IRI Launches Women’s Democracy Network

Women leaders from all over the world traveled to Washington, D.C., for the launch of the International Republican Institute’s (IRI) Women’s Democracy Network. The inaugural conference brought together accomplished women leaders from Africa, Asia, Eurasia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as the United States to foster relationships and help the leaders advance as their countries make the transition to democracy.

Those attending had an opportunity to meet with other women leaders to share experiences and challenges facing their countries. The women participated in regional workshops designed to identify challenges and determine ways in which the Women’s Democracy Network can assist in addressing them.

The participants also visited the White House where President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush spoke. During his remarks, the President thanked IRI for its work and recognized the work of the Women’s Democracy Network. “This conference provides an opportunity for women leaders around the world to connect with each other and serve as mentors for women in developing countries.”

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Ayten Shirinova, a political activist and former candidate for parliament from Azerbaijan, and The Honorable Ruth Khasaya Oniang’o, a member of the Kenyan National Assembly, become friends at the launch of the Women’s Democracy Network.

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Participants of IRI’s Women’s Democracy Network inaugural conference.
Message from the Chairman

Democracy was given new hope with elections in Afghanistan, Belarus and Liberia. Despite the forgone conclusion of a Lukashenko victory, Belarusians bravely went to the polls on March 19 believing that change is possible and change will come to the last dictatorship in Europe. And in Liberia, voters elected the continent’s first woman president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

Led by Aleksander Milinkevich, pro-democracy activists in Belarus waged a strong campaign in the face of government repression and retaliation. With little hope of winning the presidency, pro-democracy activists held a national convention to democratically choose their candidate, and carried out a nationwide campaign with no access to media or printed materials.

After 25 years of turmoil and 14 years of civil war, Liberians chose Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as the first elected woman head of state on the African continent. IRI monitored the historic elections, witnessing enthusiastic voters who were hopeful for peace and democracy in their wartorn country. IRI monitors praised the elections and urged all Liberians to come together to rebuild their country.

Afghanistan saw the first democratically-elected parliament take office and begin the work of appointing committees and electing chairs. IRI’s successful work with independent candidates during the election continues. With the formation of e-Mustaqel, a bloc of pro-democracy moderates, IRI is helping members of parliament find their voice in the new democratic government.

Despite the dangers and difficulties, people in Belarus, Liberia, Afghanistan and many other countries continue the daily struggle to bring freedom and democracy to their countries.

Senator John McCain
Chairman, IRI

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democracies so they can help shape the future of their nations.”

One conference attendee, Tanja Tomic, a member of the Skopje City Council in Macedonia, said, “President Bush’s reference to IRI’s network provided a strong motivation for me to expand the network in Macedonia and throughout the region.”

The three-day conference, which coincided with International Women’s Day and Women’s History Month, was held March 6-8. Keynote speakers included Paula J. Dobriansky, Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs; The Honorable Ana Palacio, former Minister of Foreign Affairs for Spain; and The Right Honorable Kim Campbell, former Prime Minister of Canada. The event was also attended by IRI Board Members Gahl Hodges Burt, Vice Chairman, American Academy in Berlin; Alison Fortier, Director, Lockheed Martin Missile Defense Programs; Susan Golding, President and CEO, The Golding Group, Inc.; Janet Mullins Grissom, Partner, Johnson, Madigan and Peek; and Cheryl Halpern, Chairwoman, Public Broadcasting Corporation.

The Women’s Democracy Network is an initiative established by IRI. The network will encourage and support women working to advance political, civic and economic participation in their countries, and create regional networks to strengthen their development.

Former Spanish Foreign Affairs Minister Ana Palacio gives a keynote address during the conference.

Ayat Mohamed Aboul Futtouh, director of Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies in Egypt, participates in the Middle East workshop.
Fair Election Denied in Belarus

On March 19, 2006, the government of Belarus stole another election, again denying the people’s right to choose their leaders.

The results of the 2001 presidential election and 2004 parliamentary elections failed to meet international standards, and the incumbent president, Alexander Lukashenko, issued referendums to broaden his powers and abolish term limits. Despite these challenges, Belarusians have shown they are committed to joining the democracies of Europe. The International Republican Institute (IRI) has been just as committed to supporting them. Through trainings and public opinion polling, IRI has helped these democrats come together to bring real change to Belarus.

