

# Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Newsletter



2014–2015



Front row (L–R): Manager Zerkxes Spencer, senior director Sally Blair, vice president Marc F. Plattner, executive director Christopher Walker, and senior research and conferences officer Melissa Aten. Back row (L–R): Program assistant Marlana Papavaritis, research associate Elise Alexander, program assistant Hainer Sibirian, assistant program officer Ashley Walburn Hull, librarian Tim Myers, and program officer Jessica Ludwig. (Not pictured: research associate Ayhan Ueok.)

Dear Friends,

This *Newsletter* showcases the work of our Reagan-Fascell, Visiting, and Hurford Youth Fellows, including activists, journalists, and scholars from Afghanistan, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Burma, Ethiopia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe. Prominent themes include strengthening women’s political participation; the promise of ICT and social media; the challenges of religious extremism in the Muslim world; and the rise of resurgent dictatorships in Eurasia.

This year, we feature our “Democracy Curriculum” (p. 23), through which we introduce fellows to the NED family of institutes, counterpart organizations, and the ideas of leading scholars. We appreciate the contributions of CIPE, IRI, NDI, and the Solidarity Center, as they welcome each cohort to discuss their work and issues of common concern. Freedom House, the Holocaust Museum, and the *Washington Post* are on our roster, as are visits to Capitol Hill, the Department of State, and the Library of Congress. Fellows benefit from seminars with experts such as Larry Diamond and Francis Fukuyama, as well as with NED staff, including president Carl Gershman, vice-president Marc Plattner, vice-president David Lowe, Forum executive director Chris Walker, and CIMA senior director Mark Nelson. We are grateful to Forum senior research and conferences officer Melissa Aten, who organizes this unique agenda with her signature talent and dedication to our international exchange program.

Sincerely,

*Sally Blair*

Sally Blair  
Senior Director, Fellowship Programs

## Inside This Issue

2015–2016 Fellows.....	3
2014–2015 Reagan-Fascell Fellows:	
AFRICA:	
Arthur Gwagwa .....	4
Simegnish “Lily” Mengesha.....	5
Pepe Julian Onziema.....	6
N’yella Rogers.....	7
Negaso Solan.....	8
Tidiani Togola.....	9
ASIA:	
Zin Mar Aung.....	10
Lily Gomes.....	11
Farahnaz Ispahani.....	12
Cu Huy Ha Vu.....	13
EURASIA:	
Umed Babakhanov.....	14
Dmitry Dubrovsky.....	15
Altay Goyushov.....	16
Gubad Ibadoghlu.....	17
LATIN AMERICA:	
Rut Diamint.....	18
MIDDLE EAST:	
Maliha AlShehab.....	19
Tabish Forugh.....	20
2014–2015 Visiting Fellows	
Leonid Gozman.....	21
Yoshihiro Makino.....	21
Raza Rumi.....	21
Hurford Youth Fellows.....	22
Research Associates and Interns....	22
Democracy Curriculum.....	23

This *Newsletter* was produced by Zerkxes Spencer, with contributions from Sally Blair, Marlana Papavaritis, and Elise Alexander. Opinions expressed herein are those of the Fellows and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Endowment or its staff.

Pictured on the cover are NED’s 2014–2015 Fellows. From left to right—top row: Tabish Forugh, Farahnaz Ispahani, Lily Mengesha, and Dmitry Dubrovsky; second row: Zin Mar Aung, Umed Babakhanov, Cu Huy Ha Vu, and Pepe Onziema; third row: Maliha AlShehab, Negaso Solan, and Lily Gomes; fourth row: Altay Goyushov; Raza Rumi, Arthur Gwagwa, and Rut Diamint; fifth row: N’yella Rogers, Yoshihiro Makino, Gubad Ibadoghlu, and Leonid Gozman.

# 2015–2016 FELLOWS

## Fall 2015

### Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows

**Ms. Nodira Abdulloeva (Tajikistan)**

*The Influence of Migration on Political Attitudes of Returning Migrant Workers in Tajikistan*

**Ms. Shad Begum (Pakistan)**

*Strengthening Participatory Democracy in Pakistan by Engaging Pakistani and Afghan Diaspora Networks*

