

Civic Power and Electoral Politics

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Russia entered the ranks of Not Free countries in 2004 for the first time since the breakup of the Soviet Union, according to the findings of *Freedom in the World 2005*, the survey of global political rights and civil liberties published annually by Freedom House. This setback for freedom represented the year's most important political trend.

Russia's steady drift toward authoritarian rule under President Vladimir Putin saw increased Kremlin control of national television content and growing influence over radio and print media; the use and manipulation--bordering on outright control--of "alternative" political parties with leaders linked to the country's security services; growing encroachments against local government; and elections that were neither free nor fair. The extent of Russia's long-term decline is suggested by the country's political rights rating of 3 and civil liberties rating of 4 for the year 1997 (towards the end of the presidency of Putin's predecessor, Boris Yeltsin), as compared to its rating of 6 for political rights and 5 for civil liberties today. Such a precipitous drop during that time frame is relatively rare--in that same time period, only Haiti has seen comparable declines.

While Russia became increasingly authoritarian, in neighboring Ukraine, fraudulent elections and other widespread violations of political rights and civil liberties led millions of Ukraine's citizens into the streets to defend their democratic rights. Although Ukraine's presidential election is to be re-run on December 26th, its non-violent Orange Revolution has already led to the widespread expansion of media freedoms, with most newspapers and national television networks now reporting freely. Ukraine's "people power" has contributed to greater independence of the legal system, particularly the Supreme Court, which annulled fraudulent election results and ordered a revote. Furthermore, civic ferment has helped increase academic freedom. All these developments have improved the state of the country's civil liberties, according to the survey findings.

These diametrically opposite trends were echoed in the growing differentiation between democratizing and increasingly authoritarian states throughout the former USSR. While the year saw important progress for freedom in Ukraine and Georgia, the erosion of freedoms in Russia was matched by ongoing repression in Belarus, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, as well as authoritarian consolidation in Armenia. All this suggests that the post-Communist East-West divide (which formerly separated the countries of Central and Eastern Europe from those of the former Soviet Union) is gradually migrating eastward, as liberal values make gains in key post-Soviet states.

As 2004 drew to a close, 89 countries worldwide were judged as Free (possessing a high degree of political rights and civil liberties in an environment of strong rule of law), one more than in 2003. The gain was represented by progress in Antigua and Barbuda, which entered the ranks of Free countries in the wake of the electoral defeat of corrupt Prime Minister Lester Bird, whose departure from government created significant opportunities to promote democratic practices and the rule of law. Liberia entered the ranks of Partly Free states as a result of greater political freedom that developed through the establishment of a broad-based, transitional government. This gain was offset by the decline in the status of Russia, which moved from Partly Free to Not Free. (Additionally, the territory of Kosovo declined from Partly Free to Not Free in the wake of a significant increase in ethnic violence that led to the non-participation of the Serbian minority in parliamentary elections.) As a result of these offsetting trends, the year ended with 54 countries rated as Partly Free, one fewer than in the previous year. The number of Not Free countries, where political rights are severely constricted amid widespread civil liberties problems and a weak rule of law, stood at 49, the same as in 2003.

In 2004, 44 percent of the globe's population (2.819 billion) lived in Free countries and territories, 19 percent (1.189 billion) lived in Partly Free settings, while 37 percent (2.387 billion) lived in Not Free polities--of these, 1.3 billion (nearly three-fifths) lived in China. As a result of shifts in population and changes in freedom status, the number of people living in Free countries and territories increased by 39 million. The number of those living in Partly Free polities dropped by 136 million, while the number of those living in Not Free countries climbed by 177 million, largely due to Russia's entry into this category.

A deeper analysis of Freedom House data suggests that Free, Partly Free, and Not Free societies differ somewhat in comparative performance with regard to the four broad categories of civil liberties examined by the survey. An assessment of these differences helps to illuminate some of the underlying historical trajectories and political trends within types of countries. These main categories of civil liberties evaluated

in the survey are: Freedom of Expression and Belief, Associational and Organizational Rights, Rule of Law, and Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights.

Overall, countries in all three types of societies show their weakest performance in Associational and Organizational Rights and the Rule of Law, while Freedom of Expression and Belief rankings are highest. However, Free and Partly Free societies rank considerably higher than Not Free polities in their median Associational and Organizational Rights ratings. This is hardly surprising, as it suggests that authoritarian regimes place great emphasis on controlling and limiting the ability of individuals to organize, associate, and engage in collective action, as this may prove highly threatening to entrenched authority and power.

