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July 15, 2008

NDI MOURNS THE LOSS OF POLISH PATRIOT AND DEMOCRACY CHAMPION BRONISLAW GEREMEK

The National Democratic Institute expresses to family, friends, and colleagues its condolences at the untimely passing of Bronislaw Geremek, a Polish patriot and global champion of democracy and human rights.

Born in inter-war Poland, Geremek was molded by the twin scourges of fascism and communism, and imbued with the courage to fight dictatorship of all stripes. His resolute dissidence to communist rule sparked a light first seen in Gdansk, and then in the rest of the country as millions stood up to claim their freedom and dignity. Geremek became a founding father of a new, democratic Poland.

He was an academic by vocation, an activist at heart, and a dedicated public servant. Together with his Solidarity colleagues, Geremek showed strength of character in upholding people's inalienable right to freedom and demonstrating that fundamental political change can be achieved peacefully. As Poland's Foreign Minister and then as a Member of the European Parliament, Geremek exercised a tireless, clear, and consummate voice on human rights and democracy across the globe. He spoke often of how the external support he received as a dissident kept his hope alive, and he returned the favor.

NDI is proud of its longtime friendship with Geremek, and the Institute took inspiration from his solidarity with democratic reformers around the world. He co-led an NDI election observation delegation to Kyiv in 2004, supporting the efforts of the citizens of Ukraine to secure their democratic rights. NDI was proud to bestow upon him its 2004 Harriman Democracy Award in recognition of his deep and abiding commitment to democratic values.

NDI joins the people of Poland and Bronislaw Geremek's many friends and admirers worldwide in mourning his loss, celebrating his life and honoring his legacy.

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