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THIS ISSUE: Democracy & Good Governance

Improved Institutions Seen as Key to Democracy in Africa

By Michelle Austein, Washington File Staff Writer

Experts cite poverty, conflict and corruption as impediments to democratization

Washington — Strengthening Africa's institutions will enable the continent to improve its democratization efforts, African activists said at a roundtable discussion in Washington on June 27.

The activists joined U.S. congressmen and Africa experts to discuss the continent's prospects for democracy as part of a panel sponsored by the National Endowment for Democracy. Building these institutions will take a long time, longer than in most other parts of the world, said Zainab Hawa Bangura, a democracy activist from Sierra Leone who is chief civil affairs officer to the U.N. Mission in Liberia.

Joel Barkan, a senior associate with the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said the institution-building process takes about 10 to 15 years. "Democracy is about building institutions, not elections," Barkan said. Many other panelists agreed, but also cited the importance of



Zainab Hawa Bangura,
chief civil affairs officer
to the U.N. Mission in Liberia
(©AP/WWP)

elections in bringing stability to the region and holding leaders accountable. Ongoing conflicts impede the democratic process as well. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), citizens participated in what has become the primary round of their first free and open elections in 40 years on July 30.

Ethnic conflicts and wars make it difficult to include everyone in the electoral process, said Immaculée Birhaheka, a human rights activist from the DRC. Lack of infrastructure such as roads and lack of education also may affect the election. "People 18 to 20 years old are able to vote, but they have never been to school, they are not educated," Birhaheka said.

The DRC's elections should be viewed as "the beginning of the process to put together institutions" in that nation, said Christopher Fomunyoh, regional director for Central and West Africa at the National Democratic Institute, a

nongovernmental organization in Washington.

Improving the rule of law in African countries also will improve democratization efforts, said Representative Edward Royce, a Republican from California. Royce said that bringing former Liberian President Charles Taylor to trial for war crimes showed that "justice and rule of law have won a victory in West Africa."

The international community can help Africa through its democratization process through partnerships such as the Millennium Challenge Account and the African Growth and Opportunity Act, Royce said. Other panelists said nongovernmental organizations, religious groups and people of African heritage now living elsewhere also provide major assistance.

Poverty, human rights violations and government corruption also were cited as common obstacles to developing democracy in Africa.

Birhaheka and Bangura, along with Sudanese newspaper editor Alfred Taban and Zimbabwean human rights activist Reginald Matchaba-Hove were honored by the National Endowment for Democracy for their efforts to advance democracy and human rights. (See related article on page 7.)

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

U.S. Strategy to Internationalize Efforts Against Kleptocracy: Combating High-Level Public Corruption, Denying Safe Haven, and Recovering Assets

"Corrupt practices undermine government institutions, impede economic and social development, and cast shadows of lawlessness that erode the public trust." — President George W. Bush, Message to Global Forum IV, June 2005

Corruption threatens important American interests globally, including security and stability, the rule of law and core democratic values, prosperity, and a level playing field for lawful business activities. Corrupt practices contribute to the spread of organized crime and terrorism, undermine public trust in government, and destabilize entire communities and economies.

High-level, large-scale corruption by public officials, also referred to as kleptocracy, is a particular threat to developing nations. Corruption at all levels undermines sound public financial management and accountability, deters foreign investment in many countries, stifles economic growth and sustainable development, distorts prices, and undermines legal and judicial systems. Large-scale corruption involving senior

officials in executive, judicial, legislative, or other official positions in government can have a devastating effect on democracy, the rule of law, and economic development. Those who contribute to such corruption by paying, or promising to pay, bribes, or by giving other undue advantages, to foreign public officials undermine good governance and alter fair competition.

The United States has long led by example in the fight against corruption. Through enactment in 1977 of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), the United States became the first country to criminally penalize its nationals and companies that bribe foreign public officials in commercial transactions. In this tradition, by announcing Presidential Proclamation 7750 in January 2004, the United States committed to deny safe haven to egregiously corrupt officials and other public figures by preventing them from entering the United States. We continue the vigorous enforcement of the FCPA, actively investigating and

Continued on Page 7

According to the World Bank,
good governance is characterized
by the following features:



THE WORLD BANK

- accountability of government officials including politicians and civil servants.
- transparency in governmental procedures;
- predictability in governmental behaviour and expectation of rational decisions;
- openness in governmental transactions;
- the rule of law and an independent judiciary;
- free flow of information and freedom of the press;
- respect for human rights;
- decentralization of power, structure and decision making.

World Development report, 1988
Published for the World Bank by Oxford University Press.

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THE CENTRAL ROLE OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM IN DEMOCRACY

Ian Vásquez

"Economic freedom allows for independent sources of wealth that serve both to counterbalance political power and to nourish a pluralistic society," says author Ian Vásquez. In this article, he presents evidence that in countries with the freest economies, citizens also enjoy comparatively high standards of living, and he discusses the interplay between the rule of law and economic freedom. Vásquez is the director of the Project on Global Economic Liberty at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., and a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Of the cherished liberties of a free society—economic, political, and civil—economic freedom holds a special place. It is not only an end in itself; economic freedom gives sustenance to the other freedoms. When personal choice, voluntary exchange, and the protection of private property are not secure, it is difficult to imagine how political freedom or civil liberties can meaningfully be exercised.

In 1962, Nobel laureate in economics Milton Friedman observed:

History speaks with a single voice on the relation between political freedom and a free market. I know of no example in time or place of a society that has been marked by a large measure of political freedom, and that has not also used something comparable to a free market to organize the bulk of economic activity.

The collapse of central planning in Third World countries and of socialism itself in the past 20 years seems to support Friedman's thesis. The rise in economic freedom has accompanied that of political and civil freedom around the world, and both have been significant as countries have moved away from authoritarianism and opened their markets.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Economic freedom is a desirable end unto itself because it generally expands the range of choice of the individual, both as a consumer and as a producer. The larger role of economic freedom in society, however, is often under-appreciated, including by those who believe in political pluralism; human rights; and freedom of association, religion, and speech.

Yet the decentralization of economic decision-making supports civil society by creating the space in which organizations of all kinds can exist without depending on the state. A nation in which there is economic freedom is one in which the private sector can fund the institutions of civil society. Thus genuinely independent churches, opposition political parties, and a diversity of businesses and media are more likely to exist where economic power is not concentrated in the hands of bureaucrats or politicians.



South Korean stock dealers cheer the KOSPI's record high at the Korea Exchange in Seoul in September 2005. Dictatorships have given way to democracies in countries that liberalized their markets as early as the 1960s and 1970s, including South Korea. AP/WWP Yonhap, Choi Jae-ko

By definition, economic liberalization implies a loss of full political control over the citizenry. That is something that authoritarian governments around the world have been finding out in the current era of globalization. Dictatorships have given way to democracies in countries that began liberalizing their markets as early as the 1960s and 1970s, including South Korea, Taiwan, Chile, and Indonesia. With the election of President Vicente Fox in 2000, Mexico's market liberalization in the 1990s helped end more than 70 years of the PRI's (Institutional Revolutionary Party's) one-

party rule, once referred to by Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa as "the perfect dictatorship."

Economic freedom allows for independent sources of wealth to counterbalance political power and to nourish a pluralistic society. When the state owns or exerts undue control over banking, credit, telecommunications, or newsprint, for example, it controls not only economic activity, but expression as well. It has taken the world far too long to recognize the truth in the statement of early 20th-century writer Hilaire Belloc that "the control of the production of wealth is the control of human life itself."

Thus the dilemma that China's Communist Party currently faces is familiar. To maintain social stability, China must continue the economic liberalization that has fueled more than two decades of high growth. But market reforms

have given hundreds of millions of Chinese greater independence from the state and have created an emerging middle class that increasingly demands political freedom and representation. The party wishes to maintain political power, but economic liberalization is undermining that goal, while ending liberalization would reduce growth and cause instability.

As in the case of China and countless other nations, economic freedom encourages political pluralism by promoting the growth that produces a middle class and citizens less dependent on the state. Empirical evidence supports that relationship.

