

**Council of Freely-Elected
Heads of Government**

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**NDI/COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION DELEGATION
ARRIVES IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

An international election observer delegation organized by the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, based at The Carter Center, and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) will arrive in Santo Domingo on Sunday, May 12, to begin preparations for observing the May 16 presidential election. The delegation will include election experts, political and civic leaders, and democratic development experts from 11 countries throughout Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Former Colombian President Belisario Betancur and former Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio will lead the delegation.

The delegation's principal purpose is to demonstrate the international community's interest and support for the strengthening of the democratic processes in the Dominican Republic and to provide the international community with an objective assessment of the Dominican electoral process. In witnessing these elections, NDI/Council recognizes that Dominican citizens will ultimately determine the legitimacy of the 1996 presidential election as well as whether the results express the will of the electorate.

While in the Dominican Republic, the delegation will meet with electoral officials, political party candidates, leaders of civic organizations, journalists and others involved with the election process at the national and local level. The delegation will receive detailed briefings in Santo Domingo before deploying throughout the country to observe voting, ballot counting, and tabulation of results. The observer delegation will conduct its activities in accordance with the laws of the Dominican Republic and international standards and practices concerning electoral processes and electoral rights. After the election, the delegation will reassemble in Santo Domingo for a comprehensive debriefing and plans to issue a preliminary post-election statement at a press conference on May 18 at 11 a.m. at the Sheraton Hotel.

During the past decade, NDI and the Council have monitored more than 50 elections around the world. In the Dominican Republic, NDI and The Carter Center co-sponsored an international election observation delegation for the 1990 election. NDI also organized an election observation delegation for the 1994 elections. An April pre-election assessment mission to the 1996 election, headed by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former Colombian President Belisario Betancur, found a promising atmosphere for the May 16 election but was presented with several concerns, including: the implementation of the new "colegio cerrado" voting procedure; lack of direct access to the Election Commission's computer center; a limitation placed on the number of national observers; and questions raised about the eligibility of some individuals on the voter list.

DELEGATION CO-LEADERS

H.E. Belisario Betancur, former President of Colombia
 H.E. Ramiro de Leon Carpio, former President of Guatemala

DELEGATES

Dr. Emilio Alvarez Montalban, Professor, The Catholic University (Nicaragua)
 Dr. Fidel Chavez Mena, Former President of the Christian Democratic Party (El Salvador)
 Carlos Bascunan, Executive Director, Corporation of Justice and Democracy (Chile)
 Bruce Clark, Kankakee County Clerk, State of Illinois (United States)
 Santiago Canton, Director for Latin America and Caribbean, NDI (United States)
 David Carroll, Assoc. Director of Latin American Program, The Carter Center (United States)
 Andrew Crawley, Deputy Director, Institute for European-Latin American Relations (Spain)
 Pamela Carter, Attorney General, State of Indiana (United States)
 Curtis Cutter, President, Interworld Consultants (United States)
 Rodolfo de la Garza, Professor, Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin (United States)
 Juan del Aguila, Professor, Department of Political Science, Emory University, Georgia (United States)
 Rita Di Martino, Vice Chairperson of the New York Republican State Committee (United States)
 Julio Faesler, President, Council for Democracy (Mexico)
 Jonathan Hartlyn, Professor, Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (United States)
 Guillermo Linares, Councilman, City of New York (United States)
 Ana Guadalupe Martinez, Vice President, Legislative Assembly (El Salvador)
 Patrick Merloe, Senior Associate for Electoral Processes, NDI, (United States)

Christopher Mitchell, Director, Latin American Studies, New York
University (United States)
Hon. Azia Taylor Morton, former Treasurer of the United States and
NDI Board of Directors (United States)
Doodnaught Singh, Chairman, Guyana Election Committee, (Guyana)
Yasuo Yoshioka, Executive Advisor, Itoche Inc. (Japan)

NDI/COUNCIL STAFF

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(United States)
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