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**Support by the United Nations system of the
efforts of Governments to promote and
consolidate new or restored democracies**

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/62/150.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/253 entitled “Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies”.

2. In paragraph 2 of the resolution, the General Assembly invited Member States, the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, national parliaments, and non-governmental organizations to contribute actively to the follow-up to the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies. It further invited them to make additional efforts to identify possible steps in support of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies, including through those steps set out in the Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action: Democracy, Good Governance and Civil Society (A/58/387, annexes I and II), and to inform the Secretary-General of the actions taken. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution, including the information requested above, to the Assembly at its sixty-second session.

3. In accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 60/253, the Secretary-General, in a note verbale sent on 26 March 2007, invited Member States to communicate to him by 1 June 2007 their actions in regard to resolution 60/253. Member States were also requested to consider giving their inputs regarding the implementation of the Doha Declaration, which was adopted at the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies held in Doha, from 29 October to 1 November 2006 (A/61/581, annex).

4. As at 17 August 2007, replies had been received from the following Member States: Australia, Brazil, Croatia, Cyprus, Japan, Poland, Qatar and Ukraine.

II. Replies received from Governments

Australia

[Original: English]
[23 May 2007]

1. Australia has contributed to strengthening parliamentary processes, political parties, electoral processes and governance systems in new and restored democracies through multilateral institutions and regional and bilateral programmes.

2. The White Paper, *Australian Aid: Promoting Growth and Stability*, launched in April 2006, has a strong focus on developing efficient and accountable Governments in partner countries. The White Paper also recognizes the important role of civil society as a voice for reform and improvement in governance.

3. Australia is a strong supporter of the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) as a global mechanism for strengthening democratic institutions. Australia provided 10 million Australian dollars at the inception of UNDEF and has continued to actively support the development of UNDEF and implementation of the first funding round through our seat on the Advisory Board.

4. Australia views UNDEF as an essential actor in democracy strengthening owing to its multilateral status and wide support, and has encouraged UNDEF to further define its niche in this sector. Through the Advisory Board, Australia has emphasized the necessity of reliable performance information and will carefully consider the outcomes of the first round of projects. Australia acknowledges efforts by UNDEF to identify and implement lessons learned for the benefit of future funding rounds.

The Asia-Pacific region

5. Leadership from within partner countries is critical to generating the momentum and ownership necessary to implement and sustain good governance practices. On this basis, support for the next generation of leaders in the Pacific, and having an emphasis on leadership values and ethics have been identified as important.

6. As foreshadowed in the White Paper on Australian aid, Australia will invest \$41 million over two years in a new better governance and leadership initiative for the Pacific region. The initiative will include a Pacific leadership programme, which targets current and emerging leaders in the region to develop leadership skills. This will not only focus on parliamentarians, but will include academic, social and scientific communities. In addition, Australia will invest in civic education and promote community awareness of government performance and accountability to help augment domestic demand for reform.

7. Since 1999 the Australian Government has supported the Centre for Democratic Institutions, which is hosted at the Australian National University. The goal of the Centre is to respond to the needs of developing countries in the field of good governance and democratic institutions. This is to be achieved by harnessing Australian and international best practice to support regional country partners in strengthening their parliaments and political parties. AusAID has provided core funding of approximately \$1 million per year to the Centre since its establishment. The Centre has run successful training programmes throughout Indonesia, Melanesia and the Pacific for parliamentarians and party secretariats. It conducts research to contribute to best practice in such training mechanisms.

8. The Australian Electoral Commission continues to work with key democratic institutions throughout the Asia-Pacific region, including in Timor-Leste and Indonesia. The Commission hosts the secretariat for the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators Network.

9. Australia has specific projects to support democratic processes in a number of countries, as set out below.

Cambodia

10. In Cambodia, Australia seeks to strengthen the rule of law through assisting the development of a strong representative parliamentary system, strengthening the law and justice system to ensure transparency and equitable access, and increasing the effectiveness and accountability of the civil service.

11. Australia has provided support for free and fair elections in Cambodia since 1992, including assistance to strengthen the National Election Committee. Australia recently provided \$A 2.5 million to the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP) Strengthening Democracy and Electoral Processes Project in Cambodia to promote democratic development and civic participation in the lead up to the Commune Elections in 2007 and National Elections in 2008.

12. Australia also supports programmes aimed at encouraging community participation and debate. An example is the \$A 2.4 million provided to support community talkback programmes on Radio National Kampuchea.

