in the basic rules and regulations that govern party life, such as political party laws and laws relating to party finance.”²⁹³ While urging reasonable expectations on the part of donors, Mr. Carothers argues: “The various lines of improvement and innovation that party aid providers have begun experimenting with need to be embraced and taken forward by a wider range of party aid providers. This means many things:

- Abandoning cosy party-to-party cooperative relationships that lack any real focus on how party reform can be stimulated, supported, and sustained.
- Avoiding the tendency to devote substantial amounts of program resources to party exchanges, especially poorly planned study tours, dignitary-rich conferences, and short-term parliamentary delegations in either direction.

- Incorporating and expanding the many possible improvements in training methods, with a focus on creating sustained learning experiences and the opportunity for genuine follow-up and practical application.
- Devoting more resources to serious on-going assessments of the political parties and overall political life in a country before setting up party aid program there.
- Ceasing to send to complex foreign contexts Western campaign experts who know little about the local scene and reflexively prescribe a stock set of ideas about high-octane campaigning as a recipe for party strengthening and reform.
- Going deeper and further with programs to bolster the representational character of parties, by broadening efforts to bridge the gap between parties and civil society (beyond just NGOs), taking more steps to understand the rise of new social movements and their potential ties to the party domain, continuing to support the inclusion of women in parties, and supporting new forms of citizen representation at the local level.
- Taking forward the new efforts to strengthen party systems, by learning more about how to make multiparty dialogues effective, help new legal frameworks on party finance gain teeth, and stimulate useful progress on party law reform.
- Carrying out many more independent, searching evaluations of party aid programs that question basic assumptions about methods, assess long-term effects on parties, and relate the effects to the recipient country's overall political development.²⁹⁴

Asked about what Canada might do in light of this challenges facing party assistance, Mr. Carothers told the Committee that it is “very important that other countries step forward” and that “Canada has a unique role to play” in part because it may have an advantage in being able to learn from the mistakes of others’ experience. It need not be stuck in what he referred to as the old model of party aid, and a good example to follow might be that of the Netherlands Institute of Multiparty Democracy (NIMD).²⁹⁵

Before turning to possible European models, the Committee also takes note of what Mr. Roger Hällag, Head of Programme for Political Parties at IDEA told us in Stockholm. Because parties are seen as both necessary to and “the weakest links” in democratization, and because there is a knowledge/evaluation gap, IDEA has been involved in research and dialogue with parties in some 50 developing countries with the aim of making international assistance to parties more effective.²⁹⁶ Among IDEA’s findings are that:

- “Too often it is donor interests that are dictating the terms”, rather than an assessment of the needs in the recipient country.
- Party aid is getting to be a growing and increasingly crowded field, with many players, tiny budgets, and considerable overlap. Multi-party aid is becoming more common than party-to-party aid channels to “sister” parties.
- There is not enough learning from experiences and serious evaluation of results is the exception.²⁹⁷

Notwithstanding this critical context, Mr. Hällhag affirmed that “there is probably far too little aid targeting parties and party systems.” It remains an overlooked area and donors should be prepared to take the risk of entering it.²⁹⁸ The Secretary-General of IDEA Vidar Helgesen confirmed the importance of strengthening political parties in an address to IDRC in Ottawa in February 2007 on “Strengthening Political Parties and Party Systems”. According to Mr. Helgesen, “What is evident is that needs exceed supply”, and he expressed the view that Canada could take a leadership role in this area given its “immense multilateral credibility.”²⁹⁹

While in Europe, the Committee heard from representatives of the UK’s Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support as already alluded to in Chapter 3. Each operates with public money, but at arms-length from government, and each employs both single-party and multi-party forms of assistance.

David French, Chief Executive of the WFD, which has operated since 1992, explained that although its creation was government-sponsored, the initiative to involve political parties came from backbench parliamentarians, and the WFD allows currently active politicians to participate in its activities. Of the funding which it receives from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 50% goes to the parties to undertake party-to-party assistance. The Foundation has a distinctive model in which politicians work with other politicians. This is different from the German model of the Stiftungen where it is party staff that are directly involved more than the politicians themselves. The Foundation is governed by a 14-member board, of which eight are nominated by the parties. Apart from the party-to-party-aid, the other 50% of funds goes toward long-term projects in a number of countries. Typically, this will involve assembling packages of democracy assistance with partner organizations using British expertise. Issues include how to tackle voter disengagement and creating democratic models of ethics for local officials. There is always the challenge of making local partnership work. But the Foundation can sometimes act as a catalyst to create local dialogue among parties. For example, in Cairo, it was able to bring together Egyptian parliamentarians from all parties to be able to talk to each other. At present, the WFD does not have any field offices.³⁰⁰

The Chair of WFD's Board, Labour, MP Hugh Bayley, told the Committee in a separate meeting that although the WFD's annual funding (approximately \$8.7 million in 2005-2006) is a small fraction of what the British government spends on democratic governance, it is set to increase. Conservative MP, James Duddridge, added that "a lot can be done with very little money". The 50% of WFD funds that are grants to parties are allocated according to the votes received by the parties in general elections. The WFD has a projects committee which reviews and approves all project submissions, and recognizes that proper public scrutiny of all funding is required.³⁰¹

The Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support, as explained to the Committee by Mr. John Inge Lovdal, Chair of its Board, and Astrid Thomassen, its Project Coordinator, is much more recent (created at the request of the parties as a pilot project in 2002; made permanent in 2006), and has funded only small projects so far (from a budget of less than \$1 million in 2006). In terms of organization, there is a council made up of the general secretary and two more representatives from each party which meets every second year. The parties nominate one member each to the Centre's Board and the council nominates three independent representatives.³⁰²

It was observed that the largest parties with international connections find it easiest to find suitable partners. In 2006, six parties applied for funding of projects in eight different countries, mainly in East Africa, but also in Asia and Latin America. Benefits for Norwegian parties include increased awareness and knowledge about the political situation in partner countries and a better understanding of North-South questions in general. The types of projects supported include: capacity building and organizational development within the partner political parties, internal communication, grassroots engagement, and women and youth participation. While several projects have not worked out (e.g., a multi-party project in Malawi) and it is difficult to measure results, there are examples of "small stories of success."³⁰³

The Centre has learned that there can be a two-way approach to party assistance. Some takes place on a party-to-party basis, but more is happening on a multi-party basis, using the Norwegian experience with coalition governments. The Centre represents a "unique combination" of both bilateral and multi-party approaches to assistance. While the Centre's secretariat coordinates and can initiate interest in projects, it is very important at all times that the parties feel ownership of the Centre's activities. The Centre collaborates with other institutions like the WFD, but unlike the WFD, project funding is not allocated according to the representation of the parties in parliament. The criteria for project selection are defined by the Centre's board, "looking at the quality of applications" in terms of promoting the desired goals of participation, transparency, and accountability. Interestingly, criticism of the centre has not come from civil society in Norway, but mostly from academic researchers who worry that party aid can constitute a form of political interference in other countries.³⁰⁴

Although the Committee was unable to meet directly with representatives of the NIMD, as noted above, it has been suggested as a good multi-party example for Canada, and we have taken into account the approach presented by its executive director Roel von Meijenfeldt during a visit to Canada in January 2007.³⁰⁵ As he put it:

The multiparty approach was chosen as reflection that political parties will not intervene in a biased manner within the internal dynamics of fragile states, respecting the adagio that democracy can not be exported from abroad. Furthermore, it projects the joint responsibility of political parties to assist young democracies with their democratic development on the basis of trusted peer relations. The joint approach by parties across the Dutch political spectrum also allows for the professionalism and continuity that is required in operating in politically sensitive and risky environments.³⁰⁶

The NIMD was formally established by seven participating parties represented in the Dutch Parliament in 2000, with each party having one representative on its board of directors, chaired by an impartial president who is an elder statesman. The NIMD “is registered as a foundation under Dutch law and as such qualifies as a non-governmental organization, part of Dutch civil society.”³⁰⁷ The NIMD receives core funding from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs — its budget allocation was €10 million (about C\$15.4 million) in 2005-2006 — on the basis of a “four-year strategic programme” which allows it “to use a multi-annual programmatic approach to its relations with and support for its counterparts.”³⁰⁸ The NIMD submits regular reports on its work programme and meets semi-annually with the Ministry “to discuss the results of the programmes and the lesson learned.”³⁰⁹

According to von Meijenfeldt:

Over the past four years, NIMD has established partnership relations with 152 parties in 15 countries at four continents and, in addition, regional cooperation programmes of political parties in East and Southern Africa and West Africa. At the end of 2006, NIMD completed its first four year cycle, with a full external institutional evaluation (conducted in the third year) to assess the trends in our impact. This year [2007] NIMD starts its second four year programme, core funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the development cooperation budget. In the new multi-annual programme 2007-2010, NIMD projects an increase in programme funding from our bi- and multilateral programme partners.³¹⁰

With the exception of one office in Guatemala and regional representation in Johannesburg, South Africa, the IMD does not have overseas field offices, preferring instead “to work through locally available capacity or encourage the establishment of such capacity.”³¹¹ As von Meijenfeldt elaborates:

The cooperation with political parties in the programme countries is inclusive meaning that all parties represented in the parliaments and/or officially registered take part in the cooperation. If the political parties in a particular country are interested in cooperation, NIMD invites them to come together to make an analysis of the common challenges in the democratic development of their country and prepare a strategic programme on how

to address these challenges. Our role is to facilitate these processes and to fund the implementation of the identified reforms or broker assistance from other interested international partners...

Of the 15 countries in our programme, 9 have meanwhile established Centers for Multiparty Democracy (CMD's) through which they seek to institutionalize their cooperation on national issues. ... These centers come under various names but have in common that they are fully run by the [local] political parties themselves. They focus on two main issues:

- Develop a national agenda and oversee its implementation;
- Find agreement about the modalities for support to institutional development of political parties.³¹²

In terms of encouraging national inter-party dialogues in partner countries, von Meijenfeldt noted that these “are moving to district levels while there is also an increasing emphasis on active participation of women, youth and other underrepresented groups, such as the indigenous population, in the political process.”³¹³

David Donovan of the Queen's University Centre for the Study of Democracy and Leslie Campbell of the U.S. National Democratic Institute (NDI) both mentioned positively the NIMD as an approach that would be congenial for Canada in recent testimony to a Canadian Senate Committee. In doing so, Mr. Campbell argued that NDI tries to be multi-partisan. “We do not want seek like-minded party partners. We will work with all parties across the spectrum. We are very international in how we present ourselves. The majority of people working for NDI abroad are non-American... it is important to show that we are not promoting one particular system and particularly the American system because there would be a lot of resistance to that.”³¹⁴

Mr. Campbell pointed out that NDI currently “employs 30 Canadians in senior capacities overseas”, including six former parliamentarians, and that “more than 350 prominent Canadians in political life have been involved in NDI programs at one time or another, including virtually all of the former party leaders of Canada.”³¹⁵ He added that using parliamentarians should be “a huge priority for a new Canadian institution.”³¹⁶ According to Mr. Campbell, Canada has a lot to offer in this area:

Canada's political parties have highly developed grassroots organizing models that are relevant to many developing countries. Unlike the large, publicly funded European parties, or the private, money-reliant American parties, Canadian parties are decentralized, volunteer driven, have modest budgets with public and private funding and operate under strict spending limits. ... Canada's parliamentary system and the experiences of current and former Canadian parliamentarians are relevant around the world. Most emerging democracies have parliamentary systems, and the Canadian model is more applicable in nascent parliaments than the unique, expensive and unwieldy American system. Quebec's national assembly can also provide an example in countries where the political system resembles the French model; and Canadian

provincial legislatures are similar in scale and budget to the legislatures in many developing nations.³¹⁷

Thomas Axworthy told the Committee: “The model that I would like and think would be appropriate for our country would be the multi-party model, based on the Dutch or Westminster models. Whatever divides us in Canadian politics at home on the issues, the men and women who work in our parties and are in Parliament at least believe that democracy is a system worth promoting and they are expert at because they are practitioners in it. ... I also think our own parties are oriented domestically so heavily that it would do the parties themselves some good to think about issues abroad.”³¹⁸

The Committee strongly favors a system-wide multi-party approach because it is more inclusive and also less likely to lead to accusations of inappropriate partisan foreign interference in domestic political processes. A Dutch report of a seminar on the subject held in Africa put it this way: “A key challenge for donors is to come up with an appropriate way of assisting political parties, while avoiding to be labelled partisan. Channeling donor assistance via independent foundations might be a suitable alternative for donors supporting political parties. Also, support to political parties should be designed in such a way that it makes political parties sustainable.”³¹⁹

In citing these examples and this testimony, the Committee has not overlooked the submissions of existing organizations wanting to become more involved in political party and parliamentary development work. Indeed, Mr. Campbell agreed that “more resources for the existing organizations make sense. I think the Parliamentary Centre and Rights and Democracy do great work. They have had very small funding levels.” His argument is that such organizations struggle for funding which could come from a new independent umbrella organization that could do more to support their work than the current government-dependent structure.

Rights and Democracy submitted a seven-page proposal to the Committee in November 2007 arguing that, although it has not worked on political party development in the past, it did not have the resources to do so. The submission continued:

If the Canadian government is prepared to invest in this field, it is our belief that Rights & Democracy — as an existing, operational and networked institution — can develop and implement a strategic political party development programme in a much shorter time-frame and at significantly less cost than the creation of a new institution for this purpose.³²⁰

The submission proposed that the government fund its proposal for a “3-year trial period”, giving a detailed outline of the objectives and approaches that would be followed and accomplished through a “Political Party Development Unit” set up within Rights and Democracy and through the convening of a “Canadian Consultative Group” that would meet four times a year. The anticipated cost would be \$2.5 million annually, or \$7.5 million over the three-year trial period, after which an evaluation would be done and “a longer-term decision taken.”³²¹

The Parliamentary Centre submitted a completely separate set of proposals in January 2007 which addressed both parliamentary strengthening and political party development. With regard to the latter, the Centre acknowledged that there has been no established Canadian vehicle for this purpose. It then proposed the following:

- To rectify this situation, the Centre for Legislative Exchange (CLE), a registered Canadian charity established by the Parliamentary Centre, is planning changes to its mandate and governance that will enable it to serve as a facilitator of exchange between Canadian political parties and their counterparts in developing countries. To manage the process of reorganising CLE as the Centre for Political Party Exchange, a founding committee has been struck chaired by Douglas Rowland, President of the Association of Former Parliamentarians. The Association and its members will be important collaborators in achieving the objectives of the Centre for Political Party Exchange.
- The goal of the Centre for Political Party Exchange is to promote multi-party democracy, not this or that political party. Its governance will include representatives of different Canadian political parties that support the objectives of the Centre and wish to participate in its programs. The Centre will be designed and developed in close cooperation with Canadian political parties, drawing upon lessons learned by the international community in promoting political party development.
- To limit overhead and administrative costs, as well as benefit from collaboration with an experienced organisation in international democracy promotion, the Centre for Political Party Exchange will maintain a close working relationship with the Parliamentary Centre, while having its own Board of Directors.³²²

The Parliamentary Centre recommended that its proposal be directly funded by the Government. Furthermore, with respect to parliamentary development, it noted: "Strong parliaments that represent all their citizens and have the capacity to hold governments to account are essential to democracy. Despite this, parliamentary development has not received the attention or support from the international community that it deserves. Given our values and institutions of parliamentary democracy, Canada can and should be a global leader in parliamentary development."³²³ On that point, the Committee agrees. The Centre then proposed the following:

- The Parliament of Canada adopt a resolution expressing support for the Parliamentary Centre as a centre of excellence in democratic development;

- The Government of Canada provide a matching contribution to the privately established endowment for the Parliamentary Centre;
- In supporting political party development... CIDA give priority to strengthening the role and organization of political parties within parliament, with the objective of promoting constructive inter-party competition.³²⁴

The Committee fully recognizes the existing statutory mandate of Rights and Democracy and the important work being done by the Parliamentary Centre, which has also established some international field offices. However, we do not want to be put in a position of having to choose between conflicting proposals. Moreover, in the case of Rights and Democracy, it may be best for it to concentrate on what it already does best. Increased funding for that could come from the arms-length Canada foundation we have proposed rather than directly from government. Similarly, in the case of the second and third points of the Parliamentary Centre's proposals cited above, we are concerned about the reliance for everything being put on direct government funding. And do we really want CIDA to be responsible for the sensitive political work of political party development?