A real chance for democratic change became evident in March 2003 when approximately 600 pro-reform candidates participated in local elections with one-third winning seats on city councils. In the wake of this success, pro-democracy activists realized democratic change was needed before they argued about policy. As a result, six of the seven leading political parties along with more than 200 nongovernmental organizations formed the People’s Coalition Five Plus. Over the next year, the coalition grew and became the Unified Democratic Forces. In the wake of losses in the 2004 parliamentary elections and the term limit referendum, the Unified Democratic Forces set their sights on the presidential election scheduled for 2006. The members realized that with a unified democratic opposition supporting a single candidate, they had an opportunity to win the support of a majority of Belarusians.

Throughout the summer and early fall of 2005, Belarusians chose a democratic candidate to run against President Alexander Lukashenko. In small caucuses convened in homes, forests and parks throughout the country, people cast their vote for delegates to represent them at the National Democratic Congress. With approval from the government, more than 800 delegates

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Liberians Begin to Rebuild Their Country at the Ballot Box

On January 16, 2006, Liberians celebrated the inauguration of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa’s first elected female head of state. The inauguration came two months after Johnson-Sirleaf won Liberia’s November 2005 presidential run-off elections and after 25 years of turmoil and 14 years of civil war.

Liberia’s 2005 presidential elections, hailed as credible by international and domestic observers, became a harbinger of hope for democratic stability in a country where the scars of war can still be clearly seen. With the success of the elections, a new chapter in Liberia has begun.

The presidential elections, which set the wheels in motion for positive change in Liberia, were witnessed by IRI’s team of international election monitors who observed Liberian voters patiently enduring long lines to cast their ballots, in some cases walking overnight to reach polling stations in remote rural districts. Turnout was high, particularly for the first round, in which roughly 74 percent of registered voters went to the polls. Widely-feared Election Day violence was nearly non-existent. These were among the factors that made these elections arguably the most successful in the history of Liberia, Africa’s oldest republic.

In discussing the elections, The Honorable Margret Otim Ateng, a member of Uganda’s parliament and an IRI delegate, said, “We in Africa have a lot to learn from Liberia.”

IRI’s delegation for the first-round presidential election was led by IRI Board Member and former Ambassador to the U.N. Richard S. Williamson; and Constance Berry Newman, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. The delegation for the election run-off was led by Charles Twining, former U.S. Ambassador to Cameroon and Cambodia.

In preparation for the election, IRI worked with parties to develop a code of conduct, which was signed and adopted by all competing parties. During Liberia’s voter registration drive, IRI fielded a pre-election assessment mission. IRI also co-hosted the first-ever presidential debate, which featured 11 of Liberia’s presidential candidates, including the eventual victor, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.
Dr. Kirkpatrick Visits Nicaragua to Show Support for Democracy

Dr. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and member of the Board of Directors of the International Republican Institute (IRI) led an IRI delegation to Nicaragua in early March to observe first-hand the current state of Nicaraguan politics before the November 2006 presidential and legislative elections. The delegation included IRI Vice Chairman Peter Madigan, IRI President Lorne Craner and then-IRI Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean Brian Dean.

The visit was widely covered in the Nicaraguan media due to Kirkpatrick’s commitment and support of democracy in Nicaragua. Her schedule included visits with leaders of civil society and political parties, presidential candidates, and elected officials. During her trip, Kirkpatrick commented that she was visiting Nicaragua “…to support political parties in Nicaragua’s democratic process…” and to study the development of democracy in Nicaragua.

Kirkpatrick met with Nicaraguan President Enrique Bolaños who expressed his support for her exploratory mission to Nicaragua. Dr. Kirkpatrick said that the United States would support the candidate who won in the November elections as long as the elections were free, fair and transparent – a theme she repeated throughout her trip.

Highlights of her meetings include a visit with former mayor of Managua and Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) dissident presidential candidate, Herty Lewites. Kirkpatrick was also welcomed by presidential candidates Eduardo Montealegre and Jose Antonio Alvarado. Both candidates expressed their support for Kirkpatrick’s visit.

