



Community
of Democracies

2019 Annual Report of the Community of Democracies

February 2020

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Overview by the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett

It is my pleasure to present the 2019 Annual Report of the Community of Democracies.

Last year, the Community of Democracies (CoD) was able to highlight that multilateralism and common action are the best response to both challenges to democracy and opportunities for democratic consolidation. In 2019, there was measurable progress for the Community of Democracies, with new leadership, expansion of the Governing Council (GC), and engagement addressing vital democracy-related issues by the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD) in more than a dozen capitals, from Addis Ababa and Bamako to Ulaanbaatar and Yerevan. I would like to thank Governing Council Members for their commitment and continued support, and the PSCD team for their hard work.

In an Extraordinary Governing Council meeting on the margins of the 74th United Nations General Assembly, the Community of Democracies was honored to welcome Romania as its new Presidency for 2019-2021. Under this return to traditional CoD leadership, the Community has commenced preparations for the 10th Ministerial Conference, to be held in Bucharest in June 2020, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the CoD.

This past year also saw growth in the Governing Council, with the accession of two new Member States: Georgia and the Republic of North Macedonia. GC membership is an acknowledgment of the progress made by both countries in democratic development. The growth also increases the diversity and broad experience of the Governing Council, which includes Member States at different stages of democracy and from every region of the world.

Governing Council meetings featured discussion panels with external experts on subjects ranging from governance devolution to youth political participation. As an important new activity, Member States concluded each Governing Council meeting with the adoption of an Outcome Statement, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to work together with civil society on pressing democracy-related issues, including the protection of media freedom and cooperation with the private sector to advance the implementation of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, especially Goal 16.

Looking ahead, June 2020 will mark the 20th Anniversary of the Community of Democracies

and the adoption of the Warsaw Declaration. The Anniversary will provide an important opportunity to promote the Warsaw Declaration as a roadmap for democracy, highlight past accomplishments of the Community of Democracies and determine future activities and actions. I am looking forward to working together with the Presidency, Governing Council and the Civil Society Pillar as we commemorate two decades of shared democratic effort to promote, protect and defend the universal values enshrined in the Warsaw Declaration.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Presidency of the Community of Democracies

On September 15, 2019, the Community of Democracies welcomed Romania as it assumed the two-year Presidency of the CoD, following a collective chairmanship held by the United Kingdom and Poland with the Executive Committee in 2019. In its leadership role, the Presidency oversees, coordinates and facilitates CoD activities and provides leadership to meet the CoD Strategic Objectives. The Presidency works with the Governing Council, the Executive Committee and the Secretary General. As priorities for the next two years, the Romanian Presidency intends to focus its efforts on participation of youth in decision-making at all levels and the role of the private sector in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In June 2020, Romanian Presidency will also host the 10th Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies.



Executive Committee of the Community of Democracies

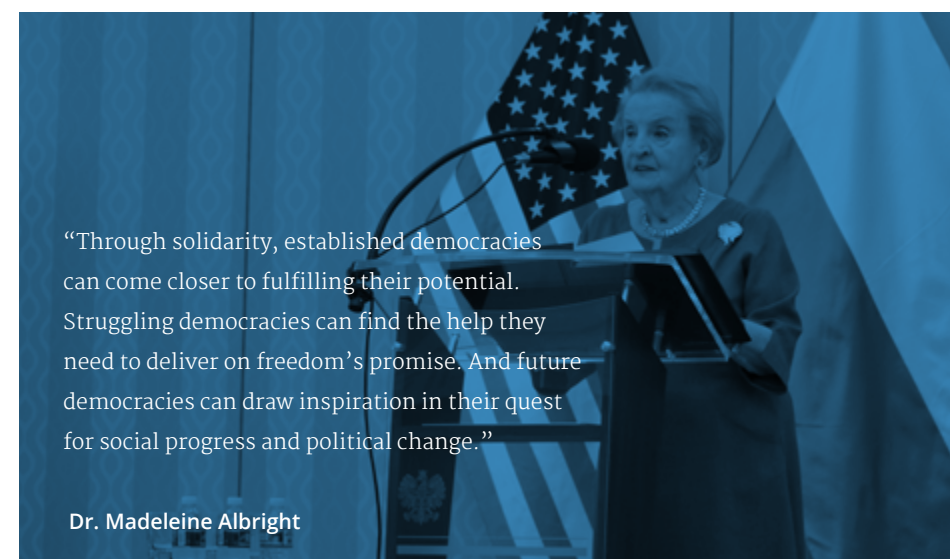
In 2019, the Executive Committee continued to provide strategic recommendations and opinions to the Governing Council to inform decisions on the activities of the CoD. The rotating six-month chairmanship of the Executive Committee was held by the United Kingdom (September 2018- March 2019) and Poland (March 2019- September 2019).

During two face-to-face meetings, held in Warsaw, in June and November, Member States discussed current and planned activities of the CoD, in line with its Strategic Plan and in preparation for the CoD 2020 Ministerial Conference.

“The UK is honoured to have been Chair of the Executive Committee and I was particularly pleased to open the meeting of the Governing Council in January and discuss with esteemed colleagues from member states the importance of democratic participation. The UK will continue its commitment to the Community of Democracies through membership of its Executive Committee and its Working Groups.”

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

During the Polish chairmanship, H.E. Mr. Piotr Wilczek, Poland's Ambassador to the United States, hosted an event for the CoD in Washington, D.C. A special guest was Secretary of State Dr. Madeleine Albright, who offered remarks on the history of the CoD and its role in preserving democracy.



“Through solidarity, established democracies can come closer to fulfilling their potential. Struggling democracies can find the help they need to deliver on freedom’s promise. And future democracies can draw inspiration in their quest for social progress and political change.”

Dr. Madeleine Albright



“Even though the Polish chairmanship of the Community of Democracies’ Executive Committee has come to an end, our goals remain unchanged: Poland will continuously strive to share its experiences gained during the process of peaceful political and economic transformation and continually support democratization processes in other parts of the world.”

Polish Foreign Minister **Jacek Czaputowicz**

Governing Council of the Community of Democracies

Three Governing Council meetings took place in 2019, including an Extraordinary Governing Council meeting on the margins of the 74th United Nations General Assembly. Each Governing Council meeting resulted in adoption of an Outcome Statement by the Member States, an important new practice for the Community of Democracies. In addition, discussions were held in the framework of the CoD Strategic Objectives, featuring panels on vital democracy-related issues.

