



Advancing Freedom and Democracy Report 2010

U.S. Government Support for Democracy and Human Rights

The long-term security of the United States depends on our unwavering support for the expansion of democracy and human rights abroad. Promotion of universal values – freedom of expression, assembly, association, and religion – is the most effective, long-term way to strengthen international stability, reduce regional conflicts, counter terrorism, and extend peace and prosperity. U.S. policy is guided by principled engagement, not only with democratic or politically transitioning countries, but with non-democratic regimes to advance individual rights and democratic governance.

The U.S. Government will advance democracy and human rights through working to strengthen democratic governance around the world; enhancing the rule of law and judicial independence; promoting political pluralism and free and fair electoral processes; supporting the development of independent media and Internet freedom; advocating for security sector reform that encourages respect for human rights by security forces; protecting human rights for all, including religious freedom, labor, those with disabilities and LGBT persons; and engaging, supporting and protecting civil society.

In addition to foreign assistance programs, such as the Human Rights Defenders Fund, the Middle East Partnership Initiative, and Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia, the Department uses public diplomacy tools to advance human rights and democracy: the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP),^[1] the Voluntary Visitors (VolVis) program,^[2] Lincoln Learning Centers (LLC),^[3] Ambassador's Small Grants (ASG) Program,^[4] small grants,^[5] and American Corners^[6] as well as the promotion of Voice of America,^[7] and the Fulbright,^[8] Humphrey,^[9] and Edward R. Murrow Fellowship^[10] programs. Additional funding is directed to prepare university-level students for leadership roles,^[11] and to fund speakers on democracy-related issues.^[12]

Democratic Governance and Civil Society

The U.S. Government seeks to strengthen the legal framework for democratic governance and improve the capacity of government bodies to respond to their constituents.^[13] U.S. Government activities also support civil service reform, including recruitment and training of professionals, and assistance to provide better government services.^[14]

The United States funds programs assisting civil society oversight of government ministries in order that they can play their watchdog role in public life.^[15] The U.S. support strengthens the ability of networks of civil society organizations to lobby government to impact policy, represent citizen interests, advocate for public reform, build partnerships with public and private sectors, develop policy alternatives, and promote multiethnic societies. Other U.S. programs support civil society organizations to address issues of concern to their communities, including freedom of assembly and association, religious freedom, local government cooperation, free and objective media reporting, and cultural exchange.

Elections and Political Processes

U.S. programs strengthen the capacity of electoral institutions,^[16] support improved political processes,^[17] increase awareness of civic responsibilities, encourage NGOs to provide civic education and advocacy for citizen interests,^[18] and encourage citizen participation in local and national governance.^[19] U.S. officials monitor the implementation of democratic media, political party, and elections legislation, and urge countries to take steps towards political liberalization, such as adoption and implementation of legislation providing access to government information and permitting freedom of assembly.^[20]

The United States promotes free and fair elections through training of election officials at all levels of government and support for NGO coalitions to observe local and national elections, as well as political party development projects.^[21] The U.S. Government supports reliable sources^[22] of information about local government functions and elections processes.

The United States supports programs to promote reconciliation in areas affected by post-election violence.[23] These programs work with community leaders – including those from different political, religious, and ethnic groups – to promote unity, peace, and reform. The U.S. combats post-election violence in combination with peace activists and supports the development and implementation of national policies on conflict management and peace building that encourage full participation of women in the political process and combat gender-based violence.

Economic Freedom and Opportunity

Improving democratic governance to help governments meet socio-economic challenges is a critical component of United States support for democracy and human rights. Priorities include more representative governance through decentralization, political and fiscal reforms to address internal grievances, advocacy of improved access to health care services and education, as well as measures to reduce poverty and strengthen natural resource management.

