



THE CARTER CENTER



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UNITED NATIONS, AND OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES AND NGOs ADOPT STANDARDS FOR ELECTION MONITORING

WASHINGTON DC – National Democratic Institute Chairman and former U.S. Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright** will join former U.S. President **Jimmy Carter**, UN Secretary-General **Kofi Annan** and OAS Secretary General **José Miguel Insulza** and others on October 27 to unveil a *Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation*. Together with representatives of more than 20 participating intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, both regional and international, they will launch the Declaration at a ceremony at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

International election observation has become central to helping nations around the world consolidate peace and strengthen democracy. The 12-page Declaration of Principles and its accompanying Code of Conduct bring participating observer groups for the first time under a common set of standards for professional, impartial and effective observation. They are intended to establish consensus on key principles, to provide guidelines for best practices for the growing field of election observation, to protect the integrity of democratic elections and help advance democratic transitions. This initiative was started by the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division, the NDI and the Carter Center, which served as the Secretariat for the project.

The full text of the Declaration may be read at www.ndi.org or www.cartercenter.org

“Our hope is that the Declaration will enable consistency among observer groups and ensure the effectiveness and credibility of observation missions worldwide,” said former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

“This Declaration brings together an unprecedented group of international organizations in support of the principles of international election observation,” said NDI Chairman and former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. “It is a major landmark in developing an international consensus on the standards for election observation.”

Endorsing organizations commit themselves, for example: to act impartially; monitor all stages of the election process; and accept no funding from the host government. The common standards also establish prerequisites for observation, such as freedom of movement, freedom to make public statements and free access to information. They are also specific about the principle of ensuring that sending monitors not be done in a way that lends undue legitimacy to undemocratic elections.

In addition to the United Nations, organizations participating in the meeting include:

African Union

Asian Network for Free Elections

The Carter Center

Center for Electoral Promotion and Advice of the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights

Commonwealth Secretariat
Electoral Institute of Southern Africa
European Commission
European Network of Electoral Monitoring Organizations
Electoral Reform International Services
IFES
La Francophonie
International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
Inter-parliamentary Union
International Republican Institute
National Democratic Institute
Organization of American States
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe - Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
Pacific Islands Australia New Zealand Electoral Administrators Network
Pacific Island Forum
Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum.

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 to promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. For more information visit www.ndi.org.

The Carter Center is a not-for-profit, nongovernmental organization, founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, committed to advancing peace and health worldwide. For more information visit www.cartercenter.org.

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