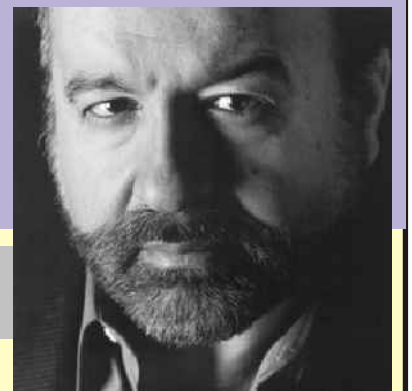
The most comprehensive empirical study on the relationship between a country's economic policies and institutions and a country's level of prosperity is the Canadian Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World report. It looks at 38 components of economic freedom, ranging from the size of government to the rule of law to monetary and trade policy, in 127 countries over a period of more than 30 years. The study finds a strong relationship between economic freedom and prosperity. The freest economies have an average per capita income of \$25,062 compared with \$2,409 in the least free countries. Free economies also grow faster than less free economies. Per capita growth in the past 10 years was 2.5 percent in the most free countries, while it was 0.6 percent in the least free countries.

The Fraser study also found that economic freedom is strongly related to poverty reduction and other indicators of

PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

Hernando de Soto is president of the Institute for Liberty and Democracy in Lima, Peru. As an advisor to Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori during the 1990s, de Soto helped initiate the economic reform programs that facilitated Peru's return to the international economic system.

Following is an excerpt from a Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) interview with de Soto that discusses what he calls the strong relationship between property rights and democracy. The interview first appeared in Economic Reform Today (ERT), published by CIPE.



ERT: When you look at the Western democracies, all of them have strong systems protecting property rights. Is it important for emerging democracies to create such systems?

MR. DE SOTO: I think the first thing that is striking about the Western democracies is that they enjoy property rights. They may have different land-tenure and property rights systems, but they all have one thing in common: They protect the right of people to "transact" their property rights. It is not only important to know that if you are the original owner of something, you can enforce this right; but also, that if you decide to sell it, whoever buys it or uses it as collateral for commercial purposes feels secure about the transaction.

In many developing countries or emerging markets, property rights do exist. However, they do not have the complementary legal framework that is present in developed countries and that allows these property rights to become currency. This legal framework provides a kind of scaffolding which allows property to move to its highest valued use with a great deal of security.

In most of the emerging markets from Russia to Latin America, there are people today who own property that did not before. But the government machinery the executive, legislative, and judicial branches has not kept up with building the kind of framework and institutions needed to protect property rights....

In short, the important thing is whether there will be enough political savvy in emerging markets to create the legal framework that protects private property rights.... So the first step is one of discovering which property rights exist. The second is to learn from the evolution of the various models used in the Western world and how organizations were created so as to best organize and protect these rights legally....

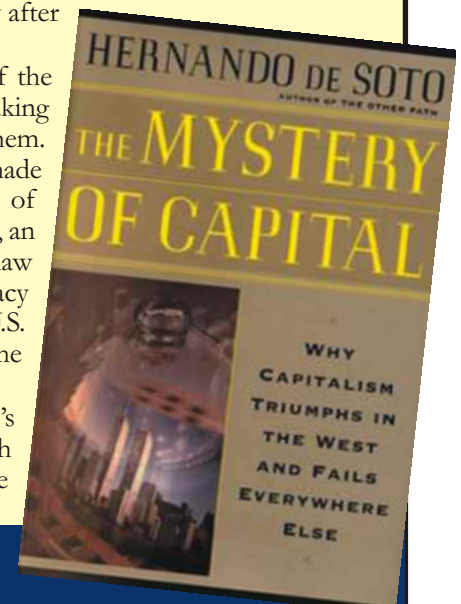
ERT: How would you describe the relationship of strong systems of property rights to democratic institutions?

MR. DE SOTO: The relationship between the two is very strong. Democracy has a lot to do with establishing a good system of property rights in the sense that it's not really possible to build such a system unless you know how people think about their relationship to objects, land, and assets at the grassroots level. Only after you do this can you incorporate property rights into a body of law that is truly effective.

In the United States, for example, throughout the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, there were various mechanisms that recognized the role of pioneers in staking out land claims even though initially the country didn't have a legal framework for them. Instead of keeping with the British tradition which accepted that the king and judge made law, the U.S. government accepted that people on the ground had their own ways of settling many property issues and had effectively built local social contracts. As a result, an effective nationwide property rights system was set up that worked, but not using the law brought over from England. Instead, it was built on a system of grassroots democracy and principles of equity that flowed from the fact that a lot of poor people in the U.S. went out and staked claims which were basically approved by the majority of the population. That's why they stuck....

If democracy is government by the people, it means among other things that people's social conventions are being acknowledged and protected. It means a country is in touch with evolving conventions, and has gradually woven these property rights into a more sophisticated and far-reaching social contract....

Hernando De Soto is also the author of *The Mystery of Capital*.



progress. The United Nations' Human Poverty Index is negatively correlated with the Fraser index of economic freedom. The income level of the poorest 10 percent of the population in the most economically free countries is \$6,451 compared to \$1,185 in the least free countries. People living in the top 20 percent of countries in terms of economic freedom, moreover, tend to live about 25 years longer than people in the bottom 20 percent. Lower infant mortality, higher literacy rates, lower corruption, and greater access to safe drinking water are also associated with increases in

those countries. The central role of economic freedom in democracy, however, is clear. It can be a powerful force in promoting democracy, and a good measure of economic freedom is necessary to sustain political freedom.

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW

Democracy is not a synonym of liberty. As we have seen, a democracy that is not accompanied by the other freedoms hardly succeeds in limiting the arbitrary power of political authorities, elected though they may be. Thus, much effort is currently being placed on promoting the rule of law—a central component of both liberal democracy and economic freedom.

It is axiomatic that the rule of law is necessary for a well-functioning democracy. Increasingly appreciated is the fact that the rule of law is also necessary for economic development. The Economic Freedom of the World report, for example, found that no country with a weak rule of law could sustain a solid rate of growth (more than 1.1 percent) once income per capita rose above \$3,400. In other words, once an economy reaches a certain level of development, improvements in the rule of law are essential to sustaining growth.

It is possible that, unlike tariff reductions or privatizations, the rule of law cannot be directly promoted. It may very well be that the rule of law happens after, or at about the same time that, other things are done right.

I advance a modest proposal. Instead of focusing on directly promoting the rule of law, we should be creating the environment within which the rule of law can evolve. Among other measures, that means promoting market reforms or economic freedom. For many poor countries, that includes reducing the size of government. The countries that today have a strong rule of law first established that institution and only later increased the size of their governments.

Unfortunately, too many poor countries are today trying to repeat that process in reverse. In countries as diverse as Brazil, Slovakia, the Republic of Congo, and Russia, for example, government spending as a share of gross domestic product exceeds 30 or 40 percent. Attempts to promote the rule of law where governments remain large are bound to fail or be exceedingly difficult. Indeed, although the trend during the past 20 years has been an increase in both economic and political freedom in the world, most countries still have a long way to travel down the path of economic freedom. Russia may have abandoned socialism, but it ranks 115 out of 127 countries in the *Economic Freedom of the World* index.

Author Fareed Zakaria observes, furthermore, that the majority of poor democracies in the world are illiberal democracies—that is, political regimes in which liberties other than the freedom to choose who governs are not well established. He notes that in the West, the liberal constitutional tradition developed first and the transition to democracy developed later. In 1800, for example, only 2 percent of citizens voted in Great Britain, perhaps the most liberal society in the world at that time. Zakaria further points out that in non-Western nations that have recently made a transition to liberal democracy, such as South Korea and Taiwan, capitalism and the rule of law also came first. That pattern may explain why regions like Latin America that have democratized first and then begun economic liberalization have had an especially challenging time at promoting economic freedom or growth.

Today, countries in Eastern and Central Europe, Latin America, and elsewhere are trying

Economic Freedom & Income per Capita



Adapted from *Economic Freedom of the World: 2005 Annual Report*

economic liberty. The UN's Human Development Index correlates positively with greater economic freedom. Significantly, so too does Freedom House's index of political and civil liberties: Countries with more economic freedom tend to have more of the other freedoms as well.