In support of worker rights and well-regulated labor markets, the U.S. Government works with partners such as the International Labor Organization and International Finance Corporation. The U.S. is committed to international efforts to increase economic prosperity in a global economy, including improving the quality and quantity of jobs to ensure that economic gains are broadly shared.[24] The United States uses e-governance programming in its anticorruption efforts, targeting government and civil society capacity building, and the development and implementation of government anticorruption strategies and action plans. U.S. programs provide technical assistance, training, and systems support to governments on subjects including fiscal and budget management, revenue raising, community participation in policy discussions and planning, and support to associations of governors and mayors.[25] U.S. programs strengthen the independence and good governance of trade unions,[26] facilitate industrial relations, work to include informal workers into the formal economy, and promote implementation of fair labor standards.[27]

Press and Internet Freedom

The United States is an ardent advocate for freedom of expression on the air, in print, and online. The U.S. encourages networking with international journalists' associations that enhance professionalism through workshops, program support, and technical assistance, and utilizes public speaking opportunities to convey the importance of the media's role in building a democratic society.[28] Members of the press are invited to U.S.-sponsored events that focus on the democratic process. The U.S. supports journalistic ethics, media capacity building, and local efforts to increase press freedom and access to public information. In addition, the United States promotes academic exchanges, public messaging, and speaking engagements, and the use of new electronic media such as social networks, blogs, and electronic journals.

U.S. officials encourage governments to bring their media and access to information laws in line with universal human rights. Specific initiatives include encouraging governments to rescind criminal penalties for libel.[29] U.S. officials advocate for thorough and transparent investigations of violent attacks against journalists.[30] U.S. officials also urge governments to release journalists and bloggers imprisoned for politically motivated reasons. U.S.-funded projects contribute to the professionalism of female journalists and improve coverage of women's issues and human rights. U.S.-supported external broadcasting programming provides citizens with alternative sources of news and information in closed societies. The U.S. supports open, public, and safe Internet access and training programs that increase citizen access to information[31], including through U.S.-funded resource centers.[32]

Rule of Law

U.S. programs combat impunity and corruption, and increase access to legal services with technical assistance to civilian and military courts, legal aid services, and legislative reform. U.S. assistance targets national and provincial legislatures, courts in pilot jurisdictions, and provincial and municipal authorities. U.S.-funded programs support efforts to propose, review, and implement criminal law-related legislation; train judges,[33] police,[34] and prosecutors;[35] and offer expert assistance in establishing more effective law enforcement structures.[36]

The United States funds measures to improve governments' abilities to protect judges and their families from violence or intimidation. U.S. officials frequently convey the message that extrajudicial killings and disappearances must cease and encourage governments to investigate and prosecute cases.[37] U.S. officials exchange best practices in reforming countries' commercial laws, migration management, and antitrafficking legislation. U.S. assistance supports training and professional exchange opportunities for judges specializing in commercial law.

Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

U.S. officials publicly and privately urge governments to bring their human rights practices into compliance with their human rights commitments and obligations, make systemic reforms, and release political prisoners

and prisoners of conscience. The United States urges governments to distinguish between those seeking to express peaceful political dissent and those engaged in terrorism.

The U.S. Government funds civil society projects to support the protection of human rights, including freedom of speech, association and assembly, children's rights, respect internationally recognized labor rights, prevent violence and discrimination against women, assist indigenous communities to access effective justice, monitor human-rights observance by local police, provide emergency assistance to activists under threat, and promote religious freedom and tolerance.

U.S.-funded military training[38] includes a human rights component, and U.S. officials meet with government and military authorities to encourage cooperation in legal proceedings involving human rights abuses committed during conflict. The United States pursues actions to address deplorable prison conditions and prisoner abuse across the globe, urging countries to comply with universal human rights.[39]

The United States promotes international labor standards and efforts to eliminate exploitive child labor. This includes projects that engage indigenous communities in participatory planning, budgeting, and monitoring to remove children from exploitive labor and place them in education programs.[40] The U.S. funds American labor rights organizations;[41] supports the participation and leadership of women and other vulnerable groups in trade unions; and promotes HIV/AIDS programs that combat workplace discrimination.[42]

The United States provides funding for local NGOs to identify and respond to acts of violence against women and children, including actively campaigning against the entrenched practice of female genital mutilation.[43] U.S. programs with NGOs assist victims of gender-based violence in navigating the justice system and support a pro bono mediation specialist to develop training materials and conduct mediation training and law workshops.[44]

U.S. Government officials meet community and government in regions with large ethnic minorities. To support development of civil society within minority regions, the U.S. Government works with NGOs to organize capacity building seminars, social outreach programs, networking opportunities with domestic and international NGOs, and tolerance in schools projects.[45]