As an important milestone for the Community of Democracies, 2019 also saw the expansion of the Governing Council, with the accession of two new Member States, Georgia and the Republic of North Macedonia.

MEETINGS OF THE CoD GOVERNING COUNCIL

29th Meeting of the Community’s Governing Council,
January 29, 2019, London

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Chaired by the United Kingdom.
- Observers: Germany, Latvia, the Republic of North Macedonia, Maldives, Montenegro, Peru, Timor-Leste, The Alliance for Democracy Foundation, International IDEA.

The meeting featured three discussion panels:

THE DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE OF THE MALDIVES, WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF H.E. ABDULLA SHAHID, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM’S MINISTER OF STATE FOR AFRICA, HARRIETT BALDWIN MP.

Addressing the democratic resilience in his country, Minister Shahid highlighted: “...This is the story of how the people of Maldives stood up against autocracy peacefully and beat

it at the ballot box. This is the story of when dictators incarcerate political leaders how people come together to find common ground to beat the oppressors."

In their comments, Governing Council Member States welcomed the democratic elections in Maldives, in which 90% of the eligible population voted.

DEVOLUTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: THIS SESSION PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT HOW DEMOCRACY IS RESPONDING TO DEMANDS FOR CHANGE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM THROUGH DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATION.

Panelists: Sarah Maclean, Deputy Director, Constitution Group, Cabinet Office; Brian Dornan, Head of Scotland House; Neill Jackson, Head of Executive & Central Advisory Division. Moderated by Catherine Webster, Deputy Director, Constitution Group, Cabinet Office.

The debate explained the process of devolution in the United Kingdom, highlighting that that devolution seeks to bring power closer to the people.

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION: THE DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION, HIGHLIGHTING SUCCESSES IN EXPANDING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, YOUTH, AND MINORITY GROUPS AND CHALLENGES TO BROADENING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION.

The session featured as panelists: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN; Chloe Smith, Minister for the Constitution, and Anthony Smith, CEO of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

Discussing different ways to overcome the challenges of democracy, including those within democratic societies,



panelists emphasized that democracy is never a finished project but a process under constant construction that requires ongoing promotion.

MEDIA FREEDOM: THE SESSION FOCUSED ON MEDIA FREEDOM AS ONE OF THE CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY AND AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE OF THE WARSAW DECLARATION.

Panelists: Alastair King-Smith, Deputy Director, Coordinator for Media Freedom Campaign and Deputy Director, Foreign and Commonwealth Office; Rebecca Vincent, UK Bureau Director, Reporters Without Borders.

Mr. King-Smith presented the UK's campaign on media freedom, aimed at tackling restrictions on media freedom and protecting the safety of journalists. In their comments, several Governing Council Member States expressed their support to the campaign and shared experience from their countries regarding freedom of the press.

Rebecca Vincent highlighted the alarming global deterioration of press freedom in the world and urged states to ensure protection of journalists.

As an outcome of the GC, Member States adopted a Statement on Media Freedom and Violence Against Journalists, which reaffirms the commitment of the Governing Council Members to the promotion and protection of media freedom, freedom of expression online and offline, and the protection of journalists and media workers



“The need for action is clear. Quite often it is asked where is the evidence? And the evidence, the stark evidence is right there in front of us. Eighty journalists killed in 2018, almost 350 are in prison, and 60 journalists are currently held hostage. Therefore, I hope that discussions today lead to a Call for Action on the important issue of media freedom from all Governing Council members present.”

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon



30th Meeting of the Communities' Governing Council, June 14, 2019, Warsaw

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Chaired by Poland.
- Observers: Armenia, Colombia, Denmark, Georgia, Ghana, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, Peru, Moldova, Senegal, Tunisia.

The meeting featured two discussion panels:

PRIVATE SECTOR ROLE IN THE SDGS: REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR WERE INVITED TO SPEAK ON ITS CONTRIBUTION IN ADVANCING THE UN 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 16 (PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS) AND SDG 17 (STRENGTHENING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT).



Panelists: Tomasz Chrósty, Director of Economic Analyses Department, Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, Poland; Irena Pichola, Member of the Board of the Responsible Business Forum in Poland; Kamil Wyszowski, President of the Board, Global Compact Network Poland; Michał Obiegała, BP's Government & Regulatory Affairs Manager, Poland.

Speakers discussed the commitment of the private sector in advancing the Sustainable Development Agenda, how governments can reach out to the private sector, and, as an example of engagement, discussed the energy sector and its investment in renewable energy and its adherence to SDGs.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE, WHICH DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC LIFE, BOTH ONLINE AND OFFLINE.

Panelists: Augusta Featherston, Youth Focal Point and Democratic Governance Officer, OSCE/ODIHR; Pawel Wierdak, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Warsaw; Nehemiah Attigah, Principal Lead at Odekro PMO Foundation, Director of Projects in GhanaThink Foundation.

Speakers highlighted the importance of civic education and digital literacy to promote youth participation and the challenges and benefits of social media, they also shared good practices from their respective organizations to engage youth and increase participation. Mr. Attigah presented the case of Ghana, highlighting the large youth presence in the country, and emphasized specific activities spearhead by youth in Ghana especially through social media.

- Member States welcomed interventions on democratic resilience by the invited Observer States to the 30th Governing Council: Armenia, Georgia, Ghana, the Republic of North Macedonia and Peru.
- Ms. Monika LeRoy represented Secretary General Luis Almagro and the Organization of American States at the Governing Council meeting. In delivering Secretary General Almagro's message to the 30th Governing Council, she noted in her review of Latin American democracy that "For too long, economic dependency, regional historical and personal relationships, combined with a misinterpretation of the principle of non-intervention, prompted many states to look the other way. They chose inaction, labeling it neutrality. The harsh reality is that inaction is action- in Venezuela it was action in defense of a developing dictatorship. Silence served as complicity, empowering the Maduro regime to create one of the worst political, economic and humanitarian crises experienced in the Western Hemisphere."
- Member States adopted a list of countries to be invited to the 10th CoD Ministerial Conference.

In the Outcome Statement adopted at the 30th Governing Council meeting, Member States called on governments to engage with the private sector and civil society to better respond to challenges in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.



“We, the Member States of the Community of Democracies Governing Council, underscore the importance of engaging with civil society, including the Community of Democracies’ Civil Society Pillar, to understand and respond to challenges faced by democratic governments, including those being part of the Governing Council.”