Timor-Leste

13. In partnership with UNDP, Australia has provided \$1 million in funding for strengthening parliamentary democracy in Timor-Leste. The activity aims to help the Timorese National Parliament develop institutional capacities (systems, processes and skills) to match its formal mandate under the constitution. Australia is also supporting the 2007 elections in Timor-Leste by providing \$1.3 million to UNDP.

14. Rule of law and national police capacity-building continue through the provision of personnel and programmes as part of the Timor-Leste Police Development Programme, the current focus of which is reintegration training and executive development programmes of the national police following the breakdown in law and order in April/May 2006. The Programme has been endorsed by the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

15. Australia is the largest contributor to, and lead nation of, the international security force, which has supported the United Nations in maintaining stability since the unrest of April/May 2006. The international security force helped to ensure there were no major security incidents during the 2007 presidential elections. Australia has also deployed official observer delegations to monitor the conduct of the presidential elections.

Indonesia

16. Australia will provide \$18 million in 2006-2007 to Indonesia to support the further development of its core democratic institutions, working with both Government and civil society. The Australian aid programme is supporting the Government of Indonesia's own reform agenda through providing assistance for legal access and reform, human rights and anti-corruption (\$4 million) and Parliamentary strengthening (\$100,000).

17. Australia is assisting civil society institutions to help improve public participation in the democracy process and the demand for better governance. For example, Australia supports Indonesian research organizations to monitor and promote policy outcomes (\$1 million) and through direct assistance at local level assists communities to undertake participatory development and empowerment projects in the least developed provinces of Indonesia (\$11 million total: \$7.5 million in Aceh). Australia is further supporting Islamic organizations to contribute to democratic and pluralistic policymaking (\$750,000) and provides ongoing support through civil society organizations for electoral monitoring and voter awareness (\$1.2 million).

18. Australia also invests significantly in health, infrastructure, education and in supporting Indonesia's decentralization process which contributes to State stability and legitimacy by improving delivery of services to Indonesia's population.

Afghanistan

19. Australia provided \$9 million through UNDP to help to manage successful presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan.

20. Through the Asia Foundation, AusAID continues to support the newly formed Afghan Independent Electoral Commission by offering technical expertise, management training courses and study tours. It has also established an elections resource centre.

21. Australia is behind the efforts of the international community and the Government of Afghanistan to achieve a stable and self-sustaining democratic State. Australia will provide up to \$150 million over 2006-2010 to Afghanistan. This support will target security and governance efforts, and improving basic services, particularly education and health.

Iraq

22. National elections in Iraq, held in December 2005, were an historic step towards democracy. An “out-of-country voting” facility through the Australian Electoral Commission allowed Iraqi citizens in Australia to vote in their national election. Australia also funded an adviser to the International Mission for Iraqi Elections.

23. Through the United Nations Development Group, Australia provided \$17 million to support the electoral process in Iraq. This funding has contributed to training 160,000 polling officials and updating the voter register. Australia’s support to Iraq is ongoing with a commitment of \$173 million over 2003-2007 with an additional \$22.5 million in 2007-2008.

Brazil

[Original: English]
[7 June 2007]

1. Brazil recognizes the interdependence between democracy, development and respect to the human rights, according to the Conference of Vienna on Human Rights, and is committed to the promotion of democracy.

2. This commitment can be verified by the Brazilian ratification of the “democratic clauses” of many political mechanisms, such as the activities regarding the promotion of democracy of the Organization of American States, of the Ushuaia Protocol on the Democratic Commitment in MERCOSUR, the Republic of Bolivia and the Republic of Chile (1998) and the Brasilia Communiqué of the First Meeting of the Presidents of South America (2000).

3. More recently, Brazil has participated in projects supporting the democratic consolidation in the American, African and Asian continents. In Haiti, Brazil gave financial support, though UNDP, to the organization of presidential elections of 2006. The Brazilian mediation was also essential to consolidate a pacific solution regarding the crisis that was being annunciated owing to accusation of fraud that avoided the victory of René Préval in the first election round.

4. In Timor-Leste, Brazil worked in order to support the democratic stabilization of the country through projects of technical cooperation. In 2006, experts from the Superior Electoral Court were sent to Dili to aid in the elaboration of the General Election Law, which was used in the elections held in May 2007 and which will be also used in the legislative elections to be held in June. The General Law proved to be essential to warrant the stabilization and efficiency of the electoral process that elected José Ramos-Horta President of Timor-Leste.

5. In Africa, the Brazilian contribution regarding the consolidation of the democratic institutions may be exemplified by the ongoing projects in Guinea-Bissau. The initiative on strengthening the legislative power in Guinea-Bissau, implemented through a Brazil-United States-Guinea-Bissau agreement of tripartite cooperation aims at strengthening the legislative capacity of Guinea-Bissau, through the holding of seminars in order to train parliamentary representatives on legislative processes, visits to Brazil by parliamentary representatives and legislative officers as well as technological modernization regarding the training of the legislative bureaucracy and the organization of a database.

