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NDI Welcomes New Members of its Board of Directors

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The National Democratic Institute announced today the addition of five new members to its board of directors.

They are former U.S. Senator Edward “Ted” Kaufman of Delaware, a visiting professor at Duke University Law School; Ambassador Karl Inderfurth, former U.S. assistant secretary of state for South Asian Affairs and former representative for special political affairs to the United Nations; Tamara Cofman Wittes, former deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs and director of the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; James O’Brien, vice chair of the Albright Stonebridge Group and former presidential envoy for the Balkans; and Mary Cathryn Ricker, executive vice president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

“The wealth of knowledge and experience our new board members bring to NDI will be invaluable as the Institute continues to adapt to the changing world and support aspiring democrats and democratic institutions,” said Madeleine Albright, former secretary of state and NDI chairman.

While in the Senate, Kaufman served on the Foreign Relations, Armed Services, Judiciary and Homeland Security committees. He previously served for 19 years as the chief of staff to then-Senator Joseph Biden.

Inderfurth was assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs from 1997-2001, and was responsible for India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. He served at the UN from 1993-1997. He was also an ABC news correspondent and deputy staff director for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Wittes served as deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs from November 2009 to January 2012, where she coordinated U.S. policy on democracy and human rights in the Middle East. She oversaw the Middle East Partnership Initiative and served as deputy special coordinator for Middle East transitions.

As special presidential envoy for the Balkans, O'Brien was responsible for U.S. diplomatic, economic and security policy. He was also senior adviser to Secretary Albright, and principal deputy director of policy planning for the State Department

Before assuming the role of executive vice president of the AFT, Ricker was president of the Saint Paul Federation of Teachers in St. Paul, Minn. Ricker has taught in classrooms in St. Cloud and Saint Paul, Minn.; Camas, Wash.; and Seoul, South Korea. She also has represented the AFT and the Saint Paul Federation of Teachers abroad in Finland, Germany, Mexico and the Middle East.

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