Outcome Statement of the Extraordinary Governing Council

Extraordinary Governing Council Meeting, held on the margins of the 74th United Nations General Assembly, September 26, 2019, New York

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Governing Council meeting was opened by Foreign Minister of Poland H.E. Jacek Czaputowicz, representing the outgoing Chair of the CoD Executive Committee, with Foreign Minister of Romania H.E. Ramona Mănescu, representing the CoD Presidency of Romania, and the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett.
- During the official transfer of the CoD Presidency, Member States welcomed Romania as the CoD Presidency for 2019-2021 and thanked the outgoing Executive Committee Chair Poland for its leadership.
- The meeting featured a discussion on the democratic resilience in Mali. The session included a speech by Ambassador Dr. Madou Diallo, Director of International Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali; and intervention by Mr. Moussa Kondo, Focal Point of the Civil Society Pillar from the Republic of Mali. Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett thanked the government of the Republic of Mali for hosting the CoD High Level Mission and underlined the main recommendations in which the CoD could assist the Malian authorities.
- The session continued with participation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia who delivered remarks in support of application of each of the country to the Governing Council.
- The Outcome Statement of the Governing Council underscored the importance of engaging with civil society, including the Community of Democracies’ Civil Society Pillar, to understand and respond to challenges faced by democratic governments.

Renewal Process in the Membership in the Governing Council

Pursuant to the decision made by the Governing Council at the 23rd GC meeting on December 14, 2016, every two years one third of the Governing Council Member States are requested by the Secretary General in writing to renew their commitment to membership in the Governing Council. The first round of membership renewal took place in 2018, with eight Member States – Chile, India, Mali, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, the United States of America – renewing their membership.

The second round of membership renewal started on August 2, 2019 and will conclude in 2020. The following GC Member States responded to the Secretary General's request to renew their membership: El Salvador, Italy, Mongolia and Morocco. As part of the renewal process, the Secretary General together with a representative of the International Steering Committee of the Civil Society Pillar traveled to El Salvador, Mongolia, and Morocco in 2019, to meet with government officials, civil society and other key democracy stakeholders to get a better understanding of the current situation in the countries, adherence to the Warsaw Declaration principles and discuss democracy strengthening.

Reports on renewal of membership to the GC were provided to the GC members in January 2020. The second round of GC membership renewal is expected to be addressed at the 31st Governing Council meeting to be held in Bucharest in February 2020.



Expansion of the Governing Council

In 2019, the Community of Democracies welcomed two new Member States to its Governing Council: Georgia (October 28, 2019) and the Republic of North Macedonia (November 25, 2019). The accession of both states was based on the review of quantitative indices ranking their progress in the democratic journey, including the state of fundamental rights, political rights and civil liberties. The engagement of both states with the Community of Democracies began with their respective adoption of the Warsaw Declaration at the Community's founding meeting in 2000 and has continued over the years with participation in the Community's Ministerial Conferences.

The membership of Georgia and the Republic of North Macedonia adds to the diversity of the Governing Council, which includes Member States from most regions of the world and at different stages of democracy, providing a potential to draw on a wide pool of experiences and information sources to spur action and facilitate democratic solidarity.

Working Groups

Working Group on the CoD Governance and Effectiveness

The Working Group on CoD Governance and Effectiveness reconstituted itself in 2019 with the following participants: Argentina, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom, United States, Republic of Korea and a representative of the ISC (International Steering Committee) of the Civil Society Pillar.

In March, the Working Group (WG) conducted discussions on the invitation process for the 10th Ministerial Conference, which was adopted by the Governing Council in May 2019. On November 7, on the margins of the 2nd face-to-face EC meeting in Warsaw, the WG adopted a text of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Permanent Secretariat and the ISC Secretariat. Currently, the WG is working on a document concerning enlargement of the CoD Governing Council.

Working Group on Women and Democracy

The Working Group on Women and Democracy (WGWD) in 2019 was chaired by Lithuania and its Members were El Salvador, Finland, Japan, Republic of Korea and Uruguay. In 2019 the WGWD held three face-to-face meetings at the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies in Warsaw.



On January 28, the WGWD discussed issues related to its membership, co-chairmanship, renewed mandate and the work plan. The Group discussed how to activate its work and agreed to undertake actions such as engaging in cooperation with other stakeholders including UN Women, UNDP and OSCE/ ODIHR.

On March 27, the WGWD met to discuss its upcoming activities focused on promoting women's political participation as well as possible synergies with relevant stakeholders working in gender equality in public life. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Audra Čiapienė, Minister Counselor at the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On June 13, the WGWD Members held a second face-to-face meeting that focused on preparations for an event proposed to be held on the margins of the 74th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York. Additionally, on the same day, the WGWD Chair met with representatives of the Democratic Governance and Gender Unit of OSCE/ODIHR. The meeting addressed possible areas of cooperation, as well as current CoD projects aimed at the advancement of women's political participation.

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On the margins of the Third Committee of the UNGA at its 74th session, the PSCD, in close cooperation with the WGWD, organized a side-event on Women's Political Participation in Local Government. The event was held on October 16, 2019, in New York, and was hosted by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the United Nations with the kind support of the Republic of Korea.

The aim of the panel was to highlight the valuable role that women representatives of local governments contribute to inclusive democracies. The side-event served as a platform for stakeholders to have an open conversation about women in local government, challenges to their meaningful participation and possible concerted actions in response to these challenges.

Opening address: Thomas E. Garrett, CoD Secretary General

Welcoming remarks: Audra Čiapienė, Chair of the CoD Working Group on Women and Democracy

PANELISTS:

- Roheyatou Lowe, Lord Mayor of Banjul, The Gambia;
- Yuliya Svitlychna, Governor of Kharkiv Region, Ukraine;
- Dr. Sabine Freizer, Chief, Leadership and Governance, UN Women;
- Aroa Santiago, Inclusive and Equitable Development Specialist, Gender Team, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, United Nations Development Programme.

A summary report from the side event is available on the CoD website.

Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society

During the year, the Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society held four conference calls.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Working Group continued to monitor closely civic space, providing legal analysis and sharing information regarding the state of civil society in over a dozen countries. This information was shared amongst members of the Working Group, civil society, governments and the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association.
- ISC member Civicus presented the CIVICUS Monitor, a tool providing real time data on the state of civil society freedoms in the world. Additionally, an updated version of a Watchlist, highlighting countries where there is serious concern regarding the exercise of civic freedoms was also presented, listing countries with a rapid and serious decline with regards to civic space.