The Committee's preference is that additional support in these areas be kept at arms length from government, even if public money is involved. The ideal would be that funding come through the Canada foundation that we have proposed earlier in this chapter. We note as well, that in the international cases we have referred to of the United States, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway and Finland, the initiative for a body supporting political party development as part of democratic development has come from the legislators and political parties themselves. Indeed, as Leslie Campbell told the Senate committee, the "arm's length relationship should be with the Canadian Parliament and not with the Canadian government."³²⁵

With that in mind, the Committee believes that the Parliament of Canada, supported of course by the government, and after consultations with all parties represented in the House of Commons, should consider setting up a centre for multi-party and parliamentary democracy, with a parliamentary mandate. Funding would be provided through the arms-length Canada foundation for international democratic development. Such a centre could start with modest funding and be re-evaluated after two years. Following that, the centre might be able to program on a multi-year basis similar to that of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy. Ultimately it would aim to reach a level comparable to the NIMD. The board of the centre would include representatives from all parties represented in Parliament.

The proposed centre should be able to benefit from the research findings and comparative experience of Canadians and others in this complex risky area. In the case of support for parliamentary strengthening, the Committee takes note of a major report on the subject, "Parliamentary strengthening in developing countries", that was released in

February 2007. It was prepared for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) by two British NGOs and included the following helpful "Guidelines for effective parliamentary strengthening:"

- Respond to demand: Parliamentary strengthening should be demand-led, and responsive to local needs, rather than externally-driven.
- Address causes: Parliamentary strengthening should seek to address the causes of poor parliamentary performance, rather than addressing solely the symptoms.
- Take account of context: Parliamentary strengthening must take full account of the local context — including the political context — within which parliaments function.
- Involve recipients: Parliamentary strengthening should involve a range of local organizations, and interest groups, including opposition MPs and parties as well as members of the government.
- Focus on issues: Parliamentary strengthening should use particular issues such as budget oversight, anti-corruption, HIV/AIDS and poverty reduction as vehicles to improve parliamentary performance, rather than focusing solely on parliamentary procedures.
- Coordinate and deliver appropriate activities: Agencies involved in parliamentary strengthening must do more to coordinate their work, and to ensure that their activities are appropriate to the objectives of parliamentary strengthening. Think twice before setting up or supporting study visits and seminars.
- Provide long-term sustainable support.³²⁶

Recommendation 15

The Parliament of Canada, following consultations with all parties represented in the House of Commons, should consider setting up a centre for multi-party and parliamentary democracy, with a parliamentary mandate and with funding provided through the arms-length Canada foundation for international democratic development. Such a centre should start with modest funding and be re-evaluated after two years. Following that, the centre might be able

to program on a multi-year basis similar to that of the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, ultimately aiming to reach a level comparable to the NIMD. The board of the centre would include representatives from all parties represented in Parliament.

7.2 Expanding Support for Civil Society, Education and Free Media

[W]e already work with civil society, but too often it is the civil society of well-educated and well-heeled elites. We must connect more effectively below these levels.

John Graham³²⁷

Supporting the work of civil society in democratic development has been less controversial than that of providing support for political party development, even if it is agreed that non-governmental or civil-society organizations (NGOs or CSOs) cannot replace the necessary functions that political parties play in representative democracy. The role of civil society in democratization from the local to the global level was not disputed by any of our Canadian and international witnesses. It was the main focus of several presentations to the Committee, in particular those of Gerry Barr of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation and John Foster of the North-South Institute, who also stressed the importance of international civil-society networks such as Social Watch.

As we have previously noted, Mr. Barr linked the civil-society role in democratic development to issues of how effective aid is in really reaching the poor and mobilizing them to address their own development aspirations: "It's when we get to this development vision side of things that issues such as the role of citizens, their social movements, the way in which aid can be used to mobilize people's participation, come increasingly to the fore; it's where democratic development arises."³²⁸ Mr. Foster observed that "civil society has strategic importance in democratization. North-South and South-South partnerships are a crucial element therein. Canadian aid policy needs to be enhanced with greater attention and support for these partnerships. Among his recommendations was that "specific priority be given to enhance material support for Canadian and international NGOs working on democratic reform of global, regional, national and sub-national instances, particularly those utilizing a comprehensive human rights framework".³²⁹ The submission of Rights and Democracy also called for broader civil-society engagement in democratic development and governance processes, affirming: "After all, democracy is about citizens' rights, citizens' dissent, and citizens' participation. ... In many countries where democracy is fragile or lacking, no force other than civil society can move the agenda forward and put democratic principles at the centre for the development debate."³³⁰

At the same time, as examined in the work of leading experts like Thomas Carothers among others, critical questions still need to be asked about the civil-society dimensions of democracy support. The enthusiasm for civil-society aid needs to be tempered by the same realistic examination and evaluation that apply to democratic development assistance as a whole.³³¹ A recent Wilton Park conference report posed the

following questions: “Can voluntary associations ensure inclusive decision-making and the space for discussion of public affairs necessary in all democracies? With the growth in power and influence of civil society organisations or non-governmental organisations in recent decades, their legitimacy and accountability are also being challenged. Can civil society strengthen itself and breathe new life into formal democracy?”³³²

In a presentation to the Democracy Council’s February 15 2007 “Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development”, Nancy Thede, who used to work on democracy issues for Rights and Democracy, observed:

Democratisation and the availability of funding from international donors have led to an exponential increase in the number of civil society organisations in developing countries. But donor trends tend to hone in on a very limited set of activities (highly visible one-off events, capacity-building in the form of training seminars, publications) with a limited range of types of civil society organisations (mainly NGOs or media organisations). The long-term impact of such trends can be counter-productive in that the shape of civil society and the thrust of its activities in a given country may be skewed by the resources provided from external sources.³³³

While stating that civil society is essential to democracy promotion, not an “optional add-on”, she urged that donors be able and willing to listen better to civil society in particular recipient country contexts, and have the patience to “get involved for the long haul.”³³⁴ We have already cited John Graham above to the effect that civil society aid needs to make an effort to reach ordinary people, not just select NGOs or elite spokespersons. While he concentrated on conditions in Latin America³³⁵, the same problems can be seen in cases such as Russia. As a major new study of civil-society aid to that country states:

To remedy the problem of foreign assistance leading NGOs away from the concerns of local citizens, a much higher proportion of foreign grant projects should be directed at reaching significant numbers of average citizens. Thus far, only a minimal increase has occurred in citizens, awareness of the existence of NGOs and the role of civil society, and only in select locations where foreign assistance has been intensive.³³⁶

Taking such concerns into account, there is a strong case to be made for increased Canadian support for civil society-based initiatives as part of democratic development. Moreover, Canada has considerable capabilities and potential comparative advantages to bring to this area. Nancy Thede is worth citing at length on this issue:

Canada has a vast number of civil society organisations with significant expertise in specific areas of democratic development, and support to civil society is generally most effective and strategic when delivered by them. To do that, though, they need sufficient resources from government ... and the political and administrative autonomy to be able to put them to the best use in a given context. ... Canadian efforts can make a distinctive

mark in the field of civil society support for democracy on the basis of the strengths and originality of our own institutions — while at the same time avoiding the pitfall of attempting to ‘export’ our own institutional model.

- Civil society is a non-partisan arena for democracy support. A strong emphasis on this field distinguishes Canada from the majority of other governments working principally through and towards the formal institutions of democracy.
- Canada has traditionally been sensitive to the fact that democratic institutions must reflect the unique character of a society, and it has therefore not attempted to impose a single model or specific institutions of democracy elsewhere. This attitude lends itself particularly well to working with civil society in multiple contexts.
- The dynamism and variety of organisations, approaches and issues in Canadian civil society provide a wealth of experience which, although it can't be directly transferred to other societies, can serve as the basis for a constructive relationship with civil society in developing democracies.³³⁷

Recommendation 16

As part of advancing democratic development, Canada should provide more support for civil society-based initiatives from the local to the global level that utilize Canadian civil-society experience and that aim to increase grass-roots citizens’ participation and strengthen democratic accountability.

Another dimension of democratic development that was addressed by some witnesses and in submissions was that of democracy education and training. In one of the Committee’s early public hearings, George Perlin provided us with information on his CIDA-funded Ukraine project, the goal of which “is to provide Ukraine with the capacity to deliver a self-sustaining program of education that will foster and strengthen commitment to liberal-democratic values and the processes of liberal-democratic governance among citizens and elites.” Although much of the project so far has focused on democracy courses in Ukrainian universities and government ministries, when completed it will also have “created a course in pedagogical institutions that will train new in-service secondary school teachers to deliver a curriculum in civic education.”³³⁸

The project has been conducted under the auspices of the Queen’s University Centre for the Study of Democracy, whose research director David Donovan elaborated on it to the Committee as follows:

The Ukraine project targeted all sorts of areas: universities, colleges, police academies, military training, and the regular education system. And a lot of academics and teachers and government officials were brought to Queen’s University in the mid-1990s and were given training seminars on democracy and democratic government, and then went back, and experts from Queen’s and elsewhere... helped them develop locally democratic values curricula in all sorts of areas.³³⁹

Mr. Donovan argued that there could be a lot more done on democracy education, including in difficult contexts like Afghanistan, making the point that the “establishment of a democratic values curriculum” is “something Canada could take a leading role in”.³⁴⁰ In his testimony, Professor Perlin suggested that another opportunity for Canada could be “to establish a training program for practitioners, or for people who want to make careers in this field, in the delivery of democracy assistance. I don’t mean this just for Canadians; there is a need for a program of this kind on an international basis. Think about the large number of donors and practitioners. What I’m suggesting is that they need some help, some special training to do their work well.”³⁴¹

International youth and student internships, scholarships, study programs, educational and professional exchanges were among other ideas presented to the Committee for consideration as part of Canada’s democratic development effort. Jeffrey Kopstein argued that internships represent “the kind of long-term spade-work that must continue and should be part of Canada’s democracy promotion tool kit.”³⁴² He added:

Canada has nothing like the Fulbright scholar program through which hundreds of leading intellectuals from authoritarian countries have managed to spend time in the United States. This is most unfortunate, because it would be so easy to implement, very cheap to run, and the long-term benefits are proven. First-hand experience with Canadian multiculturalism is not something that foreign scholars soon forget. That is our strength and we should play to it.³⁴³

Both Mr. Donovan, and an October 2006 submission to the Committee from Canadian Grant Kippen — who was NDI Country Director for Afghanistan in 2003-2004 and Chairman of Afghanistan’s Electoral Complaints Commission in 2005 — referred to Professor Perlin’s “Building Democracy in Ukraine” (BDU) project as a possible model for developing democracy education in Afghanistan. According to Mr. Kippen: “Given the existing gap in professional development programmes and the fact that corruption by government officials is one of the most significant issues affecting the credibility and legitimacy of the Government of Afghanistan I believe that a project with similar objectives to the BDU, though tailored to the realities of Afghanistan, would be of significant benefit to the long-term democratic development process there.”³⁴⁴

Beyond these specific cases, Mr. Kippen suggested a series of other education-related ideas, including:

- Establish a scholarship programme, say 50 per year, for young political leaders to study in Canada and earn advanced academic degrees. Applications could be advertised within the targeted countries and initial screening of candidates could be undertaken by our foreign missions. These special scholarships could be called something like The Governor General’s International Scholarship or the Canadian International Fellowship Award....

- Establishing a regular series of study programmes to Canada lasting anywhere from a week in length to half a year. These tailored programmes would specifically target elected representatives, senior and middle level public officials from the national to municipal levels, judges, military and law enforcement officials.³⁴⁵

The Committee supports further work by Canada in the areas of education at all levels, exchanges and training for the purposes of democratic development, provided that the specific programs can demonstrate their effectiveness and sustainability over the longer term. We believe that this sector for expanded activity should be looked at further by the independent Canada foundation for international democratic development that we have proposed. In that regard, the Committee presents the above proposals, not by way of endorsing any particular one over others, but as ideas worthy of consideration by and potential funding support through the Canada foundation.

Recommendation 17

Canada should support expanded democratic development initiatives in the areas of education at all levels, exchanges and training, provided that the specific programs can demonstrate their effectiveness and sustainability over the longer term. Further examination and funding should come through the independent Canada foundation for international democratic development that we have proposed.

In the Committee's view, another important sector of democratic development that deserves increased Canadian attention is support for free and independent media, which we note are under pressure in many parts of the world. As Jennifer Windsor and Arch Puddington of Freedom House observe:

What accounts for the current period of democracy stagnation? One factor is an erosion of press freedom. In Russia, Mexico and the Philippines the murder of journalists has become almost routine. Greater, if subtler, long-term threats lie in the smothering of free media by regime-directed economic pressure, the denial of licenses to privately-owned television stations, state takeovers and criminal slander charges against reporters who criticize the leadership.

By muzzling the press, authoritarian regimes also exacerbate a second serious threat to democracy: pervasive corruption. In democracies, the press is an essential instrument in the fight against graft; in authoritarian settings where the state and business often function as interlocking directorates, the press cannot perform this function.³⁴⁶

Moreover, there is a link between media suppression and other areas of democratic development including political party development. In his book on political party aid, Thomas Carothers makes the following sobering point:

As one Russian opposition party activist emphasized in an interview — the near-elimination of independent radio and television in Russia has been devastating to political party development. If Western governments wish to support Russian party development, he emphasized, they would do better to concentrate on exerting pressure for independent media than continuing with conventional training programs that do nothing to increase the limited political space available to parties.³⁴⁷

John Githongo is a former journalist who became founder and director of Transparency International's Kenya branch and in 2003 became permanent secretary for ethics and governance in the office of Kenya's president, before being forced to resign and leave his country in the face of strong political resistance. He told the Democracy Council's February 2007 "Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development" about the importance of supporting independent media from the ground up in Africa, where there are now 888 FM radio stations that the state cannot censor and 177 million mobile phones (a 19% penetration rate but growing fast).³⁴⁸ A 2005 Nairobi seminar report pointed out:

Independent and properly functioning media are an essential aspect of democratic systems. Media have a role to play in disseminating information to citizens. Moreover, they are a useful vehicle to create a culture of accountability and transparency. As a concrete suggestion, donors' current focus on urban-based print media should shift to community based radios, since they can reach a wider public, especially in the rural areas. In this field donors can provide much needed expertise, training and resources.³⁴⁹

At the same time, looking to the future, there is also much potential promise globally in the spread of Internet-based communications, even in unlikely places like Turkmenistan.³⁵⁰ All forms of independent media for democratic development should be explored.

A submission to the Committee from the Media & Democracy Group argued forcefully that Canada could be doing more in this area:

As a secure democracy with an exceptionally professional media, it is the right time for Canada to bring its strengths to this field which is now recognized as a necessary condition of democracy development....

Media development is a necessary element of the institutionalizing of democracy. Canada has had an inexplicably modest engagement in media development. ... there is no over-arching and sustained assertion of media development as essential to peacebuilding and democratization which would inform all foreign policy and development aid considerations and make best use of exceptional Canadian capacity to deliver more and diverse initiatives.

There is less than a handful of Canadian NGOs present in the field of media development. It is of note that there is no substantial Canadian corporate or foundation funding and support of Canadian initiatives in international media development...