Self-sustaining growth has, in fact, long depended on an environment that encourages free enterprise and the protection of private property. The West's escape from mass poverty in the 1800s occurred in such an environment, which in turn initiated the era of modern economic growth. Even before then, the emergence of a commercial class of farmers in England led to its representation in Parliament, where in the 17th century it successfully limited arbitrary confiscations of wealth by the crown—in short, the rise of commercial farmers helped establish constitutional monarchy. Credible limitations on the power of government enhanced property rights and the rule of law, major factors in the rise of Great Britain as the world's preeminent economic and political power. As Great Britain grew wealthier, of course, it became a democracy.

More recent evidence supports the idea that growth and higher levels of income lead to, or at least help sustain, democracy. Political scientists Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi studied 135 countries between 1950 and 1990 and found that "per capita income is a good predictor of the stability of democracies." For example, they found that in countries with a per capita income below \$1,000 (in 1985 PPP dollars), democracies could on average expect to survive eight years. (PPP stands for purchasing power parity, a theory that states that exchange rates between currencies are in equilibrium when their purchasing power is the same in each of the two countries.) When incomes ranged between \$1,001 and \$2,000, the probability of democratic survival was 18 years. Those democracies in countries with incomes above \$6,055 could expect to last forever.

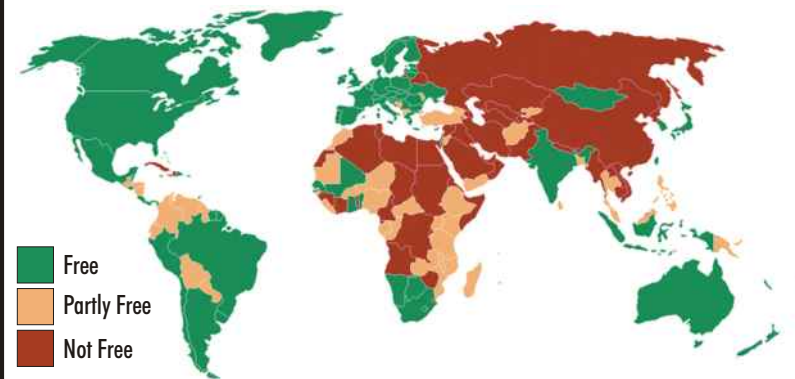
Economic freedom produces growth but does not always lead to democracy. Hong Kong and Singapore, among the world's freest economies, are notable examples. Nor is wealth alone always a product of economic freedom, as attested to by some resource-rich countries with relatively high incomes but where economic power is tightly controlled by the state; as expected, civil and political liberties are also severely limited in



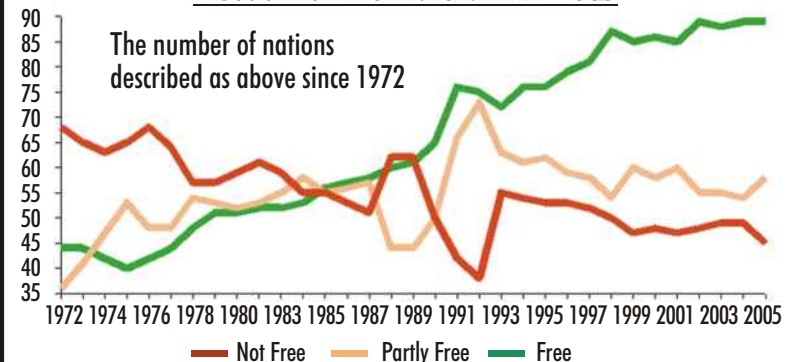
The Elcoteq mobile phone factory in Tallinn is a player in Estonia's bid for economic freedom, strengthening democracy there.
AP/WWP Kaja-kadi Sepp

Freedom House reveals the progress of freedom

Freedom in the World



Freedom on the march: 1972-2005



Freedom House is a research institute, in Washington, D.C., focused on promoting liberal democracy in the World.

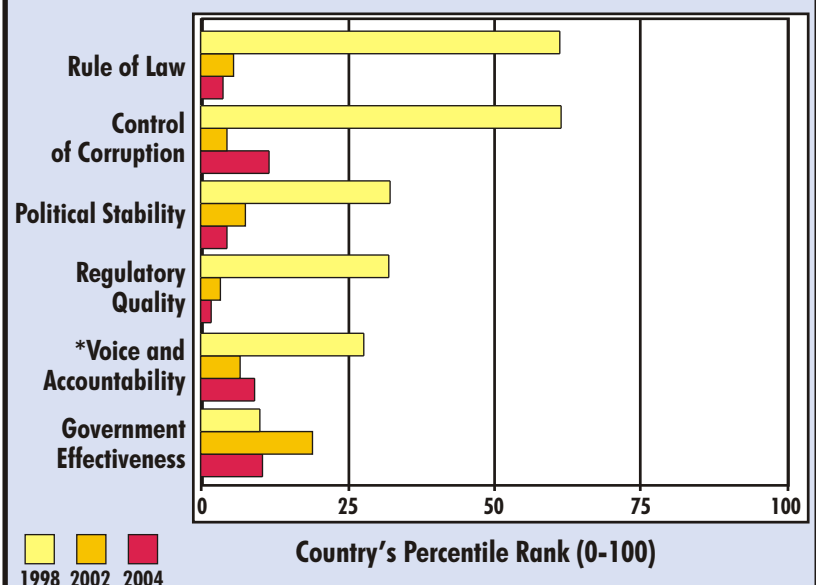
Freedom House is best known for its annual reports on the degree of democratic freedoms in each country in the world, by which it seeks to assess the current state of civil and political rights in every nation on Earth. These reports are often quoted in the media and often used by political scientists when doing research.

Source: Freedom House; Wikipedia.org

to achieve, with varying degrees of success, both democracy and economic freedom at the same time. In some cases, economic freedom has been rolled back or is no longer a priority, something that augurs poorly for democracy. In other cases, such as Estonia, economic freedom has steadily increased, thus strengthening democracy. Those of us who believe in democratic capitalism—whether we live in rich democracies, poor democracies, or autocratic states—should never lose sight of the central role of economic freedom in achieving a free society.

The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.

World Bank Report - Confidence Rating: ZIMBABWE



The indicators are based on several hundred individual variables measuring perceptions of governance, drawn from 37 separate data sources constructed by 31 different organizations.

*Voice and Accountability are established through various organizations analyzing topics such as: Vested Interests; Accountability of Public Officials; Human Rights; Civil Liberties; Public Confidence in Parliament, etc.

Source: Governance Matters IV: Governance Indicators for 1996-2004, Working Papers and Articles by D. Kaufmann, A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi (2005) Draft, May 9, 2005 <http://web.worldbank.org> or http://info.worldbank.org/governance/kkz2004/sc_country.asp

Democracy's Challenge

Democracy has emerged as the system of choice for nations around the world.

By Peter Berkowitz

As the 21st century unfolds, democracy a system of government in which the people choose their leaders in regular, free, fair and competitive elections has emerged as the regime of choice for nations around the world. This does not mean that history has ended, that by some steady and inexorable process all countries will eventually and sooner rather than later embrace democracy, or that contemporary thinkers have at last discovered the one final and true model of good government. It does mean that, with increasing frequency, when people are given the choice not just in North America and Western Europe but also in South America and Eastern Europe and Asia and the Middle East and Africa they prefer to have a say in how they are governed; they want to hold those who hold political office accountable; they want laws based on persuasion rather than imposed through violence; and they want government to protect individual freedom and secure equality before the law.

Today a majority of states are democratic and their numbers continue to grow. Indeed, the movement toward democracy since the end of World War II and in particular over the last 30 years has been nothing short of astonishing. There were approximately 20 democracies in 1950 out of the world's 80 sovereign states. In 1974, about 40 of the world's 150 countries could be called democratic. Since then, thanks in no small measure to the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the nonviolent dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the ending of the standoff between East and West through America's victory in the Cold War, democracy has spread through Eastern Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa. In the last 30 years, the total number of democracies has tripled: Today, according to Freedom House, there are about 120 democracies, or two thirds of the world's 193 states.