“We, the Member States of the Community of Democracies Governing Council, affirm that the strength and vibrancy of democratic nations depend on a robust civic space, active civil society, and meaningful consultation between governments and civil society to promote democracy, protect and promote human rights and civic space and defend rule of law.”

Outcome Statement of the Extraordinary Governing Council

CIVIL SOCIETY

Community of Democracies and Civil Society

Participation of civil society is a unique asset of the CoD and one of its key strengths. In 2019, civil society continued to play an important role in the CoD activities. Representatives of the International Steering Committee (ISC) of the Civil Society Pillar, including Chair Ms Paulina Ibarra of the Fundación Multitudes, participated in Governing Council meetings, providing input to the Governing Council's deliberations and decisions.

The ISC held its Annual Meeting on September 25, 2019 in New York on the margins of the 74th UN General Assembly. Speaking at the Annual Meeting, the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett highlighted the importance of engaging with civil society to advance the UN 2030 Agenda and respond to challenges and opportunities faced by democracies. At the meeting ISC members discussed the invitation process to the CoD Ministerial Conferences, guidelines for the GC membership renewal process drafted by the ISC; the 10th CoD Ministerial Conference in June 2020 and discussion of civil society participation, including the Civil Society Forum.

The commitment of the CoD Governing Council Member States to work closely with civil society was also highlighted in the Outcome Statements adopted during the Governing Council sessions held in 2019.

On November 2019, the PSCD and the ISC Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which aims to strengthen collaboration between the PSCD and the Secretariat by establishing a regulatory framework concerning modalities of cooperation between the parties. The draft MoU was prepared by the PSCD in early 2019 and submitted for deliberations of the Working Group on CoD Governance and Effectiveness, which approved the MoU text during its meeting in Warsaw on November 7, 2019.

In addition to ongoing cooperation with the Civil Society Pillar, meetings with representatives of civil society from different regions were scheduled as part of the Secretary General's official visits to countries in the framework of CoD actions and activities held throughout the year, including in the margins of global democracy-related events attended by the Secretary General.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Events and Activities

Strategic Objectives

Over the course of 2019, the Community of Democracies continued with the implementation of its Strategic Objectives, as set out in the CoD Strategic Plan 2018-2023.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 (SO1): GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBERS ENCOURAGE ADHERENCE TO THE WARSAW DECLARATION WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY.

The recent expansion of the CoD Governing Council membership, with the accession of Georgia and the Republic of North Macedonia, serves as an example of adherence to the Warsaw Declaration. Both countries bring valuable experience in democratic transition and add an important voice to the CoD and its joint efforts to promote adherence to shared democratic values.

The commitment of the Governing Council Member States to the principles of the Warsaw Declaration was emphasized in the Outcome Statements adopted as a result of each Governing Council meeting, in which Member States encouraged countries within and outside of the Community to uphold the principles of the Warsaw Declaration, promote democracy across the world, and support inclusive democratic processes.

Throughout the year, CoD participation in multiple events on a wide range of thematic subjects provided the opportunity to further promote the Warsaw Declaration as a guide that outlines core democratic norms and principles for the effective establishment and consolidation of democracy.

One of the examples of common action under SO1 was the CoD High-Level Delegation to Mali, held in July 2019, which helped to gain a better understanding of progress and challenges faced by Mali, enabling the Governing Council to articulate engagement to support Mali's path to democratic governance.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 (SO2): GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBERS PROVIDE SUSTAINED SUPPORT FOR KEY DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN TRANSITIONING COUNTRIES OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY.

In November 2019, the CoD conducted a High-Level Delegation to The Gambia which provided an opportunity to meet with high-level officials, civil society activists and other democracy stakeholders to discuss current challenges and opportunities for democracy in The Gambia. The knowledge gained during the visit will enable the Governing Council to discuss future engagement in the country.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 (SO3): GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBERS INCREASE AND DEEPEN THEIR DIALOGUE ON THE CHALLENGES THEY FACE AS DEMOCRACIES.

The Governing Council meetings, which gathered Members, states from outside of the Community invited as observers, civil society actors and external experts, served as an opportunity to discuss and share best practice examples on a wide range of issues around democratic governance, including challenges faced by the Governing Council Members, allowing for different angles and perspectives to be discussed and considered.

A number of the events held by the CoD in 2019 with participation of Governing Council members contributed to the discussion on the challenges faced as democracies, including issues such as protecting democratic values and institutions against malign foreign interference.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Cross-cutting themes of gender equality, youth empowerment, and democracy and development were mainstreamed into all activities undertaken by the CoD over the course of 2019.

The Community of Democracies continued to support the advancement of women's meaningful participation in public life. In 2019, the CoD activities focused mainly on engaging women in sustaining peace and advancing women's political participation. The events, described in detail under Gender Equality section of this Chapter, gathered gender experts, activists, and politicians from different parts of the world to share knowledge and expertise

on the inclusive participation of women, especially in the framework of the UNSC 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

The discussion on youth empowerment, featured during the 30th Governing Council, brought together young activists and representatives of international organizations sharing best practice on engaging young people in political life. Statements issued by the Secretary General on the occasion of International Youth Day and World Youth Day for Democracy highlighted the need for supporting youth empowerment and emphasized that “young people have the right to shape the world they live in today and shape the world of their future”. Throughout the year, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies continued with its internship program, offering young graduates from across the world the opportunity to gain experience working on activities on the cutting-edge of democracy, human rights and diplomacy.

Participation of youth in decision-making processes is one of the priorities of the Romanian Presidency for 2019-2021. A Youth Forum on the margins of the 10th CoD Ministerial Conference in 2020 is expected to provide recommendations which will provide the basis for Community's continued engagement with youth.

On Democracy and Development, the CoD co-organized a number of events together with partner organizations International IDEA and the Organization of American States (OAS), with a particular focus on the advancement of implementation of Goal 16 of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda. Broad discussions on democracy and development were also held during the Governing Council sessions, and Member States' commitment to work together with civil society and the private sector to advance the implementation of SDG16 was additionally emphasized in the Outcome Statements adopted at Governing Council meetings. A detailed overview of the events on SDG16 is covered in further sections of this Chapter.

Official Visits and High-Level Delegations

In 2019, the CoD held two High-Level Delegations, first to Governing Council Member Mali, within the framework of Strategic Objective 1, and a second mission to The Gambia, within the framework of Strategic Objective 2. The visits helped the CoD gain insight and a better understanding of current democracy-related challenges and progress made and opportunities in both countries.

HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO MALI

On July 9-12, 2019, the Community of Democracies implemented a High-Level Delegation to Bamako, composed of five Member States (Canada, Norway, Poland, the United Kingdom, the United States) and a representative of the Civil Society Pillar from South Africa.

The main task of the delegation was to gain a better understanding of progress and democracy challenges faced by Mali.

The visit was made at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Mali, under the Community's Strategic Objective 1, which encourages Governing Council Members to promote adherence to the Warsaw Declaration Principles in countries within and outside the Community.

Delegates met with representatives of the Government of Mali and national human rights institutions, international organizations present on the ground and civil society organizations who presented first-hand accounts of current challenges and opportunities for supporting and strengthening democracy in Mali. This knowledge shall enable the Community's Governing Council to articulate engagement to support Mali's path to democratic governance.





Ottawa

Washington DC

San Salvador

Bogota

London

Paris

Rabat

Banjul

Bamako

Addis Ababa

Bucharest

Skopje

Yerevan

Ulaanbaatar

HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION TO THE GAMBIA

Three women ambassadors, from Poland, Romania, and the United Kingdom, led the Community's High-Level Delegation of five countries (Canada, Poland, Romania, the United Kingdom, the United States) with a Kenyan representative of the ISC, to The Gambia, held on November 10-14, 2019. During the visit delegation members met high-level officials and civil society activists to discuss current challenges and opportunities for democracy in The Gambia. The Delegation also visited the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission, as it received citizen testimony about the Jammeh regime's violation of human rights.



SECRETARY GENERAL'S OFFICIAL VISITS TO COUNTRIES FROM WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE CoD

In 2019, the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett travelled to over a dozen capitals across five continents - Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America - to meet with government officials, members of parliaments, civil society actors, youth activists, human right institutions and international organizations, among others. From Bogota to Skopje to Rabat, the meetings discussed democracy and human rights-related issues, as well as democracy-related challenges and opportunities specific to each country and/or region. Engagement with a range of democracy stakeholders created a platform to deepen common dialogue on a number of issues ranging from women's political empowerment to the role of parliaments in strengthening democracy, to common action to advance the implementation of SDG16. The agenda of each visit included a civil society component; with SG participation in meetings and roundtable discussions with civil society activists, all of which brought inspiring and thought-provoking discussions, with valuable insights on the local context.

From High-Level Delegations to Mali and The Gambia to visits to the Governing Council Member States and countries from outside the Community, meetings held by the Secretary General over the course of the year helped increase dialogue, expand partnership opportunities and create avenues for further cooperation within the Community of Democracies.



Gender Equality

The Community of Democracies remains committed to the advancement of women's participation in public life, in line with its Strategic Plan, which sets out gender equality as one of the cross-cutting themes mainstreamed into all activities undertaken by the CoD, and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that recognizes Goal 5 on gender equality, as crucial to the achievement of all SDGs.

In a statement issued on the occasion of the 2019 International Women's Day, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett highlighted that "successful democratic transitions, rebuilding war-torn societies, and ensuring sustainability of our democracies, cannot be fully achieved without the meaningful inclusion of women."

In 2019, the CoD efforts towards advancing gender equality in public life focused mainly on two important areas: engaging women in sustaining peace and increasing women's political participation at all levels.

Engaging Women in Sustaining Peace

In 2018-2019, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies implemented a project on "Engaging Women in Sustaining Peace", which aimed to identify good practices of women's involvement in peacebuilding to assist government and civil society in developing strategies for the inclusion of women in these settings. The project was coordinated by the PSCD and generously supported by the Republic of Korea.

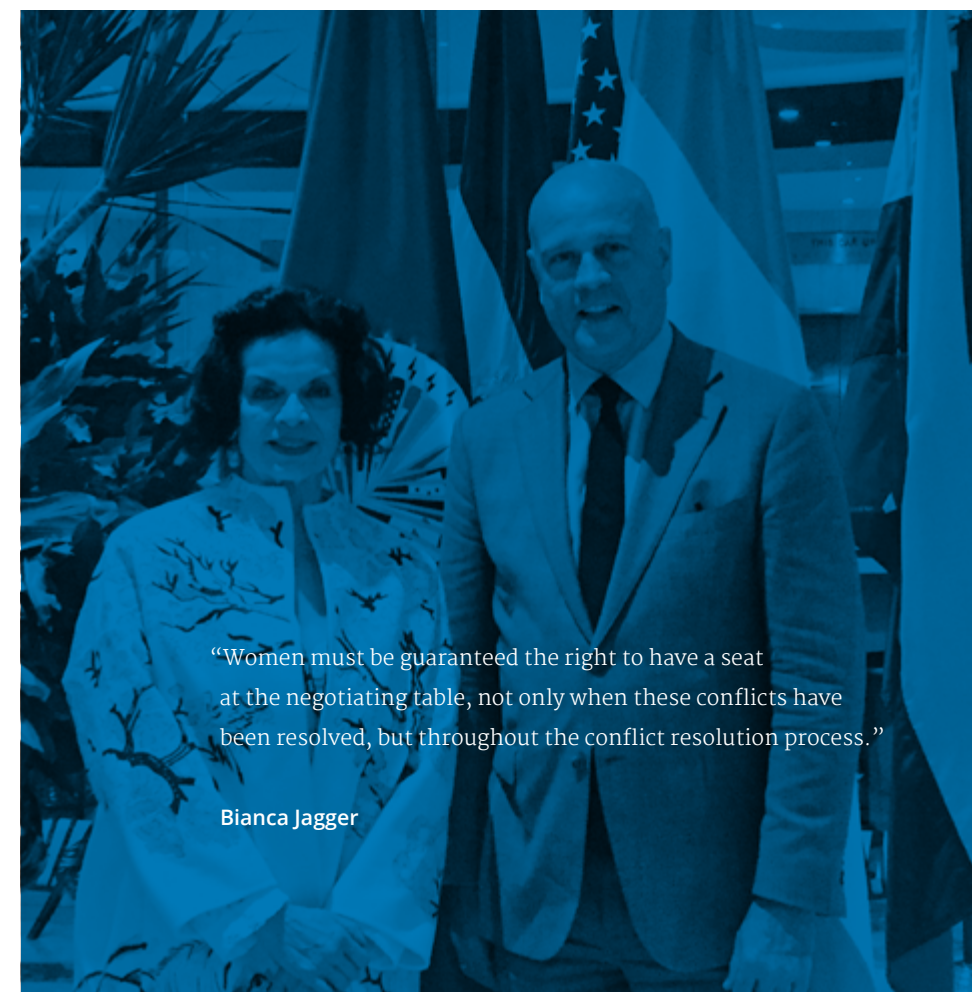
Within the framework of the project, the CoD held two panel discussions, described below, and launched a publication on "Engaging Women in Sustaining Peace: A Guide to Best Practices."