The Nicaraguan Resistance Party (PRN), composed primarily of ex-Contras, honored Dr. Kirkpatrick for her role in supporting the democracy in Nicaragua while she was Ambassador to the United Nations. She used the opportunity to remind those that the future of Nicaraguan democracy was dependent on not reverting to old ways and dictatorship.

In addition, Dr. Kirkpatrick took time to meet with civil society leaders; the executive board of IRI subgrantee Movimiento por Nicaragua (MpN); a broad spectrum of women political leaders and opinion makers; and the youth oriented Juventud de Nicaragua (JUDENIC), which is currently working to raise awareness among youth in Nicaragua of the importance of voting and participating in the political process.
In December, Afghanistan’s first democratically elected parliament in three decades took office, completing the country’s transition to democracy that began after the Taliban fell in 2001. After they took office in December, the newly elected members turned to the critical work of strengthening their new democracy by naming committees and electing committee chairs.

Building on the success of Mustaqel Pawaistoon, a coalition of independent candidates that saw more than 100 candidates elected to parliament, the International Republican Institute (IRI) is working with independent parliamentarians to help them build relationships. The work has resulted in several blocs of independents, led by Group e-Mustaqel (the Independent Group), a bloc of pro-democracy moderates. A loose coalition and degree of cooperation has developed between the blocs, and as a result, the alliance captured 11 of the 18 committee chairmanships; Group e-Mustaqel alone captured four chairs, the most of any faction in the parliament.

Mohammad Daoud Sultanzoi has emerged as the leader of Group e-Mustaqel and as one of the stars of the new parliament, having been recently elected Chair of the Economic Committee. A commercial airline pilot by training, Sultanzoi was actively involved in demonstrations against the Soviet invasion, helping some of his fellow countrymen escape to Germany. He returned to Afghanistan to fight in the resistance, despite being granted political asylum by both Germany and the United States. When the Taliban fell and Sultanzoi was deciding whether to run for parliament, he recalls his son saying, “You can either watch history pass by or be a part of it.”

The decision was easy and Sultanzoi ran for parliament from his home province of Ghanzi. He waged a true grassroots effort, registered 15,400 women to vote, and went to districts that even the government did not dare to go, communicating a simple message: “This is your chance to be heard.” Despite long odds, the message was heard by voters.

Sayeema Khogianai, Chairwoman of the Women’s Committee, is another member of one of the independent blocs. Chairwoman Khogianai was forced to leave her home in Kabul in 1991 during the country’s civil war. Khogianai fled to the province of Nangarhar and began teaching at a girl’s school. When the Taliban came to power, she continued to teach in private households despite the risks. After the Taliban was overthrown in 2001, Khogianai immediately joined the effort to rebuild her country. She attended the Emergency Loya Jirga, became a member of the Independent Commission on Human Rights, worked for the International Committee of the Red Cross, assisted President Hamid Karzai’s presidential campaign, and became a working member of the European Union-sponsored Women’s Independent Candidates Coalition. Chairwoman Khogianai ran for parliament on a platform of promoting women’s rights throughout the country and has stated, “We [women] will struggle until we have become equal.”

The success of this new bloc is an example of the commitment to democracy shared by most Afghans. As Chairman Sultanzoi recently stated, “We didn’t have guns and we didn’t have money, but we beat people who had been around forever. Now we have credibility. Now we’re their equals in the parliament.”
Mongolians Realize the Benefits of Democracy

To many, poverty is seen as a barrier to democracy. The belief is that poor countries cannot make a successful transition to democracy. Mongolia has proven the critics wrong, and stands out as a clear example that despite economic hardship, democracy can be achieved and the lives of citizens improved.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the break-up of the former Soviet Union, Mongolia embraced democracy. Despite a poor economy and the challenges of being landlocked between Russia and China, Mongolia held successful parliamentary elections in 1996, 2000 and 2004, demonstrating the Mongolian people’s commitment to a democratic process.

In November, President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush visited Mongolia in recognition of its successful transition. President Bush said during his visit, “Mongolia has made the transition from communism to freedom, and in just 15 years, you’ve established a vibrant democracy and opened up your economy. You’re an example of success for this region and for the world.”

The International Republican Institute (IRI) hosted the First Lady at a roundtable with Mongolian women leaders on women in politics and government. The event featured an open exchange of ideas on issues and challenges concerning Mongolian women. During the discussion, the First Lady thanked IRI for its continued support of women’s programs in Mongolia.