6. Brazil has also traditionally cooperated with Guinea-Bissau on electoral issues. The legislative elections of 2004 and the two rounds of the presidential elections of 2005 received an important technical cooperation from the Regional Electoral Court of the State of Minas Gerais in Brazil. The success of this cooperation has been highlighted not only by the political actors from Guinea-Bissau, but also by the international community — starting with the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau, which coordinated the international efforts of support to the elections in Guinea-Bissau.

7. Since December 2005 Brazil has implemented an intense electoral cooperation programme with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In less than two years, Brazil received the visit of two electoral missions from the Democratic Republic of the Congo — both headed by the President of Independent Electoral Commission of that country, with the aim of sharing the Brazilian experience in the organization of elections and in the resolution of contentious electoral issues. The same goal motivated up to now four Brazilian electoral missions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which were headed by the Director of the Electoral Judiciary School of the Regional Electoral Court of the State of Minas Gerais, Judge Paulo de Tarso Tamburini, two of them characterized as electoral observation, in the first and second rounds of the presidential elections, held respectively in July and October 2006.

8. Still within the scope of the programme of cooperation with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Brazilian Government donated to that country about 3,000 canvas ballot boxes, which were used in the indirect elections, at provincial level, in the beginning of 2007. The second mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Brazil, in May 2007, aimed, inter alia, at knowing in greater depth the Brazilian system of electoral ballot boxes, with the objective of its possible use in the municipal elections in that country, in 2008, in order to facilitate the electoral process.

Croatia

[Original: English]

[4 June 2007]

1. In 2003, Croatia established new independent institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights. For example, in addition to the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman for children and the Ombudsman for gender equality began to work in 2003. The Office for Gender Equality of the Government of Croatia was established in 2001, and the Commission for Human Rights of the Government of Croatia and the Centre for Human Rights as a public institution were established in the year 2005.
2. Civil society organizations established with the purpose of pointing out injustices in society regarding the protection and respect for human rights have made a great contribution during the past 10 years to Croatian society in the protection and promotion of human rights. Great importance is, therefore, attached to encouraging cooperation with them. According to the Analysis of Registered Organizations (Government Office for Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations, 2001), in Croatia there are 600 organizations operating that are directly or indirectly engaged in the protection and promotion of human rights and the prevention of various forms of discrimination, on all levels of organization from the national and regional to the local levels.
3. Attempting to give the civil sector the role of an equal partner in the implementation of social policies, in 2001 the Government of Croatia adopted "The programme for cooperation between the Government and the non-governmental non-profit sector". With this programme, the development of a code of positive practices, standards and measures for achieving financial support for the programmes and projects of the organizations is also anticipated.
4. The Government of Croatia has undertaken the obligation with its Programme of Operations for the Period 2000-2004 "to propose ways to the Croatian Parliament for financing and improving the material foundations of the institutions of the civil society", which was implemented through the establishment of the National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society and the Council for the Development of Civil Society. The composition of the members of the Council (10 representatives of ministries and 14 representatives of civil society selected by the organizations themselves) guarantee the exercise of participatory democracy in the country.
5. One of the ways in which the cooperation between the Government and the civil society organizations is being realized is through written petitions on the problems encountered by the citizens of Croatia that could not be resolved through regular channels, as well as through a dialogue and funding or co-funding programmes and projects of organizations.
6. In 2006 the Government of Croatia adopted the National Strategy for Development of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development for 2006-2011. It includes the basic guidelines for improving the existing and creating new legal, institutional and financial systems to support the development of existing civil society and create a stimulating environment for its further development in Croatia by 2011. Following the adoption of the aforementioned National Strategy in

2007, the Government of Croatia adopted the Action Plan for implementing the National Strategy containing aims, measures and deadlines.

7. The Government of Croatia is undertaking measures/organizing campaigns with a view to raising public awareness regarding the need to protect and promote the rights of each person. The Government Office for Human Rights has conducted an extensive media campaign for World Human Rights Day (December 10) and placed an advertisement entitled “Tolerance means life”, in 2004.

8. Non-governmental organizations for the protection and promotion of human rights are also participating in the preparation of national programmes concerning specific human rights areas. In connection with those programmes the Government has established national committees, commissions, and the like, proposed programmes and made suggestions for the consideration and approval by the aforementioned committees or commissions and inclusion in the national programmes, as necessary.

