

**Discurso de la Secretaria de Estado de los Estados Unidos,
Dra. Condoleezza Rice**

Thank you very much to the Chilean government, particularly to President Lagos and to Foreign Minister Walker for hosting this year's meeting of the Community of Democracies, I think we have been all warmly welcomed here in Chile.

I know that I speak for all my distinguished colleagues when I say that we are honored to gather here together in the name of democracy. Every democracy in the world has shared the triumph of Chile's citizens, as they have renewed their commitment to democracy. Indeed we have all experienced the profound hope of people here throughout Latin America, who have transformed their continent through their desire to live in liberty. Today, all the members of the Community of Democracies declare our deep conviction that freedom is the universal longing of every soul and democracy is the ideal path for every nation. The past year has brought forth a dramatic shift in the world's political landscape. Since our last meeting in Seoul, we have seen free elections in Afghanistan and in Iraq, and in the Palestinian territories. We have witnessed tremendous developments in places like Georgia and Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan and Lebanon. There comes a time when the spark of freedom flashes in the minds of all oppressed people, and they raise their voices against tyranny. The Community of Democracies must match the bravery of these men and women with the courage of our own convictions. We on the right side of freedom's divide have an obligation to help those on the wrong side of that divide. To support democratic aspirations, all free nations must clarify the moral choice between liberty and oppression. We must let all governments know that successful relations with our democratic community depend on the dignified treatment of their people. To strengthen democratic principles, all free nations must demand that leaders who are elected democratically have a responsibility to govern democratically. Abandoning the

Rule of Law for the whim of rulers only leads to the oppression of innocent people.

To advance our democratic consensus, all free nations must insist that upholding democratic principles is the surest path to greater international status. The Community of Democracies is one of a growing number of international organizations that make democracy an actual condition for membership. In the western hemisphere, the Organization of American States has adopted the Interamerican Democratic Charter and here in the southern cone, Mercosur is helping to bolster democracy. In Europe, only democracies can belong to the European community, and democratic principles have always been the cornerstone of NATO. The democratic character of states must become the cornerstone of a new, principled multi-lateralism. The real division in our world is between those states that are committed to freedom, and those who are not.

International organizations like the Community of Democracies can help to create a balance of power that favors freedom. One positive action that we can take together is to work through the United Nations Democracy Caucus, to support reform of the United Nations. In particular, we should encourage the creation of a legitimate human rights body within the United Nations. Serious action on human rights can only come from countries that respect and protect human rights. Our Democratic Community can cooperate in other ways at the United Nations. The UN Democracy Fund, which president Bush proposed last fall at the general assembly, is an ideal way to provide tangible support to emerging democracies. Financial assistance is essential for all nations working to build firm foundations for freedom. The world's democracies must also help countries with their democratic transitions, every nation in this room has experienced a democratic transition of its own, some quite recently. Hungarian Foreign Minister Somogyi has proposed the creation of a democratic transition center. This is a terrific way, Minister, for our community to share with young democracies and

democratic movements, the important lessons that we have learned from our own traditions and transitions.

Democratization is after all, not an event, it is a process. It takes many years, even decades to realize the full promise of democratic reform. For nearly a century after the founding of the United States, millions of black Americans like me were still condemned to the status below that of full citizenship. When the founding fathers of America said "We the People", they did not mean me, many of my ancestors were thought to be only 3/5 of a man. And it is only within my lifetime that the United States has begun to guarantee the right to vote for all of our citizens. And so we know, in the United States, that this is a long and difficult process, and every nation in this room has experienced moments of tyranny in its history, some not too long ago.

Today, our citizens share the common bond of having overcome tyranny through all our commitment to freedom and democracy, now it is our historic duty to tell the world that tyranny is a crime of man, not a fact of nature. Our goal must always be the elimination of tyranny in our world. We, at the Community of Democracies must use the power of our shared ideals to accelerate democracies movement, to ever more places around the globe. We must usher in an era of democracy that thinks of tyranny as we thought of slavery today, a moral abomination that could not withstand the natural desire of every human being for a life of liberty and of dignity: This is our great purpose, together we will succeed. Thank you.