The roundtable highlighted IRI’s work with Mongolian women. In 2005, IRI began working with women to encourage and prepare them to engage in politics and government. IRI brought together a bipartisan group of women along with women leaders from the U.S. for a forum on women’s leadership in Mongolia. The forum resulted in a quota of female candidates in the recently passed election law. The forum also produced relationships that have created a network of information sharing and support among female political leaders.

Mongolia’s democracy was not built overnight. For nearly 15 years, IRI has worked with democrats as they have built a free Mongolia. As the country opened its government and its economy, it experienced growth and improvement. Today, Mongolia stands as an example of the better life that democracy can bring to those committed to nurturing and protecting it.

Leaders of the Women’s Partnership in Politics and Governance effort talk with First Lady Laura Bush during her and the President’s trip to Mongolia in November 2005.
Few images in the western hemisphere speak so powerfully as the Ladies in White: every Sunday, a group of white-clad women carrying flowers emerge from a Havana cathedral to begin their silent protest. They are the wives, mothers and daughters of Cuba’s jailed political prisoners. They march to demand the release of their loved ones. This year the European Union awarded the Ladies in White its prestigious Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. Fidel Castro barred the group from traveling abroad to accept the award, while increasing mob harassment of the women’s peaceful marches.

The story of the Ladies in White is a part of this year’s Steps to Freedom report, which chronicles actions taken by Cubans in their struggle to bring freedom and democracy to their island. Upon the release of this year’s Steps to Freedom, International Republican Institute (IRI) President Lorne Craner said, “This report is a sign of just how alive and well the pro-democracy movement is in Cuba and shows us that Cubans are willing to take risks to bring about an end to political repression and dictatorship.”

Craner was joined in his praise by Department of State Cuba Transition Coordinator Caleb McCarry, and Adolfo Franco, Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean for the U.S. Agency for International Development. Franco said of the report, “It is a document of hope for the Cuban people.”

Javier DeCespedes, President of the Cuban Democratic Directorate (Directorio), and Dr. Orlando Gutierrez, National Secretary of Directorio, spoke of how Castro’s attacks on liberty and freedom of expression have led to an increase in dissident acts; this year’s report documents more than 1,800 dissident acts, nearly twice the amount from the previous year.

The growth of Cuba’s homegrown democracy movement is the best hope of change for the Cuban people. Steps to Freedom, released at IRI’s offices last December, is prepared annually by Directorio, a nonprofit Cuban organization based in Miami, which encourages solidarity for pro-democracy activists in Cuba. The report is the most authoritative compilation of documented dissident activity in Cuba.
IRI Examines Why Central Europe’s Democrats Lost Support

Just a few years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Central Europeans went to the polls and enthusiastically elected Center-Right parties who promised improved economic conditions and better lives to their citizens. In Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Macedonia and Slovakia, pro-reform governments took power with ambitious agendas and high hopes. In all but one case — Slovakia — the same governments were defeated four years later.

In November 2005, IRI published *Why We Lost: Explaining the Rise and Fall of the Center-Right Parties in Central Europe, 1996-2002* to examine what led to the defeat of these pro-reform governments and help others avoid the same mistakes. While the circumstances differed in each country, several common themes emerged. All of the governments promised more than they could realistically deliver. Corruption and painful reforms alienated voters, and while the post-communist Left generally remained united, the Center-Right was plagued by infighting and division.

In the case of Bulgaria, defeat was attributed to reformers’ attempts to simultaneously build a united party, while also restructuring the government. The Lithuanian Center-Right’s collapse in 2000 was viewed to be a result of the effects of neighboring Russia’s economic crisis, an imprudent leadership choice, ideological inertia that hampered reforms and poor public relations efforts.

This last point — the failure to consistently and adequately communicate with the voters — is the common thread that links these stories together. In each case, parties and politicians were able to convince voters to grant them a mandate, but once in power, they forgot the need to continue to inform voters of their efforts. In an environment where governments were implementing difficult economic and social reforms, these communications lapses proved disastrous.

The Slovak example presents a counterpoint to the defeats in the other six countries. The 2002 victory of Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda showed that leaders can succeed at the polls, even when enacting difficult and essential reforms.