9. Similarly, non-governmental organizations also participate with their proposals in the preparation of annual reports on the status of human rights in Croatia, as well as in the preparation of reports submitted by Croatia to international institutions.

Cyprus

[Original: English]
[4 June 2007]

1. With reference to the General Assembly resolution 60/253, Cyprus would like to provide the following information, relating to the implementation of this resolution. Cyprus would also like to provide information on the implementation of the Doha Declaration which was adopted at the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, held in Doha from 29 October to 1 November 2006. Information has been provided by the House of Representatives of Cyprus.

Introduction

2. With respect to the implementation of the General Assembly resolution 60/253 and the measures set out in the Ulaanbaatar Plan of Action on Democracy, Good Governance and Civil Society (A/58/387, annex), and although Cyprus does not fall under the category of new or restored democracies, the House of Representatives of Cyprus has taken up the initiatives described below.

1. National measures

3. The House of Representatives is in constant communication with Government authorities and relevant ministries for deepening and widening the democratic fibre in the country. In addition to the progressive legislation that has been adopted in a number of fields, the engagement of all stakeholders, particularly civil society groups, has significantly increased the level of public awareness and national consensus.

(a) *Concerning participation and representation*

4. Free, fair and periodic elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage is enshrined in our Constitution. In addition, the internal organization and functioning of the House of Representatives, its coherent and sound legislative process, the solid committee system, and its free access to information are all indispensable factors promoting freedom, participation, human rights and the rule of law.

5. Voter turnout in election processes has been particularly encouraging since 2003 (Referendum for the United Nations plan for “The comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem” (Annan Plan-V) in 2004; elections for the European Parliament in 2004; and parliamentary and municipal elections in 2006). For each of these elections, voters had access to independent and sufficient information. Furthermore, sophisticated technology software for accurate and quick monitoring of election results are used by the Election Authority of the Ministry of the Interior.

6. On 30 June 2005, the House of Representatives ratified the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, which contained important clauses in relation to the subsidiarity principle by means of an obligation for Community institutions to inform national parliaments on all stages of legislative procedures through an early warning system.

7. Parliamentary committee work is incessantly on the rise. Since the last parliamentary elections, the new House Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women has been established. The House of Representatives remains committed to promoting gender equality and women’s representation in the House.

8. All interested parties, stakeholders, NGOs and Government representatives are involved in parliamentary debates that take place at Committee level. This ensures that citizens are always consulted on matters that affect them. Moreover, the House of Representatives plays a key role in strengthening links with the different constituencies and fostering partnerships with civil society.

9. Deregulation and decentralization of decision-making procedures were at the cornerstones of the electoral campaigns of the municipal elections held in 2006. The need to ensure that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizens in light of the participatory mechanisms available at national, regional or local level has become one of uttermost importance.

(b) *Concerning sustainable development and the eradication of poverty*

10. Cyprus, as an European Union member State has a high standard of living and a generous welfare system with adequate safety nets for disadvantaged groups and the elderly. Numerous provisions of the European Union *acquis communautaire* with respect to sustainable development and environmental practices have been transposed into national legislation.

(c) *Concerning the protection of human rights*

11. There is a House Standing Committee on Human Rights that exercises scrutiny with regard to human rights problems. The Committee also proceeds to the preparation of relevant legislation and other measures safeguarding human rights, by means of public hearings and meetings with experts, civil society, NGOs and

other relevant organizations. The Committee promotes the ratification of international agreements pertaining to the protection of human rights. To this end, one of the main responsibilities of the Committee is to examine and investigate the compliance of the Republic with international conventions ratified by the House of Representatives.

(d) Concerning open and transparent Government

12. Apart from its legislative function, the House of Representatives exercises parliamentary control over the Government and its members through various means and ways. This function can be exercised indirectly, through the rejection or approval of bills introduced by the Government. Also, on demand of the House of Representatives, Ministers regularly appear before Committees in order to report on Government policies and actions. In addition, the House of Representatives exercises control over the executive, since the yearly report of the Ombudsman, whose basic mandate is to study citizens' petitions against abuses of any service or official exercising an executive or administrative function, is submitted to the House of Representatives.

13. Moreover, the House of Representatives frequently organizes seminars and exhibitions to increase public awareness and generate media attention in an effort to sensitize society at large on issues of general and specific interest.

(e) Concerning the rule of law and accountability

14. Cyprus has a fully functional, independent judiciary that guarantees the rule of law for all its citizens. Moreover, the strict separation of powers ensures that the judiciary exercises its functions without political interference.