Canada can play a significantly larger role in media development for democratization, particularly because of its exceptional media resources. Canada is one of the most media-saturated countries in the world.³⁵¹

The Committee agrees. Yet we also inject a note of caution as we have in other sensitive areas of democracy assistance. Well-intentioned project ideas must also prove to be effective and sustainable. We take note of the failure of a \$3 million CIDA-supported program run by the Vancouver-based Institute for Media Policy and Civil Society to teach Afghanistan women about journalism and the law, the deficiencies of which were only revealed when CIDA internal audits were released under the Access to Information law.³⁵² We hope this is an exception. But it may also indicate that such initiatives might be better served through being considered by an independent foundation that can fully devote itself to democratic development assistance and that has rigorous assessment and evaluation procedures in place.

Recommendation 18

Canada should provide more support for freedom of the press through the development of free and independent media as part of democratic development, paying particular attention to strategies for, among others: assisting such media in contexts where they are under pressure; reaching as many people as possible including in rural and under-served areas; harnessing Canadian expertise in this area and exploring the potential of new affordable communications technologies. Increased funding should come through the Canada foundation for international democratic development on the basis of a rigorous assessment of project proposals as to their effectiveness and sustainability.

Notes

- 271 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007, p. 3.
- 272 Testimony to the Canadian Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Issue No. 12, February 21, 2007, p. 14. Mr. Campbell is a Canadian.
- 273 Lisa Sundstrom, "Hard Choices, Good Causes: Options for Canada's Overseas Democracy Assistance," Institute for Research on Public Policy, *Policy Matters*, Vol. 6, No. 4, September 2005, p. 7 (available on-line at: <http://www.irpp.org>).
- 274 "Promotion and Protection of Democracy: Policies and Perspectives for the 21st Century", Presentation of Jean-Louis Roy, President, October 2, 2006, p. 31.
- 275 Jean-Louis Roy, "President's Report to the Board of Directors", March 2007, pp. 8 and 7. The report was sent to the Committee on April 2, 2007.
- 276 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 17.
- 277 "Engaging Political Parties Abroad: Preliminary Proposal by Rights & Democracy", Submission of Jean-Louis Roy, president, November 27, 2006., p. 4.
- 278 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 39, February 1, 2007, p. 10.
- 279 "Strengthening Canadian Leadership in Democracy Promotion": A package of policy proposals", The Parliamentary Centre, Robert Miller, President, January 11, 2007.
- 280 "Sustaining Democracy through the Rule of Law", Submission of January 2007, p. 9. See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007, p. 3.
- 281 We take note of the caution made in the analysis of Lisa Sundstrom:
- In an organizational sense, the donor community in Canada should strive to coordinate democracy assistance and share information more effectively to allow donors to specialize, minimize duplication and learn best practices, thereby helping them to avoid reinventing the wheel with each new program or country in which they work. We must take care in this process, though, not to create a rigid, centralized institution that would sacrifice the flexibility and accessibility of Canadian assistance to overseas aid recipients by spawning unwieldy new layers of bureaucracy, or that would raise barriers to fruitful integration of democracy assistance programs with other kinds of development aid efforts. (Sundstrom, op. cit., p. 35)
- 282 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007, p. 10.
- 283 *Evidence*. Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 5.
- 284 "Statement to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development", pp. 5-6. See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 13. This articulation is an updated version of Thomas Axworthy and Leslie Campbell, "The Democracy Canada Institute: A Blueprint", Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP) Working Paper Series no. 2005-02b, May 2005.
- 285 See Thomas Axworthy, Leslie Campbell, and David Donovan, "The Democracy Canada Institute: A Blueprint — Canadian Experience and Expertise", IRPP Working Paper Series, no. 2005-02c, May 2005.
- 286 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007, p. 10.
- 287 Ibid.
- 288 Ibid.
- 289 Thomas Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., 2006, p. 4. On the challenges facing political party development under conditions of globalization see also Peter Burnell, ed., *Globalising Democracy: Party Politics in Emerging Democracies*, Routledge, London and New York, 2006.
- 290 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006, p. 12
- 291 Presentation of Jean-Pierre Kingsley to the Committee, November 1, 2006, p. 9.
- 292 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 26, November 1, 2006, p. 16.

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- 293 Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, p. 216..
- 294 Ibid., p. 217.
- 295 Meeting with the Committee, Washington D.C., February 5, 2006.
- 296 Meeting of the Committee at IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden, October 12, 2006. Mr. Hällag noted that Thomas Axworthy and David Donovan, two of the Committee's Canadian witnesses, had visited IDEA while doing background research for their "Democracy Canada" proposal.
- 297 Presentation to the Committee by IDEA, Stockholm, October 12, 2006.
- 298 Meeting at IDEA, October 12, 2006.
- 299 Remarks made by Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General of IDEA to an IDRC seminar, Ottawa, February 21, 2007.
- 300 Meeting of the Committee in London, England, October 11, 2006.
- 301 Meeting with members of the UK Parliamentary Select Committee on International Development, House of Commons, London, October 11, 2006.
- 302 Meeting of the Committee in Oslo, October 13, 2006.
- 303 Ibid.
- 304 Ibid.
- 305 Von Meijenfeldt, "Beyond Euphoria: new challenges for democracy promotion", public lecture delivered at DFAIT, January 10, 2007. Mr. von Meijenfeldt also met privately with Committee staff on January 11, 2007.
- 306 Ibid., p.15.
- 307 "Support for Political Parties and Party Systems: The IMD Approach", The Hague, June 2005, p. 9 (available online at: http://www.nimd.org/upload/publications/2005/supporting_parties_the_imd_approach.pdf).
- 308 Ibid., p. 10.
- 309 Ibid.
- 310 Von Meijenfeldt, "Beyond Euphoria", p. 15. As von Meijenfeldt told Committee staff, two of NIMD's programs are externally evaluated every year, with a full evaluation of all programs every four years. The NIMD is also starting a program in Afghanistan. (Meeting of 11 January 2007.)
- 311 "Support for Political Parties and Party Systems", pp. 9-10.
- 312 Von Meijenfeldt, "Beyond Euphoria", pp. 15-16.
- 313 Ibid., p. 17.
- 314 Testimony before the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Issue No. 12, 21 February 2007, p. 21.
- 315 Ibid., p. 13.
- 316 Ibid., p. 20.
- 317 Ibid., p. 12.
- 318 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2007, p. 15.
- 319 Stevn Schoofs and Jeroen de Zeeuw, "The Future of Democracy Assistance Seminar Report", Nairobi, April 2005, Netherlands Institute for International Relations 'Clingendael', Conflict Research Unit, June 2005, p. 6.
- 320 Jean-Louis Roy, "Engaging Political Parties Abroad: Preliminary Proposal by Rights & Democracy", November 27, 2006, p. 1.
- 321 Ibid., various pages.
- 322 Robert Miller, "Strengthening Canadian Leadership in Democracy Promotion", Submission to the Committee, January 11, 2007, p. 9.

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- 323 Ibid., p. 8.
- 324 Ibid.
- 325 Testimony before the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Issue. No. 12, February 21, 2007, p. 16.
- 326 Alan Hudson, Overseas Development Institute, and Claire Wren, One World Trust, "Parliamentary strengthening in developing countries", Final report for DFID, London, UK, February 12, 2007, p. 5 (available online at: http://www.odi.org.uk/PPPG/politics_and_rights/publications/ah_Parliamentary_strengthening.pdf .) See also Alan Hudson, "Parliaments and Development", Overseas Development Institute, Briefing Paper No. 18, April 2007 (available online at: http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/briefing/bp_april07_parliaments.pdf).
- 327 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2007, p. 12.
- 328 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 21, October 18, 2006, p. 12.
- 329 John Foster, "Civil society, parliaments and democracy: Deepening participation, transparency and accountability from the 'grassroots' to the global", Brief to the Committee, 6 December 2006, p. 9. See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006.
- 330 Presentation of Jean-Louis Roy, "Promotion and Protection of Democracy: Policies and Perspectives for the 21st Century", October 2, 2006, p. 18. See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 18, October 2, 2006.
- 331 See especially Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway, eds., *Funding Virtue: Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., 2000; also Alison Van Rooy, ed., *Civil Society and the Aid Industry: The Politics and Promise*, Earthscan, London, 1998.
- 332 "Strengthening Democratic governance: The Role of Civil Society", Report on the Wilton Park Conference SO6/10 in association with the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard University, June 2006, p. 1.
- 333 Nancy Thede, "Civil Society in Canada's Democracy Promotion", Ottawa, February 15, 2007, p. 1.
- 334 Ibid., pp. 2-3.
- 335 For more discussion of this see Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), "Civil Society in the Promotion and Strengthening of Democracy in the Americas: A Vision for the Future", Conference Report, Ottawa, March 2006.
- 336 Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom, *Funding Civil Society: Foreign Assistance and NGO Development in Russia*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2006, p. 176.
- 337 Thede, "Civil Society in Canada's Democracy Promotion", p. 3.
- 338 "Building Democracy in Ukraine", document presented to the Committee by Professor Emeritus George Perlin, October 4, 2006, p. 1.
- 339 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007, p. 7.
- 340 Ibid., p. 6.
- 341 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 2.
- 342 Ibid., p. 4.
- 343 Ibid.
- 344 Grant Kippen, Brief to the Committee, October 9, 2006, p. 4.
- 345 Ibid., p. 5.
- 346 Jennifer Windsor and Arch Puddington, "Defending democracy's expansion", *The National Post*, 20 February 2007, p. A20.
- 347 Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies*, p. 222.
- 348 Presentation of John Githongo, Ottawa, February 15, 2007.
- 349 Steven Schoofs and Jeroen de Zeeuw, "The Future of Democracy Assistance", p. 6.

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- 350 Alexander Vershinin, "Downloading democracy: The arrival of Internet cafes is a sign of a new era in Turkmenistan", *The Ottawa Citizen*, February 20, 2007, p. D3.
- 351 Ross Howard, President, Media & Democracy Group, "Why media development?", Brief distributed to the Committee, February 15, 2007, pp. 1-3.
- 352 "Canada's help for media a misguided flop, audit says," *The Toronto Star*, March 7, 2007, p. A 18.

CHAPTER 8 CANADA'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MULTILATERAL APPROACHES TO DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

[W]e need democracy as a basis of a safer world, we need democracy as the basis for a just system of international relations ...

Her Excellency Nino Burjandze,
Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia³⁵³

The Committee has already made reference in previous chapters to Canada's welcomed multilateralist approach to democratic development and to its valued contribution to multilateral bodies. We believe that should be continued, and enhanced where most effective, as part of the evaluation of all Canadian support for international democratic development that we have recommended.

The Committee observes as well that international organizations are increasingly expanding their work into all areas of democratic development and governance. For example, in our meeting at the Commonwealth Secretariat, its Secretary General told the Committee that the Secretariat is trying to work both at the cultural level and with parliaments and political parties on understanding the role of the opposition and on introducing accountability measures. Mr. Christopher Child, Advisor and Head of the Democracy Section, commented that "we'd like to do much more party training."³⁵⁴ Strengthening party systems has also become an important area of work for the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Systems (IDEA). The role of political parties in democracy-building was the subject of the Council of Europe Forum for the Future of Democracy which took place in Moscow in October 2006 with the involvement of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly to which Canada sends observers.

The World Bank, to which Canada is an important contributor through the Department of Finance, is not allowed by its Charter to take into account the nature of the political regime, hence its role in "political development is obviously constrained," as Sanjay Pradhan, Sector Director in the Public Sector Governance Unit told the Committee in Washington, D.C.³⁵⁵ However, within a broader conception of good governance that is linked to democratic development: "We are doing a lot in terms of accountability of the state to its citizens." So the Bank works on things that might be considered "building blocks" of democracy. Mr. Pradhan distributed a paper "How Ongoing Operations of the World Bank Currently Strengthen Participation and Accountability," which lists six major program areas for Bank interventions. One of these includes "parliamentary capacity development."³⁵⁶

Mr. Steen Lau Jorgensen, Director of the Bank's Sustainable Development Network, elaborated that the Bank has programs directly involving local communities in development decisions, thereby increasing the effectiveness of projects. In the Bank's experience, more open countries do much better in achieving their development goals. The Bank therefore has an interest in building the capacity of civil society and it now even gets close to election-related processes, as in Ivory Coast where it is helping with the compiling of a national registration list. In this case, the Bank is working with the EU and the UN and through the country's prime minister's office. Registration is not just about elections but about establishing citizen's eligibility for social services.

As Mr. Jorgensen put it, there has been a "fundamental change in mindset" towards seeing poor people as citizens having rights and responsibilities. The Bank's consequent shift away from major infrastructure projects since the late 1980s has been approved by its Board.³⁵⁷ The Bank sees this as linked to development effectiveness, which incorporates a good governance and anti-corruption agenda.³⁵⁸ For example, in the public procurement process, the Bank has established oversight through a "Procurement Watch" mechanism, and it now has a "zero tolerance" policy on corruption in World Bank-supported projects. Mention was also made of a "Global Integrity Alliance" as part of an anti-corruption strategy involving leaders in the recipient countries.³⁵⁹

The role of a major international financial institution like the World Bank is noteworthy in another sense, since many believe that these powerful international organizations are not themselves sufficiently democratically accountable to the publics in the countries which make up their memberships. Several of the Committee's witnesses addressed the issue of the need to advance democratization processes from the local and national levels of governance, to the dimension of global governance. For example, John Foster of the North-South Institute referred to the Finnish-supported "Helsinki Process" which produced a 2005 Report, *Governing Globalization-Globalizing Governance*, that made recommendations for democratizing oversight of the global economy and strengthening the role of parliamentarians and civil society in that regard.³⁶⁰ He also made reference to the work of the Forum International de Montreal — which gets most of its funding from non-Canadian sources — and to the Spanish-based "World Forum of Civil Society Networks and its Campaign for an In-Depth Reform of the System of International Institutions..."³⁶¹

The presentation to the Committee by the World Federalist Movement — Canada also devoted a lot of attention to advancing democratization at the level of international institutions, in particular in the context of United Nations reforms. Indeed it noted that this Committee in 1993 had supported the concept of a parliamentary assembly at the UN, and it went on to state:

In April 2007, the Committee for a democratic UN (an NGO organizing network working with parliamentarians) will present publicly the "International Appeal for the Establishment of a United National Parliamentary Assembly, at press conferences around the world. Following the Appeal launch in April, an international parliamentary conference is planned for October 2007 in Geneva."³⁶²

The World Federalist representatives urged the Committee to give favourable consideration to this international appeal. We note as well that the European Parliament has supported the establishment of UN Parliamentary Assembly as part of overall UN reform, most recently in a resolution of June 9, 2005.³⁶³

In terms of working through international organizations, the biggest of all is of course the UN system. Most of the UN funding related to democratic development and governance goes through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Indeed, when the Committee met with the UNDP's Pippa Norris, Director of the Democratic Governance Group, Bureau of Development Policy, and other senior staff (many of them Canadians) at the UN in New York, it was noted that this group is the largest within the UNDP.³⁶⁴

Ms. Norris shared with the Committee the group's Strategic Plan, 2008-2011, and explained that its mandate in the area of democratic governance comes from various UN sources including the Millennium Declaration and a General Assembly resolution in 2000, the 2002 statement *Democratic Governance Practice in UNDP*, and a recent high-level panel report *Delivering As One*. Documents provided to the Committee included the UNDP's *Global Programme on Parliamentary Strengthening*, on *Support for Arab Parliaments*, on *Strengthening the Role of Parliaments in Reconstruction and the Prevention of Conflicts*, and the annual report of its Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund. There was also a briefing note on CIDA-UNDP collaboration in Afghanistan. On gender issues, the Committee was told that an international knowledge network on women and politics was to be launched in February 2007, centred on an on-line tool to help education in this area. In addition, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) does a lot of work on civic education for women. On electoral assistance, it was noted that collaboration between Elections Canada and UNDP goes back as far as Cambodia in 1993. However, another Canadian staff member Elissar Sarrouh (Policy Advisor, Public Administration Reform) — who formerly worked at the Parliamentary Centre — added that Elections Canada is always short of resources. So when countries express interest in having Canadian expertise, sometimes the resources are not there.³⁶⁵

On the UN's work on election processes, the Committee also met with Craig Jenness (again, a Canadian), Director of the Electoral Assistance Division within the Department for Political Affairs, who explained that this takes the form both of direct electoral support, and work on electoral best practices. Rather than election observation, the UN focuses either on providing assistance to electoral offices in host countries, or on assisting with electoral operations as part of peacekeeping missions in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo or Haiti. The budget is relatively small, with a dozen people at headquarters, although a large roster of people — including many Canadians — work around the world. Also, there is a small trust fund to allow the quick deployment of people when necessary to places like Nepal. Some 102 UN member states — and four non-member states have requested electoral assistance since 1992, and over 30 countries are now receiving or have requested such assistance — most of them in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.³⁶⁶

One important reason UN help is requested is that this helps legitimate the result and get it accepted — for example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The UN does not work with countries unless asked by the host government or there is a Security Council mandate. The UN tries to not run elections themselves, but to assist the host government in setting up the necessary structures to do so. In post-conflict situations, a problem that often comes up is that everyone wants to win an election, but it is often difficult to convince the losers that there is a real role for oppositions. According to Mr. Jenness, “parliamentarians can help” with that since they can talk to colleagues in other countries on a peer-to-peer basis.³⁶⁷

Before turning to UN’s innovation of a “Democracy Fund” in 2005, and Canada’s potential role in that, it is important to recognize that notwithstanding all of this work, many questions still surround the UN’s involvement in democratic development, as well as that of international organizations such as the Community of Democracies or alternatives, which can be more explicit than the UN about their pro-democracy aims since their memberships are limited to at least nominally democratic states.

