



SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS
AND DEMOCRACY:
THE U.S. RECORD
2003 -2004



“The progress of liberty is a powerful trend. Yet, we also know that liberty, if not defended, can be lost. The success of freedom is not determined by some dialectic of history. By definition, the success of freedom rests upon the choices and the courage of free people...”

– President George W. Bush, November 6, 2003



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PREFACE



Advancing human rights and democracy around the world not only reflects our nation's deepest values, it is profoundly within our interests. For a world where fundamental freedoms are respected and citizens can elect accountable, representative governments is a world of hope and opportunity, where conflict and chaos do not rage and tyranny and terrorism cannot thrive.

The United States' work for human rights and democracy enjoys strong bipartisan backing here at home, and we do much of it in partnership with our allies and friends overseas. Americans can take pride in the international human rights instruments we have helped to shape and uphold. We stand in solidarity with the extraordinary men and women around the world who take great personal risks to shed light on human rights abuses and press for democratic change – courageous people like Oswaldo Payá in Cuba, Morgan Tsvangirai in Zimbabwe and Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma.

On every continent, we are making important, long-term investments in democracy. We are helping to build democratic institutions. We are working with non-governmental organizations, faith-based groups, opposition parties, minority communities, women's organizations and labor movements to develop dynamic civil societies. We are promoting good governance to create conditions for economic growth and sustainable development. We are helping to free the flow of information and to ensure free and fair elections. And through our exchange and other programs, we are acquainting rising generations with democratic ideas and processes. Georgia's Mikheil Saakashvili is only one of many young leaders who have participated in U.S.-sponsored exchange programs and returned home determined to advance reform. In 2003, Saakashvili led the peaceful "Revolution of Roses," which ultimately resulted in new, democratic elections. Now President Saakashvili and his people face the great challenge of putting the democratic ideals that they have embraced into daily practice, and we are doing our utmost to help them succeed.

This congressionally mandated annual report, *Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The U.S. Record*, shows how the United States worked worldwide in 2003 and 2004 to expose and remedy human rights violations and to foster the evolution of vibrant, stable democracies. As President Bush has said: "The message to those who long for liberty and those who work for reform is that they can be certain they have a strong and constant ally in the United States of America."

Colin L. Powell
Secretary of State

The events in Georgia in November 2003 brought with them many significant lessons, certainly to the people of Georgia who for years have sought more political transparency and economic reforms, and also to many others throughout the world, in all segments of society and political life, who dream of freedom and democracy. Perhaps they held a lesson for those remaining in the world who rule through oppression and fear as well. But for the U.S. Government, the lesson is straightforward and profound: Effective U.S. diplomacy means reaching out beyond government circles and developing and nurturing a broad range of long-term allies.

In February 2004, Secretary of State Powell communicated the following message to U.S. embassies and consulates throughout the world, to remind them of the value of this important lesson:

UNCLASSIFIED TELEGRAM

February 13, 2004

To: ALL STATE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES
Origin: DRL
From: SECSTATE WASHDC (STATE 32940 - IMMEDIATE)
TAGS: KDEM, PGOV, PHUM, GG
Captions: None
Subject: REACHING OUT TO ALLIES BEYOND HOST GOVERNMENTS
Ref: None

Last month, I attended the inauguration of Mikheil Saakashvili as President of Georgia. This dynamic, young politician came to power by leading the people of Georgia to reject corruption and rigged elections and to demand democracy. The resignation of President Shevardnadze and the peaceful transfer of power were genuinely historic, and I was struck by the gratitude expressed by the new government and civil society leaders for the many years of strong U.S. support for Georgia and its people.

The reason for such strong pro-American feelings is simple - good diplomacy, including public diplomacy. Over the past decade, Embassy Tbilisi, while maintaining strong relations with the Shevardnadze government, also consistently stood on the side of democracy and reached out to individuals and groups outside the government. President Saakashvili was an IV participant and studied law in the United States. American NGOs funded by the U.S. Government have worked with opposition political parties and civil society in Georgia to help them build the capacity to constitute an effective, unified democratic force in the country. We also pressed the government for years to accept and work with these groups and to carry out other political and economic reforms.

Maintaining government-to-government relations must remain a priority. When in addition you are reaching out beyond the government, and also beyond current elites of power and influence, you are forging relationships that will serve us well into the future, and help those struggling for democracy to develop the party structures, independent media and other institutions necessary to achieve it. As the lesson of Georgia shows us, it is never clear where - or when - the next generation's leaders will emerge. Host governments may not always appreciate such outreach, but they must learn that you are simply doing your jobs as professionals.

What I saw last month was that through good diplomacy and good assistance programs, the United States had not just made friends with a new government, but we have a friendship with the Georgian people that will last for generations. This is a model worth replicating.

Keep up the good work.

MINIMIZE CONSIDERED
POWELL

U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY STRATEGY

The National Security Strategy of the United States lists eight demands of human dignity: the rule of law, limits on the absolute power of the state, freedom of speech and freedom of worship, equal justice, respect for women, religious and ethnic tolerance and respect for private property.