U.S. officials exchange best practices in reforming anti-trafficking legislation. Embassy officials meet with their counterparts to advocate for more shelters, legislation, and convictions of trafficking violators.[46] U.S. programs are training judges, prosecutors, and lawyers on trafficking victim identification and protection, and are advancing shelter-based care for trafficking victims, including victims of forced labor.[47]

U.S. programs support religious freedom, encourage cross-sectarian dialogues,[48] and monitor government adherence to the universal human right of religious freedom. To promote religious freedom, U.S. officials meet with religious leaders and members of interfaith dialogue committees in various communities.[49]

Endnotes

The information above reports U.S. Government priorities and activities of U.S. embassies around the world to promote democracy and human rights for calendar year 2010. For background on human rights conditions in each of these countries, please see the 2010 *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, the *International Religious Freedom Reports*, and the *Trafficking in Persons Reports* at www.state.gov.

[1] Afghanistan; Bhutan; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Brunei; Burma; Central African Republic; China; Democratic Republic of Congo; Comoros; Republic of Congo; Egypt; Fiji; Guinea-Bissau; Kazakhstan; Kosovo; Laos; Lesotho; Libya; Malawi; Malaysia; Maldives; Moldova; Morocco; Nepal; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Paraguay; Rwanda; Saudi Arabia; Sierra Leone; Singapore; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Sudan; Tonga; Tunisia; Uganda; Ukraine; Vietnam

[2] Afghanistan, Nepal

[3] Afghanistan, Ecuador, Malaysia

[4] Afghanistan; Swaziland

[5] Algeria; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Burma; Comoros; Cote d'Ivoire; Djibouti; Egypt; Ethiopia; Eritrea; Fiji; The Gambia; Georgia; Kazakhstan; Kosovo; Kyrgyz Republic; Madagascar; Malaysia; Maldives; Morocco; Nicaragua; Oman; Pakistan; Russia; Seychelles; Somalia; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Togo; Tunisia; Ukraine; Uzbekistan; Venezuela; Yemen

[6] Albania; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Belarus; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Botswana; Burkina Faso; Burma; Cambodia; China; Comoros; DRC; Cote d'Ivoire; Ecuador; Egypt; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Fiji; Georgia; Guinea; Honduras; Iraq; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Kosovo; Kuwait; Kyrgyz Republic; Laos; Lebanon;

Macedonia; Madagascar; Malaysia; Malawi; Maldives; Mauritania; Moldova; Montenegro; Morocco; Mozambique; Nepal; Nicaragua; Niger; Nigeria; Pakistan; Paraguay; Philippines; Russia; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Singapore; Somalia; Sri Lanka; Swaziland; Syria; Tajikistan; Tanzania; Thailand; Togo; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Uganda; Ukraine; United Arab Emirates; Venezuela Vietnam; Zambia; Zimbabwe.

[7] Angola; Azerbaijan; Guinea-Bissau; Iran; Paraguay

[8] Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Burma; Republic of the Congo; Libya; Maldives; Nepal; Paraguay

[9] Bhutan; Burma; Nepal

[10] Brunei Darussalam; Nepal

[11] Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies fellows, ACCESS Micro-scholarship program, the President's Entrepreneurial Summit, English Language Fellow

[12] Algeria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Bolivia; Brunei Darussalam; Burma; Central African Republic; China; Egypt; Ethiopia; The Gambia; Georgia; Guinea; Kenya; Kosovo; Kuwait; Kyrgyz Republic; Laos; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Malaysia; Maldives; Mauritania; Moldova; Morocco; Nepal; Nicaragua; Nigeria; Paraguay; Qatar; Russia; Saudi Arabia; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Sudan; Swaziland; Thailand; Togo; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Uganda; Zambia

[13] Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Georgia, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Russia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

[14] Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Kyrgyz Republic, Maldives, Pakistan, Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and Ukraine.

[15] Armenia, Kenya, Macedonia, Montenegro, Nepal, and Russia.

[16] Training to Independent Election Commission, National Assembly, Afghanistan; Independent Electoral Commission, Democratic Republic of Congo; Increased Trust in Electoral Processes, Georgia; The Party Training Academy, Kosovo; Central Election Commission, Kyrgyz Republic; Legislative Strengthening Program, Malawi; Election Commission, Maldives; **Moldovan Electoral Administration Capacity Development Program**, Moldova; Election Committee, Nepal; Election Commission, Pakistan; Permanent Election Committee, Qatar; La CENA Training, Senegal; Electoral Commission, Uganda; Political Process Program, Ukraine.