In observing that “the UN has often been in a situation where it has been an advocate of democracy”, Jane Boulden, Canada Research Chair in International Relations and Security Studies at the Royal Military College of Canada, told the Committee:

There are a number of member states that are not happy about the fact that the UN should play a role in advocating democracy, even when it comes to post-conflict situations where parties have agreed to democracy as part of the peace agreement.

This relates partly to the ongoing questions about sovereignty. With the responsibility to protect, for example, there’s been an increasing acceptance that sovereignty is not sacrosanct, and for those who are resistant to these ideas, the idea that democratization or democracy is an important universal value is seen as yet another hook that western states can use as a criterion for intervention in states.

If democracy is to be put forward as a universal value, we need to be able to make that case more effectively than we are now. That’s a factor the United Nations is grappling with, but I think it goes across the board for states as well. On this point, the questions of perceptions relate as well to the image or the perception in a number of states that the UN engages in a number of double standards. Why do we, through the United Nations, react to some conflicts and by extension then deal with some post-conflict scenarios with resources and commitment, and not others? When we feed that into the broader question about whether democracy is a western value or not, you can see how the whole package becomes an issue.³⁶⁸

Scepticism about UN multilateralism combined with the need to engage the United States multilaterally has led to various alternatives being suggested. For example, two prominent U.S. scholars have recently made a detailed proposal for the establishment of a 60-member “Concert of Democracies.”³⁶⁹

Yet to get around the fact that the UN includes many non-democracies, there has already been the creation of the Community of Democracies in 2000, with Canada as a founding member, and which met for the first time at the UN in 2004 as a UN “Democracy Caucus”. The Committee was told during our New York meetings in February 2007 that the 100-member “Caucus” is currently chaired by Mali, which is also an active member of the Group of New and Restored Democracies. His Excellency, Cheick Sidi Diarra, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN of Mali, was among a group of UN ambassadors and permanent representatives with whom the Committee met.³⁷⁰ We have already referred in Chapter 4 to Canada’s participation in the Community of Democracies (CD). One of our Canadian witnesses, Jeffrey Kopstein argued that, given the UN’s weaknesses and limitations, the CD should be bolstered.³⁷¹ In Washington, where we met with Richard Rowson, President of the CD’s Council, Theodore Piccone, Director of the Democracy Coalition Project (and representative of the Club of Madrid in Washington) argued that “Canada should be a member of the [CD] Convening Group,” and that notwithstanding our multilateralist reputation, Canada “has been mostly at the margins in this regard.”³⁷²

Others were less convinced of the CD’s effectiveness. Richard Haas, President of the Council on Foreign Relations, told the Committee that the CD defines its democracy membership criteria too broadly and is too large to be a meaningful actor.³⁷³ Thomas Melia, Deputy Director of Freedom House told the Committee in Washington that the Convening Group of the CD represents in part the strategic interests of the member governments. For example, Morocco is a member although it does not meet the democracy criteria. Mr. Melia also had some cautionary words on trying for global coordination, stating that “a lot of effort can be diverted into coordination.” Instead he saw the need for “complementarity,” and “the way to pursue that is to build one’s niche.”³⁷⁴

Gareth Evans, President of the International Crisis Group, has also cautioned:

Don’t pin too many hopes on Democracy Caucuses and similar grand international strategies. While in principle an attractive idea, there are simply too many institutional and interest differences between democratic countries for a united front to be sustained on anything very much, and it is not at all clear that the tentative moves to create such mechanisms have so far placed any useful pressure on non-democracies, or generated any net positive returns.³⁷⁵

At the same time, Mr. Evans, who remains a strong believer in a strengthened and reformed UN system, points out that individual democratic countries, notably those with great-power interests such as the U.S., are often not the best placed to promote democratic development. Even if, as several U.S. witnesses told the Committee, Canada is sometimes able to do things that the U.S. cannot, Canada cannot go it alone in this field either. Mr. Evans argues that: “One way to have an impact without such visible badging [association with Western big-power interests] is working through collaboration with multilateral coordinating mechanisms in the UN and elsewhere — the new UN Democracy Fund now getting off the ground will hopefully prove of real utility in this respect.”³⁷⁶

The Committee shares that hope. Indeed, there is no substitute for action by the UN, for all its faults, since it is the only truly global body. We, too, want to see it reformed and made into a more credible instrument for advancing democratic development. With respect to the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) set up as a result of the September 2005 UN Summit, it is supported through voluntary donations not assessed contributions. The largest donor by far is the U.S., and the second largest donor has been India, the world's most populous democracy, with a contribution of US\$10 million. That amount was matched by Japan in early March 2007, adding to UNDEF's funding capacity of about US\$ 65 million, and making it the Fund's 28th donor country. So far Canada is not among these.

When the Committee met with UNDEF representatives, Acting Executive Director Magdy Martinez-Soliman and Senior programme Officer Randi Davis (a Canadian) in New York in February 2007, Mr. Martinez-Soliman observed that the Fund is the first UN organization to use the word "democracy" in its title.³⁷⁷ Moreover, parliaments have been one of the better allies of the new fund; UNDEF staff having met with delegations from India, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United States and others, now including Canada. The visit of the Committee was prominently noted on UNDEF's web site (<http://www.un.org/democracymfund/>). It was made clear to the Committee that Canada's involvement would be welcomed, especially as Canada's democracy is looked upon favourably by many countries in the world.³⁷⁸

The idea for UNDEF was explained as a U.S. initiative proposed as part of the UN reform debate along with priorities such as human rights, management reform and a Peacebuilding Commission. (The Committee also met separately with Canadian Carolyn McAskie, UN Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Peacebuilding Support Office.³⁷⁹) UNDEF currently works mostly through civil society organizations as well as partnerships with other UN organizations, including peacekeeping missions. Its first funding tranche in August 2006 involved some 70 NGOs, including in Canada the Parliamentary Centre and a journalists group in Toronto. Importantly, UNDEF funding also comes from the South; it is not in the "import-export" business in terms of democracy, and does not offer a democratic model for others to copy. Significantly, too, UNDEF does not require host government permission when it decides on funding projects. It operates with the support and legitimization of the Secretary-General and the states that make up its board, composed of the six largest contributors. UNDEF is also one of the earliest examples of the "One UN" model proposed by the report of a recent High Level UN Panel on Coherence, *Delivering as One*,³⁸⁰ that was also referred to in the Committee's meeting at the UNDP.

UNDEF is still a fledgling organization with only six staff (as of February 2007), and has just starting work on the ground, although it already has some 125 projects in 110 states and territories. Its regional priority is Africa (37% of project funding), followed by least developed countries outside of Africa. Project decisions are made on the basis of detailed proposals after consultation with the UN's Department of Political Affairs and other UN organizations active in each country, following which a short list is made and presented to the board, which makes an even shorter list for presentation to the Secretary-General. With no formal advertising, UNDEF received over 1,300 applications in its first two weeks of

operation — although about 700 of these did not meet its criteria. (Even when UNDEF did not fund projects, however, it has shared its database of proposals with other UN bodies, so these projects may get funding from elsewhere.)³⁸¹

The UNDEF governance structure is bi-level: one composed of UN member states, and one of NGOs, respecting geographic balance, and with an advisory board that includes international democracy experts such as Guillermo O'Donnell cited by the Committee in Chapter 1. Asked why UNDEF has accepted funding from states such as Qatar that are not fully democratic, Mr. Martinez-Soliman responded that UNDEF does not judge the degree to which its donors are democratic, but poses the larger questions of: Do the citizens within a state think it is democratic, and do other states think so?³⁸²

Mr. Martinez-Soliman added that UNDEF has about 15 projects that work directly with political parties in countries such as Bolivia, Serbia and Peru. There are obviously sensitivities involved in such work. Observing that some countries have tightened their legislation on the transfer of foreign money to NGOs, in order to prevent these countries from shutting the door, UNDEF specifies that NGOs must be recognized either nationally or internationally. UNDEF also works in partnership with global and regional inter-parliamentary forums — for example, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), particularly on the issue of support for increasing the number of women parliamentarians, and including the *Assemblée parlementaire de la francophonie*.³⁸³

The Committee was told, by our Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations John McNee, that Canada's official position on UNDEF remains one of "wait and see."³⁸⁴ We agree that UNDEF is a work in progress. But at the same time, it is part of UN reform and a global UN effort to take democratic development seriously. Surely that goal merits Canadian support. We note as well that among UNDEF's donors are five of Canada's G7 partners and its Commonwealth partner, Australia. Accordingly, we believe that Canada should consider whether to become a UNDEF donor.

Finally, there is a recurring theme that has struck the Committee during its meetings with international organizations supported by Canada that are involved in democratic development: namely, the impressive number of Canadians who are working in these organizations, often at senior levels. This is a great pool of expertise and experience upon which to draw. While some of these Canadians may be attracted back to Canada by the new Canada foundation for international democratic development that we proposed in Recommendation 12, it is also a good to have Canadians in positions of influence inside the multilateral organizations that Canada funds.

The Committee believes that a greater effort should be made to tap into the knowledge accumulated by Canadians working in multilateral organizations. This could enrich Canada's own approach to democratic development as it is elaborated through an enlarged Democracy Council and through the independent Canada foundation that we have proposed.

Recommendation 19

The independent evaluation of all Canadian support for democratic development that we have recommended should also assess the effectiveness of multilateral channels to which Canada provides funding. That evaluation should guide appropriate funding levels.

Recommendation 20

Recognizing that the future challenges of democratization processes involve governance at the level of international organizations, as well as in national and local settings, the Canada foundation for international democratic development should include these dimensions within its mandate, and should consider related proposals for support from Canadian non-governmental bodies and civil-society groups working in this area.

Recommendation 21

As part of the essential role of a reformed and strengthened United Nations in global democratic development, the Parliament of Canada should give favourable consideration to the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly.

Recommendation 22

In light of the establishment of the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) as part of UN reform proposals in 2005, Canada should consider whether to become a donor to UNDEF.

Recommendation 23

Taking into account the expertise and experience on democratic development that has been accumulated by Canadians working in this field through multilateral organizations, Canada should make an effort to tap into this pool of knowledge in furthering its own approach to democratic development.

Notes to Chapter 8

- 353 Keynote Address by Speaker Burjandze to the "Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development", Ottawa February 15, 2007, p. 8.
- 354 Meeting at the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, October 11, 2006. See also more generally the Report of the Commonwealth Expert Group on Development and Democracy prepared for the Commonwealth Secretariat, *Making Democracy Work for Pro-Poor Development*, October 2003.
- 355 Meeting at the World Bank, February 6, 2007.
- 356 Ibid. The World Bank Institute has an active Parliamentary Strengthening Program and has recently launched a special "Series on Contemporary Issues in Parliamentary Development". More details and working papers are available online at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PSGLP/Resources/461605-1102456980175/parliament_brochure.pdf .
- 357 Ibid.
- 358 On the role of the World Bank, and the OECD Development Assistance Committee, in the evolution of thinking by the donor community about issues of governance and economic development, see David Gillies, "Democracy and Economic Development," Institute for Research on Public Policy, *Policy Matters*, Vol. 6, No. 2, April 2005.
- 359 Meeting at the World Bank, February 6, 2007.
- 360 John Foster, "Civil society, parliaments and democracy: Deepening participation, transparency and accountability from the 'grass roots' to the global", Brief of the North-South Institute, December 6, 2006. pp. 4ff. (See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006.) The report in question and related documents are available online at: www.helsinkiiprocess.fi .
- 361 Ibid., p. 8.
- 362 "A Contribution to the Committee's Study of Canada's Role Internationally Promoting Democratic Development", February 13, 2007, pp. 8-9. See also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007. The appeal for such a UN Parliamentary Assembly was formally launched on April 17, 2007 with the endorsement of numerous parliamentarians, civil society groups and individuals from 103 countries. The text of the appeal is available online at: <http://en.unpacampaign.org/appeal/index.php>. For more information see also the web site of the Committee for a Democratic U.N. - <http://www.uno-komitee.de/en/>.
- 363 The full text of the resolution is available online at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?jsessionid=CE4FFF3AD1A73F446207423684B18D97.node1?pubRef=-/EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2005-0237+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> .
- 364 Meeting of the Committee at UNDP, New York, February 7, 2007.
- 365 Ibid.
- 366 Meeting of the Committee at the United Nations, New York, February 8, 2007.
- 367 Ibid.
- 368 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006, p. 5. See also Jane Boulden, "Democracy and Peace-Building", Institute for Research on Public Policy, *Policy Matters*, Vol. 6 No. 2, April 2005.
- 369 Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, "Democracies of the World, Unite", *The American Interest Online*, Winter Issue preview 2006 available online at: <http://www.the-american-interest.com/ai2/article.cfm?id=219&Mid=6> . .
- 370 Meeting of the Committee in New York, February 7, 2007.
- 371 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 4.
- 372 Meeting of the Committee in Washington D.C., February 6, 2007.
- 373 Meeting of the Committee at the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, February 7, 2007.
- 374 Meeting of the Committee in Washington D.C., February 6, 2007.

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- 375 Gareth Evans, "Promoting Democracy: What We Have Learned", Presentation to the American Enterprise Institute Symposium, How Much do we Really Know about Democracy Promotion?, Washington D.C., September 19, 2006.
- 376 Ibid.
- 377 Meeting of the Committee in New York, February 7, 2007.
- 378 Ibid.
- 379 Meeting with the Committee, New York, February 7, 2007.
- 380 *Delivering As One: Report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment (A/61/583)*, November 26, 2006, http://www.unsystemceb.org/features/swc/report_systemwidecoherence.pdf/view. CIDA President Robert Greenhill was a member of this panel.
- 381 Meeting with UNDEF representatives, New York, February 7, 2007.
- 382 Ibid.
- 383 Ibid.
- 384 Meeting of the Committee at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations, New York, February 7, 2007.

CHAPTER 9 THE PARTICULAR CHALLENGES OF PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN DIFFERENT, AND DIFFICULT, CONTEXTS — CONCENTRATING ON CANADA’S ROLE

[Donors should] recognise that ultimately all outsiders have serious limitations when it comes to advancing the democracy cause. Ultimately, as democracy activists usually acknowledge, the struggle has to be fought primarily from within: until that internal opposition reaches some kind of active critical mass, with its own momentum, external support is likely to be of only marginal impact... I am not normally in the business of advocating caution in pursuit of anything worth doing internationally. But this is an area in which many fingers have been burnt, and where modesty really is the best policy.