The one region where a more serious or sustained movement in the direction of democratic change has not yet been evidenced is the Muslim Middle East. But 2005 has witnessed a cluster of favorable developments. National elections and a constitutional convention in Iraq, the expulsion of Syrian forces from Lebanon and the demand by the people for self-government, the decision by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to hold multi-party elections, and the passage of a law by the Kuwaiti National Assembly granting women the right to vote suggest that the people of the Muslim Middle East are open to, and are increasingly acquiring the taste for, democracy.

The spread of democracy around the globe makes understanding its presuppositions, its principles, and its prospects all the more necessary. Those who have never lived under any other form of government can easily come to take democracy for granted. And those for whom democracy is a relatively

new experience, or those aspiring to democracy, or those for whom it represents an intimidating or menacing foreign intrusion might not fully understand what democracy requires of, and what it offers, citizens. So it is useful, from a variety of points of view, to ask: What is democracy? Where did democracy come from and how has it developed? In what ways may democracies reasonably differ? What are democracy's indispensable foundations? What are democracy's weak points and unwise tendencies? And how do new developments in world politics and technology effect democracy's prospects?

DEMOCRACY IN ANCIENT GREECE

Democracy comes from two Greek words, *demos* which means the people, and *kratein*, which means to rule. In the Greek world, democracy was understood in contrast to monarchy, in which one person rules, and oligarchies, in which a few rule. Although it never became the norm in classical antiquity,



Democracy in ancient Greece lasted 241 years.

the first great flowerings of democracy took place in the ancient Greek city of Athens. Democracy lasted there from 508 to 267 B.C., and, until the United States turns 241 years old in 2017, ancient Athens remains the longest living democracy in world history.

In Athens, the people, or rather the eligible population—male citizens 18 years of age and older—ruled directly in the Assembly and discussed politics openly in the agora (marketplace). At the peak of its glory, in the middle of the 5th century B.C., the Athenian statesman Pericles, according to the historian Thucydides, praised Athenian democracy for its superiority to all alternatives. Its superiority, Pericles explained in his famous funeral oration for Athenian soldiers who had died during the Peloponnesian War, stemmed from the liberty and equality enjoyed by its citizens. But it was liberty that did not generate into anarchy, and an equality not in all things but before the law. In Athens, Pericles declared, individuals were rewarded for their merits, both private life and the public good were respected, culture thrived, debate flourished, innovation was encouraged, outsiders were welcome, and, thanks to its openness to the new and different, Athens acquired the know-how to defeat its enemies in war. To be sure, the realities of Athenian life often fell short of the ideals Pericles described. But the ideals, rooted in the democratic principle, gave life to the people's hopes and guided their aspirations.

Athenian democracy did not lack for critics.

Both Plato (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) agreed that democracy was far from the best regime. It was defective, they contended, because it allowed people to live according to their likes and dislikes rather than reason and virtue. Plato in particular was influenced in his judgments about democracy by the trial of his revered teacher Socrates (469-399 B.C.), in which a citizen jury of 500 Athenians found Socrates guilty of corrupting the young and of impiety, and then sentenced him to death.

Despite their reservations, both Plato and Aristotle offered qualified defenses of democracy. In the *Republic*, Plato's Socrates praises democracy as multicolored cloak that, in providing a home to all human types, provides freedom also for those who wish to live in accordance with reason and virtue. Aristotle argued that the best practicable regime—the form of government that most people most of the time could most reasonably hope to live under—was actually a mixed regime, in which some power was exercised democratically by the people and some power exercised oligarchically, or by the wealthy few.

In general—and here Plato and Aristotle do not offer forceful criticism—Athenians did not see a contradiction between democracy and slavery or between democracy and the exclusion of women from politics. Although democracy as the Athenians understood it placed all citizens on an equal footing, it did not confer citizenship on all individuals. Indeed, the democratic idea that the people should rule does not specify just who belongs to “the people.” To reach the conclusion that individuals should not be excluded from politics on the basis of class, or religious belief, or sex or race requires another principle. In the modern era, this principle was supplied for democracy by the liberal tradition.

THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC TRADITION

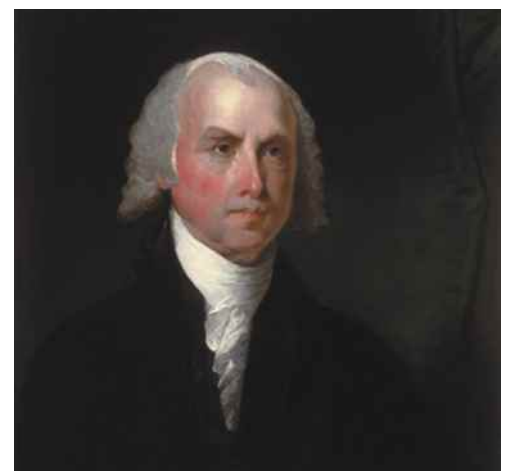
The liberal tradition—the tradition of John Locke (1632-1704), James Madison (1751-1836), the Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755), Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)—is grounded in the belief that human beings are by nature free and equal. It tends to understand this natural freedom and equality in terms of rights that are shared equally by all. Today, it is more common to speak of human rights than of natural rights. But the doctrine of human rights, which undergirds the U.N. Charter and informs international law, while deriving support from a variety of traditions, has its immediate intellectual origins in liberalism's natural rights tradition.

The liberal principle modifies the democratic principle in at least two crucial ways. First, it proclaims that, from the point of view of moral and political life, our common humanity is more fundamental than differences of class, sex, race or even religious belief. And second, by defining freedom and equality in terms of rights that preexist government, the liberal

principle asserts that there are some actions government may not take against individuals regardless of how large and how passionate the majority in favor of them. When most people today use the term democracy, what they actually mean is liberal democracy.

All modern liberal democracies are also representative democracies. Instead of gathering to vote directly on the laws as in Athens, citizens today vote for lawmakers who draft and pass laws, and for executives responsible for putting the laws into effect. The indirect rule of the people through their representatives involves a further modification of democracy's original meaning. Indeed, in the 18th century, when America and France were bringing modern liberal democracy into being, the objection had to be overcome that, because the people must rule directly, democracy was only applicable to small, tight-knit populations, living closely together in a single, compact, well-defined geographic area.

James Madison rose to the challenge in *Federalist 10*, one of a series of newspaper articles he wrote along with Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804) and John Jay (1745-1829) to persuade fellow citizens to support ratification of the U.S. Constitution.



James Madison (1751 – 1836)

Madison was the fourth (1809–1817) President of the United States. Known as the “Father of the Constitution,” he played a leading role in the creation of the United States Constitution in 1787. Working closely with Thomas Jefferson, he created the Democratic-Republican Party in the mid-1790s and built a movement of grass roots political activism that was victorious in the “Revolution of 1800.”

Representation, he argued, allows self-government to be extended to a complex commercial republic composed of a large population stretching across a vast and varied land. At the same time, it serves as a corrective to the tendency of democracy to

give expression to the momentary whims of the people. Instead of voting on each and every law, the people vote for office holders who, by virtue of their knowledge of politics and their standing in the community, can be counted on to deliberate patiently and fashion laws that will serve the public good. And if the people conclude that their representatives have performed their jobs poorly and betrayed the trust placed in them, the people can vote them out of office.

In a representative democracy, the people are sovereign and government is based on their consent, but what the people consent to is the entire scheme of government institutions and the



John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)

settled procedures for making law and adjudicating disputes. In this way, the people consent to honor the laws produced by their representatives, even those laws with which they disagree, provided that the laws are enacted through the agreed upon institutions and procedures, are consistent with the rights guaranteed by the constitution or the supreme law of the land, and do not infringe the most fundamental natural or human rights. Moreover, the very same democratic institutions and procedures that permit the making of bad laws also afford citizens the opportunity to persuade a majority to elect officials who will pass better laws.