In 2004, 119 out of 192 countries (62 percent) qualified as electoral democracies, two more than in 2003. The designation of electoral democracy is based on whether a country's last major national elections qualified under established international standards as "free and fair." All electoral democracies are not liberal democracies (or Free countries), as states with democratically elected leaders may still have serious problems in terms of human rights, the rule of law, and corruption. Out of 119 electoral democracies 89 (75 percent) are Free, liberal democracies, while 30 (25 percent) are rated Partly Free. While Russia exited from the ranks of electoral democracies this year, new electoral democracies included Antigua and Barbuda, Comoros, and Georgia.

REGIONAL TRENDS

At year's end, the Middle East and North Africa continued to lag behind other world regions when overall levels of freedom are measured. In this region, only 1 country, Israel, is rated as Free, with 5 rated as Partly Free and 12 rated as Not Free. It is important to note that according to the survey's longstanding methodology, the rating for Israel only reflects events that occur within its territorial boundaries. The state of freedom in the Israeli Occupied Territories (and in areas formally administered under the Palestinian Authority) are rated separately, and both are rated Not Free given the significant human rights abuses and restrictions that are placed on Palestinian residents.

Comparable year-end figures for the Americas were 24 Free, 9 Partly Free, and 2 (Cuba and Haiti) Not Free countries. In Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, 12 countries were Free, 7 were Partly Free, and 8 were Not Free (all five of the countries of Central Asia are rated Not Free, with two--Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan--among the most repressive states in the world.) In the Asia-Pacific region, the survey found 17 countries are Free, 11 Partly Free, and 11 Not Free. In Sub-Saharan Africa, there were 11 Free, 21 Partly Free, and 16 Not Free states. And in Western Europe, 24 countries were rated Free; one country in the region, Turkey, was rated as Partly Free, although it made measurable strides in civil liberties this year, improving its score from 4 to 3.

Beyond these broad regional trends, in addition to the two countries (Antigua and Barbuda and Liberia) that registered status improvements in 2004, 24 countries showed numerical gains in freedom, although they were insufficient to produce a change in the overall freedom designation: Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Comoros, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Jordan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Poland, Qatar, Slovakia, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Meanwhile, in addition to a decline in freedom status in Russia, ten other countries experienced a decline in their numerical rankings that did not lead to a status change: Armenia, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti, Lithuania, Malawi, Nepal, Romania, and Zimbabwe.

Gains in Freedom

This year's survey registered modest trends in improved civil liberties in the Middle East and North Africa specifically, and in Muslim majority countries in general. While Muslim majority countries constitute 24 percent of the world's states, they accounted for over a third (9 of 25) of the states that made measurable progress this year, mainly as a result of improved civil liberties. This trend was matched by growing discourse in many Islamic states about the need for political reform, as well as growing attention to the absence of fundamental rights for women in many Islamic--and particularly Arab--societies.

While in Iraq, progress toward stability and the creation of civic life was stalled by a brutally violent insurgency that increasingly made targets of innocent civilians, the survey reflected modest, but positive, trends in the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Although no Arab country gave evidence of improvement sufficient to merit a status change, modest gains were registered in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Qatar. In Egypt, the civil liberties score increased from 6 to 5 because of greater civic activism, particularly by women's advocacy groups.

Jordan's civil liberties score increased from 5 to 4 because of improvements in women's rights and press freedom. In Morocco, the civil liberties rating improved from 5 to 4 due to the adoption of one of the most liberal family codes in the Arab world. Qatar's civil liberties rating increased from 6 to 5 on the basis of improvements in academic freedom. It is noteworthy that the gains in the Arab world were concentrated in the civil liberties area; many of the changes stem from increased civic activism, which is factored in along with governmental actions and policies in overall evaluations. No country in the Arab Middle East has yet adopted significant liberalization of its political system.

Other majority-Muslim states registering gains included Malaysia, whose political rights rating improved as a result of more openly contested national elections. Comoros saw increased political contestation in its national legislative elections. Niger saw both political rights and civil liberties improvements due to increased representation of minorities in government and because of efforts to improve the status of women. Turkey's civil liberties strengthened due to the passage of another round of major reforms this year, including a complete overhaul of the penal code that makes it much more democratic. The Turkish government also increased civilian control of the military and started broadcasts in minority languages, including an increase in Kurdish language broadcasting. As Turkey awaited a decision concerning its consideration for European Union membership, the severest forms of torture decreased, and there were other improvements in human rights practices. In Afghanistan, reasonably free and fair presidential elections led to improved political rights despite obstacles to open contestation in regions where violence remained a significant factor.

