

# News Release

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## NDI SPONSORS INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO CHILE PLEBISCITE

WASHINGTON, DC, SEPTEMBER 23, 1988 -- A delegation of more than 50 political leaders and election experts from five continents will observe the October 5 plebiscite in Chile. The delegation is being sponsored and organized by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI).

The observer mission will be led by Bruce Babbitt, the former Arizona governor and presidential candidate; Peter Dailey, former ambassador to Ireland and President Reagan's special envoy to NATO countries; and former presidents Adolfo Suarez of Spain and Misael Pastrana of Colombia.

The delegation includes former heads of state, parliamentarians, political party leaders and election experts from 21 countries. The U.S. component of the delegation comprises prominent Republicans and Democrats.

More than seven million Chileans have registered to vote in the plebiscite, called under the terms of Chile's 1980 constitution. If President Augusto Pinochet wins the referendum, he will serve as president for an additional eight years. If he is rejected, the army general will remain in power for another year, at which time open, competitive elections would be held.

As in previous observer missions organized by the institute, the group will not take a position on the plebiscite but will

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*conducting nonpartisan international programs to help maintain and strengthen democratic institutions*

report to the international community on their observations of the electoral process.

"In organizing this delegation NDI does not presume to supervise the plebiscite nor to interfere in Chilean affairs," said J. Brian Atwood, president of NDI. "We recognize that the ultimate judgment about the plebiscite process will be made by the Chilean people."

NDI Executive Vice President Ken Wollack, who is organizing the effort, said that "observations made by the delegation, as well as those from other credible sources, will serve as the basis for the group's conclusions."

While in Chile the delegation will meet with government and election officials, leaders of both the "Yes" and the "No" campaigns, and representatives of other institutions that play a role in the monitoring process, Wollack added. The delegation will watch the voting and counting process in Santiago and nine other cities throughout the country.

Chaired by former Vice President Walter F. Mondale, NDI conducts nonpartisan political development programs overseas. By working with political parties and other institutions, NDI seeks to promote, maintain and strengthen democratic institutions and pluralistic values in new and emerging democracies.

NDI received bipartisan acclaim for organizing the international observer delegation to the 1986 "snap" presidential elections in the Philippines. It has also conducted a series of democratic development programs in nearly 30 countries, including Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Haiti, Nicaragua, Northern Ireland, Senegal, South Korea, Taiwan and Uruguay.