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY TODAY: FOUNDATIONS AND VARIATIONS

Different democracies may choose different institutional arrangements for securing individual rights and maintaining equality before the law. Most modern democracies,



Venezuelans demonstrate their right to freedom of expression, November, 2003. (©AP/WWP)

for example, have chosen a parliamentary system, in which the leader of the executive branch of government is chosen by and dependent upon the legislative branch. The United States is in the minority in having adopted a presidential system, in which the chief executive is chosen by the people and is largely separate from and independent of the legislative branch. Both systems rely on an independent judiciary to impartially adjudicate the disputes that inevitably arise under the law. The advantage of the parliamentary system is thought to consist in its greater responsiveness to the will of the people and in the greater flexibility that it gives to office holders. The advantage of the presidential system is thought to lie in the checks and balances on both popular will and ambitious politicians that is built into its separation of the legislative, executive and judicial powers. It is to the advantage of citizens who live under both systems to study the alternative to better appreciate the strengths and weakness of their own form

of government.

Despite the wide scope for differences in designing democratic institutions, historical experience has suggested that modern democracy has certain indispensable foundations. Several of these foundations involve limitations on government action. For example, freedom of speech, which includes liberty of thought and discussion, prohibits government from making laws prescribing to people what they should think or say. It is essential because all other freedoms derive from the citizen's ability to think his or her own thoughts and devise independent plans. Freedom of assembly helps ensure that citizens can discuss their thoughts with others, openly and in public if desired, or discreetly and in private if preferred. Freedom of worship affirms that government may not dictate to individuals how to worship and the content of religious faith, or whether to worship at all. Protections for those accused of crimes keeps government from using its enormous weight to unfair advantage in arresting, detaining and trying those believed to have committed crimes.

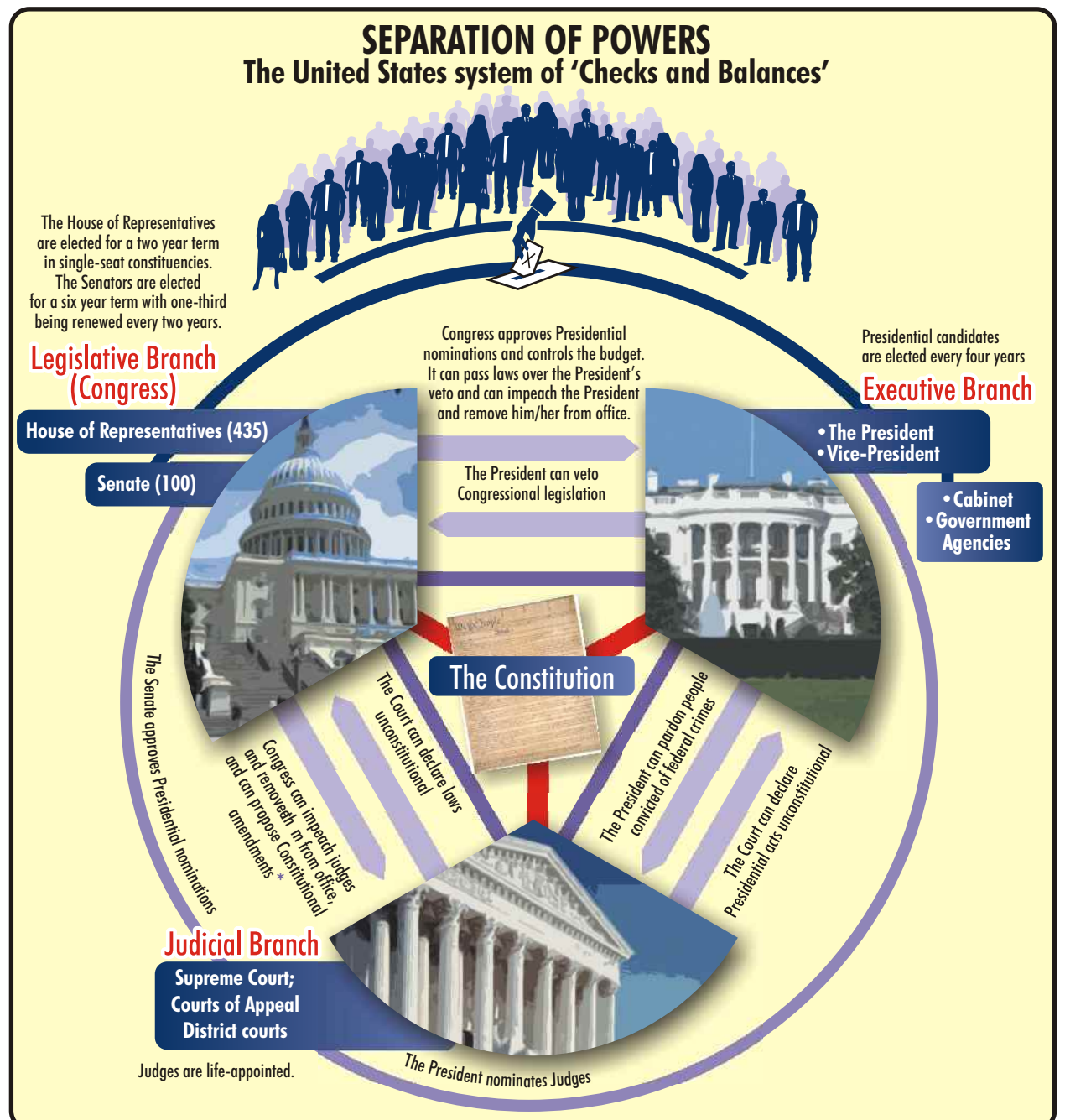
Not all of democracy's foundations involve the elaboration of formal rights. An independent judiciary provides a source above party politics for refereeing disputes about what the law commands, forbids or permits. A free economy enables individuals to enjoy the fruits of their labor and to cooperate and compete with each other in a way that increases the prosperity of society as a whole. A free press furnishes citizens with multiple sources of news and competing opinions and thereby enables them to make up their minds in an informed manner.

In any particular case, democracies are bound to differ over just where to strike the balance between individual rights and government power. Moreover, reasonable people can disagree about the optimal structure of the judiciary, the proper degree of state regulation of the economy, and the outermost boundaries of press freedom. Thus, it is in the interest of democracies to look to the practices of fellow democracies for perspective and for new ideas on how best to realize their shared goal of liberty and equality under law.

Like all forms of government, modern liberal democracy has its weaknesses and unwise tendencies. Critics from a variety of

perspectives have converged in concluding that liberal democracy tends to break down community and undermine the just claims of custom and tradition, encourages individuals to isolate themselves and prefer their private advantage to the public good, fosters an exaggerated reliance on formal process and individual rights at the expense of reflection on intrinsic merits and ultimate ends, neglects the moral discipline and education in character necessary to form

democracy's weaknesses and unwise tendencies, new eras inevitably give rise to new challenges. This era, the era of globalization, is no different. The current revolution in travel and telecommunications has made the world smaller and brought sights and words from all over the world to desktops and laptops. In this lies a democratic advantage. With a few clicks of the computer mouse, we can enjoy unprecedented access to an amazing range



good citizens, and, under the guise of promoting diversity imposes a uniformity of belief and conduct. Its adversaries sometimes speak as if these criticisms provide grounds for rejecting democracy. Some of democracy's misguided friends act as if it were a betrayal to even acknowledge that democracy has faults. In fact, knowledge of democracy's faults is a vital supplement to the appreciation of democracy's foundations. For it is in light of democracy's foundations that nations must craft liberal and democratic correctives to democracy's weaknesses and unwise tendencies.

WHITHER DEMOCRACY?

Although there is no reason to suppose that the future will bring changes that will render democracy's foundations unnecessary or that will overcome once and for all

of opinions from a genuine diversity of sources on the great issues of the day. This can foster political debate and enhance tolerance for competing points of view. But there is a danger as well. Thanks to the very same communications technology, it has become easier than ever before for people to immerse themselves in reporting and opining that reinforces preconceptions and partisan preferences. This can polarize politics and, indeed, fuel hostility to the very idea of competition between rival points of view.

It is up to democracy's supporters to ensure it meets both the old challenges and the new ones.

Peter Berkowitz teaches at George Mason University School of Law and is a fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution.