The gains are spread relatively evenly across the main geographic regions. In Central and Eastern Europe, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia all made modest improvements in freedom as a result of their incorporation of European Union rights standards in the past year. These new EU states now enjoy the survey's highest numerical ranking for both political rights and civil liberties. At the same time, civic and political organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina exercised significant influence in successful municipal elections throughout the country in October 2004, revealing a deepening maturity of civil society.

Improvements in Latin America included the strengthening of the rule of law in Costa Rica due to the indictment and detention of two ex-presidents, Rafael Calderon and Miguel Angel Rodriguez, for corruption, coercion, and illegal enrichment. This progress was matched by improvements in free press coverage and freedom of expression. In the Dominican Republic, political rights improved due to improvements in the country's electoral climate that occurred during the election of President Leonel Fernandez.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, gains included the Central African Republic, whose political rights improved as a result of increased political activism in preparation for democratic elections in 2005. Guinea-Bissau's political rights were strengthened by legislative elections that international observers pronounced as largely free and fair. Mauritius further increased its civil liberties score through the consolidation of associational rights and social equalities.

South Korea's political rights improved after the strengthening of the democratic process in free and fair elections, following last year's highly politicized presidential impeachment process. Taiwan's civil liberties registered steady gains due to gradual improvements in the rule of law, including the consolidation of judicial independence. In the territory of Hong Kong, despite the government of China's decision to rule out direct elections of the full legislature and Chief Executive, civil liberties improved modestly due to unparalleled civic activism, which led to incremental gains in associational rights and the rule of law.

As indicated above, positive developments also took place in Ukraine (civil liberties) and in Georgia (political rights). In Georgia, President Edward Shevardnadze was forced from office after fraudulent legislative elections in 2003 spurred nationwide protests. Mikhail Saakashvili was later elected president in polling in January 2004 that international observers asserted was honest and professionally conducted. In Ukraine, a surge in civic activism and a major improvement in press freedom emerged during that country's presidential campaign and the protest movement that ignited in the wake of widespread ballot fraud.

Declines in Freedom

In addition to Russia's entry into the ranks of Not Free states, three other ex-Soviet republics suffered measurable declines in freedom. Belarus, which ranks as the least free country in Europe, saw a further deepening of harassment of opposition political forces. In Armenia, the government responded violently to peaceful civic protests during the year amidst a broader pattern of increasingly unresponsive and undemocratic governance. Lithuania's political rights suffered a modest setback due to the determination

by parliament that impeached President Rolandas Paksas had been under the influence of a foreign security service and organized crime elements while president. During the special election for his successor, a series of official raids was also perpetrated against parties supporting Paksas' replacement, Valdas Adamkus. Despite Paksas' removal from office, the fact of significant infiltration of high state offices by a foreign government raised worrying questions about the full autonomy of Lithuania's political leadership.

In Romania, political rights declined due to flaws in the first round of the country's presidential and parliamentary election process. One territory under international supervision, Kosovo, registered a setback in its political rights and saw its status decline from Partly Free to Not Free due to a Serbian community boycott of parliamentary elections following an increase in ethnic violence.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Burkina Faso saw an increase in corruption and reports of illegal arms trafficking, resulting in a decline in civil liberties. Cote d'Ivoire's civil liberties decreased due to the deterioration in security and civil freedoms resulting from an upsurge in hostilities emanating from an unresolved civil conflict. Malawi's political rights declined due to flawed political elections. Despite the acquittal of opposition leader Morgan Tsangvirai on trumped-up charges of treason and attempted assassination, Zimbabwe's political rights declined further due to increased government repression of the political opposition.

Although an increasingly authoritarian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide left the country in 2004, overall Haiti's political rights declined in the absence of democratically-derived sovereign authority and the imposition of an ineffective interim government after the deployment of an international security force.

