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National Democratic Institute

455 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 8th Floor

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my interest in working as a Central and West Africa Temporary Project Assistant for the National Democratic Institute. I am well suited for this rolebecause I have strong French language skills and experience studying both International Development and African politics.

In my Economics and Political Science classes, I specifically concentrated on taking as many courses as possible with a focus on International Development related issues. I did this to develop both a strong theoretical background and some practical experience working on a project for an International Development organization. In my Political Economy of International Development course, I studied the role that institutions play in bringing individual people and countries out of poverty. In my International Development in Practice course, I worked as a Student Consultant for Education Bridge, a non-profit working to provide a quality education for impoverished students in South Sudan. This project required my team to develop a long-term fundraising strategy that would give it the best chance to have sustainable streams of revenue.

I have been studying French during the last ten years and have developed strong writing and speaking skills in the language. During my four years at Notre Dame, I took a French language class each semester, which allowed me to become more competent at discussing and writing about complex issues in the French language. This includes the one semester I spent in Angers, France, where I took French language classes and lived with a French speaking host family. Lastly, as a Political Science Research Assistant, I wrote analytic summaries of media articles covering the 2016 Beninese presidential election, which required me to translate the French in the article into a brief description of the article in English.

I am a strong candidate for this role because I have a strong background studying International Development issues and an ability to write and speak French at a high level. Please consider placing me on your interview schedule. Thank you for considering my application

Sincerely,

Zachary Spahr

I concentrated my education at Notre Dame on improving my French language skills and understanding the challenges facing developing countries today. To do this, I spent one of my semesters in France taking courses conducted in the French language. One of these courses was a French translation class, where I got to work on my ability to translate English language texts into French. In my Economics and Political Science courses, I had the opportunity to understand the challenges facing

As a Political Science Research Assistant, I conducted research on the media coverage in the lead up to presidential elections in Zambia and Benin. My responsibility was to read media articles and code into an excel spreadsheet the issues that the articles discussed. I then wrote brief summaries of the articles to give the researcher a brief explanation. The Beninese election required me to use my French language skills to simplify the complex issues discussed in the article into a simple explanation of the article in English. This experience helped me understand