Totalitarian "democracy"

Totalitarian democracy is a term made famous by Israeli historian J.L. Talmon to refer to a system of government in which lawfully elected representatives maintain the integrity of a nation state whose citizens, while granted the right to vote, have little or no participation in the decision-making process of the government.

A totalitarian democracy, says Talmon, accepts "exclusive territorial sovereignty" as its right. It retains full power of expropriation and full power of imposition, i.e., the right of control over everything and everyone. Maintenance of such power, in the absence of full support of the citizenry, requires the forceful suppression of any dissenting element except that which the government purposely permits or

organizes. Liberal democrats, who see political strength as growing from the bottom up (cf. "grass roots"), reject in principle the idea of coercion in shaping political will, but the totalitarian democratic state holds it as an ongoing imperative.

A totalitarian democratic state is said to maximize its control over the lives of its citizens, using the dual rationale of general will (i.e., "public good") and majority rule. An argument can be made that in some circumstances it is actually the political, economic, and military elite who interpret the general will to suit their own interests. Again, however, it is the imperative of achieving the overarching goal of a political nirvana that shapes the vision of the process, and the citizen is expected to contribute to the best of his abilities; the general is not asked to guide the plow, nor is the farmer asked to lead the troops.

Source: www.wikipedia.org

Democracy Prevails in Liberia



Liberia Elects Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf President

On November 8, 2005, just two years after Liberia emerged from a brutal 14-year civil war that claimed more than 200,000 lives and displaced a third of the population, the nation elected the first woman president to serve as a head of state in modern African history. The National Election Commission declared that former World Bank economist Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf won 59 percent of the run-off vote, defeating international soccer star George Weah, who obtained 41 percent.

Although Weah and many of his supporters challenged the results, domestic and international election observers maintained that the run-off vote, which came nearly one month after the first round of elections, was largely free and fair. Liberians came out in impressive numbers to cast their ballots in both rounds, many lining up at polling stations as early as 1 a.m. Government, international observers, and United Nations military kept watch at the polls as identification cards were checked against pictures in the voter roster, ballots were handed out, and fingers were marked with indelible ink to prevent double voting. Citizens cast their votes behind a cardboard booth, folded the ballot, and placed it in a container. Minimal violence was observed, with the exception of a few flared tempers on the part of exhausted voters who traveled lengthy distances and waited exceptionally long hours. The level of participation on the part of the citizenry for both rounds of the presidential election turnout was estimated at 75 percent signaled that the Liberian people "are united around a common objective of transforming this war-ravaged nation through democratic governance," according to the National Elections Committee (NEC).

Liberia's successful shift to peace and democracy depends on a free and fair electoral process, which counts on the

tireless efforts of dedicated organizations that can offer support in numerous capacities. One of the most prominent organizations encouraging positive civic contributions from Liberian youth, the National Youth Movement for Transparent Elections (NAYMOTE), relied on NED support to provide many different services to ensure a free and fair election. NAYMOTE assisted in election monitoring, published hourly reports on voting conditions, issued press releases containing independently-confirmed tallies, and provided independent observers for the run-off vote. In the run-up to the election, NAYMOTE launched a massive and sustained electoral outreach campaign geared towards increasing citizens' understanding and participation in the political campaign and voting process, which

was accomplished by the distribution and posting of several reader-friendly posters, flyers, and banners at strategic locations around the country. Targeting the youth vote was especially important in this election, with no less than 40 percent of the electorate under the age of 28.

NED and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) have also long supported the Press Union of Liberia (PUL), Liberia's oldest, largest, and most credible press organization, which has consistently defended democracy and freedom of the press and protected journalists and human rights defenders. For this year's presidential election, PUL made an impressive contribution to democracy through the formulation of an elections coverage code of conduct for Liberian journalists, which was drafted in collaboration

with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and largely respected by Liberia's print and electronic media. When erroneous and partisan coverage of the election did occur, PUL responded by suspending one newspaper editor and reprimanding several radio outlets. And to help the electorate make an informed decision, PUL also organized a presidential debate before the first round of the elections, when 22 candidates were in the running. Twelve candidates took part in the debates, among them Johnson-Sirleaf.

Another important element of the effort to unify the Liberian people in support of democracy has been outreach to rural communities that were most affected by the violent conflict. With NED support, the Center for Democracy and Education (CENDE) conducted training in marginalized rural communities to empower citizens to actively and responsibly participate in Liberia's transition to democracy. CENDE successfully raised public awareness about civil rights, good governance, and the rule of law through a uniquely grassroots method of civic education, which was readily adopted by rural populations.

Liberia reached the end of its destructive 14-year conflict with the signing of the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the two main rebel factions and the remnants of President Charles Taylor's government. The peace agreement established a contentious transitional government composed of rebel leaders, Taylor supporters, and members of civil society. Fortunately, Liberian civil society has grown into a vibrant force for peace and democracy in the country, thanks to the hard work of democratic activists and civil society

groups who have fought hard for human rights awareness, civic education and training, freedom of the press, and a credible and transparent electoral process. NED looks forward to continuing its longstanding commitment to democratic progress, and with a democratically elected government in place, the Liberian people may finally look forward to a new era of peace and prosperity. (Source: NED.org)



Liberians patiently waited in long lines to cast their ballots in the first democratic election since the end of the civil war.



Voters who have waited in long lines to cast their ballots bombard an election official with their identification cards.



Liberian President Johnson-Sirleaf at her inauguration, January 2006 (©AP/WWP)

Words of Freedom

Excerpts From the Inaugural Speech
of Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, 2006

Vice President Boakai and I have just participated in the time-honored constitutional ritual of oath-taking as we embark upon our responsibilities to lead this Republic. This ritual is symbolically and politically significant and substantive. It reflects the enduring character of the democratic tradition of the peaceful and orderly transfer of political power and authority. It also confirms the culmination of a commitment to our nation's collective search for a purposeful and responsive national leadership.

We applaud the resilience of our people who, weighed down and dehumanized by poverty and rendered immobile by the shackles of fourteen years of civil war, went courageously to the polls, to vote - not once but twice, to elect Vice President Joseph Boakai and me to serve them. We express to you, our people, our deep sense of appreciation and gratitude for the opportunity to serve you and our common Republic. We pledge to live up to your expectations of creating a government that is attentive and responsive to your needs, concerns, and the development and progress of our country.

We know that your vote was a vote for change; a vote for peace, security and stability; a vote for individual and national prosperity; a vote for healing and leadership. We have heard you loudly, and we humbly accept your vote of confidence and your mandate. This occasion, held under the cloudy skies, marks a celebration of change and a dedication to an agenda for a socio-economic and political reordering; indeed, a national renewal.

Today, we wholeheartedly embrace this change. We recognize that this change is not change for change sake, but a fundamental break with the past, thereby requiring that we take bold and decisive steps to address the problems that for decades have stunted our progress, undermined national unity, and kept old and new cleavages in ferment.

As we embrace this new commitment to change, it is befitting that, for the first time, the inauguration is being held on the Capitol Grounds, one of the three seats of

Government. We pledge anew our commitment to transparency, open government, and participatory democracy for all of our citizens.

Fellow Liberians, Ladies and Gentlemen: No one who has lived in or visited this country in the past fifteen years will deny the physical destruction and the moral decadence that the civil war has left in its wake here in Monrovia and in other cities, towns, and villages across the nation.

Our record shows that we are a strong and resilient people, able to survive; able to rise from the ashes of civil strife and to start anew; able to forge a new beginning, forgiving if not forgetting the past. We are a good and friendly people, braced for hope even as we wipe away the tears of past suffering and despair. Our challenge, therefore, is to transform adversity into opportunity, to renew the promises upon which our nation was founded: freedom, equality, unity and individual progress.

First, let me declare in our pursuit of political renewal, that the political campaign is over. It is time for us, regardless of our political affiliations and persuasions, to come together to heal and rebuild our nation. For my part, as President of the Republic of Liberia, my Government extends a hand of friendship and solidarity to the leadership and members of all political parties, many of them sitting right in front of me, which participated in our recent presidential and legislative elections. I call upon those who have been long in the struggle - and those who recently earned their stripes - to play important roles in the rebuilding of our nation.

