



Community  
of Democracies

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# Warsaw Declaration

## A roadmap to democracy

# Warsaw Declaration

The Warsaw Declaration is the founding document of the Community of Democracies. It sets out the basic principles for a state to flourish as a democracy, recognizes the universality of democratic values and agrees to respect and uphold these principles.

- ▣ Adopted on June 27, 2000 in Warsaw, Poland by representatives of 106 democratic states attending the opening Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies.
- ▣ It defines the essential practices and norms for the effective establishment and consolidation of democracy and emphasizes the interdependence between peace, development, human rights and democracy.

The Warsaw Declaration acknowledges that democratic development is a process, in which each country is at a different stage. No country has reached perfection and all should work together to meet these objectives, supporting each other while respecting each state's sovereignty. The best way to strengthen democratic institutions and principles is by promoting discussion, exchanging experiences and identifying best practices. This collaboration makes the countries that adopted the Warsaw Declaration a community: they cooperate, learn together, share common values, and encourage each other to uphold these principles.

## **The Warsaw Declaration on how to achieve its goals:**

- ▣ Strengthening institutions and processes of democracy and promoting discussion on democratic governance.
- ▣ Promoting civic education, including education for democracy.
- ▣ Supporting civil society and independent media.
- ▣ Working with relevant institutions, international organizations, civil society and governments to coordinate support for new and emerging democratic societies.
- ▣ Strengthening cooperation to face the transnational challenges to democracy such as terrorism and organized crime.
- ▣ Assisting each other in economic and social development.
- ▣ Collaborating on democracy-related issues in existing international and regional institutions aimed at promotion of democratic governance.

## Countries that adopted the Warsaw Declaration

Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Cabo Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Kuwait, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen.

## Community of Democracies

The Community of Democracies (CoD) is a global intergovernmental coalition comprised of the Governing Council Member States that support adherence to common democratic standards and values outlined in the Warsaw Declaration. Building on the Warsaw Declaration, the Community is committed to taking concerted action to advance and protect democratic freedoms, strengthen democratic institutions, and expand political participation.

# Warsaw Declaration principles

Countries that adopted the Warsaw Declaration recognized the universality of democratic values and committed to respect and uphold the following 19 core democratic principles:

1  
The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government, as expressed by exercise of the right and civic duties of citizens to choose their representatives through regular, **free and fair elections** with universal and equal suffrage, open to multiple parties, conducted by secret ballot, monitored by independent electoral authorities, and free of fraud and intimidation.

2  
The right of every person to **equal access to public service** and to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

3  
The right of every person to **equal protection of the law**, without any discrimination as to race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

4  
The right of every person to **freedom of opinion and of expression**, including to exchange and receive ideas and information through any media, regardless of frontiers.

5

The right of every person to **freedom of thought, conscience and religion.**

6

The right of every person to **equal access to education.**

7

The right of the **press to collect, report and disseminate information, news and opinions**, subject only to restrictions necessary in a democratic society and prescribed by law, while bearing in mind evolving international practices in this field.

8

The right of every person to **respect for private family life**, home, correspondence, including electronic communications, free of arbitrary or unlawful interference.

9

The right of every person to **freedom of peaceful assembly and association**, including to establish or join their own political parties, civic groups, trade unions or other organizations with the necessary legal guarantees to allow them to operate freely on a basis of equal treatment before the law.

The right of persons belonging to **minorities or disadvantaged groups to equal protection of the law**, and the freedom to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and use their own language.

10

11

The right of every person to be **free from arbitrary arrest or detention**; to be free from torture and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment; and to receive due process of law, including to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

12

That the aforementioned rights, which are essential to full and effective participation in a democratic society, be enforced by a **competent, independent and impartial judiciary** open to the public, established and protected by law.

13

That **elected leaders uphold the law** and function strictly in accordance with the constitution of the country concerned and procedures established by law.

14

The right of those duly elected to **form a government**, assume office and fulfill the term of office as legally established.

# 15

The obligation of an **elected government to refrain from extra-constitutional actions**, to allow the holding of periodic elections and to respect their results, and to relinquish power when its legal mandate ends.

# 16

That **government institutions be transparent, participatory and fully accountable** to the citizenry of the country and take steps to combat corruption, which corrodes democracy.

# 17

That the **legislature be duly elected and transparent and accountable** to the people.

# 18

That civilian, **democratic control over the military** be established and preserved.

# 19

**That all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social – be promoted and protected** as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant human rights instruments.

# Community of Democracies

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