

Advancing Freedom And Democracy Around The World

U.S. Pursues Freedom Agenda By Strengthening Support For Democratic Dissidents, Helping Build Democratic Institutions

Today, At An International Conference On Democracy And Security In Prague, Czech Republic, President Bush Discussed Steps America Has Taken And Will Take In Pursuit Of The Freedom Agenda. In his Second Inaugural Address, President Bush pledged America to the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in the world. The President traveled to Prague to discuss U.S. actions in support of this goal. Today's conference, "Democracy and Security: Core Values and Sound Policies," was convened by three of the great modern advocates for freedom: Jose Maria Aznar, Vaclav Havel, and Natan Sharansky.

- **The United States Is Committed To The Advance Of Freedom And Democracy As The Great Alternatives To Repression And Radicalism.** The most powerful weapon in the struggle against extremism is the universal appeal of freedom. Freedom is the best way to unleash the creativity and economic potential of a nation, the only ordering of a society that leads to justice, and the only way to achieve human rights.
- **Expanding Freedom Is More Than A Moral Imperative – It Is The Only Realistic Way To Protect Our People.** The 9/11 attacks were evidence of an international movement of violent Islamic extremists that threatens free people everywhere. Nations that commit to freedom for their people will not support extremists; they will join in defeating them.

Under The Freedom Agenda, America Is Strengthening Support For Democratic Dissidents

Today, The President Announced He Has Asked Secretary Of State Condoleezza Rice To Direct Every U.S. Ambassador In An Un-Free Nation To Seek Out And Meet With Activists For Democracy And Human Rights.

The President Has Met Personally With Dissidents And Democratic Activists, Including:

- Belarus: Syvatlana Zavadskaya, Irina Krasovskaya, 2/27/2006; Natalia Bourjaily, 9/19/2006
- Burma: Charm Tong, 10/31/2005
- China: Yu Jie, Wang Yi, Li Bauiguang, 5/11/2006
- Cuba: Isabel Roque and others, 5/20/2003
 - Cuban Americans: Eleno Oviedo, Luis Zuniga, Caridad Roque, Emilio Estefan, 5/20/2005
- Democratic Republic of the Congo: Immaculee Birhaheka, 6/27/2006
- Egypt: Engy El-Haddad, 9/19/2006
- Iran: Azar Nafisi, 11/2/2005
- North Korea: Gwang-Cheol Kim, Gwi-Ok Lee, Han-Mi Kim, Seung Min Kim, 4/28/2006
- Russia: Yuri Dzhibludze, 9/19/2006
- Sierra Leone: Zainab Bangurra, 6/27/2006
- Sudan: Alfred Taban, 6/27/2006; Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, 3/8/2006; Simon Deng, 4/28/2006
- Uzbekistan: Nozima Kamalova, 9/19/2006
- Venezuela: Carlos Ponce, 9/19/2006; Maria Corina Machado, 5/31/2005
- Vietnam: Cong Thanh Do, Diem Do, Nguyen LeMinh, Quan Nguyen, 5/31/2007
- Zimbabwe: Reginald Matchabe-Hove, 9/19/2006 and 6/27/2006

The Administration Recently Created A Human Rights Defenders Fund, Which Provides Grants For The Legal Defense And Medical Expenses Of Activists Arrested Or Beaten By Repressive Governments. This fund began with \$1 million and will be replenished as needed.

Beginning In December 2007, The Secretary Of State Will Present Two Awards Annually To Recognize Those Striving To Advance Human Dignity.

1. **Freedom Defenders Award:** This award will be given to a foreign activist or NGO that has demonstrated outstanding commitment to advancing liberty and courage in the face of adversity.

2. **Diplomacy For Freedom Award:** This award will honor the U.S. Ambassador who best advances the President's Freedom Agenda by working to end tyranny and promote democracy using the full array of political, economic, diplomatic, and other tools.

Under The Freedom Agenda, America Is Helping Emerging Democracies Build The Institutions That Sustain Liberty

The United States Has Nearly Doubled Funding For Democracy Projects Since 2001. The President's FY 2008 Budget requests nearly \$1.5 billion in funding for Democracy, Governance and Human Rights – up from less than \$700 million in 2001. In addition, funding for the National Endowment for Democracy has more than doubled from \$31 million to \$80 million since 2001.

- **It Is The Responsibility Of Those Who Enjoy The Blessings Of Liberty To Help Those Who Are Struggling To Establish Free Societies.**
- America is working with its partners in the G-8 to promote the rise of a vibrant civil society in the Middle East through initiatives like the Forum for the Future.
 - America is cooperating side-by-side with the new democracies in Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan.
 - The United States congratulates the people of Yemen on their landmark presidential election and the people of Kuwait on elections in which women were able to vote and run for office for the first time.
 - The U.S. stands firmly behind the people of Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Iraq as they defend their democratic gains against extremist enemies.
- **America Is Also Using Its Influence To Urge Valued Partners Like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, And Pakistan To Move Toward Freedom.** These nations have taken brave stands and strong action to confront extremists, along with some steps to expand liberty and transparency. Yet they have a great distance still to travel. The U.S. will continue to press nations like these to open up their political systems and give a greater voice to their people.