Nepal continues its downward trend with a decline this year in civil liberties due to a violent Maoist insurgency, the government's increasingly brutal response to that conflict, further deterioration in the rule of law, and increased pressures on economic activity.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FREEDOM AND TERRORISM

Despite the increase in global terrorism, freedom and democracy have shown a demonstrable resilience and progress--even if incremental and tentative--continues in many regions. Unfortunately, in some cases, the war on terrorism has been used by some states to justify the reduction of personal and political freedoms by unscrupulous regimes that are drifting further toward authoritarian rule. Among these is Russia, where President Vladimir Putin has cynically exploited the terrorist attacks in Beslan this September to dismantle local elected authority.

Uzbekistan's authoritarian ruler, Islam Karimov, has similarly used the war on terror as a justification for repressing peaceful civic movements while maintaining a ban on moderate opposition political parties.

The threat of terrorism has put a strain on established democracies as well. Democratic leaders are naturally under pressure from their publics to respond effectively and vigorously to emerging terrorist threats. However, at times, such responses may lead in directions which put a strain on a country's traditional patterns of tolerance and respect for civil liberties. In the aftermath of the murder of Dutch film documentarian Theo Van Gogh, there was a wave of arson attacks against both Christian and Muslim houses of worship. These events contributed to heightened fears of a wider network of potential terrorists in the country's growing Muslim immigrant community. In France, concern about the spread of Muslim fundamentalism has led to restrictions on the display of religious symbols in state schools. While not threatening the broadly based and well-secured rights and liberties of these EU member states, these trends nevertheless are capable of putting at risk some civil liberties and suggest that even well-established democracies must be vigilant against encroachments on their own freedoms.

Similarly, in the United States, there has been a thoroughgoing debate about the civil liberties implications of the USA PATRIOT Act, some provisions of which are believed by civil liberties and some human rights groups to pose a potential threat to freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and the spread of government surveillance capability. In addition, serious questions have been raised by prisoner abuse in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and by the detention without judicial oversight of accused terrorists in Guantanamo. During 2004, American courts issued several decisions that chipped away at the PATRIOT Act and challenged the government's claim to exclusive authority over terrorism detainees.

No aspect of freedom has been the subject of greater commentary than its relationship to the global threat presented by terrorist movements. This year, studies by Harvard Professor Alberto Abadie and

Professor John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago found statistically significant correlations between levels of freedom and terrorism, reinforcing similar studies by Alan Krueger of Princeton.

Freedom House's own research into the relationship between democracy and terrorism bears out these academic conclusions. In an ongoing research initiative, Freedom House has correlated data from all recorded terrorist acts from the period 1999-2003 with data from the *Freedom in the World* survey [1]. First, our research finds that the targeting of liberal democratic societies has increased dramatically after September 11, 2001. In the 32 months before the 9/11 attacks, sixteen percent of all terrorist fatalities occurred in the democratic world. Post-9/11, this proportion rose to 27 percent, and the number of terrorist casualties occurring in democracies rose from 9.3 to 37.8 per month, an increase of over four hundred percent.

In part, of course, this can be explained as radical Islamist rage over the attacks by US-led coalitions against Afghanistan's Taliban and Saddam Hussein's Iraq. But this pattern also reflects a calculus by terrorists that at root even powerful democracies are weak and susceptible to terrorist pressure. Revolutionary Islamist terrorists are specifically targeting the democratic world. As a result, including the victims of September 11th, 62 percent of all casualties (deaths and injuries) caused throughout the world since 1999 by radical Islamist terrorists have occurred in liberal, democratic societies (countries rated Free by Freedom House). Such radicals are responsible for 7 out of every 8 deaths from terrorism that have occurred in the democratic world in the last five years, and for 32 percent of all terrorist attacks on open, democratic societies. Even when the single-day death toll from September 11th is not included, revolutionary Islamist terror is still responsible for over 55 percent of the terrorist fatalities that have occurred in the democratic world in the last five years.

Freedom House's findings--which will be released in a detailed report in 2005--reinforce Krueger and Mearsheimer's findings about the correlations between terror and levels of freedom. Between 1999 and 2003, 70 percent of all deaths from terrorism were caused by terrorists and terrorist groups originating in Not Free societies, while only 8 percent of all fatalities were generated by terrorists and terror movements with origins in Free societies. Moreover, terrorists from dictatorial and repressive societies that brutalize their inhabitants are themselves significantly more brutal than terrorists born and acculturated in democratic societies. Over the last five years, terrorists who came from societies that are rated Not Free by Freedom House and in which most basic rights are denied, on average, killed some 11 and injured 15 people per attack [2], whereas those perpetrated by organizations and individuals from Free societies on average claimed 2 lives and injured 7. Even if we exclude 9/11's fatalities, terrorists from closed societies are over twice as lethal as their counterparts from less repressive states. All terrorism is morally reprehensible and odious, but this difference in degree must be better understood.