Women's Participation in Sustaining Peace and the Advancement of SDG 16: Practices from Latin America

On the margins of the 49th Regular Session of the Organization of American States (OAS), held on June 26, 2019, in Medellin, Colombia, the PSCD carried out a panel discussion on "Women's Participation in Sustaining Peace and in the Advancement of Goal 16: Practices from Latin America". The event was co-organized together with International IDEA, the Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (REDLAD) and the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia of the Organization of American States (MAPP/OAS).

The event explored the role of women in peacebuilding as well as in the consolidation of peace, justice and inclusive societies in relation to the advancement of the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda. The meeting addressed best practices for advancing women's participation in sustaining peace from Latin America and presented the preliminary findings of the Community of Democracies' research on engaging women in sustaining peace.

Keynote speaker Bianca Jagger, the Founder and Chair of the Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation, shared her experiences working on the advancement of human rights and the promotion of sustainable peace in the region.



Opening Address: Thomas E. Garrett, Secretary General of the Community of Democracies
Keynote Speech: Bianca Jagger, President and Founder Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation

PANELISTS:

- 👤 Patricia Galdamez, Senior Advisor of the Community of Democracies;
- 👤 Luis J. Consuegra, Coordinator, Inter-Regional Dialogue for Democracy International IDEA; Edelma Gómez, Coordinator of Peace Building of the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OAS);
- 👤 Patricia Gálvez, the Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (REDLAD).

The summary report from the event is available on the CoD website.



Women for Peace: Recognizing Women’s Role in Peacebuilding

On September 26, 2019, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies held a panel discussion on “Women for Peace: Recognizing Women’s Role in Peacebuilding” on the margins of the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The event consisted of a panel discussion on the importance of women’s meaningful participation in peace processes and political agreements and a presentation of the CoD new publication “Engaging Women in Sustaining Peace: A Guide to Best Practices”. The discussion provided an opportunity to share knowledge and experiences on the significant role that women play in building and sustaining peace.

Opening Address: Mr. Thomas E. Garrett, Secretary General of the Community of Democracies. Welcoming Remarks: H.E. Mr. Jeong-sik Kang, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs, the Republic of Korea.

PANELISTS:

- 👤 Dr. Abigail Ruane, Women, Peace and Security Program Director, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom;
- 👤 Dr. Kathleen Kuehnast, Director of Gender Policy and Strategy at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP);
- 👤 Lynrose Jane D. Genon, Member of the Executive Council of Young Women+ for Peace and Leadership (YW+PL-PH);
- 👤 Marina Kumskova, UN Liaison Officer & Regional Coordinator for Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) North America.

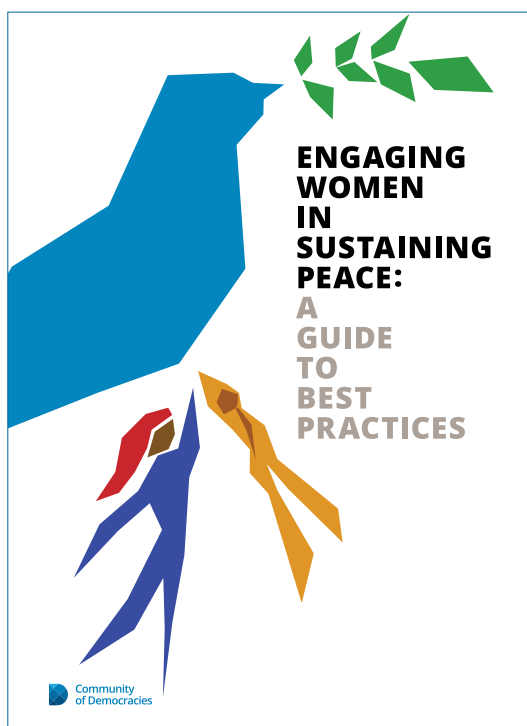
New Publication: Engaging Women in Sustaining Peace: A Guide to Best Practices

Echoing the seven commitments of the action plan for gender-responsive peacebuilding outlined by the UN Secretary General in 2010, the publication identifies best practices in women's participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America as well as challenges that women face in these post-conflict settings. These commitments are the following: conflict resolution, post-conflict planning, post-conflict financing, gender-responsive civilian capacity, women's representation in post-conflict governance, rule of law, and economic recovery.

With this publication, the Community of Democracies aims to contribute to the ongoing conversation on gender equality and support the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other subsequent resolutions that form the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

Marking the 19th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on October 31, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett met with women ambassadors accredited to the Republic of Poland to discuss the findings of the publication. The meeting was hosted by the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Warsaw.

In its first paragraph, UNSCR 1325 calls for “an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes” and recognizes that the “full participation of women in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.”



Strengthening Women's Political Participation

On the margins of the Third Committee of the UNGA at its 74th session, the PSCD, in co-operation with the CoD Working Group on Women and Democracy organized a side-event on “Women's Political Participation in Local Government”, which served as a platform for stakeholders to have an open conversation about women in local government, barriers to their meaningful participation and possible concerted actions in response to these challenges. For more detailed description of the event, please see the chapter on the Working Group on Women and Democracy.



