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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FORMER SENATE MAJORITY LEADER DASCHLE
TO LEAD NDI PAKISTAN ELECTION MISSION**

Group to Assess Conditions Prior to Parliamentary Elections

ISLAMABAD – Former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle will lead a Pre-Election Assessment Mission in Pakistan on behalf of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) from October 17 to 21 to observe conditions ahead of parliamentary elections.

The purpose of the Pre-Election Assessment Mission – the second such mission conducted by NDI this year – is to examine key elements of the electoral process as they relate to the planned general elections and the previous NDI recommendations.

The Assessment Mission will also consider and draft specific recommendations to improve the fairness and transparency of the process, as Pakistan gears up for its first nationwide legislative elections since 2002.

The four-person delegation conducting the mission will hold nationwide meetings with political parties, electoral officials, government officials and civil society representatives.

The delegation will also include former president of the New Zealand National Party Susanne Wood and NDI's Asia Regional Director Peter Manikas.

They will present and discuss their findings and recommendations with the Electoral Commission of Pakistan, political leaders, civil society organizations, Pakistani media and the international community. The delegation will issue a statement upon completion of its mission on October 21.

The first NDI Pre-Election Assessment Mission was conducted between May 13-17. The findings were made public at the mission's conclusion.

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