No society and no political system can guarantee that it will not produce terrorists, just as no society can guarantee that it will not generate violent criminals. Still, as the data in this study indicate, stable democracies generate fewer and less lethal terrorists and terrorist movements than tyrannies. In order to successfully wage a war of ideas against such a lethal enemy, the human benefits of greater political, civil, and economic freedom must be consistently encouraged. This makes urgent the priority of bringing democracy and human rights reforms to Central Asia and the Arab world. Such an agenda of promoting democracy and reform requires a long-term approach and a long-term commitment; a military and intelligence driven war on terror is not enough. Even if the war on terror scores significant intelligence, security, and military achievements, long-term success can be best secured if it is accompanied by democratic reform and liberalization of the world's most repressive and politically closed regimes.

This effort to promote democratic change will be most effective if it is waged by democrats from closed societies themselves, and augmented by international cooperation that engages moderate and reformist governments from majority-Muslim states. A corollary of this approach should include efforts to engage respected religious leaders who oppose the cynical manipulation of religious faith on behalf of extremist political agendas. Finally, the U.S. and other established democracies must ensure that they maintain the highest standards of conduct in their own actions to combat the scourge of terrorism.

THE FATE OF ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACIES: DO ELECTIONS REALLY NOT MATTER?

While no one doubts the correlation between democratic political processes and broad-based freedoms, in recent years, the relationship between elections and freedom has been subjected to significant criticism. Fareed Zakaria, Thomas Carothers, Larry Diamond and others have warned about the rise of "illiberal democracies" in which elections are held but leaders remain unaccountable and engage in actions that undermine political rights and civil liberties.

Recently--amid rising domestic pressures and international standards--one-party states and other monolithic authoritarian systems have collapsed and been replaced by multiparty systems. In the last fifteen years alone, the number of competitive electoral democracies has risen from 69 out of 167 (41 percent) to 119 out of 192 (62 percent). This process means that each year, on average, 3.3 additional states have adopted minimal standards of free and fair elections. As noted before, however, only 89 of these 119 electoral democracies are Free, while over a quarter lag behind in terms of their civil liberties.

Many of these new multiparty systems have become open and competitive democracies, often with significant gains for the rule of law. But in other post-transition systems, truly competitive multiparty elections have often been supplanted by dominant party states which employ a wide array of authoritarian techniques. While there were some examples of dominant party states in the post-World War II era (including Mexico under the seven-decade rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the Philippines under Marcos, Indonesia under Suharto, and Peru under Fujimori), a large number arose in the aftermath of the collapse of one-party Marxist-Leninist systems. The development of dominating institutions in these states has been so widespread that some scholars have pointed to the rise of pseudo-democracies and "hybrid states," which contain the false trappings of democratic processes and opposition political parties. These "dominant party" states use a variety of means to preserve a facade of electoral contestation while maintaining unchallenged political power, including the financial resources of crony-capitalist oligarchic elites to back party campaigns; pro-government media dominance; use of state administrative resources in campaigns; and political harassment of independent media and opposition groups. Among such states, scholars have pointed to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Ukraine--all of which possess to one degree or another a political party opposition that participates in electoral processes, however constrained or fraudulent.

In each of these pseudo-democracies, dominant parties maintain control in semi-authoritarian systems that retain the external trappings of democracy while real political power remains in the hands of an unchallenged, entrenched elite. Scholars have suggested that these trends presage a new stable polity, not a mid-point in the evolution toward authentic democracy.

Freedom House data continue to show that a considerable proportion of electoral democracies (25 percent this year) are rated Partly Free. Fareed Zakaria, in an influential essay, has pointed to this discrepancy in Freedom House data to suggest that, in the absence of strong constitutional and legal frameworks, elections often empower illiberal majorities that persecute minority groups. Zakaria dubbed this phenomenon illiberal democracy.

Some political scientists also have suggested that this discrepancy is the result of an overemphasis on the part of donors on the formality of elections and have urged a greater emphasis on the rule of law, independent media, and civil society. In fact, donor strategies have generally incorporated this more multi-dimensional approach.

