



2030 M Street, NW
Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 728-5500
(202) 728-5520
www.ndi.org

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT

Jean Freedberg 202-728-5527

NDI CALLS FOR RESPECT OF THE RIGHTS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND WARNS AGAINST COERCION OR VIOLENCE IN THE FORMATION OF CAMBODIA'S NEW GOVERNMENT

Washington DC --- Following is a statement issued by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) regarding the current situation in Cambodia:

“Following the results of the July 27 parliamentary elections and with the approaching September 25 deadline for the formation of a new Cambodian government, the NDI Board of Directors – chaired by Madeleine K. Albright – at its September 10 meeting reaffirms its support for the democratic aspirations of the Cambodian people.

The two major opposition political parties have formed the Alliance of Democrats and are seeking political reforms as a prerequisite for their vote of confidence for a new government, which requires two-thirds majority support in the National Assembly. The government of Cambodia has the obligation to respect the rights of parliamentary parties to play their constitutional role in the formation of a new government. Any use of violence or coercion to subvert the constitutional rights of Cambodian citizens and their elected representatives would destroy prospects for democratic progress. NDI hopes that a genuine negotiating process that includes the government and the opposition Alliance leads to the formation of a new government in accordance with the constitution and that the new government advances democratic values, institutions and processes. The international community should stand in solidarity with these fundamental principles.”

NDI is a nonprofit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Calling on a global network of volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to civic and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government.

For more information about the current situation and NDI's programs in Cambodia, visit NDI's website at <http://www.ndi.org/worldwide/asia/cambodia/cambodia.asp>.

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