Gareth Evans, President, International Crisis Group,
“Promoting Democracy, What We Have Learned”³⁸⁵

[I]t’s not just enough to have democracy or democratization as one of the three Ds [diplomacy, development, defence], or part of the joined-up approach, whatever title we’re going to give it. As a leader on these issues Canada could work towards developing greater awareness of the nuances and complexities involved in this process, and lead or commission a study that would undertake that long, in-depth examination of the importance of context specificity, and what works when. A certain model of democracy and democratization might work in one instance, but in a second instance, which is not necessarily dramatically different, only somewhat different, have a completely different impact, including, ... in fact sowing the seeds for long-term instability and even a return to conflict.

Jane Boulden, Canada Research Chair in
International Relations and Security Studies,
Royal Military College of Canada³⁸⁶

[W]e cannot push a single solution for all evolving democracies. Context is everything.

Lisa Sundstrom,
“Hard Choices, Good Causes: Exploring Options
for Canada’s Overseas Democracy Assistance”³⁸⁷

The Committee returns to these necessary cautions, and the need for greater context-specific knowledge, as raised in Part I of our report, because we believe that realistic expectations and improved practices based on learned experience are required if support for democratic development is to lead to long-term positive, and not perverse or unsustainable, outcomes. Moreover, as Thomas Carothers remarked to the Committee in Washington, we are now down to the hard cases that resist easy answers, even as democracy assistance becomes an increasingly crowded field.³⁸⁸

All of this argues, as did some witnesses, for a concerted long-term Canadian approach that attempts to know the particular country recipients of democratic development assistance as well as we can, and to stay in for the long haul. Canada's bilateral funding of democratic development is unlikely to make a significant difference if it is scattered across a lot of small or short-term projects in many countries to little cumulative effect. If we want to have impact, it will be necessary to focus our efforts. That does not necessarily involve huge amounts of money. As Kevin Deveaux suggested to the Committee: "For \$25 million a year, for example, Canada could be a serious player in ten countries around the world. If we pick those countries appropriately, based on our history, based on our diversity, I think we can have a lot of impact in those countries."³⁸⁹ Lisa Sundstrom concludes: "Setting appropriate criteria will allow Canada to decide upon a group of 'democracy partner' countries where we can best target Canadian democracy assistance to have a noticeable positive impact on democratic outcomes."³⁹⁰

The setting of appropriate criteria of concentration could be a matter for consideration by the Government of Canada and non-government members of the Democracy Council, in cooperation with the Canada foundation for international democratic development that we have proposed. Such criteria might include:

- Importance of the country to broad Canadian international policy interests;
- Importance of the country as indicated by the level of existing aid and other investments;
- Demonstrable need and demand from the country for democracy assistance, combined with the country's ability to benefit from what Canada is capable of offering.

The Committee has already suggested in Recommendation 8 of Chapter 5, that the independent evaluation of all existing Canadian support for democratic development include an evaluation of where best Canada should concentrate its efforts in future.

Beyond that assessment, both Canadian governmental and non-governmental actors in this field need to have the best available, and constantly updated, detailed knowledge of local circumstances, in any chosen countries of assistance. The production and refreshing of objective independent democratic development country assessments may be a task that could be assigned to a centre for policy in democratic development as funded by the Canada foundation. Such assessments should include the identification of credible and accountable local partners for Canadian democracy support since local leadership and participation are essential for a sustainable democratization process.

Recommendation 24

Canada should ensure that it engages in democratic development assistance with the benefit of detailed realistic country assessments that include the identification of credible and accountable local partners who must drive forward the democratization process within their countries. The preparation and updating of such objective assessments could be undertaken by an arms-length centre for policy in democratic development (as discussed in Recommendations 2 and 14) funded through the Canada foundation.

In the following sections, the Committee will comment briefly on three broad contexts where Canada may become more involved in advancing the goals of democratic development: those of authoritarian or semi-authoritarian states; those of emerging democracies and post-conflict societies; those of “failed” or “fragile states.” These categories are not fixed, and may indeed overlap as we will see. Before proceeding further, let us consider the concrete examples of two countries that will surely be among the list of Canada’s long-term democracy partners, Haiti and Afghanistan.

Afghanistan and Haiti are respectively the largest recipients of Canada’s international assistance. Much is at stake for Canada in both. The complexities of working on development, and notably democratic development, in both contexts are also daunting. We have already noted this in our 2006 study of Haiti and December 2006 Report, *Canada’s International Policy Put to the Test in Haiti*, which urged a very long-term commitment to Haiti’s development and included among its recommendations:

Beyond continued electoral assistance, the Committee strongly supports long-term Canadian involvement in building sustainable institutions of democracy and good governance in Haiti. In particular, Canada should strive to strengthen Haiti’s parliamentary system to help enhance true voter representation of constituent communities in the national Parliament.³⁹¹

Haiti is a long way from being out of the woods and faces a long rocky road ahead in terms of democratic development even after relatively successful elections in 2006. We note that, in terms of the Economist Intelligence Unit’s “democracy index 2006” which we utilized in Chapter 1, Haiti is still assessed as a “hybrid regime” (i.e., containing some democratic but also many non-democratic elements), ranking 109 out of 167 countries surveyed.³⁹²

If the situation on the ground and the context for external interventions is complex in the case of Haiti, that is even more true of Afghanistan — the subject of the Committee’s ongoing study — where large-scale military conflict is still taking place alongside efforts at reconstruction and development. Elections Canada has assisted with the Afghan elections, CANADEM has deployed Canadian expertise to Afghanistan, and the Committee has heard several proposals from witnesses on the kinds of democratic development activities that might be supported by Canada, notably from David Donovan and in the submission of

Grant Kippen.³⁹³ We take note of these, but we think that much greater knowledge of the highly varied local circumstances in Afghanistan is essential for a long-term democratic development program for that country to have a chance to succeed.³⁹⁴ The Committee also recalls the caution expressed to us by our High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, James Wright, in London that: “We need to be careful to apply Western concepts of democracy to a country like Afghanistan.” Our interventions in this area must be adapted to their long traditions.³⁹⁵

Barnett Rubin, of the New York University Centre on International Cooperation, also emphasized to the Committee in New York, and during subsequent testimony in Ottawa, that Afghanistan remains one of the world’s poorest countries with one of its weakest governments.³⁹⁶ In fact, it might be discussed under each of the contexts for democratic development interventions that we will consider below. Emerging from the ravages of decades of war and the extremist rule of the Taliban, it has been considered to be a “failed” or “fragile” state. It is still a state in conflict although it is struggling to start down the path towards becoming a democracy (with distinctive Afghan characteristics). An indication of how long this path will be is that, notwithstanding several elections, Afghanistan is still in the “authoritarian regime” category of The Economist Intelligence Unit’s “democracy index 2006”, ranking 135 out of 167 countries surveyed, and with a score of zero in terms of “functioning of government.”³⁹⁷

The point the Committee is making is that Canadians need to assess each situation of democratic development intervention with our eyes open, on the basis of the best available knowledge of what might work under the particular circumstances being faced. We need to have the resolve to make long-term commitments, with realistic expectations of what can be achieved, accompanied by a tolerance of risk. Put bluntly, there will be no easy solutions for the hard cases. The goals of democratic development will not be advanced by wishful thinking. Rigorous analysis is required of specific cases that are beyond the scope of this report. But we offer the following as some initial reflections to take into account.

9.1 Canada’s Potential Role in Authoritarian or Semi-Authoritarian Contexts

As it trades with and engages dictators in less-than-democratic regimes, Canada should continue to back NGOs and civic groups abroad in those same countries, especially in the Arab-Muslim world and in backsliding democracies... Canada should continue to foster contact between the citizens of our country and democracies at risk in the Balkans, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union.

Professor Jeffrey Kopstein³⁹⁸

One of the most disturbing trends that the Committee has already noted in Chapter 2 is the pushback against democracy and rise of authoritarianism in some parts of the world. It is also a fact that the world’s most populous country and rising power, China, remains a non-democracy, accounting for fully 60% of the global population living

under autocratic rule. Canada should carefully consider how it might support democratic transition in China, the stirrings of which are already apparent. We are aware of existing CIDA support for human rights, democratic development and good governance programs in China — including by the Canadian Bar Association, the Parliamentary Centre and others — the aim of which is to build capacity for internal change within China. However, there are China scholars, such as Bruce Gilley, who believe that Canada can and should take a stronger pro-democracy stand towards China. As part of that he argues:

[Canada's] overall relations with China should be citizen-centered not regime-centered. We must talk to the regime as necessary, but we should feel free to talk past it to the people of China, who for the time being are the only true representatives of the Chinese citizenry. We should cultivate and favor discussions with reform-oriented figures in the party and the military, and focus our efforts on the ground in talking directly to the leading journalists, civil activists, lawyers, public intellectuals, independent scholars, interest group leaders, entrepreneurs, and ethnic minority leaders of that country. The domestic counterpart to this diversification of its partners in China should be the diversification of our agents on behalf of Canada. In particular, Members of Parliament should play a much more active role in our relationship with China through official delegations, hearings, and inclusion on government delegations.³⁹⁹

Dr. Gilley further argues that support for democratic forces in China would be bolstered by the creation of an independent Canadian foundation focused on the promotion of democratic development.⁴⁰⁰

The Middle East is another particularly democracy-challenged region. Indeed, as Rex Brynen of McGill University told the February 15 “Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development” — “... it is safe to say that the process of democratization in the Middle East is comatose, for now at least.”⁴⁰¹ The Committee has already heard the critical assessment of Marina Ottaway during our meeting in Washington D.C. She observed the disappearing Western pressures on Arab autocracies and the need to find ways to engage grass-roots Islamist movements which enjoy popular support.⁴⁰² Brynen stated that: “Efforts to support democratization must be tailored to the nuances of individual political systems.” He added: The media revolution in the Middle East will not bring about democratization. It has, however, profoundly pluralized political discourse in the region. Yet it has not yet been effectively engaged by Western donors or foreign ministries.”⁴⁰³

Egyptian democracy activist, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, observes that their could be parallels to the outside support for human rights and democracy that helped to overcome Communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe, but he wonders if the political will is there —

Today the Arab world needs similar support from the free world. Conditional aid and putting teeth into expectations for minimal adherence to human rights standards in Arab countries would give heart to struggling democracy forces. Sadly, the fears surrounding terrorism and Islamist political movements have dampened even the few occasional impulses of western leaders to stand up to Arab dictators.⁴⁰⁴

Moreover, as we noted, there has been backsliding in regions of incipient democratization, including the authoritarian trends in Venezuela affecting Latin America⁴⁰⁵ and cases like Zimbabwe in Africa that continue to affront the international conscience.⁴⁰⁶ The apparent rise of authoritarianism in Russia is especially troubling as it affects the whole post-Soviet area. Speaker of the Georgian Parliament, Nino Burjanadze, with whom the Committee met in Ottawa on February 15, 2007, told the Democracy Council's Dialogue on Canada's Approach to Democratic Development: "Assistance to Russia in order to transform it into a genuine democracy will be the best kind of assistance to Georgia by [the] international community."⁴⁰⁷

But how, especially given trends in Russia and its region of influence? One study by Canadian scholar of democratization Lisa Sundstrom, concludes optimistically that "the recent cases of mass movements to defend democracy in Serbia, Georgia, and Ukraine, with foreign-funded NGOs providing organizational backbone to those movements, indicate that foreign assistance can emerge as a crucial element protecting democratic values at crucial junctures when that assistance has been sustained."⁴⁰⁸ But there are more ominous recent signs. A February 2007 poll by the EU-Russia Centre revealed that the 1,600 Russians surveyed favoured a pre-1990 Soviet system to a Western liberal type of democracy by a margin of 35% to 16%.⁴⁰⁹ According to a March 2007 analysis by *The Economist*: "The foreign funded non-governmental organizations that prepared and organized the colour revolutions now face big obstacles in the ex-Soviet Union where they would most like to work."⁴¹⁰ It went on to conclude provocatively:

Indeed the West seems to have lost the stomach for promoting democracy in post-Soviet Europe almost entirely. And if it ever regains it, it will have to reach further back than 1989 for its inspiration. With Russia getting stronger again, though perhaps not sustainably so, the more relevant precedent may be the long hard slog of the cold-war decades.⁴¹¹

The Committee does not claim to have answers to these varied and sometimes dispiriting situations. As we have said, hard cases do not have easy solutions. But we do know that successful strategies of democratic development intervention at all levels (from that of high diplomacy to that of the smallest local aid project) require sophisticated knowledge of the particularities of each situation, and continued political resolve to make long-term commitments to promoting democratic development even when circumstances become more difficult than they already are.

Recommendation 25

Canadian support for legitimate local democratic efforts within authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes will require detailed and updated knowledge of the circumstances for democracy assistance in the countries in which Canada chooses to focus its efforts. Objective country assessments could be undertaken by an independent centre for policy in democratic development as funded through the Canada

foundation for international democratic development that we have proposed.

9.2 Canada's Potential Role in Emerging Democracies and Post-Conflict Societies

Despite a vast literature on democratic transitions, what Thomas Carothers calls “transitology,”⁴¹² once again there are more questions than answers when it comes down to the country specifics of ensuring that outside interventions are actually helpful to the cause of sustainable democratization. Jane Boulden, Canada Research Chair in International Relations and Security Studies at the Royal Military College of Canada, cautioned the Committee that “democratization in post-conflict situations is different.”⁴¹³ This applies even to supporting such basic elements of democracy as elections. Richard Hass told the Committee in New York that too much emphasis is placed on elections — what he calls “electocracy” — which are often introduced too early in the process of democratization.⁴¹⁴ This agrees with Jane Boulden’s analysis that: “One outcome that early elections can generate is further instability. ... We have a tendency to judge elections, when they happen, on the basis of whether they’re free and fair, rather than a tendency to judge whether or not they are playing a positive role in the post-conflict environment.”⁴¹⁵

Professor Boulden elaborated in testimony that deserves citing at length:

At what point is it correct or is it useful to have elections? When should those elections occur with respect to what we do with respect to rights? ... Is it possible to engage in democratization in a situation that is less than fully secure, or does democratization contribute to making the situation more secure over time? Again, these are questions that we now understand are important, but we still don’t have a lot of answers about what matters and when.

[D]emocratization can be conflict-inducing. One way in which this happens relates to the question of how minorities or other groups in society are treated. We need to build in greater recognition that democratization can both empower and disempower. It can disempower groups that are used to having exclusive access to power before the conflict or the post-conflict situation, and it can empower groups that have longstanding grievances with other groups in society and that will then use the process as a way to deal with those grievances. ...

We have a much greater requirement, I think, to understand the importance of context specificity... we have not yet engaged in either the academic literature or at the policy level in an in-depth lessons-learned process that looks at all of this experience in an effort to determine how the nature of certain contexts affects the democratization and post-conflict peace process.⁴¹⁶

The hard case of achieving an increasingly democratic, post-conflict Afghanistan, which has adopted a new constitution and held several elections, with more to come, is illustrative of the need for context-specific knowledge, realism and patience. David Donovan, research director of the Queen’s University Centre for the Study of Democracy,

observed that: “There have probably been very few cases that have had the amount of international support Afghanistan has right now.”⁴¹⁷ But as to its progress towards democracy, he told the Committee: “I don’t know how long it would take, but in Taiwan it took 50 years. Who knows how long it will take in Afghanistan?”⁴¹⁸ His published study of democratic transition in Afghanistan concludes: “Given its history, tribalism, and poverty, achieving sustainable democracy in Afghanistan is one of the most complex and difficult problems in the world. We should measure our expectations against that reality.”⁴¹⁹

Grant Kippen, with three years of direct experience in Afghanistan including on elections, noted in his submission to the Committee that there are over 80 registered political parties in Afghanistan.⁴²⁰ He presented the following challenge to the Committee:

[W]here Canada can play an important role is to work with both parliamentarians and political parties in order to enhance the capacity of both these important communities. At the moment there is enormous public skepticism within Afghanistan towards the role and function of political parties because many are seen as simply branches of former military organizations. This skepticism extends to members of the Wolesi Jirga, where according to some reports over half of the members have some affiliation to former armed militias. While valuable work is currently being undertaken to improve the knowledge and skill sets of parliamentarians so that they can become more effective legislators, much more work needs to be done to prepare them for their role as elected representatives.⁴²¹

These citations, although they may sound discouraging, are from two Canadians who want Canada to do much more to promote the emergence of democratic development in societies suffering from conflict, notably including Afghanistan. They underscore the need to have no illusions about what that entails.