**Dr. Gábor Demszky (Hungary)**

*Without a Voice: From Social Exclusion to Active Participation*

**Mr. Lamii Kpargoi (Liberia)**

*Strengthening Democracy in Liberia through Public Access to Information*

**Ms. Simegnish “Lily” Mengesha (Ethiopia)**

*The Effect of the Anti-Terrorism Law on Ethiopian Media (March–December 2015)*

**Mr. Manoj Mitta (India)**

*The Bottom Layer: Impunity for Caste Violence in India*

**Mr. Tilak Pathak (Nepal)**

*Promoting Financial Transparency within Political Parties in Nepal*



### Visiting Fellows

**Ms. Hend Nafea (Egypt)**

*Documenting Human Rights Violations in Egypt*

**Mr. Raza Rumi (Pakistan)**

*Pakistan’s Democratic Evolution and Extremism*

## Spring 2016

### Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows

**Ms. Lea Baroudi (Lebanon)**

*Promoting Reconciliation & Peace through the Elimination of Censorship in Lebanon*

**Dr. Henry Hale (United States)**

*The Public Opinion Foundations for Democracy in Russia and Ukraine*

**Ms. Izzah Inzamliah (Indonesia)**

*Strengthening Trade Unions in Indonesia: A Manual on Strategic Organizing*

**Ms. Fatema Jafari (Afghanistan)**

*Effective Women’s Participation in Good Governance in Afghanistan*

**Ms. Nyaradzo Mashayamombe (Zimbabwe)**

*Empowering Young Women to Participate in the Movement for Democracy in Zimbabwe*

**Mr. Andrej Nosov (Serbia)**

*Using Multimedia Tools to Promote Peace and Reconciliation in Post-Conflict Societies: The Case of Srebrenica*



### Hurford Youth Fellows

**Ms. Goma Bastola (Nepal)**

*Empowering Young Women & Girls through Civic Education*

**Mr. Ateki Caxton (Cameroon)**

*Bridging Digital Divides and Combating Marginalization through Youth Political Participation*

**Mr. Makoi Popioco (Philippines)**

*Democracy, Disasters, and Social Media*



# 2014–2015 REAGAN-FASCELL DEMOCRACY FELLOWS



**Mr. Arthur Gwagwa** is a human rights attorney who heads the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, based in London. Previously, he was among the first lawyers to offer pro bono representation to victims of rights violations through the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights network. During his fellowship, he drafted a policy document on building democracy in Zimbabwe. On January 13, 2015, he delivered a presentation at NED entitled “How Civil Society Engagement Can Strengthen Democracy in Zimbabwe,” in which he assessed the state of Zimbabwean civil society and charted a path forward. At the end of his fellowship, Arthur returned to London to continue his work as a lawyer and democracy advocate, including travel to East Africa.

## AFRICA

### Mr. Arthur Gwagwa (Zimbabwe)

“How Citizen Engagement Can Strengthen Democracy in Zimbabwe”

October 2014–February 2015 | [arthurgwagwa@gmail.com](mailto:arthurgwagwa@gmail.com)

“As President Mugabe plans a succession to ensure the preservation of his legacy, civil society organizations (CSOs) in Zimbabwe need to take a hard look at their role and chart a new course ahead. While CSOs have made considerable contributions to Zimbabwe’s democratic milestones—among them, the crafting of a new constitution and a reduction in organized violence—recent trends indicate a need for grassroots renewal. Originally driven by a broad volunteer base, CSOs have become overly formalized and numerous, shifting from a unified strategy to single-issue research and advocacy with limited direct action.



**To move forward, CSOs need to work with Zimbabweans in all parts of the country to discover their evolving views, rather than relying on feedback from earlier days.** To fully engage with citizens and the state, they must champion both political and economic rights. Finally, in dealing with regional and international partners, CSOs must urge the government to live up to the democratic principles of the country’s new constitution and the regional agreements to which Zimbabwe is a signatory.”

—Arthur Gwagwa, January 13, 2015

On February 20, 2015, Arthur appeared on the United Nations’ Talk Radio Services program “The World in 2:00.” In his remarks, he reflected on the changing nature of Zimbabwean politics over the past 13 years and discussed prospects for the future.





## Ms. Simegnish “Lily” Mengesha (Ethiopia)

“The Effect of the Anti-Terrorism Law on Ethiopian Media:  
The Case of Social Media”

March–December 2015 | [lilyye23@gmail.com](mailto:lilyye23@gmail.com)

“In the post-9/11 world, Ethiopia was among many countries to adopt anti-terrorism bills, nominally to protect against attacks. Under the pretext of maintaining stability, however, the Ethiopian government has used the bill to crack down on dissent, sentencing some 18 journalists since the bill’s passage in 2009. While the traditional press was the bill’s first victim, online media have been targeted as well. The government’s investment in surveillance equipment and the shocking arrest of the Zone 9 bloggers in 2014 left many too scared to post.