15. Cyprus considers the fight against terrorism a foreign policy priority and takes an active part in international counter-terrorism efforts in cooperation with European Union partners and the rest of the international community. Towards that end, the House of Representatives has enacted the ratification law of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and has moreover proceeded to establish the Unit for Combating Money-laundering, to report on any suspicious transactions so as the appropriate preventive measures can be taken by the Government. Moreover, Cyprus has ratified or acceded to all 12 international conventions concerning international terrorism, as well as to the relevant convention of the Council of Europe. Cyprus is party to the four main counter-terrorism conventions which are deposited with the Secretary-General, namely the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents.

2. Regional and international action

16. The House of Representatives has developed multifaceted and multi-level regional activities both in its capacity as a European Union member State and as a Mediterranean country. Parliamentary diplomacy has been a primary task in this respect and today the House of Representatives maintains friendly relations and cooperation with most parliaments in the world, and participates actively and on

equal footing in the international parliamentary field. In the last couple of years, the international obligations of the House of Representatives have significantly increased and as a result, Cyprus parliamentary delegations have contributed dynamically and constructively to the work and activities of international organizations. Moreover, parliamentary exchanges, the establishment of friendship groups with most parliaments in the world, technical cooperation, forums addressing the economic and social challenges of globalization, as well as activities related to European Union development have further consolidated regional cooperation, democracy and human rights.

Implementation of the Doha Declaration, adopted at the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies held in Doha from 29 October to 1 November 2006

17. The House of Representatives is a fully functional, freely elected body whose 56 members represent all fragments and sectors of society. As such, it plays a key role in resolving conflicts between different interested parties and promoting dialogue and reconciliation in the name of the general public interest. Access to unbiased information and the freedom of expression are the effective mechanisms through which the members of the House of Representatives are able to duly exercise their functions, articulate their discourses and participate in the management of public life.

18. Through the exercise of parliamentary scrutiny, the House of Representatives is able to effectively control the executive branch, intervene and protect individuals from arbitrary measures and administrative deficiencies. Moreover, through the enactment of legislation and oversight of the *acquis communautaire* in Cyprus, the House is able to monitor compliance with international human rights instruments and duly check the conformity of domestic mechanisms with European and international norms and practices. Effective multilateralism at the parliamentary level is crucial in many respects.

19. Acting in an accountable and transparent way is at the cornerstone of the House of Representatives multifaceted activities. Synergies with the media and civil society have enhanced the Parliament's outreach to marginalized and disadvantaged groups of society resulting in an unparalleled concert of exchange and communication with the entire spectrum of society including the new generation. Democratizing society and the role that women and young people can play in this process, and developing governance and democratization approaches involving right to association, legal systems and elections, have been shared priorities among all the stakeholders involved in the process.

20. In accordance with the Plan of Action adopted at the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in Doha from 29 October to 1 November 2006, the House of Representatives remains committed to all of the five key characteristics identified, namely representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective parliaments.

21. To this end, the House of Representatives remains committed to participate actively in the mechanisms established for the follow-up to the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies.

Japan

[Original: English]

[1 June 2007]

1. The Foreign Minister of Japan, Mr. Taro Aso, declared last November in his speech entitled “Arc of freedom and prosperity: Japan’s expanding diplomatic horizons” that Japan wishes to do its part to support the development of a prosperous and stable region along the outer rim of the Eurasian continent, where universal values such as democracy, freedom, human rights, the rule of law, and the market economy are sure to take root.
2. Japan made a contribution to the United Nations Democracy Fund of 10 million United States dollars in March 2007, which was established by the United Nations Secretary-General in July 2005 for the purposes of providing assistance for strengthening democratic institutions and facilitating democratic governance in new or restored democracies.
3. Japan attaches great importance to diplomacy based on universal values, and will continue to contribute to the international society’s efforts to consolidate democracy through the Fund and other means, including official development assistance.

Poland

[Original: English]

[29 May 2007]

1. Democracy promotion belongs to the priorities of the Polish foreign policy. Poland’s commitment to the promotion of democracy and the civil society is based on the conviction that enhancement of good governance, support for the rule of law, suppression of corruption and crime, countering the poverty and the observance of human rights are all essential components for consolidating peace and stability. The principle of supporting democratic transitions stems directly from Poland’s experience of the Solidarity Movement and its fundamental contribution to the democratic changes which brought freedom to the region of Central and Eastern Europe.
2. Poland’s policy of supporting democracy is focused on the following actions: promoting good governance and the rule of law, monitoring and assessing the observance of human rights and fundamental civil liberties, strengthening the independence of the civil society institutions, supporting free and independent media, enhancing knowledge and awareness of active citizenship.
3. The promotion of democratic values is directed towards the countries expressing the will to pursue democratic way of development, especially in Eastern Europe, as well as countries of the broader Middle East. More than \$30 million was allocated for the development assistance, democracy promotion and civil society enhancement in the annual budget of Poland for 2007.
4. Cooperation and consultations within the framework of international organizations and institutions are vital for the Polish democratization efforts. Poland is actively involved in the European Union activities for the benefit of building and

strengthening democracy. Poland is engaged in the activities of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, whose Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights is based in Warsaw. It renders its support to the Ukrainian-Georgian initiative: Community of Democratic Choice.

