

United Nations Democracy Group

Introduction

In June 2000, the final declaration of the first Community of Democracies meeting called for the creation of caucuses and coalitions in international organizations to support resolutions and other international activities aimed at the promotion of democratic governance, and the human rights and fundamental freedoms protected under democracy. Efforts to create such a UN Democracy Group (UNDG) have gained traction in recent years, with members of the Community of Democracies coming together during important UN meetings and promoting initiatives to support democracy through UN bodies.

Basic Facts

- **Endorsed by over 100 democracies:** The Community of Democracies June 2000 Warsaw Declaration commits over 100 democracies to supporting such initiatives.
- **Would work to extend democracy within UN system:** The members of the UN Democracy Group could work together to support UN initiatives to promote democracy and the election of democratic countries to leadership positions in the UN.
- **Supported by NGOs:** A coalition of NGOs, including Citizens for Global Solutions, is working to encourage countries to establish the UNDG.
- **Endorsed by the Washington Post:** In its May 3, 2003 editorial the Washington Post encourages the UN to "to create...a democracy caucus that could help fight the battle for human rights and unite countries that otherwise seldom work together." This effort would help to change of some of the more "moribund, corrupt, or...ludicrous" elements of the UN.

Talking Points

- A UNDG would be a powerful way to promote democracy and human rights in a multilateral, inclusive way.
- A UNDG could help avoid situations like that of Libya, a country that routinely violates basic human rights, being elected as chair of the UN Human Rights Commission.

United States Position

The United States signed the final Community of Democracies declaration that calls for a UNDG, and the idea has been endorsed by senior state department officials. The House of Representatives passed legislation in 2003 calling for the President to establish a democracy group at the United Nations. Secretary of State Powell has said, "We support the idea of a democracy group at the UN, a group of like-minded countries that would work together in multilateral settings to advance common goals in all areas of policy."

What We Do

Citizens for Global Solutions supports the creation of an inclusive, multilateral UN Democracy Group based on the Community of Democracies membership criteria. We urge the U.S. government to work with other Community of Democracies Steering Committee members to establish and nurture a thriving UNDG that works to promote democracy and human rights throughout the UN system.