

## **Proposed Resolution on "Democracy Promotion," 2006**

WHEREAS, the United States government, through the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other agencies, routinely engages in activities that are designed to undermine governments, political and social movements and organizations which are opposed to U.S. hegemony and neoliberal economic policies in the Americas, often labeling these activities "Democracy Promotion" or "Democracy Enhancement" programs;

WHEREAS these "Democracy Promotion" activities include providing financial and other assistance to political parties and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including labor organizations in other countries, that undermine or seek to overthrow or decrease the effectiveness of such governments, movements and organizations;

WHEREAS these "Democracy Promotion" activities have been designed to organize opposition to Haiti's elected governments, and in fact played a leading role in the overthrow of Haiti's constitutional government in February, 2004, which led to massive persecution of pro-democracy activists and increased misery for the majority of Haitians who are poor;

WHEREAS these "Democracy Promotion" activities, include support for the discredited Confederacion de Trabajadores Venezolanos (CVT) and other groups that organized and promoted the attempted coup against Venezuela's elected government in 2002; as well as support for opposition political parties and SUMATE, the political organization that worked to persuade opposition parties to withdraw from the recent December 2005 National Assembly elections and is working to promote a single opposition candidate, similar to the US-sponsored UNO campaign in the Nicaraguan election of 1990;

WHEREAS, since the inception of NED and USAID, political aid channeled through their "democracy promotion" programs has been an overt instrument of U.S. foreign policy in Cuba, supporting efforts to overthrow the Cuban government and reverse the egalitarian social gains of the Cuban revolution;

WHEREAS, the United States Justice department hired Choicepoint, Inc. (the company which created the list of voters to scrub from the Florida voting rolls before the 2000 election) to collect information on up to 300 million citizens of Latin America, including information alleged by Mexican prosecutors to have been illegally obtained from the Mexican national voting registry, prior to an election which has been challenged as rife with fraud;

WHEREAS these "Democracy Promotion" activities include inappropriate interventions in the leadup to the November 5 Presidential elections in Nicaragua, including publicly supporting conservative candidates, and offering to finance conservative and centrist parties; and

WHEREAS Article 3 of the Charter of the Organization of American States, to which the United States is a party, declares that "Every State has the right to choose, without external interference, its political, economic, and social system and to organize itself in the way best suited to it, and has the duty to abstain from intervening in the affairs of another State;"

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- 1) that the National Lawyers Guild opposes the use of "Democracy Promotion" activities by the United States to undermine governments, political and social movements and organizations which are opposed to U.S. hegemony and neoliberal economic policies in the Americas, and any other illegal interference in the internal affairs of other countries in the Americas;
- 2) that the National Lawyers Guild and its members shall implement this resolution, through litigation in national and international fora, including continued support for the current Petition before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) on behalf of Haitian citizens whose democratic rights were violated by U.S. support for the February 2004 overthrow of Haiti's elected government; and support for the Task Force on the Americas' efforts to bring a petition to the IACHR on behalf of Venezuelan citizens whose democratic rights were violated by U.S. support for the attempted coup against the elected authorities of Venezuela in 2002 and the on-going support for opposition parties and political organizations that are working to sabotage a free and fair electoral process in Venezuela;
- 3) that the National Lawyers Guild and its members will implement this resolution, through cooperation with their partners in the Americas who are likewise opposing improper U.S. interference in the internal affairs of other states, including initiatives to investigate and publicize efforts of U.S. agencies to undermine governments, political and social movements and organizations which are opposed to U.S. hegemony and neoliberal economic policies in the hemisphere; and
- 4) the National Lawyers Guild and its Committees shall meet with US organizations with which they have working relationships to discuss their programs and encourage them to assure that the funds they receive from NED, USAID and other government sources shall not be used for such activities.

Submitted by the International Committee, the Labor and Employment Committee, the Cuba Committee, the Haiti Subcommittee and the Task Force on the Americas.