With the people power movements this year in Ukraine, in Georgia (2003), and in Serbia (2000) fresh in our memories, there is good reason to reexamine and reevaluate the thesis that the electoral process is merely a formality. As each of these pivotal transitions indicates, an important factor in leading to political openings has been the evidence of growing civic ferment generated by electoral processes themselves. Indeed, it can be said that the very fact of voter fraud and electoral manipulation has proven a catalyst for massive civic opposition that has led to a free and fair electoral result.

To the Ukrainian, Georgian, and Serbian examples of civic mobilizations revolving around electoral processes, we can add the 1986 people power revolution in the Philippines and civic activism in Chile in 1988 around a plebiscite that helped force General Augusto Pinochet from office and launched a democratic transition. Civic protests around tainted elections in Mexico in 1988 and long-term civic and political mobilization paved the way to a more open and contested process, resulting 12 years later in the defeat of the ruling party's candidate. In Slovakia, widespread civic mobilization around elections in 1998 created a broad-based left-right coalition that defeated the party of the authoritarian Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar and ushered in more liberal rule.

There are several important reasons why electoral processes in pseudo-democracies and illiberal democracies have a catalytic effect on more deeply rooted democratic change.

First, elections concentrate civic energy and activity around a culminating focal point--the date of the election. This allows opposition parties and movements to mobilize their resources for deployment in a concentrated period of political contestation.

Second, despite state media dominance in many pseudo-democracies, some alternative media-in the form of the Internet, local radio, local cable television, and independent newspapers-manage to emerge in the cracks of the edifice of state control.

Third, if there is some limited space for electoral contestation, there is equally some space for freedom of assembly and associational rights that enable opposition civic life.

Fourth, corruption and crony capitalism-frequent characteristics of these less-than-fully democratic regimes-often become a source of civic anger and mobilization.

Fifth, because pseudo-democracies adopt their political model to be acceptable to the growing democratic world, they are often open to external donor activity, cross-border cooperation among civic groups, and extensive external election monitoring.

As importantly, because the formal legal basis for multiparty systems and civic and media pluralism is already in place, changes in such part-democratic/part-authoritarian hybrid settings usually occur within constitutional bounds. Indeed, many non-violent "people power revolutions" do not topple existing constitutional systems, but instead make it possible for state and civic institutions to begin functioning according to the spirit and letter of the basic law.

FOREIGN AID: CREATING INCENTIVES FOR LIBERALIZATION

In March 2002, President George W. Bush announced the Millennium Challenge Account, a new foreign aid initiative that would reward developing countries that "rule justly." A set of criteria was crafted that included absence of corruption, support for market liberalization, greater investment in health and education, and respect for political rights and civil liberties as reflected in Freedom House's ratings.

The new paradigm for foreign aid was put into practice this year and it is useful to evaluate its performance to date.

On balance, the countries selected and rewarded with \$1 billion in cumulative new foreign aid include seven that are rated Free and nine that are rated Partly Free [3]. Seven of the nine Partly Free states had combined Freedom House scores of 3.5 or above and were thus some of the better performing Partly Free countries. Only two states that received support under the program, Armenia and Morocco, were ranked at the lower end of Partly Free states.

By contrast, the cohort that qualified for inclusion but was not given MCA enhanced foreign aid included three Free and nine Partly Free countries, of which six had lower-end Partly Free ratings. While Freedom House is appreciative of the Millennium Challenge Corporation Board using its discretion not to reward a number of potentially eligible poor performers-including Vietnam, Mauritania and Bhutan-it urges the Board to reexamine the criteria to ensure that the rule of law criteria adequately consider issues of due process and judicial independence.

On balance, the first year's decisions by the Millennium Challenge Corporation, while not fully according with levels of freedom as reflected in Freedom House's ranking, nevertheless incorporated enough of these factors to ensure that the MCA foreign aid initiative does not reward those developing countries that practice widespread political suppression or massively violate most fundamental rights. However, Freedom House urges the Administration to ensure that policy dialogue and assistance continues to be provided to participating countries, as many, especially the poorer performing qualifiers, have significant deficits in respect for political rights and civil liberties.

CONCLUSIONS: THE LESSONS OF 2004

The year brought with it many important lessons and reminders of relevance to policymakers, civic activists, and donors.

First, people power--i.e., non-violent civic protest--was yet again revealed to be a potent force for political change. It was a reminder that support for non-partisan civic life through aid and training for membership organizations, labor unions, student and youth groups, election monitoring organizations, rights groups, and think tanks focused on the development of reform agenda deserve significant donor investment.