Recommendation 26

Canada should work towards effective strategies that link democracy-building and peace-building in emerging democracies under situations of conflict or post-conflict. These strategies should pay particular attention to Canada’s role in supporting the development of sustainable governance institutions and processes, including those of sound public administration, functional political parties and parliaments.

9.3 Canada’s Potential Role in “Failed” or “Fragile” States

Failed states pose among the most difficult challenges for democratization.

Larry Diamond⁴²²

A disturbing trend of recent years is the rise in the number of “failed” or “fragile” states. According to a recent World Bank report, the number of fragile states, or “low-

income countries under stress,” has risen over the past three years from 17 to 26.⁴²³ Haiti and Afghanistan, the two largest recipients of Canadian international assistance over this period, continue to be prominently listed in this category. The goal of democratic development in such cases requires long-term commitments from international donors, as the Committee stressed in our December 2006 report on Haiti.⁴²⁴

Assisting democratic development in these hardest of circumstances entails a combination of poverty alleviation, peace-building and state-building. In the wake of state failure, many of the points noted in the above section on emerging democracies and post-conflict societies apply even more forcefully. As Gareth Evans observes: “We know that the period of transition to democracy is in many ways one of the most dangerous and fragile of all”, citing Timothy Garton Ash that this is especially so “in countries divided along religious and ethnic lines, and where you rush to the party-political competition for power without first having a functioning state with well-defined borders, a near monopoly of force, the rule of law, independent media and a strong civil society.”⁴²⁵

While the Committee did not hear much detailed evidence on the exigencies of supporting democratic development in specific failed or fragile states, we note that the critical issues facing democratic development assistance as a whole are particularly acute in these states, starting with acquiring an in-depth understanding of the local context. A report prepared for the Canadian Consortium on Human Security underlines that: “Canada must begin at the grassroots level by working with local structures and initiatives while engaging and including the majority of the people in the process. With regards to local structures and local based initiatives, Canada must have a concrete understanding of local power relationships”.⁴²⁶ In Afghanistan, for example, reference has been made to devolving development decision-making down to the village council level. However, there is obviously a problem if that only ends up reinforcing traditional or tribal power structures that are patriarchal and anti-democratic. Outsiders need to be able to foster local democratic leadership in ways that take account of prevailing power structures without allowing them to obstruct the processes of democracy building.

Beyond the trappings of modern democracy — elections, political parties, parliaments, accountable public administrations, independent judicial institutions, police forces, etc. — there is the question of basic democratic values becoming embedded in the social and cultural fabric of the society. Without that, there is no solid base for democratic development to take place, while still recognizing that it must be adapted as appropriate to the particular local circumstances. Governance practices containing strong anti-democratic elements cannot be expected to evolve into the development of a sustainable democracy that respects human rights. On Afghanistan, David Donovan of the Queen’s University Centre for the Study of Democracy told the Committee that:

[W]e’d like to see more done in the role of democratic education in Afghanistan. The military aspect is necessary, of course, to provide security for humanitarian aid, but there could be a lot more work done on instilling democratic values, on making sure that’s done with regard to the local context, and on developing a democratic values curriculum with local officials on the ground, with local academics and local universities.⁴²⁷

The Committee has only started its examination of Canada's overall role in Afghanistan. So we do not want to prejudge what is most feasible for Canada to do at this stage. However, it is obvious from these preliminary references, that much remains to be done, both in learning from past mistakes of donor interventions — as we described in some detail in our earlier report on the case of Haiti — but also in devising democratic development strategies that have a realistic chance of success over the long, and probably very long, term.

In undertaking this task, we note that the distinguished American scholar of democratization Larry Diamond has usefully come up with nine relevant “tentative general lessons and guidelines” after surveying democracy building and stabilization experiences in post-conflict and failed states.⁴²⁸

1. Understand the local context in its historical, cultural, political and sociological dimensions....
2. Mobilize and commit adequate military and financial resources....
3. Establish international legitimacy and active support for the post-conflict intervention....
4. Generate legitimacy and trust within the post-conflict country....
5. Hold local elections first....
6. Promote knowledge of institutional choices for democracy, and of democratic principles and norms....
7. Disperse economic reconstruction funds and democratic assistance as widely as possible....
8. Promote local participation, and proceed with humility and respect for the opinions of the people in whose interest the intervention is supposedly staged....
9. Institutionalize the capacity for effective intervention and democracy promotion in post-conflict settings. [Diamond underlines the establishment of the United Nations Peace-building Commission as a step forward in this regard. A Canadian, UN Assistant Secretary-General Carolyn McAskie, with whom the Committee met in New York on 7 February 2007, currently heads the Peacebuilding Support Office that supports the new Commission.

Tall orders indeed. What is apparent to the Committee is that democratic development interventions in fragile or failed states that are dealing with, in some cases, decades of conflict, will necessarily be complex and multi-dimensional, involving many players, and demanding large-scale commitments sustained over long periods of time. This means that even in cases, such as Haiti and Afghanistan, where Canada is already heavily invested, there is also still much to be learned and applied.

Recommendation 27

Recognizing that the circumstances of “failed” or “fragile” states are the most difficult and complex for democratic development interventions, Canada should concentrate its efforts in countries where it is already heavily invested with much at stake, and where it is capable of making a difference by sustaining high levels of democracy- and peace-building assistance over long periods of time.

Recommendation 28

There is at the same time a consequent need for more and better applied knowledge and learning based on independent realistic and updated country assessments. The Canada foundation for international democratic development through the centre for policy on democratic development that the Committee has suggested should be involved in the preparation of such assessments.

Notes to Chapter 9

- 385 Presentation to the American Enterprise Institute Symposium, "How Much do We Really Know about Democracy Promotion?", Washington D.C., September 19, 2006.
- 386 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006, p. 5.
- 387 Institute for Research on Public Policy, *Policy Matters*, September 20005, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 34.
- 388 Meeting with the Committee at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., February 5, 2007.
- 389 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 38, January 30, 2007, p. 10.
- 390 Lisa Sundstrom, "Hard Choices, Good Causes: Exploring Options for Canada's Overseas Democracy Assistance", IRPP, op. cit., p. 35.
- 391 House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, *Canada's International Policy Put to the Test in Haiti*, December 2006, Recommendation 6, pp. 23-24 (available online at: <http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/committee/391/faae/reports/rp2593086/faaerp04/faaerp04-e.pdf>).
- 392 Laza Kekic, "The Economist Intelligence Unit's index of democracy", companion document to *The World in 2007*, Table 1, p. 4.
- 393 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007; Submission to the Committee of Grant Kippen, 9 October 2006; also David Donovan, "Afghanistan: Democratization in Context" and Grant Kippen, "The 2004 Presidential Election: On the Road to Democracy in Afghanistan", in *Transitions to Democracy — Afghanistan*, Centre for the Study of Democracy, Queen's University, March 2006.
- 394 The depth of the challenge for outsiders in supporting the development of a modern stable democratic Afghan state is vividly underlined in the remarkable book by Hamida Ghafour, *The Sleeping Buddha: The Story of Afghanistan through the Eyes of One Family*, McArthur & Company, Toronto, 2007. For a detailed examination of the issues that must be addressed in supporting democratic state-building in Afghanistan, see Hamish Nixon and Richard Ponzio, "Building Democracy in Afghanistan: The Statebuilding Agenda and International Engagement", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 2007, pp. 26-40.
- 395 Meeting with the Committee in London, October 11, 2006. A similar point was made by former British diplomat and Kabul resident Rory Stewart in a brilliant presentation on the current situation in Afghanistan at IDRC, Ottawa, April 3, 2007 (available as a podcast on the IDRC web site at: http://www.idrc.ca/index_en.html). See also the interview with Mr. Stewart in *Maclean's*, 16 April 2007, pp. 16-17.
- 396 Meeting with the Committee, New York, February 8, 2007; see also *Evidence*, Meeting No. 47, March 29, 2007.
- 397 "The Economist Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy", 2006, op.cit., p.5.
- 398 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 19, October 4, 2006, p. 4.
- 399 Bruce Gilley, "Engaging China: Some Ideas for Canadian Policy-Makers", Presentation to the Library of Parliament Seminar Series, Ottawa, March 30, 2007, p. 9. See also Gilley, "Elite-led democratization in China: Prospects, perils, and policy implications", *International Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 2, Spring 2006, pp. 341-58.
- 400 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- 401 Rex Brynen, "The Tragedy of Middle East (non) Democratization", Ottawa, February 15, 2007, p. 1.
- 402 Meeting of the Committee at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., February 5, 2007.
- 403 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 404 Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Are There Democracy Lessons Arabs Can Learn From Eastern Europe?", The Ion Ratiu Democracy Lecture, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., November 30, 2006, p. 9.
- 405 On developments in Venezuela see International Crisis Group, *Venezuela: Hugo Chavez's Revolution*, Latin America Report No. 19, February 22, 2007; also more widely, Enrique ter Horst, "Latin America Waking up to

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- the growing dangers to representative democracy and stability”, Preliminary notes for remarks to the “Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development”, Ottawa, February 15, 2007.
- 406 On the grim state of Zimbabwe’s continued dictatorship following the summit of the South African Development Community (SADC) that addressed its situation, see “Zimbabwe: The hogwash of quiet diplomacy”, *The Economist*, April 4, 2007.
- 407 “Keynote Address of Her Excellency Nino Burjandze, Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia”, to the Dialogue on Canada’s Approach to Democratic Development”, Ottawa, February 15, 2007, p. 8 (available online at: <http://geo.international.gc.ca/cip-pic/library/Keynote%20Address%20to%20Democracy%20Dialogue.pdf>).
- 408 Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom, *Funding Civil Society: Foreign Assistance and NGO Development in Russia*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2006, p. 182.
- 409 The poll covered a wide range of Russian attitudes towards democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and its place in Europe. It was released in Brussels on February 6, 2007 and in Moscow on February 14, 2007 (available online at: <http://www.eu-russiacentre.org/assets/files/14.02%20Levada.pdf>). See also David Frum, “Russian democracy is dying”, *The National Post*, March 10, 2007, p. A24.
- 410 “Europe.view — Romance and revolution: The future is no longer orange”, *Economist.com*, March 22, 2007.
- 411 Ibid.
- 412 See Thomas Carothers, “The End of the Transition Paradigm”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2002, pp. 5-21 (available online at: <http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/gratis/Carothers-13-1.pdf>).
- 413 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006, p. 4.
- 414 Meeting with the Committee at the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, February 7, 2007.
- 415 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 35, December 6, 2006, p. 4.
- 416 Ibid., p. 5.
- 417 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007, p.6.
- 418 Ibid.
- 419 Donovan, “Afghanistan: Democratization in Context”, in *Transitions to Democracy — Afghanistan*, Centre for the Study of Democracy, Queen’s University, March 2006, p. 17.
- 420 Brief of October 9, 2006, p. 5. The Afghan legislature is only at the very beginning of having any experience with functioning political parties. See “Afghanistan: The arrival at last of party politics”, *The Economist*, 26 April 2007.
- 421 Ibid., p. 4.
- 422 Larry Diamond, “Promoting Democracy in Post-Conflict and Failed States: Lessons and Challenges”, *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 2, December 2006, p. 114 (available online at: <http://www.tfd.org.tw/docs/dj0202/05%20Larry%20Diamond.pdf>).
- 423 The World Bank, *Engaging with Fragile States: An Independent Evaluation Group Review of World Bank Support to Low-Income Countries Under Stress*, Washington D.C., 2006 (available online at [http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoelib.nsf/24cc3bb1f94ae11c85256808006a0046/a4d6461b0067e049852571f500551e1b/\\$FILE/licus.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoelib.nsf/24cc3bb1f94ae11c85256808006a0046/a4d6461b0067e049852571f500551e1b/$FILE/licus.pdf)).
- 424 *Canada’s International Policy Put to the Test in Haiti* (available online at: <http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/committee/391/faae/reports/rp2593086/faaerp04/faaerp04-e.pdf>).
- 425 Gareth Evans, “Promoting Democracy: What We Have Learned”, Washington D.C., September 19, 2006.
- 426 “Failing, Failed and Fragile States Conference”, March 2007, Final Report Prepared For The Canadian Consortium on Human Security”, p. 7 (available online on the Canadian Consortium web site at: <http://cchs.xplorex.com/page279.htm>).
- 427 *Evidence*, Meeting No. 40, February 13, 2007, p. 5.
- 428 Diamond, “Promoting Democracy in Post-Conflict and Failed States: Lessons and Challenges”, op. cit., pp. 102-113.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF INDIVIDUALS WHO MET WITH THE COMMITTEE (FROM OCTOBER 9 TO 13, 2006 AND FEBRUARY 5 TO 8, 2007)

Organizations and Individuals

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK MONDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2006

Canadian Ambassador Fredericka Gregory

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA):

Mr. Johnny Flento, Director of the Africa Department

Ms. Maria Ana Petrera, Head of Section, Development Policy Division

Ms. Helle Vadmand, Head of Section, Technical Assistance Advisory Service

Mr. Steen Gade, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Danish Parliament

Ms. Nana Hvidt, Director, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)

Dr. Neil Webster, Head of Department

Mr. Morten Kjaerum, Director, Danish Institute of Human Right

HELSINKI, FINLAND TUESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2006

Canadian Ambassador Anne-Marie Bourcier

Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

Ms. Sinikka Antila, Director, Unit for General Policy Development and Planning

Mr. Pekka Puustinen, Director, Unit for Sectoral Policy, Department for Development Policy

Ms. Johanna Jokinen-Gavidia, Advisor, Democracy and Good Governance, Unit for Sectoral Policy

Members of the Development Policy Committee:

Mrs. Gunvor Kronman, Chair, (Swedish People's Party)

Organizations and Individuals

Mr. Kalle Laaksonen (Finnish Centre Party)

Mr. Hannua Ohvo (Trade Union Solidarity Centre)

Mr. Timo Lappalainen (Service Centre for Development Cooperation)

Mrs. Heini Roysko (Christina Democrats)

Mr. Rolf Sormo (True Finns Party)

Second Deputy Speaker of Parliament :

Mr. Ilkka Kanerva, Foreign Affairs Committee

Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee :

Ms. Liisa Jaakonsaari, Chair

Ms. Mari Kiviniemi, Vice-Chair

Mr. Kimmo Kijunen

Mr. Johanness Koskinen

LONDON, ENGLAND WEDNESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2006

High Commissioner Jim Wright

David French, Chief Executive, The Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Professor Jennifer Welsh, Oxford University

Members of the UK Parliamentary Select Committee on International Development:

Mr. Malcolm Bruce, Chair (Liberal Democrats)

Mr. Hugh Bayley (Labour), and Chair of the Board of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Mr. John Battle (Labour)

Mr. James Duddridge (Conservative)

Ms. Anne McKeelin (Labour)

Organizations and Individuals

Department for International Development (DFID):

Mr. Peter Owen, Senior Governance Advisor, Policy Division,
Governance and Social Development Group

Mr. Jeremy Armon, Governance Advisor, Effective States Team,
Policy Division, Governance and Social Development Group

Commonwealth Secretariat:

Secretary General Don McKinnon

Mr. Matthew Neuhaus, Director, Political Affairs Division

Mr. Richard Gold, Director, Governance and Institutional
Development Division

Ms. Rabab Fatima, Adviser and Head of Human Rights Unit

Dr. Rawwida Baksh, Adviser and Head of Gender Section, Social
Transformation Programmes Division

Mr. Christopher Child, Adviser and Head of the Democracy
Section, Political Affairs Division

