



November 24, 2003

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) regrets to announce the suspension of its activities in Guinea until after the December 21 presidential election.

Unfortunately, the prevailing political environment makes it impossible for NDI to conduct activities as planned. Following the failure of repeated attempts to promote political dialogue and the resolution of disagreements over the electoral framework and conditions under which this election will be conducted, NDI has determined that the appropriate course of action is to suspend the Institute's program during the electoral period. The Institute will continue to monitor the evolution of the political situation in order to determine the best way to support Guinean democrats in the future.

NDI had planned to conduct trainings for party poll watchers to observe the December election in Guinea. This activity was envisioned in the context of NDI/Guinea's ongoing program to strengthen political parties, which has since 2000 included support to parties of all tendencies in order to improve their abilities to function in a democratic society, as well as efforts to foster constructive multiparty dialogue.

In light of the failure of the government of the Republic of Guinea to put in place minimum standards for a credible electoral process that would permit the equal participation of all political actors, the continuation of NDI's program is not appropriate under the present circumstances. NDI strongly urges all sides to avoid violence and respect the rights of citizens to participate or abstain from the electoral process.

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