Committed to advance the spirit of inclusion, I assure all Liberians and our international partners and friends that our Government will recognize and support a strong democratic and loyal opposition in Liberia. This is important because we believe that our democratic culture and our nation are best served when the opposition is strong and actively engaged in the process of nation building.

Let us rejoice that our recent democratic exercise has been a redemptive act of faith and an expression of renewed confidence in ourselves. Let us be proud that we were able to ultimately rise above our intense political and other differences in a renewed determination as a people to foster dialogue instead of violence, promote unity rather than disharmony, and engender hope rather than disillusionment and despair.

My Administration therefore commits itself to the creation of a democracy in which the constitutional and civil liberties and rights of all of our people will be respected.

My Fellow Citizens: Let me assure you that my Presidency shall remain committed to serve all Liberians without fear or favor. I am President for all of the people of the country. I therefore want to assure all of our people that neither I, nor any person serving my Administration will pursue any vendetta. There will be no vindictiveness. There will be no policies of political, social, and economic exclusion. We will be inclusive and tolerant, ever sensitive to the anxieties, fears, hopes, and aspirations of all of our people irrespective of ethnic, political, religious affiliation, and social status.

By their votes, the Liberian people have sent a clear message! They want peace; they want to move on with their lives. My charge as President is to work to assure the wishes of our people. We will therefore encourage our citizens to utilize our system of due process for settling differences. We will make sure that we work together as a people, knowing, however, that we will forcefully and decisively respond to any acts of lawlessness, threats to our hard earned peace, or destabilizing actions that could return us to conflict.

My Fellow Liberians: We are moving forward. The best days are coming. The future belongs to us because we have taken charge of it. So, let us begin anew, moving forward into a future that is filled with promise, filled with hope!

Four African Freedom Activists Honored

Recipients chosen for efforts to establish, improve democracy in Africa

By Rachel J. King
Washington File
Staff Writer

Four African activists, two men and two women, were honored with the 2006 Democracy Award of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) on June 27 for their contributions to the advancement of democracy, human rights, gender equality, government transparency and free and fair elections in their homelands.

The NED has presented the Democracy Award nearly each year since 1987 to activists for outstanding achievements, both personal and on behalf of the organizations with which they work. Honorees have demonstrated leadership in working toward democracy and good governance.

This year, all four recipients were selected from nations in sub-Saharan Africa, although in past years recipients also have come from Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe. The 2006 recipients are Alfred Taban from Sudan, Reginald Matchaba-Hove from Zimbabwe, Zainab Hawa Bangura from Sierra Leone and Immaculée Birhaheka from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They received their awards at the Cannon House Office Building on Capitol Hill.

"Africa has been witness to more protracted conflicts than any region of the world," said NED Chairman Vin Weber. "The individuals NED honors this year have demonstrated enormous personal courage and optimism, facing down brutal regimes and working in some of the most harrowing circumstances imaginable. If democracy continues to advance in Africa, it will be due to the dedication of activists like these."

Taban, a publisher and chairman of Sudan's only independent English-language daily newspaper, the Khartoum Monitor, accepted the award on behalf of the "long-



Zimbabwe's Reginald Matchaba-Hove, second from left, and co-honorees met with President Bush in the Oval Office

suffering" and "marginalized" people in Darfur.

"With this award, I am going to continue the struggle for a true democratic Sudan," he said.

Matchaba-Hove, chairman of the Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network, has advocated for the provision of basic social services as well as for free and transparent elections in his country.

The activist said the inspiration for his struggle for human rights was American civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr.

Bangura, a chief civil affairs officer for the U.N. Mission in Liberia, said that it has been a long and frustrating journey toward democracy, but added "our voices have become louder," thanks to the continued effort.

She emphasized, however, that there is still much more to be done to establish democracy throughout Africa.

Birhaheka, president of Promotion and Support of Women's Initiatives, an organization that she co-founded has worked to protect political prisoners and end massive rapes of women and girls in the DRC. She said the award represents more than just an honor for her hard work, but also recognition that there is an international interest in the countries of Africa.

"I see it as an award to the Congolese

people," she said. "I also see it as an indication that the NED and the American people are ready to help the Congolese people in their difficult march to democracy."

"These awards recognize the courageous and creative works of these remarkable activists, who have advanced the cause and realized democracy in their homelands," said Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky.

Earlier that afternoon, the four honorees met with President Bush in the Oval Office, where they had what Bush called an "amazing"

discussion on human rights and democratic principles.

"My spirits are enriched by talking to freedom lovers and freedom fighters," the president said. "We've got a man from the Sudan who talked eloquently about free press. We had a doctor from Zimbabwe who talked about the human condition and the need for the United States to make sure we stay engaged with the democracy movements and help people who are hungry."

Bush congratulated the recipients for their work in advancing democracy and said he was "proud to be in their company."

"I thank you for being witness to this universal fact that liberty is universal in its application, that people everywhere desire to be free" and that freedom ... belongs not just to American citizens, "freedom belongs to everybody. And you're courageous in your fight and your desire to spread the concept of freedom," the president said.

The NED is a private, nonprofit organization established in 1983 to strengthen democratic institutions. More information about NED is available on its Web site.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

US Launches \$80 Million Pro-Democracy Effort for Cuba

The U.S. is committed to assisting Cubans as they seek a democratic transition from the Communist regime of Fidel Castro.

Through its Compact with the Cuban People and its Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, the U.S. continues to provide humanitarian aid and, should the U.S. be asked, help with preparations for multiparty democratic elections once Cuba becomes free.

The U.S. is also supporting Cubans who want democratic change by providing uncensored information through radio and television broadcasts and the Internet. During 2007 and 2008, the U.S. will provide eighty million dollars to support these activities. The U.S. will also work to improve enforcement of sanctions to maintain economic pressure on the Cuban regime and limit its ability to sustain itself and repress the Cuban people.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says the U.S. is keeping its promise to support "the right of all Cubans to define a future of freedom and democracy for themselves and their country":

"This Compact and the second report's recommendations reflect America's resolve to stand with Cuba's opposition, men and women who are forced into fearful silence but who remain free in their hearts and minds."

Secretary of State Rice said, "The day will come when the Cuban people take back their sovereignty." On that day, said Ms. Rice, the U.S. "will be there to support them and to begin building the close relationship that two great nations should have."

The financial package will support the existing U.S.-funded Television and Radio Marti, and third-country broadcasting to Cuba, as well as efforts to circumvent what officials here say is the Castro government's blockade of Internet information to the island.

About one-third of the money will go to support independent civil society, though how funds will be channeled to beleaguered democracy groups there is not specified.

The preceding included editorial reflecting the views of the United States Government.

U.S. Strategy to Internationalize Efforts Against Kleptocracy

Continued from Page 1

prosecuting those who pay or promise to pay bribes to foreign public officials. We are also party to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Anti-Bribery Convention and continue to urge our international partners to ensure it is fully enforced.

Through diplomatic efforts and multilateral fora, the United States continues to strengthen political will globally to prevent and combat kleptocracy. The United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), which entered into force in December 2005, provides a framework for international cooperation against corruption, including prevention and law enforcement measures. The United States Government participated in the negotiation of the UNCAC and in drafting the U.N. legislative guide materials for implementing the UNCAC. We have signed the UNCAC and transmitted it to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification. The United States is working with international partners to promote implementation and enforcement of the UNCAC and to design an effective multilateral follow-up mechanism to

monitor its implementation.

Using the UNCAC as an overarching global framework against corruption, we encourage governments to also work through regional instruments and multilateral fora including the Group of Eight (G-8), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, Council of Europe, and the Organization of American States, and through several G-8 regional partnerships in the Middle East (Good Governance for Development in Arab States) and Africa (African Partnership). Our foreign assistance also places high priority on working with partner countries to strengthen critical transparency and administrative, regulatory, rule of law, and law enforcement systems to fight corruption.

