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**NDI TO CLOSE OFFICE IN TAJIKISTAN**

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Democratic Institute (NDI) announced today that it has closed its office in Dushanbe and ceased program work there because the government of Tajikistan has refused to approve the organization’s application for registration. NDI’s third application in the past four months was rejected last week.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, who serves as chairman of the NDI Board of Directors, said, “NDI’s registration in Tajikistan would have been a positive sign of the government of Tajikistan’s willingness to fulfill its commitments to international cooperation.”

“In this time of growing interdependence among nations, we regret that the Tajik government would not want to learn from the reform experiences of other countries,” said NDI President Kenneth Wollack. “NDI has appreciated its relationships with civic groups and parties from across Tajikistan’s political spectrum. We look forward to one day resuming our programs with these partners,” he said.

NDI began working in the Republic of Tajikistan in 2002, in a nonpartisan manner, to share international experiences with civic groups and all registered political parties. NDI’s program activities in Tajikistan have been on hold since April 2006 while NDI sought registration. The Institute currently operates throughout Central Asia, with offices in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

NDI is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. 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 in about 100 countries.

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