IRI commissioned authors from each of the seven countries to study what went right and what went wrong. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development, their case studies are the core of *Why We Lost*, which is available on www.iri.org.

BELARUS

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met in Minsk in October to choose a single candidate that would represent them in the 2006 presidential election. After two rounds of voting, Aleksander Milinkevich narrowly won the nomination to become the presidential candidate for the Unified Democratic Forces.

As the campaign began, government repression increased. In violation of Belarusian law, the government required candidates to obtain permits to hold rallies or meet with voters. These permits were routinely denied and more than 200 activists were arrested. Opposition candidate Alexander Kozulin was beaten by police when he tried to attend an official government event. Citizens were threatened with violence if they protested election results, with President Lukashenko promising to “snap their necks like ducklings.”

In the face of these threats, more than 10,000 brave people gathered in downtown Minsk in Oktyabrskaya Square on March 19 to show their desire for democracy. The people carried flowers, peacefully shouting “Long Live Belarus,” “Milinkevich” and “Freedom.” With the international community and independent monitors criticizing the elections and their results, Milinkevich has called for the peaceful protests to continue. The pro-democratic activists continue their struggle, looking to Poland in the early days of the Solidarity movement for inspiration. “There was a powerful public protest,” Milinkevich recently said to The New York Times. “The authorities could do nothing. Martial law was imposed. And that was the beginning of the end.”
IRI Hosts Democracy Leaders

Last October, IRI hosted a luncheon with the Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Buckovski during his trip to Washington, D.C., to dedicate his country's new Embassy. During the event, Prime Minister Buckovski said that Macedonia is a successful, multi-ethnic democracy that can serve as a model for the region and that his country is proud to be allied with the United States. Minister of Foreign Affairs Ljiljana Mrteva, Minister of Economy Fatmir Besimi, Macedonian Ambassador to the United States Nikola Dimitrov, and Slovak Ambassador to the United States Rastislav Kacer also attended the luncheon.

On November 1, 2005, Ukrainian Prime Minister Yuri Yekhanurov spoke at IRI during his first official visit to the United States since his appointment as Ukraine's prime minister by President Viktor Yushchenko. During his remarks, Prime Minister Yekhanurov thanked IRI for its work during the 2004 presidential elections. “I would like to express my deep appreciation and gratitude… I know only too well the scope of that great assistance that was rendered…,” he said.

On November 7, 2005, IRI hosted Paul Rusesabagina, who was portrayed by Don Cheadle in the award-winning film “Hotel Rwanda.” Two days later, Rusesabagina was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush for his courage to protect Tutsi refugees during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, and his work to assist African nations in conflict. Rusesabagina, then-manager of the Hotel des Mille Collenes in Rwanda, had risked his life and used the hotel to shelter 1,200 refugees in 1994.

In January 2006, IRI hosted a delegation of 11 women parliamentarians and political leaders from the Republic of Moldova to observe the American political process at the federal and local levels. The delegation met with administration and legislative officials in Washington, D.C., to discuss federal legislative processes. The group then traveled to Lansing, Michigan, and met with local political parties and lawmakers to learn about local government structures. Through the trip, Moldovan women leaders experienced first-hand democratic political processes.

On February 2, 2006, then-Chairman of the Lithuanian Seimas (parliament) Arturas Paulauskas, this month’s Democracy Hero, spoke at IRI. In his remarks during the event, Paulauskas thanked IRI for its work in Lithuania in the 1990s. Paulauskas also highlighted the importance of the 2006 elections in Ukraine and Belarus to the development of democracy in the former Soviet bloc, and urged his country to help new democracies in the Caucasus region as they make the transition.

On April 4, 2006, IRI hosted President of the Cambodia Center for Human Rights, Kem Sokha, and Director of Voice of Democracy Radio, Pa Nguon Teang, during their visit to the United States. Both discussed the struggle for freedom and democracy in Cambodia and thanked IRI for its support.

Growth of Technology Helps to Advance Democracy

With the growth of satellite television, the Internet, cell phones and other technologies, our world is truly getting smaller. No longer can a government control all the information coming across its boards. Ordinary people in Syria can watch as people go to vote in Ukraine. People in Somaliland can talk on their cell phone to people in Indonesia. People in Cambodia can post a blog to be read by millions all over the world.