Ms. Katalaina Sapolu, Adviser and Head of Justice Section,
Legal and Constitutional Affairs Division;

Mr. John Wilkins, Advisor Public Sector Management and Head
of Special Programmes Section, Governance and Institutional
Development Division

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2006

Canadian Ambassador Lorenz Friedlaender

Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

Mr. Torgny Holmgren, Deputy Director-General, Head of the
Development Policy Division

Ms. Ulrika Funered, Human Rights and Democracy Section

Ms. Kanslirad Hoglund Karin, Civil Society and Democracy
Section

Officials From the Swedish International Development Agency
(SIDA):

Mr. Mikael Bostrom, Head of the Division for Democratic

Organizations and Individuals

Governance

Mr. Niklas Enander, Programme Officer, Political Parties and Parliaments

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA):

Ms. Ingrid Wetterqvist, Head, Planning and External Relations

Ms. Sakuntala Kadirgamar Rajasingham, Head of the South Asia Program

Mr. Mark Salter, Senior Programme Officer, Democracy Building & Conflict Management Programme

Mr. Ayman Ayoub, Senior Programme Officer

Mr. Roger Hällhag, Head of Programme for Political Parties

OSLO, NORWAY FRIDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2006

Members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs:

Ms. Marit Nybakk (Labour), Acting Chair

Ms. Anette Trettebergstuen (Labour)

Vidar Bjornstad (Labour)

Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs (RMFA):

Mr. Petter Wille, Deputy Director General, Global Section

Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Special Representative on Sudan

Ms. Ingrid Schoyen, Adviser, Middle East Section

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD):

Ms. Jannicke Bain, NORAD, Head of Section Responsible for Democracy Building

Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support:

Ms. Astrid Thomassen, Project Coordinator

Mr. John Inge Lovdal, Chairman of the Board

Organizations and Individuals

Norwegian Centre for Human Rights:

Mr. Geir Ulfstein, Director, Centre for Human Rights

Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM):

Ms. Siri Skåre, Project Director, NORDEM

Mr. Christian Boe Astrup, Information Officer

WASHINGTON D.C MONDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2007

Canadian Embassy:

Kevin O'Shea, Minister

David Lowe, Vice-President, Government and External Relations, National Endowment for Democracy (NED)

Vin Weber, Chairman, National Endowment for Democracy

Ivan Doherty, Director of Political Party Programs, National Democratic Institute (NDI)

Christopher Sands, Senior Associate, Canada Project, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and also associate with the International Republican Institute (IRI)

U.S. Department of State:

Paula Dobriansky, Under-Secretary, Democracy and Global Affairs

Barry Lowenkron, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor

Stephen Krasner, State Department Director of Policy and Planning

Mike Kozak, Senior Director for Democracy, Human Rights and International Organizations, National Security Council

Scott Carpenter, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

Betsy Whitaker, Deputy Assistant Secretary (Canada and Mexico), Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID):

Paul Bonicelli, Deputy Assistant Administrator

Maria Rendon, Acting Director, Office of Democracy and Governance, Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Bureau

Organizations and Individuals

Keith Schultz, Office of Democracy and Governance

Gerald Hyman, Senior Advisor and President of the Hills Program on Governance, Center for Strategic and international Studies; Ex-Director of the USAID Office of Democracy and Governance

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace:

Thomas Carothers, Vice-President for Studies – International Politics and Governance; Founder and Director of the Democracy and Rule of Law Project

Marina Ottaway, Director, Middle East Program

WASHINGTON D.C TUESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2007

Canadian Embassy:

Richard Rowson, President, Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD)

Theodore Piccone, Executive Director, Democracy Coalition Project, and representative of the Club of Madrid in Washington

Thomas O. Melia, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, and Deputy Executive Director, Freedom House

World Bank:

Samy Watson, Executive Director for Canada, Ireland and the Caribbean

Sanjay Pradhan, Sector Director in the Public Sector, Governance Unit

Steen Lau Jorgensen, Director in the Sustainable Development Network

Organization of American States (OAS):

Ambassador Graeme Clark, Canada's Permanent Representative to the OAS

José Miguel Insulza, OAS Secretary General

Albert Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General

Dante Caputo, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

Peter Hakim, President of the Inter-American Dialogue

Organizations and Individuals

NEW YORK, NY, USA

WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2007

Canada's Permanent Mission to the United Nations:

John McNee, Ambassador and Permanent Representative

Henri-Paul Normandin, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative

Heidi Hulan, Counsellor (Political)

Hugh Adsett, Counsellor (Legal)

Diana Rivington, Counsellor (Development)

United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF):

Mr. Magdy Martinez-Soliman, Acting Executive Director

Ms. Randi Davis, Senior Program Officer

Peacebuilding Support Office:

Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General

Ambassadors and Representatives to the United Nations:

The Honourable Robert Hill, Ambassador of Australia to the United Nations

His Excellency Mr. Johan L. Lovald, Ambassador of Norway to the United Nations

His Excellency Cheick Sidi Diarra, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mali

His Excellency Youcef Yousfi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Algeria

Paul Johnston, Counsellor Political Affairs of the mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations

The Council on Foreign Relation:

Richard Haass, President

Democratic Governance Group, United Nations Development Programme:

Pippa Norris, Director, Democratic Governance Group, Bureau for Development Policy

Gilbert Houngbo, Assistant Administrator and Director of Regional Bureau for Africa

Organizations and Individuals

Jennifer Topping, Director, Division for Resource Mobilization,
Bureau Resources and Strategic Partnerships

Jean Claude Rogivue, Chief, South and West Asia Division,
Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific

Akiko Suzuki, Programme Manager for Afghanistan, RBAP

Scott Hubli, Policy Adviser (Parliamentary Development),
Democratic Governance Group, BDP

Nina Berg, Policy Adviser (Justice), Democratic Governance
Group, BDP

Elissar Sarrouh, Policy Adviser (Public Administration Reform),
Democratic Governance Group, BDP

Limya El-Tayeb, Adviser, Division for Resource Mobilization,
BRSP

Anne-Marie Goetz, UNIFEM Governance, Peace and Security

NEW YORK, NY, USA THURSDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2007

Canada's Permanent Mission to United Nations:

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, New York University

George W. Downs, New York University

Barnett R. Rubin, Director of Studies and Senior Fellow,
New York University Center on International Cooperation

United Nations Electoral Assistance Division:

Craig Jenness, Director, Electoral Assistance Division,

Steven Siqueira, Special Assistant to the Special Representative
of the Secretary-General, United Nations Assistance Mission for
Iraq

Richard Gee, Political/Electoral Affairs Officer

APPENDIX B LIST OF WITNESSES

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Department of Foreign Affairs	2006/09/27	17
Peter MacKay, Minister		
Michael Small, Assistant Deputy Minister, Global Issues		
Canadian Foundation for the Americas	2006/10/02	18
John Graham, President, Board of Directors		
Parliamentary Centre		18
Robert Miller, President and Chief Executive Officer		
Jean-Marc Hamel, Member, Board of Directors		
Rights and Democracy		18
Wayne MacKay, Interim Chair, Board of Directors		
International Development Research Centre		18
Maureen O'Neil, President		
Rights and Democracy (International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development)		18
Jean-Louis Roy, President		
As Individuals	2006/10/04	19
Thomas Axworthy, Chair, Centre for the Study of Democracy, Queen's University		
Jeffrey Kopstein, Director, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, University of Toronto		19
George Perlin, Emeritus Professor and Fellow, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University		19
Canadian Council for International Co operation	2006/10/18	21
Gerry Barr, President and Chief Executive Officer		
As Individual		21
Ed Broadbent		
Canadian International Development Agency		21
Josée Verner, Minister		
Robert Greenhill, President		

CANADEM (Canada's Civilian Reserve)	2006/10/24	23
Paul LaRose-Edwards, Executive Director		
Elections Canada	2006/11/01	26
Diane Davidson, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer and Chief Legal Counsel		
Jean-Pierre Kingsley, Chief Electoral Officer		
University of Montreal	2006/12/05	34
Diane Éthier, Full professor, Department of Political Science		
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	2006/12/06	35
David Beer, Director General, International Policing		
Raf Souccar, Assistant Commissioner, Federal and International Operations		
Royal Military College of Canada		35
Jane Boulden, Canada Research Chair in International Relations and Security Studies, Department of Politics and Economics		
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John W. Foster, Principal Researcher (Civil Society), The North-South Institute		
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Kevin Deveaux, Member of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia		
Canadian Bar Association		38
William Goodridge, Member, International Development Committee		
John Hoyles, Chief Executive Officer		
Robin L. Sully, Director, International Development		
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John Williams, Chair, Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC)		
Martin Ulrich, Executive Secretary, Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC)		
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Malex Alebikiya		
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Organizations and individuals

Kippen, Grant

Smillie, Ian

Media & Democracy Group

Parliamentary Centre

Rights and Democracy (International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development)

Perlin, George

Foster, John W.

Canadian Bar Association

Centre for the Study of Democracy

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 26, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 61, 63, 64, 65 and 66](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Sorenson, MP
Chair

BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS DISSENTING REPORT

1. The Bloc Québécois acknowledges the thoughtful work that has been initiated by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development in its report *Advancing Canada's Role in International Support for Democratic Development*, but we believe that the main conclusions drawn in this report are hasty conclusions, if not questionable ones, except for the recommendation to proceed to an independent evaluation. This evaluation should, however, be aimed not only at investigating all the efforts made by Canada in aiding the democratic development of certain countries and “*all channels of funding as to their effectiveness in achieving their stated objectives, and to advise on which types of Canadian assistance have proved to be most effective and where Canada can have the most positive impact,*”¹ but also at assessing if there is a need for a complete overhaul of Canada's assistance to democratic development and for new tools and structures, such as the establishment of a new foundation as proposed in the report.

2. The approach proposed in the report is to conduct an independent assessment after the creation of a new foundation generously endowed and with greater freedom of action. This approach, therefore, consists in asking questions after having accepted to disburse important sums of money for the creation of a new foundation. This way of proceeding defies all logic. Not only does the report rely on a very incomplete picture of Canadian assistance to democratic development, but it contains a number of inconsistencies that

¹ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, *Advancing Canada's Role in International Support for Democratic Development*, p.53.

have us wonder about the real objectives behind the creation of such a foundation. Several fundamental issues remain unanswered. A number of warnings have gone unheeded.

3. Without an accurate and comprehensive overview of the situation, particularly without consultation with Québec's ONG that have experience in this domain and without the assessment of CIDA's engagements nor without the study of the foundation Law of Rights and Democracy, the Bloc Québécois cannot subscribe to the need for a complete restructuring of Canadian assistance to democratic development nor to the need for the creation of a new foundation as proposed in the Committee's report.

4. The Bloc Québécois feels it is risky, if not dangerous, that the majority of the Committee accepted the idea put forward by a few promoters of a foundation oriented toward providing assistance to political parties and finding a strategy to bring together the various Canadian and international actors, and doing so, making Canada the world leader in democracy assistance.

Incomplete portrait

5. Given the mandate that the Committee adopted the 10th of May 2006 which was to "*carry out a major study on democratic development*" in the framework of a broader study of "*Canada's role in complex international interventions*", the Committee could not skip on the task of spelling out the international action issues in assistance to democratic development.

6. Despite, or because of, international commitments to support the development of democracy, caution is required on the part of democratic countries in choosing what action to take in development assistance. That action may be seen from a historical perspective as guided more by the self-interest of donor countries than by the needs of the people in the recipient countries.

7. This is widely the case for the people in countries that have experienced political or economic colonization. It is often the case for the people in Arab/Muslim countries: they associate democracies with the countries that supported and still support authoritarian leaders who remain in power thanks to force, to torture and to corruption. Before the invasion of Iraq, American leaders were certain that Iraqis would thank them for rescuing them from Saddam Hussein. The Iranians recall that their own authentic democratic revolution, under the leadership of Mossadegh, was brought to a halt in 1953 by the coup d'état fomented by the CIA and the British secret services, who joined forces to prevent Iran from controlling its own oil. And they remember that it was thanks to the United States and the Great Britain that the Shah was put back on the throne, from which he was chased in 1979 by the Iranian revolution that brought the Ayatollah Khomeini, leader of the Shiite Islamist movement, to power.

8. Many of the African countries that achieved independence after the Second World War saw their charismatic postcolonial leaders eliminated by the former colony's military. Still today, they keep seeing corporations based in democratic countries plunder their mineral resources with impunity and support authoritarian leaders. The governments of emerging democracies have often tried to exert control over their resources, only to run

head-first into the interests of their former colonial masters or powerful foreign interests that do not hesitate to support politicians who will allow them to go on plundering, regardless of the interest of those politicians to maintain themselves in power or regardless of their interest for the well-being of the population.

9. Also worth remembering are the American doctrine that South America was its fiefdom and the revolutionary movements that served, during the Cold War, as proxy combatants for the two power blocs in many countries that today are ravaged, weakened and broken. People in countries that were formerly behind the Iron Curtain are very interested in developing their democracy along with their economy and their sovereignty. They are educated and may appear able to reach democracy more quickly and more easily than others. This is a new and interesting area activity; its difficulty, however, should not be underestimated, despite the enthusiasm generated by the events in Georgia and Ukraine among a few intellectuals at Queens University's Centre for the Study of Democracy. To be convinced, one should look into the activities of the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and look at the ongoing changes in Russia.

10. There remains another issue: do the majority of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development want to leave our current aid recipients to their fate in order to concentrate on former East Bloc countries, for the benefit of Canadian foreign policy? The authority and responsibilities given to the new foundation might well lead to that conclusion.

11. When promoting democracy, the democratic countries have to prove that they are not seeking to control another country, or defend their own interests, but rather are offering the people means of controlling their own destiny and creating the institutions that will, little by little, ensure them democratic governance through justice, police, human rights, free elections. How to do this? Is it possible? Can we determine in what conditions? What are the countries where international intervention has helped people take control of their own destiny? What intervention has been useful, in what conditions? Are such conditions exportable? Who can exercise what kind of influence?

12. The Committee has not given it self the means that would have enabled it to answer these questions. Nor did it explore the current context even though American experts and officials, during meetings the Committee had in Washington for the purpose of the current report, invited Canada to take the lead and move front and centre. Gerald Hyman, Ex-Director of the USAID Office of Democracy and Governance, for example, emphasised that “*Canada can do things that the United States cannot*”². Thomas Carothers, a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace expert, stated “*it is very important that other countries [than the United States] step forward and that “Canada has a unique role to play.” This is especially so as the United States has stumbled in its promotion of democracy*”³. Would it not be timely to point out that the success of Canadian intervention appears to hinge on respect for the democratic approach adopted by the people of the country being helped, which is very unlike the American and British invasion of Iraq?

²Schimtz, Gerald. Notes on the Meetings in Washington D.C. and New York-5-8 February 2007, p.7

³ Schimtz, Gerald. Notes on the Meetings in Washington D.C. and New York-5-8 February 2007, p.9

Centralized democratic development assistance efforts still contested

13. As mentioned in the report, democratic development assistance donor states are asking more and more questions about the nature and effectiveness of this type of assistance and about more constructive ways to promote democracy. Despite this observation, the report proposes that Canada become a leader in democratic development assistance and that the Government of Canada grant the necessary funds to become the top assistance donor, without any idea of the amount of money entailed by this political decision.

14. Despite mixed results since World War II, the report suggests that Canada should play a lead role in democratic development. The Committee report makes this recommendation without assessing both the risks and pitfalls nor without assessing the every so often enormity of the support:

15. *“This cautionary scepticism about external interventions on the side of democracy is not unusual among analysts. Professor Bruce Bueno de Mesquita of New York University told the Committee that “the record of exporting democracy since World War II is not a good record”, although his colleague Professor George Downs allowed that, with less baggage than the great powers and more responsive flexibility than large international organizations, “Canada has a better prospect of being successful than the UN or the United States.”*⁴

⁴ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Advancing Canada's Role in International Support for Democratic Development, p.24.

Asking for nothing less.