This strategy against kleptocracy serves to promote many of the objectives set forth in the March 2006 National Security Strategy by focusing international attention on confronting large-scale corruption by senior-level public officials. This strategy represents a focused element of the fight against corruption and the promotion of transparency

and responsible governance, building on previous work, such as the G-8 Transparency Initiative and the President's Proclamation to Deny Entry to Corrupt Officials, their Assets, and Those Who Corrupt Them. It complements the fundamental underpinnings of other key international initiatives, such as the Millennium Challenge Account, which encourages honest, responsible government by rewarding those that govern justly, invest in their people, and foster economic freedom. In addition, this strategy furthers the national security goal to create a more transparent, accountable, and secure international financial system, in part by safeguarding it against abuse by criminals, terrorists, money launderers, and corrupt political leaders. These same safeguards are essential underpinnings in our efforts to combat terrorist financing and money laundering by creating systemic barriers to prevent tainted capital from entering the legitimate financial system. Finally, this strategy seeks to change the international landscape so that it is wholly unacceptable for senior public officials to engage in large scale corruption and the pilfering of public funds.

Developing Democracy

The Washington Times
By Paula J. Dobriansky

President Bush's 2006 National Security Strategy reaffirms the link between democracy promotion and the advancement of global stability and prosperity. Consistent with this bold vision, across Africa, and throughout the world, the United States is promoting democracy and development.

Significantly, our pro-democracy strategy is carried out with strong support from African partners. A recent poll found that nearly 70 percent of those surveyed in 15 African countries endorse democracy. This pro-democracy spirit is visible in Mali, the current chair of the Community of Democracies (CD), a coalition of over 100 nations committed to strengthening democracy worldwide, and Cape Verde, which participated in a 2004 multi nation CD mission to help consolidate democratic institutions in East Timor.

Democracy yields a range of tangible benefits to the people of Africa by fostering stability and good governance which are essential for economic prosperity. These are the principles that the Millennium Challenge Corporation promotes. Through the MCC, we are granting poverty alleviation assistance to countries that rule justly, invest in people, and foster

economic freedom.

Three of the eight MCC-approved compacts are in Africa (Madagascar, Cape Verde and Benin), as are three of the five approved threshold programs (Ghana, Mali, Lesotho), for a total of \$573 million in assistance. Additional African compacts, totaling almost \$2.7 billion, are pending. Meanwhile, the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act provides significant trade benefits, particularly in the chemical and agricultural sectors, to countries that are making progress toward establishing democracy and a fair investment environment.

We are advancing democracy in Africa with programs to encourage a representative political process; to empower women; to strengthen civil society, democratic institutions, and the rule of law; and to help decentralize government functions and improve transparency and accountability. Through USAID, we spent \$137 million, a 30 percent increase in spending last year, to implement African good governance programs. These include supporting free and fair electoral processes in Angola, Liberia, Burundi, and Sierra Leone, building the civil-society capacity in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia and providing

leadership training to women in Mali.

In the last three years, the United States has also spent over \$36 million to combat trafficking in persons in Africa. Working with governments and NGOs, we have rescued children trafficked into forced labor or sexual exploitation in Ghana, Nigeria, and Burkina Faso; strengthened the ability of police in Senegal and Guinea to arrest and prosecute human traffickers; and funded trafficking prevention campaigns in South Africa and Benin. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's election in Liberia—as Africa's first woman head of State—was a powerful reminder of women's critical democratization role—for half a democracy is no democracy at all.

Working with our African partners, we are fostering the next generation of women leaders through scholarships from the Africa Education Initiative: By the end of this decade, we will have given scholarships to 550,000 girls as part of this \$600 million multi-year program. We are supporting women's justice and empowerment in Africa through a \$55 million initiative to assist four African countries (Benin, Kenya, South Africa and Zambia) to enact new laws on sexual offenses, to enforce higher penalties for sexually violent crimes, and to give women equality in property and inheritance matters. As these programs mature, their successes will produce a ripple effect through other African countries. The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg concluded that sustainable development can be best achieved through dynamic

partnerships between governments and the private sector. The U.S. government supports public-private partnerships, and they are delivering concrete results. Through one partnership, 48 Sub-Saharan African countries eliminated lead in gasoline by the end of 2004, boosting the health of their 733 million people. Through another alliance -- the Global Village Energy Partnership -- over 12.9 million people have increased access to modern energy services.

We recognize that, for all the progress, considerable challenges lie ahead on the road to democracy and prosperity in Africa. Repression and intimidation continue in Zimbabwe. Darfur still suffers the horrors of genocide. Countries emerging from devastating conflicts face massive challenges in infrastructure, employment and basic human needs. Food insecurity, famine, HIV/AIDS, infectious diseases, infant mortality, displacement of communities, and sexual violence continue at an unacceptable rate.

Despite these problems, there is reason to be hopeful. Democracy is taking hold in many parts of Africa, and, with its spread, citizens are being empowered, the rule of law strengthened, the chances of conflict reduced and the pace of sustainable development increased. The United States will remain steadfast with our African partners in this process, as we work together toward a better future for all Africans.

Paula J. Dobriansky is Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs.

Youth Seen as 'Heart' of Democracy Movement in Egypt

The youth population is growing rapidly across the Middle East, and, in many countries, it is a force for change. Huge crowds of mostly young people have taken to the streets in Egypt over the last year, demanding democracy. In a country where half of the population is under the age of 24, the demands of youth are becoming more important than ever. And the scenario is echoed in other countries in the region.

By Challiss McDonough—Cairo

Over the last year, pro-democracy activists have staged hundreds of street protests like this one, demanding change. They shout slogans boldly criticizing President Hosni Mubarak, something nobody has ever dared to do here before. The loosely organized movement is known as Kifaya, the Arabic word for "enough."

President Mubarak has been in power for 24 years. That is longer than some of the protesters have been alive. Many of these demonstrations are led by people in their 20s and 30s. They are part of a Kifaya offshoot, known as Youth For Change, headed by 38-year-old Ahmed Salah. "Older generations are always more conservative, when it comes to action in the street....," he says. "Let's say, Youth For Change has been the spearhead of the democracy movement now, when it comes to action."

It would not be accurate to say that Egypt's pro-democracy movement is entirely youth-based. Some of its leaders are in their 60's, and one is 85. But those older leaders acknowledge that much of the movement's energy comes from the youth. "You know, because the young people... they are the heart of the movement," says George Ishak, 67, is one of Kifaya's founders. "They are the heart of the movement."

Young people have been at the center of other protest movements around the Middle East for decades. For example, university students played a major role in the Iranian revolution of 1979. Young Iranians were also behind the push for change that brought

reformist President Mohammed Khatamei to power in 1997. But the promised reforms there never materialized. The movement lost steam. Many young Iranians grew disenchanted with politics, and a hard-liner was again elected president earlier this year. In Egypt, not all youth are enthusiastically engaged in political struggle. Widespread unemployment and disillusionment about the political process have kept many young people away from the polls in this year's elections.

In September, President Mubarak faced other candidates on the ballot for the first time. But voter turnout remained

low, and local human rights groups said there were some serious irregularities. The State Department called it one step in the march towards full democracy, but also urged continued reforms to ensure that future elections are more credible to the Egyptian people.

Ahmed Salah of Youth for Change acknowledges that many young people are either not interested in politics or are afraid of the consequences of speaking out. But, he says, in the current environment, apathy is becoming a luxury that fewer and fewer can

afford. He sarcastically compares life in Egypt to the dystopian novels of George Orwell. "We are supposed to be living in the best country in the world," he says. "We are having the best kind of freedom that anybody could enjoy, and we should be very thankful to our government and our popular, lovable dictator all the time. This is crazy! How could you just take it? Wouldn't you just get to a point where you have to say, 'no', and you wouldn't care whether you live or die anymore, because you can't get a job anyway?"

Mr. Salah says many young people feel they have no future here anymore. That leaves them with few options. They can

try to emigrate, and many do. They can join the street protests. Or they can just give up. Doaa El-Shami, 21, is working for a popular Islamic Web site, but she says she knows many people her age who are unemployed. "It is a very big problem," she says. "There are lots of college graduates, who cannot find a job, and are doing nothing but selling belts or handbags on the street." She also says a disturbing number of young people - frustrated, bored and unable to find work - are idling their time away in cafes, and some are turning to drugs.



Protestors carrying banners urging voters not to re-elect Hosni Mubarak



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News & Views
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