SDG16+ CoD Engagement in Multilateral Efforts Addressing Challenges and Opportunities for the Advancement of Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Throughout 2019, the Community of Democracies continued to work together with partner organizations on multilateral efforts addressing challenges and opportunities for the advancement of the SDG16+ and its elements of peace, justice, and strong institutions. The activities, held in different regions of the world and on the margins of democracy-related international events, aimed to:

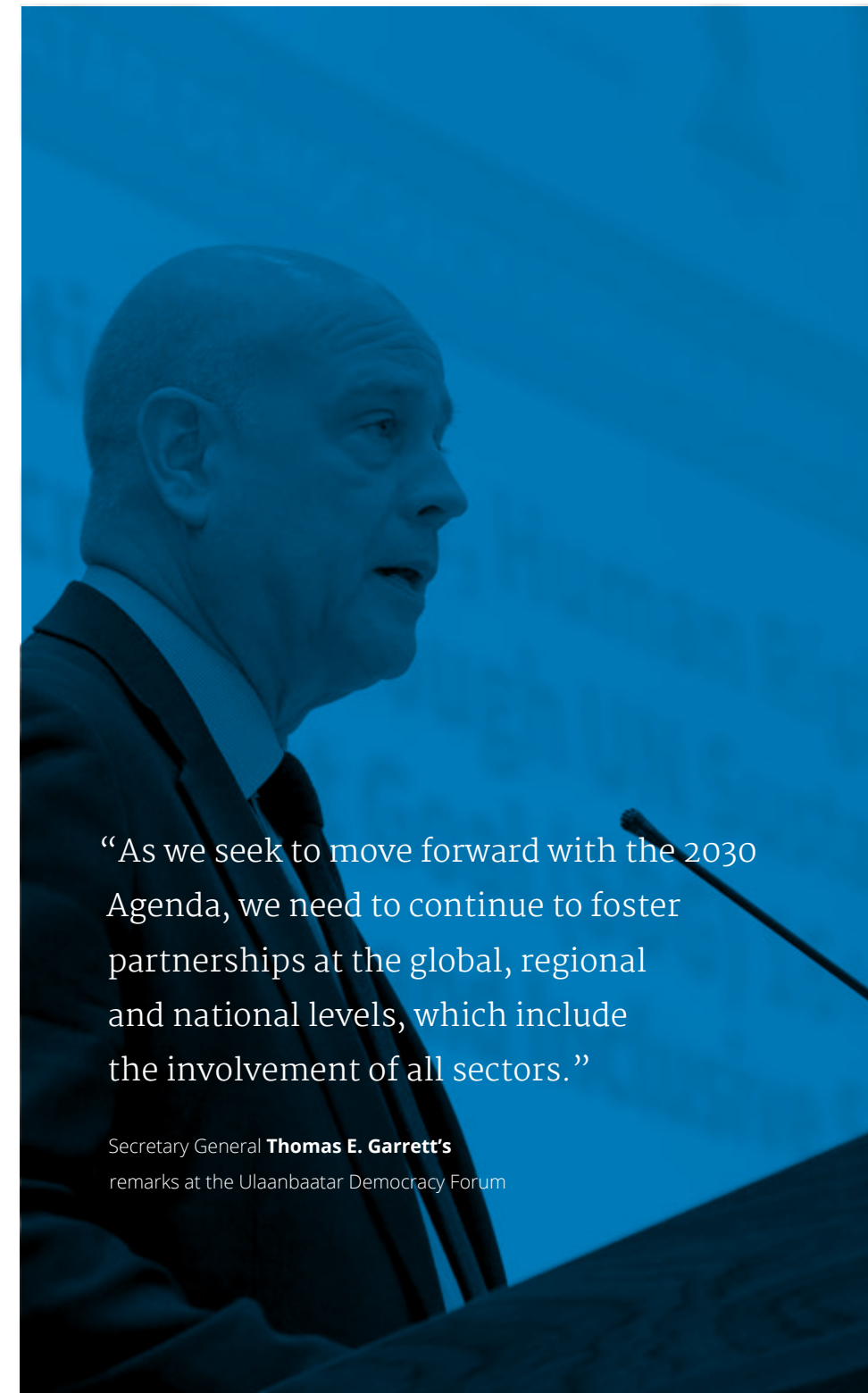
Facilitate a better understanding of key global and regional challenges and circumstances affecting democracy and development;

Exchange best practices and enable the consolidation of common grounds on the efforts being made at the global, regional and local levels around these issues;

Identify potential channels of collaboration, creating awareness and knowledge to promote complementarity instead of replication; and

Open spaces for multi-stakeholder collaboration.

The importance of multilateral engagement in the implementation of the UN 2030 Development Agenda was also acknowledged in the statement adopted as an outcome of the 30th Governing Council, in which Member States called on governments to engage with the private sector and civil society to better respond to challenges in advancing the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals 16 and 17.



“As we seek to move forward with the 2030 Agenda, we need to continue to foster partnerships at the global, regional and national levels, which include the involvement of all sectors.”

Secretary General **Thomas E. Garrett's**
remarks at the Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum

The following key events were held in 2019:

ULAANBAATAR DEMOCRACY FORUM

The Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum 2019 (UBDF 2019) “Promoting Peace, Human Rights and Democracy through SDG16+: Towards Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies in Asia”, was the second joint initiative of the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies, Asia Development Alliance, and Asia Democracy Network, carried out with funding assistance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea. The event was hosted by the Local Organizing Committee in Mongolia in partnership with the Mongolian government and National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia. The United Nations Development Programme and the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies also joined the UBDF 2019 as partners.

UBDF 2019 built on the discussions started at the 2018 Busan Democracy Forum, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, to discuss democratic governance in Asia and proactively promote the implementation of Goal 16 of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to achieve more peaceful, just and inclusive societies in Asia. The Forum gathered multi-stakeholders, including Asian governments, regional and global organizations, and provided an opportunity to share experiences and best practice made on the implementation of SDG16.



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PANEL: SDG 16+ LESSONS LEARNED IN IMPLEMENTATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND THE WAY FORWARD.

On July 15, 2019, the Community of Democracies and International IDEA held a “Multi-stakeholder Panel: SDG 16+ Lessons learned in implementation, partnerships and the way forward.” The event was held on the margins of the UN High-Level Political Forum in New York and brought together representatives from the Community of Democracies, International IDEA, global and regional organizations and civil society, working on the advancement of SDG 16+. The meeting discussed challenges and achievements in the implementation of SDG16 as well as solutions and strategies which could be put in place to advance SDG16.

In his welcome remarks, the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett outlined the CoD recent activities promoting SDG16, SDG5 and SDG17 and emphasized the importance of fostering partnerships at the global, regional and national levels, which include the involvement of all sectors: government, international and regional organizations, academia, private sector, civil society, women and youth.

CoD ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE INTER-REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON DEMOCRACY

On September 19, the Community of Democracies, International IDEA, the Organization of American States and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict held the 8th High Level Meeting of the Inter-Regional Dialogue on Democracy (IRDD), and the International Conference on “Achieving Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: The Role of Global and Regional Intergovernmental Organizations and Civil Society Actors”.

The events, held in Washington D.C. , brought together global and regional organizations partners of this platform at the highest level to discuss the role of multilateralism, through global and regional engagement, in the advancement of democracy, peace and development in the framework of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, with a particular focus on SDG 16+ and SDG 17; and to discuss and propose policy recommendations for the way forward.