The United States is pursuing a broad strategy of promoting respect for human rights that is both appropriate in itself and beneficial for U.S. security. The United States is persuaded that regimes that violate the human rights of their own citizens are more likely to disrupt peace and security in their region and to create a reservoir of ill will that can accrue to the detriment of the United States. The best guarantor of security and prosperity at home and abroad is respect for individual liberty and protection of human rights through good governance and the rule of law. The United States pursues this policy through bilateral and multilateral avenues.

For decades, the United States has placed significant emphasis on respect for human rights in our bilateral relationships. The “Country Reports on Human Rights Practices,” the “Report in International Religious Freedom” and the “Trafficking in Persons Report” detail the state of human rights in countries around the world, and serve as the guide for diplomatic and programmatic efforts to end them. President Bush, Secretary of State Powell and other senior officials regularly communicate America’s views and values regarding human rights in meetings and other direct communications with foreign leaders. Senior officials also engage in constant diplomatic efforts to remedy abuses, including in some extreme cases by using sanctions and other authorities in the law. Our words are matched by action through programmatic efforts by the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development. In the Bush administration, these efforts have been given new dimensions through the Millennium Challenge Account and the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative, and by tripling the State Department’s Human Rights and Democracy Fund and the proposed doubling of funding for the National Endowment for Democracy.

In June 2000, a new multilateral effort was launched when the United States joined with other democratic countries in Warsaw, Poland to launch the Community of Democracies (CD). Since then, the United States has begun discussing the formation of a democracy caucus in the United Nations with interested members of the CD in Washington, New York and Geneva. The United States envisions this as a group of like-minded countries that would coordinate more closely in multilateral settings to advance goals consistent with democratic values. It will also help to garner broader support for UN resolutions that are consistent with democratic objectives. The United States has held a series of meetings and garnered strong support for the formation of such a caucus.

The UN Commission on Human Rights is the world’s forum for the discussion of human rights, and the United States has been a member of the Commission for all but one year of its existence. The UN General Assembly also provides an excellent opportunity for the United States to promote democratic ideals, respect for human rights and good governance by supporting strong, accurate human rights resolutions.

PURPOSE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is submitted to the Congress by the Department of State in compliance with Section 665 of P.L. 107-228, the Fiscal Year 2003 Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which requires the Department to report on actions taken by the U.S. Government to encourage respect for human rights. This second annual submission complements the longstanding *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2003*, and takes the next step, moving from highlighting abuses to publicizing the actions and programs the United States has taken to end those abuses.

Unlike the 196 Country Reports, *Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The U.S. Record 2003-2004* highlights U.S. efforts to promote human rights and democracy in only 101 countries and entities – those with the most human rights abuses. References to Hong Kong, Macau and Tibet have been incorporated into the China report, and Western Sahara is mentioned in the Morocco report. Also unlike the Country Reports for 2003, this report includes Iraq. To make this report consistent with the criteria in the legislation, this report also includes a number of additions: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras, Iraq, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Thailand and Turkey, as well as a number of deletions, including Bahrain, Ghana, Oman and Qatar.

Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The U.S. Record 2003-2004 reflects the dedicated effort of hundreds of State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development and other U.S. government employees, as well as the employees of numerous non-governmental organizations. U.S. embassies and consulates prepared the initial drafts of the reports which were then sent to Washington for careful review by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, in cooperation with other State Department offices and other Departments and agencies. As they worked to analyze and edit the reports, Department officers drew on their own knowledge of U.S. government programs and activities.

Supporting Human Rights and Democracy: The U.S. Record 2003-2004 will be used as a resource for shaping policy, conducting diplomacy and making assistance, training and other resource allocations. It will also serve as a basis for the U.S. government's cooperation with private groups to promote the observance of internationally recognized human rights and democracy.

Within the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, the editorial staff of the report consists of: Editor in Chief – Robert P. Jackson; Senior Advisors – Ambassador Michael G. Kozak and Elizabeth Dugan; Editors – Lena Auerbach, Jared Banks, Jarrett Basedow, Connie Braxton, Kent Brokenshire, Sally I. Buikema, Deborah J. Cahalen, Daniel Cain, Charmaine Coleman, Stuart Crampton, Kara Cumberland, Jeannette Davis, Patricia A. Davis, Adrienne Faraci, Carol G. Finerty, Sajit J. Gandhi, Jean M. Geran, Saba Ghorri, Karen Gilbride, Sondra Govatski, Patrick Harvey, Sandra Hodgkinson, Donna Ifill, Ann Marie Jackson, Yvonne Jackson, Jeffrey M. Jamison, Christina Jun, Lisa Kaplan, Catherine Kuchta-Helbling, Joanna Levison, Leonel G. Miranda, Peter Mulrean, Michael Orona, Susan O'Sullivan, Sarah Fox Ozkan, LeRoy G. Potts, Lisa Rende-Taylor, Wendy B. Silverman, Rana Siu, Vonzella Taylor, and Danika Walters; Photo Librarian (USAID) – Patricia Adams; Graphic Design – Regina Cross.