To look at the ways technology is helping the advancement of democracy, the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Democracy Data & Communications hosted “Expanding & Strengthening Democracy: The Role of Technology.” IRI Board Member, Congressman Jim Kolbe opened the conference and recognized the role technology is playing.

“Like any other kind of education, democracy assistance has benefited tremendously from the advances in technology…”

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Democracy’s Hero: Arturas Palauskas

When Arturas Palauskas entered politics in 1997, few would have guessed that three years later he would become speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas (parliament). When he first decided to run for president in 1997, Palauskas was a young former prosecutor general, who ran as an independent with little political experience, but the desire to see democracy work in his country.

At the time, said Palauskas, “I understood that running as an independent candidate for the office of the president, I needed to learn how to build structures that could take my message to the Lithuanian people.”

At the suggestion of a friend, Palauskas visited the International Republican Institute’s (IRI) office in Lithuania to learn how to run a campaign. Palauskas used IRI’s lessons to reach out to hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians with his message.

Ultimately, he lost his bid for president in the 1997-1998 elections by just under 7,000 votes out of more than 2 million cast. But Palauskas took his experiences and volunteers to build a new party, the New Alliance. By the 2000 parliamentary elections, the New Alliance was one of the most popular parties in the country.

From 2000 to 2006, Palauskas served as speaker of the Parliament. He also served as acting president of the Republic of Lithuania after Rolandas Paksas was impeached. As speaker and acting president, Palauskas not only strengthened democracy in Lithuania, but he made the promotion of democratic values the cornerstone of his foreign policy priorities.

“Lithuania has been blessed to have friends who have helped us...succeed in becoming a model...for our neighbors and our region,” said Palauskas. It is because of this that he believes it is important for Lithuania to do the same for other countries “who have yet to achieve a democratic society.”

At the 2005 IRI Freedom Dinner, President Bush specifically cited the work of Lithuanians in bringing democracy to Belarus, which has been called Europe’s last dictatorship. IRI President Lorne Craner said, “The Baltic States and Lithuania in particular serve as a model of what the other countries in Eurasia want to become – democratic, free market, European states. The willingness of the political leadership in these countries, like Speaker Palauskas, to take the lead in promoting democratic values is a tribute to the enduring spirit of people to pass the democratic torch on to those who currently live in the darkness of authoritarian non-democratic regimes.”

Palauskas attributes much of his success to IRI training. “At the earliest stage of my political life it was IRI that helped teach me how to take a professional approach to the art of politics,” said Palauskas. “Without that help, I am not sure that I would have had the successes I have had to this point in my political career.”

TECHNOLOGY
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The conference included panel discussions exploring technology’s role in the advancement of democracy abroad in three areas: citizen activism, elections and good governance, and featured a live satellite hook-up with IRI and NDI staff in Iraq.

In remarks during the conference, Lorne Craner, President of IRI, said, “Technology has played a significant role in this growth, helping arm citizens with the tools they need to organize, communicate and more effectively participate in the democratic process and build the institutions required to sustain democratic goals and values.”
The International Republican Institute (IRI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing democracy worldwide.

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IRI maintains programs in Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, East Timor, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Georgia, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somaliland, South Africa, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, West Bank and Gaza, and Zimbabwe.

Two long-time International Republican Institute (IRI) staff members, Brian Dean and Jeffrey Krilla, have left the institute to accept new opportunities. After seven years, Brian Dean, Regional Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, became the Executive Director of the Florida FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), Inc. The group, based in Miami, Florida, supports hemispheric free trade and efforts to bring the permanent Secretariat of the FTAA to Miami.

Jeffrey Krilla, Regional Program Director for Africa, left IRI in January to serve President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor at the U.S. State Department. Krilla joined IRI in 2001. Both Krilla and Dean were invaluable members of IRI’s team and will be greatly missed.

### Board of Directors

- **Jeffrey Krilla**, Regional Program Director for Africa, left IRI in January to serve President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor at the U.S. State Department.

- **Brian Dean**, Regional Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, became the Executive Director of the Florida FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas), Inc. The group, based in Miami, Florida, supports hemispheric free trade and efforts to bring the permanent Secretariat of the FTAA to Miami.

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