

Statement on the Occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)

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At a time of rapid geopolitical shifts, the Council of Member States of International IDEA calls for continued and elevated efforts to protect and strengthen democracy, and for coordinated action in support of democratic principles, institutions, values and resilience.

Stronger democracies demonstrably lead to a safer and more prosperous world. Strengthening democratic institutions—nationally, regionally, and globally—is conducive to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all, and building effective and accountable institutions, as expressed by Sustainable Development Goal 16. The Council reaffirms its belief in democracy as essential to realize the aspirations for freedom, equality, dignity, development, justice, peace and security enshrined in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Political, social, economic, and environmental uncertainties pose multi-fold and far-reaching challenges to societies worldwide. Compared to other forms of government, democracies are better equipped to tackle these issues through free and pluralistic public discourse, inclusive policies, and built-in mechanisms for self-correction. In this context, the Council acknowledges the growing need for International IDEA's proven ability to drive international cooperation to protect and improve democracy, and to support effective and collective democratic responses to global challenges. With its world-renowned expertise and diverse network of partners, International IDEA is uniquely positioned to help address these global challenges, by strengthening democratic institutions and processes within and beyond its Member States, and by continuing to serve as a leading voice and trusted convener for democracy. This work is more important and urgent than ever before.

Over the past three decades, International IDEA has become a global intergovernmental leader on democracy research and assistance. The Institute has expanded from 14 founding Member States in 1995 to today's 35 Member States and 2 Observers. From Nepal to The Gambia, from Paraguay to Fiji and Ukraine, the Institute has supported the democratic journey of more than 70 countries worldwide. Building on its core mission of providing electoral assistance, International IDEA has improved and consolidated electoral institutions, supported constitution-building processes across continents, promoted political rights and representation, become one of the world's most trusted sources of comparative research on democracy, and addressed the challenges to democracy posed by digitalization and climate change. Further, initiatives such as the Global Democracy Coalition are a testament of the Institute's ability to engage civil society and foster multi-stakeholder and transnational collaboration. The increased scope and depth of the Institute's geographical footprint and activities underline its continued and growing relevance.

As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of International IDEA, the Council of Member States commends the remarkable journey and the numerous achievements of the Institute, and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the mission of the Institute to protect and advance democracy worldwide. The Council reiterates its strong and steadfast support to International IDEA, its mandate and the principles expressed in its Statutes. The Council remains committed to engaging collectively, impactfully and constructively in this crucial work, alongside the Institute's Secretariat, its Board of Advisers, partners and democratic actors around the world.