Both the 8th High Level Meeting of the IRDD and the International Conference gathered high-level representatives of international and regional organizations, as well as civil society organizations.

The Inter-Regional Dialogue on Democracy is the only platform worldwide that brings together the main global and regional inter-governmental organizations working in democracy at both the political and technical level. The platform enables the engagement with relevant stakeholders to discuss key issues related to democracy, good governance and sustainable development.



CoD Participation in Other Key Events Promoting Democracy

Secretary General's Participation in the General Assembly of the Organization of American States

In 2018, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies and the Organization of American States (OAS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen their cooperation for the promotion and consolidation of democracy in the American continent. Throughout 2019, both organizations continued to engage in a mutual dialogue on a number of democracy-related issues. In April, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett met in Washington with Secretary General of OAS Luis Almagro and US Ambassador to OAS Carlos Trujillo to discuss democracy, the rule of law, and potential areas for further joint cooperation.

On May 22, the Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett spoke to the OAS Permanent Council on the subject of democratic solidarity and resilience. In his remarks, he noted that the Community of Democracies differed from other intergovernmental groupings as it was built not on linguistic, geographical or economic criteria but on commitment to universal values of democracy, to the Warsaw Declaration. He highlighted the OAS Inter-American Democratic Charter and the Warsaw Declaration, presenting both as road maps to tackle challenges and promote democratic values and fundamental freedoms.



The 30th meeting of the CoD Governing Council, held on June 14, 2019, in Warsaw welcomed Ms. Monika LeRoy who represented Secretary General Almagro and delivered his message to the 30th Governing Council, highlighting democracy-related challenges and opportunities in Latin America, with a particular focus on the current situation in Venezuela.

On June 19-28, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett travelled to Colombia to participate as an observer in the 49th General Assembly of the OAS. On the margins of the event, the SG took part in the panel discussion on Women's Participation in Sustaining Peace and the Advancement of SDGs: Practices from Latin America.



On September 10, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett welcomed Secretary General Luis Almagro and Advisor Monika LeRoy at the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies in Warsaw. During the meeting, they discussed challenges and opportunities for democracy in Latin America, the important role of international and regional organizations in promoting democracy, and potential synergies for future joint activities aimed at promoting and strengthening democratic governance.

30 Years On: Lessons from the Past, Challenges of the Present, Inspiration for the Future

On May 14-15, 2019, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett participated in a conference “30 Years On: Lessons from the Past, Challenges of the Present, Inspiration for the Future”, held in Bucharest by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in partnership with Aspen Institute Romania, European Endowment for Democracy and the German Marshall Fund.

The Secretary General spoke in a plenary session: “Wither Democracy?” and moderated a workshop on “Democracy in the Digital society. Synergy and Trade-offs / Technology and Democracy.”

Countering Malign Foreign Influence in Democracy

On July 4, 2019, on the margins of the G7 Development Ministerial meeting in Paris, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies and USAID co-organized an event on “Countering Malign Kremlin Influence in Europe and Eurasia”. The presentation of the new policy framework by USAID Administrator Mark Green was followed by a panel discussion on addressing malign foreign interference in democracy. The Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett provided welcome remarks and moderated the panel discussion.

PANELISTS:



- 👤 Brock Bierman, Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, U.S. Agency for International Development;
- 👤 Tamar Chugoshvili, First Deputy Chairperson, Parliament of Georgia;
- 👤 Lawrence Meredith, Director for Neighborhood East Directorate-General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) European Commission;
- 👤 Dan Neculaescu, State Secretary for Regional Affairs and Multilateral Global Affairs, Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- 👤 Siim Kumpas, Strategic Communications Advisor, Government Office of Estonia.

As a continuation of the discussion, on September 12, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies hosted the USAID panel on Democracy on the Rise: Defending Democratic Institutions and the Rule of Law against the Kremlin's Malign Influence, during which Assistant Administrator Brock Bierman presented the USAID Countering Malign Kremlin's Influence Development Framework to the Warsaw based Governing Council ambassadors and representatives of think tanks. The presentation was followed by a discussion with the audience, moderated by SG Garrett.

Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy

The eighth annual Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy, held on October 3, 2019, focused on the freedom of religion or belief as a pillar of democracy.

Speaking in a summary session of the Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett emphasized that freedom of thought, conscience and religion are fundamental values of democracy and one of the core principles outlined in the CoD founding document, the Warsaw Declaration.



Democratic resilience in post conflict situations

On November 25-26, 2019, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett traveled to Addis Ababa to participate in a conference on post conflict reconstruction, organized by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in partnership with Romanian Agency for International Development (ROAid) and African Union Commission. The SG spoke on building democratic resilience in post conflict situations.

Promoting shared values through Secretary General's Statements

In statements issued throughout 2019, the Secretary General highlighted the work of the Community of Democracies on a range of democracy-related issues; encouraged governments to adhere to the principles of the Warsaw Declaration; and emphasized the need for more concerted efforts addressing challenges and opportunities to democracy.



In 2019 Secretary General issued statements on the following occasions:

“I urge leaders from across the world to redouble efforts to ensure that journalism is not a life-threatening occupation and public access to information disseminated by free and independent media is always protected as a fundamental human right and a crucial element of a healthy democratic landscape.”

World Press Freedom Day

“Celebrating today’s International Youth Day, let’s remember that it is young people’s right to shape the world they live in today and shape the world of their future.”

International Youth Day

“I call on political leaders to expand inclusive participation in decision-making processes at all levels of governance to ensure that democracies are transparent, participatory and fully accountable to citizens.”

International Day of Democracy

“Working together towards a more peaceful world means working together to achieve a gender equal world”

International Women’s Day

“Peaceful and inclusive society is one where justice and equality are enjoyed by all. Observing the International Day of Peace, let us remember that peace should always be built together and for everyone.”

International Day of Peace

“The meaningful participation of young women and men in political debates and democratic decision-making is crucial to building strong, resilient democracies and peaceful, inclusive societies.”

World Youth Day for Democracy

“With a strong commitment of its Member States, the Community of Democracies will continue to engage in multi-stakeholder dialogue and concerted actions to protect the freedom of expression and contribute to creating safe and enabling environment for independent journalism.”

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

“Protection of human rights is at the heart of the Community’s work to advance and protect democracy worldwide, in line with its founding document, the Warsaw Declaration, which emphasizes the interdependence between human rights, democracy, and development.”

Human Rights Day

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