[17] Training to Civil Service Commission, and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, Afghanistan; Monitoring of Elected Bodies, and Political Process Development, Armenia; Strengthening Civic Leadership and Civic Participation in the Democratic and Electoral Process in Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan; Political Process Strengthening Program, Belarus; pardons of opposition candidates, Ethiopia; International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), Guatemala; Strengthening Political Competition, Georgia; implementation of the Human Rights Action Plan, Kazakhstan; Political Processes and Party Support (PPPS) Program, Strengthening Election Administration in Kosovo program, Kosovo; IVLP, Lesotho; Strengthening Democratic Political Activism, Moldova; IVLP, Morocco; IVLP, The American Library, Nepal; small grants, Nicaragua; Pilot Engagement with States (PES) program, Jos Task Force, Nigeria; IVLP, Pakistan; IVLP, Papua New Guinea; IVLP, Rwanda; Election Monitoring and Voter Education program, Promoting Civic and Political Engagement in Russia, and Strengthening Democratic Institutions, Russia; IVLP, the Middle East Partnership Initiative, Saudi Arabia; American Connections, Singapore; enforcement of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, Sudan; American Corners, Tajikistan; small grants, Togo; Political Process, Ukraine.

[18] Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Burundi, China, Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Fiji, Honduras, Iraq, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Maldives, Moldova, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russia, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates.

[19] "Get Out the Vote" (GOTV) campaign, Georgia; GOTV, Kuwait; GOTV campaign, Moldova.

[20] Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bhutan, Cuba, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[21] Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[22] Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burma, Central African Republic; Cuba, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan; Russia, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[23] Armenia, Bhutan, Central African Republic, Georgia, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Senegal, Somalia, and Zimbabwe.

[24] Albania, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Mauritania, Nepal, Niger, Russia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[25] Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Russia, Somalia, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe.

[26] Guinea, Kenya.

[27] Cuba, Egypt, The Gambia, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Niger, Nigeria, Russia, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates.

[28] Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Russia, Somalia, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[29] Democratic Republic of Congo, Kyrgyz Republic.

[30] Azerbaijan, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Russia, Somalia.

[31] Azerbaijan, Brunei Darussalam, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Georgia, Guinea Bissau, Iran, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Singapore, Timor Leste, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Vietnam.

[32] Afghanistan; Albania; Algeria; Angola; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Belarus; Bolivia; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Burkina Faso; Burma; Cambodia; Cameroon; China; Congo; Cuba; DRC; Cote d'Ivoire; Ecuador; Egypt; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Guatemala; Georgia; Guinea; Haiti; Honduras; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Kosovo; Kuwait; Kyrgyz Republic; Liberia; Laos; Macedonia; Madagascar; Malawi; Moldova; Morocco; Mozambique; Nepal; Nicaragua; Niger; Nigeria; Oman; Pakistan; Paraguay; Philippines; Russia; Rwanda; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Sri Lanka; Sudan; Swaziland; Syria; Tajikistan; Tanzania; Thailand; Togo; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Uganda; Ukraine; United Arab Emirates; Uzbekistan; Venezuela; Vietnam; Yemen; Zambia; Zimbabwe.

[33] Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Russia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates

[34] Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia, United Arab Emirates.

[35] Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Kenya, Russia.

[36] Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Russia, United Arab Emirates.

[37] Azerbaijan, Armenia, Central African Republic, Chad, Nepal, Russia, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe.

[38] Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Nepal, Nigeria, Sudan.

[39] Central African Republic, Cuba, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Russia.

[40] Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, The Gambia, Guinea, Niger, Sierra Leone.

[41] Cuba, The Gambia, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Niger, Nigeria, Russia, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates.

[42] Egypt, Eritrea, Kenya, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe.

[43] Egypt, Eritrea, Guinea.

[44] Armenia, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liberia, Pakistan, Sudan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates.

[45] Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cote d'Ivoire, Georgia, United Arab Emirates.

[46] Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Sierra Leone, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[47] Albania, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Georgia, Kenya, Kosovo,

Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[48] Azerbaijan, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

[49] Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bhutan, Central African Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Zimbabwe.

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