I call on the Ethiopian government to recognize the importance of free media for a vibrant society. It is impossible to maintain stability without independent media, and it is impossible to promote development without Internet freedom and access. **As international pressure has proven effective in facilitating political reform, governments abroad should advocate openly for human rights and the amendment of the anti-terrorism proclamation in their dealings with Addis Ababa.** Finally, we must enlist the Ethiopian diaspora, using online platforms and overseas media, to work together for a better future. ”

—Lily Mengesha, June 23, 2015

On May 1, 2015, Lily was invited to meet with President Barack Obama in commemoration of World Press Freedom Day. In a private interview with the president and in a press conference that followed, Lily stressed the importance of international support for media freedom in Ethiopia. Also present at the meeting was former Reagan-Fascell Fellow Fatima Tlisova.



Photo Credit: Alex Wong/Getty Images



Ms. Simegnish “Lily” Mengesha is a seasoned journalist who served most recently as director of the Ethiopian Environment Journalists Association. During her fellowship, she examined the impact of Ethiopia’s anti-terrorism law on social media. In recognition of her work on freedom of expression, she was invited to meet with President Barack Obama on World Press Freedom Day (see box). A prolific writer and speaker, she authored online articles with the Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA) and the Center to Protect Journalists, and spoke at events hosted by Freedom House and CIMA. On June 23, 2015, she delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Too Scared to Post: Freedom of Expression Under Ethiopia’s Anti-Terrorism Legislation.” Lily extended her NED fellowship through the fall of 2015, with plans to pursue an advanced degree in communications and human rights.

# AFRICA



**Mr. Pepe Julian Onziema** is program director at Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG), an advocacy network that supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) rights organizations across Uganda. During his fellowship, Pepe explored ways to increase citizens’ awareness of the Ugandan Constitution and Bill of Rights. He met with Randy Berry, U.S. Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons, and addressed graduating Africa-bound foreign service officers at the Foreign Service Institute. On April 30, 2015, he delivered a presentation at NED entitled “In the Shadows of Democracy: LGBTIQ Rights in Uganda,” which laid out the history of the movement in Uganda and analyzed the recent rise in homophobia and transphobia. Following his fellowship, Pepe returned to Uganda to resume his human rights work with Sexual Minorities Uganda.

**AFRICA**

**Mr. Pepe Julian Onziema (Uganda)**

“Enhancing Participatory Democracy and Respect for Human Rights by Taking Uganda’s Constitution to the Grassroots”  
 March–July 2015 | [onziema@gmail.com](mailto:onziema@gmail.com)

“In 2009, Uganda burst onto the world’s radar with the introduction of its infamous ‘Anti-Homosexuality Bill.’ Though eventually defeated, the bill represented a turning point for us as LGBTIQ Ugandans, leading us to recast our role and reframe our efforts within the broader struggle for civil liberties and democracy in our country. We are first and foremost citizens of Uganda, working to guarantee freedom of expression and association for all our brothers and sisters. We have achieved legal successes in right-to-privacy cases and are actively supporting the African Commission’s resolution against anti-gay violence.

To continue our progress as a sustainable local movement, we must focus on capacity building to empower our fellow activists. **Our partners abroad can best support us by keeping LGBTIQ Ugandans ‘on the map’ in all discussions and by following our lead when designing projects and navigating relationships on the ground.** Through legal reforms that employ the language of nondiscrimination and protection for all human beings, I know we can change hearts and minds and transform the country we love for everyone. ”



—Pepe Julian Onziema, April 30, 2015

Her Excellency Oliver Wonekha, Ugandan ambassador to the United States, attended Pepe’s NED presentation and invited him to the Ugandan embassy to discuss human rights.



## Ms. N'yella Rogers (Sierra Leone)

“Harnessing Social Media to Combat Corruption in Sierra Leone”

October 2014–February 2015 | [nrogers@llm12.law.harvard.edu](mailto:nrogers@llm12.law.harvard.edu)

“The Ebola outbreak exposed how rapidly democracy and good governance can be undermined when they are not grounded in a fair, inclusive social compact between government and citizens. In Sierra Leone, mismanagement of the national response to the epidemic pointed to deficiencies in the country’s healthcare system, while the misallocation of treatment funds drew renewed attention to the pervasive problem of corruption.



Our fight must now turn to combating the underlying problems of institutional failure and corruption. The current top-down effort is inadequate, ineffective, and perpetually undermined by politics. Instead, an online, media-driven, bottom-up approach that allows all Sierra Leoneans to participate in government monitoring offers a more effective and inexpensive solution.