5. One of the important areas of Polish engagement in enhancing democratic values is the Forum on the Future of Democracy, aimed at strengthening democracy, political freedoms and citizens' participation, established at the Warsaw Summit of the Council of Europe in May 2005. The first meeting of the Forum took place in Warsaw in November 2005, and was focused on civic participation in modern democracies. The Polish delegation also made substantial contributions to the second meeting of the Forum, which was held in Moscow in October 2006 under the theme "The role of political parties in the building of democracy".

6. A key forum for the Polish commitment to support democracy is provided by the Community of Democracies. Poland hosted the first Conference of the Community of Democracies in 2000. The Conference adopted the founding act at the Community of Democracies entitled "Final Warsaw Declaration: Toward a Community of Democracies". Currently Poland is an active member of the Convening Group and takes part in all its meetings. It co-chairs the Working Group on Civil Society and Democratic Governance. In cooperation with the Group chair, India, and another co-chair, Hungary, Poland is engaged in the elaboration of a training manual on collaboration between diplomatic missions and representatives of the civil society. Poland also submitted the candidature of Warsaw for a seat of the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies and declared its readiness to provide the secretariat with appropriate personal and material support, including office facilities.

7. Poland was also represented at the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, in Qatar, and made a contribution outlining Polish engagement in support for democracy.

8. Poland's constructive commitment in the process of combating corruption, protecting human rights and strengthening democracy was reflected by organizing, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Conference on Anti-Corruption Measures, Good Governance and Human Rights, held in Warsaw in November 2006. The main objective of the Conference was to identify concrete ways in which governance efforts to fight corruption could be assisted by and contribute to human rights protection. The Conference built on the increasing awareness within the international community about the detrimental impact of widespread corruption on human rights both through the weakening of institutions and the erosion of public trust in Government, as well as through impairing the ability of Governments to fulfil human rights, particularly the economic and social rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized persons. The Conference focused on three subjects: how human rights, principles and approaches can help in fighting corruption; the impact of corruption on human rights; and fighting corruption while safeguarding human rights.

Qatar

[Original: English]

[28 June 2007]

Background

1. Qatar is in the midst of creating a vibrant, dynamic and productive society, where a culture of democracy reigns cemented in the domestic and foreign policy arenas. At the local and national levels, Qatar has strived to ensure a better life and future for its citizens — men and women — through progressive economic and social policies, programmes and strategies. Far-reaching legislation has been passed that upholds the human rights for all Qatari citizens.
2. The foreign policy of Qatar is founded on the democratic principles of the rule of law, the promotion of human rights, the empowerment of women, tolerance and mutual understanding. Both domestic and foreign dimensions of Qatari policy extol democratization. Moreover, both dimensions derive from the wisdom, insights, leadership and vision of His Highness Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar.
3. Qatar, under the dynamic leadership of His Highness Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, is dedicated to the democratization process at all levels and has undertaken numerous effective actions in that regard. At the national level, for example, Qatar is fully committed to enhancing democracy in the country through innovative projects and motivating democratic reform in various areas such as partnership involvement, good governance, enhancing political, civil and human rights as well as active citizenship. At the regional level, for example, Qatar has established an Arab Institute for Democracy, in Doha, to extol democratic opportunities in the region. At the global level, for example, Qatar has organized annually, since 2001, the Doha Forum on Democracy, Development and Free Trade. The seventh Doha Forum was held from 23 to 25 April 2007. Moreover, Qatar is committed to the promotion and consolidation of democracy within the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies framework and, as the Chair of the Sixth International Conference, Qatar has embarked on the systematic implementation of Conference recommendations.

Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies

4. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/281, the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies was held in Doha from 29 October to 1 November 2006. The theme of the Conference was “Building capacity for democracy, peace and social progress”. The Conference was organized by the Government of Qatar, the host country, with the support of the United Nations. Some 145 countries were represented in the Government, parliament and civil society meetings of the Conference.
5. The Sixth International Conference had two main objectives: to enhance the linkages between democracy, peace and social progress in the global development agenda and to initiate a systematic implementation and follow-up steps to consolidate the achievements and recommendations emanating from the previous significant International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies, which

began in 1988 (Manila, in 1988; Managua, in 1994; Bucharest, in 1997; Cotonou, in 2000; and Ulaanbaatar, in 2003).