Second, international democratic solidarity by the world's economically powerful democracies was shown to be a positive force for change. From US-EU joint action to press Ukraine's authorities to ensure free and fair elections, to the improvements in the freedom rankings of Turkey and Central and East European

states, occasioned by their efforts to integrate into the European Union, coalitions of democracies helped advance freedom.

Third, positive incentives to reward developing countries taking the democratic path should be strengthened and enhanced with the participation of other prosperous democracies, particularly the member states of the EU and Japan.

These three factors, if employed cohesively and comprehensively, may help propel further liberalization in states formerly thought stuck in a semi-authoritarian no man's land. They will also offer measured hope to democracy activists in closed societies.

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[1] The Freedom in the World data used here do not include the 2004 scores detailed in this essay. The research encompasses terrorist acts which took place January 1, 1999 through December 31, 2003. The three freedom status changes in 2004 do not affect the statistical conclusions of the research. (Chechnya, which has been both a target of and a source for terrorists, is rated separately from Russia, and has been rated Not Free throughout the five-year period.)

[2] While several of the 9/11 terrorists, including Mohammed Atta, lived for years in open societies, they all had grown up in repressive and closed societies. Despite living abroad in the environment of democracy, they were integrated into insular ethno-religious environments and terror networks in which exiles from closed societies predominated. This insular cultural environment -which is widespread in many liberal Western societies- unquestionably contributed to their radicalization and contributed to their pitiless commitment to the mass murder of innocents.

[3] The MCA aid will be distributed in 2005, and the countries listed are either eligible or on the threshold for 2005 aid.

Tables and Charts

Tracking Electoral Democracy

Year Under Review	Number of Electoral Democracies
1994	114
1999	120
2004	119

The Global Trend

Year Under Review	Free	Partly Free	Not Free
1974	42	48	63
1984	54	59	55
1994	76	61	54
2004	89	54	49

Freedom in the World 2004 Survey Population

The population of the world as estimated in mid-2004 was 6,394.4 million persons, who reside in 192 sovereign states. The level of political rights and civil liberties as shown comparatively by the Freedom House survey is:

Free: 2,819.1 million (44.08 percent of the world's population) live in 89 of the states.

Partly Free: 1,189.0 million (18.59 percent of the world's population) live in 54 of the states.

Not Free: 2,387.3 million (37.3 percent of the world's population) live in 49 of the states.

**A Record of the Survey
(population in millions)**

Year Under Review	Free	Partly Free	Not Free	World Population
Mid-1992	1,352.2 (24.83%)	2,403.3 (44.11%)	1,690.4 (31.06%)	5,446.0
Mid-1993	1,046.2 (19.00%)	2224.4 (40.41%)	2,234.6 (40.59%)	5,505.2
Mid-1994	1,119.7 (19.97%)	2,243.4 (40.01%)	2,243.9 (40.02%)	5,607.0
Mid-1995	1,114.5 (19.55%)	2,365.8 (41.49%)	2,221.2 (38.96%)	5,701.5
Mid-1996	1,250.3 (21.67%)	2,260.1 (39.16%)	2,260.6 (39.17%)	5,771.0
Mid-1997	1,266.0 (21.71%)	2,281.9 (39.12%)	2,284.6 (39.17%)	5,832.5
Mid-1998	2,354.0 (39.84%)*	1,570.6 (26.59%)	1,984.5 (33.58%)	5,908.7
Mid-1999	2,324.9 (38.90%)	1,529.0 (25.58%)	2122.4 (35.51%)	5,976.3
Mid-2000	2,465.2 (40.59%)	1,435.8 (23.58%)	2,157.5 (35.61%)	6,058.5
Mid-2001	2,500.7 (40.79%)	1462.9 (23.86%)	2,167.1 (33.35%)	6,130.7
Mid-2002	2,717.6 (43.85%)	1,293.1 (20.87%)	2,186.3 (25.38%)	6,197.0
Mid-2003	2,780.1 (44.03%)	1,324.0 (20.97%)	2,209.9 (35.00%)	6,314.0
Mid-2004	2,819.1(44.08%)	1,189.9(18.59%)	2,387.3 (37.33%)	6,395.4

*The large shift in population figure between 1997 and 1998 is due to India's change in status from Partly Free to Free