

Methodology Note

The Secretariat for the International Advisory Committee (IAC) followed a very specific and carefully designed methodology in order to determine which countries should qualify to be invited to the Bamako Community of Democracies (CD) Ministerial, which countries should be disqualified due to their poor democratic and human rights record, and which countries demanded further study and consideration.

The Community of Democracies Criteria for Participation as the Guideline

The IAC Secretariat made its selection of countries and carried out its analytical work in accordance with the criteria agreed upon in the September 27, 2002, official document entitled “Criteria for Participation and Procedures,” adopted by the Community of Democracies Convening Group for the Seoul Ministerial Meeting and subsequently ratified at the Santiago Ministerial Meeting. The basic list of criteria includes:

- Free, fair, periodic, and competitive elections by universal suffrage and secret ballot
- Multipartidism
- Separation of powers and independence of the judiciary
- Adherence to the rule of law
- Equality before the law and equal access to it
- Military accountability to a democratically elected civilian government
- Respect of human rights, fundamental freedoms and human dignity, notably:
 - Freedom of thought, conscience, religion, belief, association, speech, opinion and expression.
 - Independence of the media.
 - Freedom from arbitrary arrest and inhuman or degrading treatment.
 - Right to a fair trial and presumed innocent.
 - No political, economical or cultural discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, color, language, religion or belief.
 - Protection of gender equality.
 - Protection of national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minority rights.
 - Protection of children, elderly and persons with disabilities.
 - Right of (direct and indirect) political participation.

According to the official guidelines adopted by the Convening Group, invitations to *participate* will be issued to “genuine democracies and those countries undergoing democratic consolidation,” in accordance with the criteria above. Invitations to *observe* will be issued to countries that fail to meet international standards of democracy and human rights, but are in a transition process and have given concrete steps along the lines of the criteria above. Finally, if any state fails to comply, for a reasonable period of time, with one or several of these main requisites, it will *not be invited to participate* in any events of the Community of Democracies, for a limited time and as long as deemed necessary.

Selection of countries that deserved further study

The IAC Secretariat made the initial selection of countries based on a review of leading reports and indicators measuring the state of democratic governance and human rights throughout the world. This analysis allowed the Secretariat to identify which countries clearly qualify to attend the CD Ministerial Meeting, which ones clearly did not meet the criteria as a result of autocratic regimes and lack of liberties, and which ones deserved further analysis by the IAC. Some of the reviewed reports and indices used in this initial selection phase included: World Bank Institute Governance Indicators, Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Freedom in the World and other reports by Freedom House, and Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

According to the Criteria for Participation, no country is automatically invited to the biennial meeting simply because it was invited to past meetings. Therefore, the Secretariat did not rely on past participation in CD Ministerial meetings as a key indicator. It did, however, consider a government's prior CD commitments as a factor in evaluating its political will to carry out democratic reforms.

Based on the analysis of these indices, the Secretariat arrived at an initial benchmark for including countries that clearly met the CD's criteria for participation and excluding countries that were too far from meeting the criteria.

- Invitation status was attained by countries that scored below 3/3 in Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index OR higher than 6.5 in the Bertelsmann Transformation Index.
- A country was put in the "not invited" category if it scored more than 5/5 in Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index OR lower than 4 in the Bertelsmann Transformation Index.

The 31 countries that fell within this range (between 3/3 and 5/5 in Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index and between 6.5 and 4 in the Bertelsmann Transformation Index) were directly considered for further study. In addition, all countries excluded in the first review were given a second look, analyzing their recent evolution and comparing their scores in other leading indices. The Secretariat considered that some borderline cases (eg., slightly above 5/5 in Freedom House and below 4 in the Bertelsmann Index) deserved further scrutiny in order to determine if they showed a positive recent trend in their democratic evolution. These cases were debated within the Secretariat for several weeks, and a final list of 35 countries recommended for further study was produced and circulated to IAC members, who had a chance to provide their feedback. During the consultations, it was also agreed to establish a "watchlist" for countries that qualified for invitation but whose recent evolution could jeopardize their eligibility for invitation to the Bamako Ministerial.

Methodology for specific country reports

Distribution of Countries among IAC Secretariat Organizations

The allocation of countries for study among the four organizations within the Secretariat was made according to each organization's expertise. The country allocation was as follows:

- **Bertelsmann Stiftung:** Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Russia and Singapore.
- **CDD-Ghana:** Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.
- **Democracy Coalition Project:** Burundi, Congo (Brazzaville), Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Mauritania, Tanzania, Uganda and Venezuela.
- **Freedom House:** Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia and Yemen.

The distribution of countries placed in the aforementioned watchlist was done as follows:

- **Bertelsmann Stiftung:** Bangladesh, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- **CDD-Ghana:** Malawi and Zambia.
- **Democracy Coalition Project:** Ecuador, Guatemala and Timor Leste.
- **Freedom House:** Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Methodology Considerations

The in-depth analysis carried out by each member of the Secretariat team centered on the country's fulfillment of the official CD "criteria for participation," with the studies focusing on those areas of deficiency and contention rather than on the criteria which the countries in question indisputably fulfilled. The main purpose of each analysis was to provide a solid base for the final recommendation the IAC elevates to the Convening Group on the country's invitation. Each country report also includes a series of recommendations on how the relevant government could improve its democratic institutions and human rights records.

The country reports build upon the quantitative research the Secretariat carried out in the previous phase, emphasizing qualitative sources. Wherever possible, importance was given to consulting national and regional sources, including reports by local organizations and civil society groups, national and regional media, and any other primary sources that could provide first-hand, insider intelligence on the state of democracy and human rights in the country under scrutiny. The Secretariat also consulted with members of the International Steering Committee for the Community of Democracies Non-governmental Process.

Structure of the Reports

1. Presentation: General introduction to the country —tables with basic facts and a record of past participation in CD meetings, and timeline of recent major events.

2. Background: Introduction to the country’s recent history and recent democratic evolution, especially since the Santiago Ministerial.

3. Analysis: Identification of the “Criteria for Participation” that the country has had problems with since the last Ministerial, focusing on their recent evolution. The analysis explores the roots of the problem, assesses if there have been any improvements in these areas, and evaluates what the overall trends seem to be.

4. Suggestions for Improvement: Overall assessment of the country’s democratic and human rights records and examination of the main improvements the relevant government could make to comply with the “Criteria for Participation.”

5. Statistics and Indicators: Tables with the country’s scores in the latest democracy and governance indicators—World Bank Institute Governance indicators, Freedom House Freedom in the World, Freedom House Freedom of the Press, Bertelsmann Transformation Index, Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index.

6. Sources: Bibliographical references and sources used.

Review Process

Each country report underwent a careful review process. After the completion of the initial drafts on September 1, 2006, the reports were reviewed in-house by each organization responsible for the specific countries. Between September 15 and September 30, organizations exchanged their reports, so other members within the Secretariat had the opportunity to offer their comments and suggestions. The reports were reviewed by the IAC individual members during October 2006, and they were further discussed at the meeting the IAC held in Berlin, in November 2006. Following the Berlin meeting, and after incorporating the recommendations made by IAC members, the Secretariat circulated the new drafts to local and international experts on the specific countries under scrutiny. Special consultation was established with the CD-NGO International Steering Committee (ISC), a 21-member board that includes four civil society representatives from each of the five world regions, as well as a representative from the CD nongovernmental secretariat in Bamako. Finally, during the early weeks of 2007, the Secretariat incorporated final comments from IAC members, and also updated the reports in order to include recent developments affecting democracy and human rights in the studied countries. Responsibility for the reports, however, rests entirely with the members of the IAC Secretariat team.