6. A major outcome of the Sixth International Conference was the formulation of the Doha Declaration. Significantly, it addressed the concern of Member States to establish follow-up steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the New or Restored Democracies Movement and ensure systemic implementation of Conference recommendations. This entails establishment of an international Advisory Board and a nucleus secretariat to assist the current Chair of the Sixth International Conference (Qatar). The Chair of the Sixth International Conference, for a period of three years, is entrusted with taking necessary measures to guarantee appropriate implementation and follow-up to the recommendations of the International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies since 1988.

7. The Sixth International Conference maintained its tripartite structure with parliamentary and civil society forums held parallel to the governmental country meeting. Representatives of 101 Member States participated. Civil society delegates totalled 311 participants representing 140 organizations. Parliament representatives totalled 185 delegates from 69 countries. Both forums resulted in the formulation of a Declaration and a Plan of Action (A/61/817, annexes I and II).

8. Moreover, the Doha Conferences held a considerable achievement, previously unattained. For the first time, the tripartite partners adopted a Joint Statement in a common effort to promote democracy (A/61/581, annex). The Joint Statement underlines a shared commitment, emphasizes regular and ongoing dialogues, urges an enabling environment and calls for the systematic implementation of Conference recommendations.

Follow-up to the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies

9. Following the Sixth International Conference, the Government of Qatar transmitted the Doha Declaration and the Joint Statement to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (*ibid.*); transmitted the Declarations and Plans of Action of both the Parliamentary and the Civil Society Forums, cited earlier, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (A/61/817, annexes I and II); ensured the inclusion of an additional item on the agenda (agenda item 157) of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly; formulated and ensured the subsequent adoption of General Assembly resolution 61/226 entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies", with the co-sponsorship of 92 countries.

10. The Government of Qatar moved with alacrity in establishing a nucleus national secretariat as well as forming the international Advisory Board.

11. The Doha Declaration requested the Chair of the Sixth International Conference to take the necessary measures to guarantee appropriate implementation and follow-up of Conference recommendations. In this connection, the Chair is to be assisted by an Advisory Board composed of eight members: five governmental representatives nominated on the basis of geographical representation in accordance with United Nations practice, taking into consideration that one of the five representatives will be a representative of the previous Chair of the International Conference; one participant from the Parliamentary Forum; one participant from the Civil Society Forum; and one representative from the United Nations.

12. The Advisory Board is mandated to assist the Chair on the most effective and practical ways and means to follow up on Conference recommendations. The Advisory Board is composed of the following members: Egypt, Iceland, Mongolia, Romania, Uruguay, the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International Civil Society Forum for Democracy.

13. The Chair of the Sixth International Conference organized the first Advisory Board meeting on 26 April 2007 in Doha. The Advisory Board meeting approved a work programme for 2007-2009 which would facilitate the systematic implementation of Conference recommendations. Achievable measurable activities were envisaged such as: preparation of a Conference electronic newsletter; development of a Conference databank; design of a Conference logo; designation of an International Day of Democracy; the Annual Meeting of the Conference during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly; and planning expert group meetings on issues related to democracy.

14. One major recommendation emanating from the Advisory Board meeting was that the Conference should promote the global exchange of information and experiences by establishing and maintaining a comprehensive international databank on democracy.

15. Members of the Advisory Board welcomed the idea of establishing an International Conference of New or Restored Democracies databank. It was noted that a databank would assist in the promotion of a global exchange of information and experiences. It was felt that the proposed databank would go a long way in enhancing systematic implementation of Conference recommendations by building needed capacity and strengthening a culture of partnership.

16. It was felt that the establishment of an International Conference of New or Restored Democracies databank required a strategic vision. In that regard, it was proposed that a meeting of experts could be convened to exchange views on the ways and means to develop an effective databank, based on similar experiences of past democracy-related databases.

17. The primary objective of an International Conference of New or Restored Democracies databank is to assist the New or Restored Democracies Movement to be well informed about developments and lessons learned in promoting, building and consolidating democracy around the world. Another primary objective of a databank is to help promote, at all levels, policies, programmes, structures and projects related to democracy.

Ukraine

[Original: Russian]
[17 August 2007]

Individual details of the implementation of the recommendations of the 2003 Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action, in Ukraine

General remarks

1. In keeping with its international obligations and the State's strategic aim of European and Euro-Atlantic integration, Ukraine has been methodically implementing reforms to strengthen the foundations of democracy, the rule of law,

respect for human rights, the principle of the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary.