16. One of the central premises of this report—that research and coordination within Canada and among nations will lead to greater progress in promoting democracy—is far from proven. A number of experts pointed out that democratic development assistance could do more harm than good, expressing their scepticism and issuing warnings. But their misgivings appear to have fallen on deaf ears, including this call for caution from Ian Smillie of Partnership Africa Canada: *“(...) Some critics of Canada’s approach to governance lament the absence of coherent policies tying all aspects of the agenda together. A patchy, project-by-project approach with no obvious central policy and no central management, they say, is unlikely to yield coherent results. This may be true, but given the overwhelming size of the governance agenda, and the limited track record in its promotion by any donor, healthy doses of humility and caution are warranted, along with a good set of brakes in the expectations department.”*⁵

17. There is no international model, as mentioned in the report.⁶ However, recommendation 4, advocating increased Canadian public-sector support for independent research and knowledge generation on effective democratic development assistance, is at odds with this observation and implies that a centralized approach is a contested one.

⁵ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Advancing Canada’s Role in International Support for Democratic Development, p.48.

⁶ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Advancing Canada’s Role in International Support for Democratic Development, p.59.

18. The Bloc Québécois is of the opinion that the risk of centralized decision-making that is beyond any political control and could jeopardize Canada's good reputation.

19. The recommendation that Canada take a more centrally coordinated approach to its democratic development assistance was far from being universally accepted by the witnesses who appeared before the Committee. The recommendation was made by three witnesses: Thomas Axworthy, Kevin Deveaux and David Donovan, who urged the Committee to consider this approach. Other witnesses, including Ed Broadbent, Ian Smillie and representatives from the Parliamentary Centre, said there was no need to set up another institution and that it was important, even vital, for Canada to strengthen the initiatives currently under way and for the government to provide them with greater funding (as mentioned to the Committee by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Parliamentary Centre, and Rights and Democracy). However, the report makes no recommendation on this issue.

20. Therefore, it would have been possible to also draw from the testimonies the conclusion that it is important for Canada to bolster existing initiatives, because its comprehensive approach to democratization has earned praise, according to Chapter 2 of the report. In this chapter, the Executive Director of the *Democracy Coalition Project* and co-author of the survey on “defending democracy”, brings the attention on the fact that: *“Canada was praised for its pluralistic ‘flexible and holistic approach to democratization’. In the survey’s sample of 40 donor countries, Canada was among only three (the others being the Netherlands and Sweden) to receive a ‘very good’ rating on its ‘support of democracy abroad, as evidence by its willingness to provide electoral assistance to fledgling democracies, to support grassroots democracy programs through bilateral aid to and to criticize regimes engaged in the most egregious abuses of democracy.’”*⁷

21. The Bloc Québécois is concerned about the lack of political oversight over a new independent foundation in a major foreign-affairs arena. CIDA is already criticized for its lack of transparency. A new independent foundation is likely to conduct its business the same way. In the European countries studied for the purposes of the report, democratic development assistance is closely monitored and does not receive huge amounts of money.

22. Furthermore, we fear that centralizing activities within a new independent institution could endanger the existing plurality of approaches, as Jean-Louis Roy of Rights and

⁷ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Advancing Canada’s Role in International Support for Democratic Development, p.43.

Democracy pointed out in the brief he submitted on October 2, 2006 “(...) we strongly believe that a centralized system could become a bureaucratic monster, could undermine the existing plurality of approaches, dialogues and activities that together produce significant results with our partners and, ultimately, could undermine Canada’s credit and credibility around the globe. I know no other country that has adopted such a centralized system. Before creating new institutions, existing mandates should be completely assessed and fully supported.”⁸

Funding for the new foundation: a risk of unverifiable expenditures

23. There is already a desperate shortage of funding for projects by NGOs and countries supported by CIDA. Canada is still far from reaching the 0.7% target. Against this backdrop, the Bloc Québécois finds it difficult to justify the establishment of another institution that will require large sums of money.

24. The Bloc Québécois believes that establishing a new foundation may well lead to unnecessary expenditures, as an agency already exists that has a democratic development mandate: Rights and Democracy. Its mission, according to the *International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development Act*, is:

“(...) to initiate, encourage, and support cooperation between Canada and other countries in the promotion, development and strengthening of democratic and human

⁸ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Advancing Canada’s Role in International Support for Democratic Development, p.122.

rights institutions and programmes that give effect to the rights and freedoms enshrined in the *International Bill of Human Rights*.⁹

Democratic development assistance as a foreign-policy tool for Canada to influence domestic policy in a target country?

25. Without better monitoring, without a clearer definition of the issues and without an independent evaluation being carried out beforehand, the types of measures recommended in this report may lead to political interference in the domestic affairs of another country. Canada could use democratic development assistance as a foreign-policy tool and decide to influence certain political “groups or forces” rather than others. Recommendation 18 and recommendation 25 allow for the possibility of a more interventionist foreign policy.

26. Recommendation 18 proposes that Canada should provide more support for the development of free and independent media, particularly in contexts where they are under pressure. To date, Canada has provided very little support for this type of project because it is a sensitive and controversial issue. However, the recommendation is based not on a meaningful, in-depth study of this chapter of democratic development assistance, but primarily on statements made by the Media and Democracy Group, which submitted a brief to the Committee.

27. There are already a few community radio projects supported by NGOs in some southern countries, and they receive funding from CIDA. As the report does not state

⁹ *International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development Act.*

clearly what criteria the new foundation will use to support one project rather than another, we are concerned that these NGOs will have to meet new criteria that do not match the ones on which they are currently evaluated to access funds. This may jeopardize their community radio projects.

28. This report draws heavily on evidence provided by witnesses, including Kevin Deveaux, who said that democratic development assistance should be used as a foreign-policy tool so that Canada can influence issues such as trade, human rights, bilateral and multilateral disputes and even questions of freedom and security. We are alarmed by these types of statements, especially since Canada's reputation, as a number of experts testified, is built on its impartiality and a foreign policy that has no underlying political agenda.

Conclusion

29. In a "major" study on democratic development, how can the Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development avoid at least trying to evaluate the effects of international action, both by Canada and other countries, on democratic development? Such an evaluation is essential to determine what is helping (and not helping) to achieve the objectives set. This needs to be done before deciding on any substantial changes to the objectives and the means allocated to achieving them. Deciding to set up and fund a Canadian foundation that is expected to become nothing less than the "world leader" in democratic development assistance, without defining exactly what that is, and especially without explaining just how the foundation differs from existing bodies is literally incomprehensible for a Committee whose reports had the reputation of being thoughtful and well documented. The existing bodies have apparently been written off as inadequate

before any analysis has been conducted, including Rights and Democracy, a body created by Parliament in 1989 with enabling legislation that provides, as previously mentioned, “*the promotion, development and strengthening of democratic institutions and programs*”.¹⁰

30. The Bloc Québécois therefore supported the proposal that all Canadian public funds allocated to democratic development and also the work of CIDA and the international development organizations it funds should be evaluated, but did not support, in the absence of an independent expert evaluation, setting up a vaguely defined but generously endowed foundation that would become the sole agency funding and coordinating Canada’s democratic development activities and assistance to democracy.

31. This is why we consider that the work done is interesting but nowhere near adequate to support the main proposal of setting up a foundation. In our view, the foundation appears a risky proposition, likely to jeopardize the generally positive image that Canada has earned so far.

¹⁰ *International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development Act.*

DISSENTING OPINION

SCFAID REPORT TO PARLIAMENT ON DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

1. The report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, in this report sets out recommendations for ‘Advancing Canada’s Role in International Support for Democratic Development,’ with a view to making Canada a ‘world leader’ in this important – yet sensitive - domain. In the opinion of the NDP, the majority report, endorsed by both Conservative and Liberal SCFAIT members, does not adequately address several complex issues, central to successful democratic development initiatives.

2. The NDP’s concerns are both substantive, and procedural. In terms of its substantive content, the report makes no concrete recommendations for attaining Canada’s international commitments to provide for the basic economic and social rights of the world’s poorest populations. The development of healthy democracies cannot be separated from a comprehensive human rights framework. The Standing Committee report largely ignores this critical link between the social and economic rights of the poor and democratic development, and does not offer a single recommendation to the government to address these issues in its woefully deficient current development aid policy.

Canada’s International Development Framework

3. Democratic development does not take place in a vacuum. Effective governing institutions and constructive civic engagement rarely, if ever, occur where individuals and communities are denied their basic economic and social rights. Security of the person,

poverty reduction, sanitation, basic health services, and educational opportunity, are fundamental human rights that must be met if communities and individuals are to engage constructively in democratic processes. These rights are encoded in international law, accepted, ratified and promoted by successive Canadian governments, and have been emphasized in testimony presented to the Standing Committee (See: pp.27-28, Chapter One; pp. 43-47, Chapter 2), as they have been consistently throughout my four years since joining the Committee in the spring of 2003.

4. While acknowledged in the report with reference to “the full range of international human rights – including socio-economic and cultural rights,” (Recommendation 1), the subsequent recommendations are unacceptably silent on this critical interrelationship. The Standing Committee report fails to provide concrete guidance for how these related issues should be incorporated into the heart of Canadian development policy practice. The report acknowledges that democratic development cannot be effectively pursued in the absence of these social and economic rights. Yet, the NDP’s repeated attempts to amend the report to include these key considerations were rejected.

5. Canadians are painfully familiar with the continuing failure of Canadian government’s first under the Liberals, now under the Conservatives, to reconcile actions with words on this critical issue. On June 9, 2005, the Committee unanimously passed the NDP motion, calling on the then-Liberal government to reach the international standard of 0.7% of Gross National Income for development aid by 2015.¹ On June 28, 2005, on the

¹ Appendix 1: SCFAIT Motion, 9 June 2005.

eve of the G8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, the House of Commons unanimously adopted this motion as well.² These motions expressed the clear will of the SCFAIT, and of Parliament itself. Yet, neither the then-Liberal government, nor the current Conservative government, has respected the unanimous will of Parliament to live up to these international ODA obligations. The lack of concrete recommendations to better address these social and economic rights is a glaring omission from this report.

6. Canada's Official Development Assistance (ODA), for instance, as a percentage of Gross National Income (GNI) has been in considerable decline since the early nineties, where it measured approximately 0.5% of GNI/P.³ By 2001, Canada's development assistance reached rock bottom at 0.22% of GNI, as a result of a succession of restrictive Liberal budgets.⁴ The current Conservative government has undone several years of

² From Hansard, 28 June 2005, "Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP): 'Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. On the basis of further discussions that have taken place among the parties, I think you would find that there is unanimous consent for the following motion. I move that the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade presented Monday, June 13, be deemed concurred in without debate or amendment.'" From website: <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=38&Ses=1&DocId=1984361&File=0#Int-1374641>. Accessed: 23 June 2007.

³ ACPD, 'Canadian Foreign Aid,' from ACPD website: <http://www.acpd.ca/acpd.cfm/en/section/canaid/articleID/177>. Accessed: 2 July 2007.

⁴ Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, *Managing Turmoil: The Need to Upgrade Canadian Foreign Aid and Military Strength to Deal with Massive Change*. (House of Commons, October 2006), p. 25.

modest recovery by reducing the development aid budget in 2007 to 0.31% of GNI - down from 0.36% in 2006, significantly short of the 0.7% target laid out in the Millennium Development Goals, to which Canada is a signatory.⁵

7. In November 2006, the SCFAIT members traveled to five European countries - Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, and the UK – all of which have surpassed or are clearly on track to meet their Millennium Development Goal obligations. Democratic development experts in these countries, as well as many other witnesses presenting to the Standing Committee in Canada, all expressed the critical need for Canada to match its democratic development programs with substantial financial commitments to these related development goals. Still, the lessons of these leading countries, and the recommendations of these leading experts, were absent from the report's final recommendations. The NDP cannot support the report without their inclusion.

8. The Standing Committee report purports to provide an agenda for action, on how the Canadian government can become a 'world leader' in democratic development. However, in our view, Canada must first demonstrate its commitment to the full range of political, economic and social rights without which effective democratic development cannot occur.

⁵ *Ibid*; CCIC, 'Harper Budget Fails to Deliver on World's Poor,' from CCIC website: http://www.ccic.ca/e/004/news_2007-03-19_budget.shtml. Accessed: 21 March 2007.

9. The NDP recommends as a first step, that the government of Canada demonstrate through concrete action it is prepared to respect its own parliamentary decisions and international obligations on these critical social and economic rights, to establish credibility with other countries on democratic development. The government of Canada must respect past motions and bills passed by the House of Commons (such as the better aid bill C-293, passed by Parliament, but still waiting to be proclaimed), as well as its signed obligations to the international community to achieve its ODA commitments, and incorporate the full range of human rights considerations across all of the government's democratic development activities.

The Government's 'Credibility Gap' on Democratic Development

10. The NDP is further concerned that the withholding of government policy documents on democratic development and the unanticipated inclusion of a major institutional policy recommendation within the draft report suggests the politicization of the report and its recommendations for the purposes of the Conservative government's own narrow policy agenda.

11. This Committee's deliberations were severely frustrated by the government's refusal to share with the committee existing policy strategy documents pertaining to their democratic development agenda. On December 5, 2006, the Standing Committee adopted an NDP motion directing the government to share its draft strategy on fragile and failing states – some of very countries most likely to be targeted by Canada's democratic development initiatives. As Parliamentary Secretary, Deepak Obhrai said at the time, "we

don't see any difficulties. The government will be very happy to come forward and present its strategy on failed states and what it's been doing. This calls for it, and I think this is an improvement, so we have no problem in supporting this.”⁶

12. Repeated NDP requests over the subsequent six months for compliance with this motion were refused with no satisfactory explanation. When the final report was voted upon in mid-June, the government's position had not been shared with committee, nor appropriate officials called before the committee to testify on this policy strategy.

13. The committee's frustration was compounded by the inclusion in the report of major new policy initiative – the formation of a 'Canada foundation' for democratic development – which was not consistently advocated in testimony before the committee, nor requested by the majority of committee members.

14. Critically, the Standing Committee report's recommendation for a new foundation was accompanied by a clearly articulated policy agenda for this foundation to play – including funding and logistical assistance for political parties in recipient states. Following the testimony of Thomas Axworthy, the report recommends this foundation “focus on political party assistance... which would introduce a tool largely absent from Canadian *foreign policy*” (italics added, p. 124, Chapter 7). The NDP is deeply troubled by this proposition. Genuine democratic development initiatives should never be captive to

⁶ Obhrai, Deepak, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Meeting No. 34, 5 December 2006.

narrow national self-interest. 'Democracy' promotion can be, and has frequently undermined indigenous democratic processes around the world, when abused for the partisan foreign policy purposes of an external state.

15. Regardless of the foundation's proposed activities, the Committee was in agreement that a comprehensive evaluation of Canada's existing programs is a necessary precondition before future directions for Canada's democratic development agenda can be effectively made. The NDP continues to hold the view that the creation of any new structures or institutions (such as a Canada foundation) should await the results of an independent evaluation of Canada's existing democratic development programs. To the extent that the report signals its intent to move forward with a clearly-defined initiative under the auspices of a new institutional body, the report prejudices the outcomes of that evaluation.

16. These substantive and procedural failures cast serious doubt over the government's respect for democratic processes within Canada, and its willingness to address the concerns of development experts and opposition parliamentarians. By disrespecting democratic processes at home, the government is undermining faith at home and abroad that it can operate as a credible broker on these issues in its democratic development policy abroad. The NDP recommends that the form or structure for any new democratic development initiatives should await the completion of an independent evaluation of Canada's existing programs.

Conclusion

17. The NDP is deeply concerned by the substance and procedure of the Standing Committee report. This report, supported by the Conservative and Liberal members, advocates for Canada to become a champion of democratic development in today's world. It is worrisome that in the process, the government disregarded democratic decisions reached by both the Committee and Parliament itself. In light of these considerable deficiencies both in substance and process, the NDP holds the view that neither this report's recommendations, nor the government responsible to implement them, are adequate to the task of providing appropriate leadership in delivering constructive and effective democratic development.