

United Nations Democracy Fund
5 July 2005

What will be the Fund's objective?

- The primary purpose will be to promote democracy throughout the world by providing assistance for projects that consolidate and strengthen democratic institutions and facilitate democratic governance in new or restored democracies, as called for by the General Assembly in resolution 58/13. The Fund will complement current UN efforts and ensure an integrated, holistic, capacity-building and demand-driven approach.

What would be the source of its funding?

- This will be a voluntary fund, established as a Trust Fund by the Secretary-General under the UN Financial Rules and Regulations.

Would it endorse a model of democracy?

- No, it will not support any single model of democracy. The Secretary-General reiterates in his report that democracy does not belong to any single country or region.

What will be its relationship to existing UN activities?

- The Fund will complement existing activities, fill gaps, and respond to requests that go beyond the reach of existing mechanisms. It will work closely, in a structured manner, with other UN bodies to ensure coordination and avoid overlap.

How will funding be determined?

- The Fund will be overseen by an Advisory Board of Member States, established under the Secretary-General's authority, to include a geographically diverse group of members. This Advisory Board will consider and recommend proposals for funding.

Where will the Fund be located?

- Within the UN Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP). The Democracy Fund will have an Executive Head and other staff appointed by the Secretary-General.
- UNFIP is to provide the necessary administrative and financial support in a cost-effective way. No substantive role is envisaged for UNFIP. The relevant departments, agencies and offices (such as DPA, UNDP and OHCHR) will be the ones to review applications and to provide recommendations to the Advisory Board. The Executive Head of the Democracy Fund will report directly to the Advisory Board on substantive matters, while reporting to the Executive Director of UNFIP only for administrative purposes.

Will there be conditionality?

- No. Proposals will be decided on their merits.

Who will have access?

- At a minimum, any country will be able to apply, as well as UN entities.

Could it be used as a tool for political interference?

- Under no circumstances could activities undertaken by the Fund be “imposed” on a country. The approach will be one of collaboration and support.

How will it be evaluated?

- The Fund will have a dedicated support office that will arrange for monitoring and evaluation, as well as audit exercises. It will also submit reports to the ACABQ and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly as required.

Why is it being established now?

- The Secretary-General has said repeatedly that he wants all the parts of his “In larger freedom” report to move forward as quickly as possible, and that we should lock in progress where we have it. Many Member States have already offered to contribute to the Fund, so he has proceeded to do the ground work to make that possible. This way the Fund will be up-and-running this summer, making it possible for any interested country to contribute by September.