2. The spirit of the 2003 Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action has been carried through in particular in “Towards European integration”, the 2004-2015 strategy for the economic and social development of Ukraine. An organic part of this process is the strategy for Ukrainian integration with the European Union and, consequently, the European Union-Ukraine plans of action. These documents, adopted by Ukraine in collaboration with the European Union, are a road map for the development of the State: its reform in accordance with generally accepted European democratic norms and standards which are, in principle, consonant with the recommendations contained in the Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action.

3. Deserving of particular attention is the ongoing effort to perfect and strengthen the democratic principles for the conduct of countrywide elections, evidence of which is the conclusion of all international observers monitoring the third round of the presidential election in 2004 and the elections to the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) and local councils in 2006. Ukraine’s compliance with the Ulaanbaatar recommendations continues to be evident today, as the country continues its difficult, but nonetheless democratic, open and honest, emergence from a situation of internal political crisis, with the holding of snap elections to the Verkhovna Rada on 30 September 2007.

Information on implementation of individual sections of the Plan of Action

Section 3.3

Sustainable development and eradication of poverty

4. Ukraine’s current state of economic development is marked by the achievement of sustained growth. Every year, social and economic programmes are put in place to improve living standards. In 2006, personal income increased faster than gross domestic product, demonstrating the social associations of economic growth in Ukraine: household income rose by 16.1 per cent in real terms compared to 2005 and the average salary rose by 18.3 per cent, reaching 1,277 hryvnias in December 2006. The level of social benefits guaranteed by the State was increased substantially. Compared with the beginning of the year, the minimum pension rose by 10 per cent, and the average pension payment grew by 18.9 per cent. Regularly, at the beginning of each year, the Government of Ukraine adopts a plan of measures to implement the anti-poverty strategy, a long-term policy adopted as long ago as 2001 to cover the period to 2009. Efforts are under way to improve social protection for the population. Prices and exchange rates have been kept stable.

Section 3.4

Protection of human rights

5. The Constitution of Ukraine, adopted in 1996, and particularly chapter II, establishes the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of the individual and of citizens of the Ukrainian State.

6. A National Commission for the strengthening of democracy and consolidation of the rule of law was established in accordance with Decree No. 1049/2005 of the President of Ukraine, of 5 July 2005. The National Commission is the permanent forum for consultation and discussion with the President of Ukraine, and was

established with the aim of helping to comply with the 1993 Copenhagen criteria for accession to the European Union.

7. In 2006, Ukraine was elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council. Confirming its commitment to the international obligations it has assumed in connection with the protection of human rights, Ukraine extended an open invitation to visit to all the special rapporteurs assigned by the Human Rights Council to examine various aspects of human rights in the countries of the world.

Section 4

Regional action

8. Ukraine is making efforts to develop regional cooperation to the east of the European Union, primarily in the field of strengthening democracy and sustainable development. Accordingly, in May 2006, the Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova (GUAM) union became the GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development.

9. The main aims of GUAM, which correspond in particular to the spirit of the Ulaanbaatar Declaration, are: to reaffirm democratic values; to uphold the rule of law and respect for human rights; to ensure sustainable development; to strengthen international and regional security and stability; to further European integration for the establishment of a common area of security and for greater economic and humanitarian cooperation; to develop the potential of the parties in the social and economic, transport, energy, scientific and technological, and humanitarian fields; and to establish more active political collaboration and practical cooperation in various areas.

10. In the past year, the GUAM member States have been more active in their collaboration in the international arena and with other States and international organizations. They have been collaborating with a growing circle of international organizations on the basis of joint programmes of work between their permanent missions to those organizations. At present, such collaboration is occurring in the context of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, international organizations in Geneva and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

11. A new form of collaboration within GUAM is the establishment of GUAM clubs outside its member States, particularly in Bucharest, Sofia, Tokyo and Warsaw.

12. A further Ukrainian initiative to strengthen regional cooperation in the development of democracy and human rights is the Community of Democratic Choice, which Ukraine firmly believes made a tangible contribution in 2005-2006 to developing democracy in the Baltic Sea, Black Sea and Caspian Sea region. Ukraine is convinced that achieving the highest standards of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law is in the interests of all States and nations of the world and of the region. Although the Community of Democratic Choice has virtually achieved the agenda it had set itself at its first forum in Kyiv in 2005 (in the Kyiv Community of Democratic Choice declaration), Ukraine still considers it important to conduct dialogue within the Community to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of developing democracy, which is a goal specifically established in section 4 of the Ulaanbaatar Plan of Action.