**Harnessing the power of social media to fight corruption will promote citizen ownership, lower barriers to civic engagement, and facilitate government accountability.** It is essential that we use new media to promote open government. Otherwise we risk a repeat of tragedies like Ebola, with disastrous consequences for women and children, who are always the primary victims of our broken institutions. ”

—N'yella Rogers, December 15, 2014



On February 18, 2015, N'yella gave a talk as part of American University’s Human Rights Defender Series. In her remarks, she reflected on her experience as a human rights lawyer and discussed the potential for social media to fight corruption in Sierra Leone.



Ms. N'yella Rogers is a human rights lawyer previously based in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Recognizing that online media can lower barriers to citizen engagement, N'yella devoted her fellowship to exploring the use of technology to address corruption in Sierra Leone. In an interview with Voice of America, she stressed the importance of involving women in public health education. On December 15, 2014, she delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Ebola’s Impact on Women and Children in Sierra Leone: Why Accountability Matters,” in which she highlighted the deleterious effects of corruption on the mismanaged epidemic. After her fellowship, N'yella planned to engage the Sierra Leonean diaspora in the United States and South Africa to aid Ebola victims and fight corruption in Sierra Leone.

# AFRICA





**Dr. Negaso Solan** is an esteemed statesman who has served as president of Ethiopia (1995–2001), member of the House of People’s Representatives (2005–2010), and most recently, as chair of the United for Democracy and Justice Party, one of Ethiopia’s main opposition parties (2012–2013). During his fellowship, he worked on an article addressing the role of a democratic constitution in settling controversies relating to Ethiopia’s ethnic federalist system and exchanged ideas on the topic with area experts at the annual conference of the African Studies Association. On February 24, 2015, he delivered a presentation at NED entitled “A Constitution for a Multiethnic State-Nation: The Case of Ethiopia,” in which he charted the history of Ethiopia’s many ethnic groups and the prospect for greater democratization through constitutional change. Following his fellowship, Negaso returned to Ethiopia to continue advocating for political reform.

**AFRICA**

## **Dr. Negaso Solan (Ethiopia)**

“The Role of Democracy in Building a Multi-Ethnic State: The Case of Ethiopia”

October 2014–February 2015 | [nereta2003@yahoo.com](mailto:nereta2003@yahoo.com)

“With its more than 80 ethnic groups and 200 dialects, Ethiopia is like a bouquet, beautiful in its diversity. However, the country faces many challenges that threaten to tear it apart along ethno-linguistic lines, from the uncompromising stance of the governing elite to the presence of armed liberation movements. Heated controversy rages over certain articles of the



constitution, such as those on language policy, self-determination, and majoritarian rule. Other articles, including those on the supremacy of the constitution, minority representation, and human rights, are simply disregarded.

As former president of Ethiopia, I am proud of my work on the 1994 Constitution, especially the inclusion of Article 39, which guarantees the right of self-determination. However,

**I believe the time has come to amend the constitution in order to ensure my country’s survival and facilitate its democratization.** To that end, I recommend adding articles on a constitutional court, consociational democracy, and enforcement mechanisms. In addition, the government should enact confidence-building measures, such as amending restrictive media and civil society laws. Such action will pave the way for the parliament to initiate an inclusive dialogue and build a more sustainable, democratic Ethiopia. ”

—Negaso Solan, February 24, 2015

In February 2015, Negaso was invited to speak at Georgetown University and the University of Maryland–College Park. In his remarks, he drew upon his political experience to raise awareness concerning Ethiopia’s multi-ethnic democracy.



Photo Credit: UMD School of Public Policy

## Mr. Tidiani Togola (Mali)

“Developing ICT Solutions that Empower Local Organizations to Observe Elections”

March–July 2015 | [tidianitogola@gmail.com](mailto:tidianitogola@gmail.com)

“Over the past decade, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have transformed the electoral landscape across West Africa. Election monitors have used ICTs to promote civic education, ensure electoral integrity, and prevent violence. Although the initial results have been promising, we still have a long way to go in realizing the full potential of digital technologies to maximize the quality of our work.

For now, the challenges of human capacity development, funding, and infrastructure stand between us and full success. As a step toward addressing these issues, I have developed the web-based application “Yeoude,” a free, user-friendly, and open-source tool intended to facilitate election observation and to be



adaptable to all stages and types of elections. To meet the need for greater human capacity, I am hoping to form a Democracy Tech Squad, a West African network of specialists who offer trainings on the use of ICTs to enhance democracy.

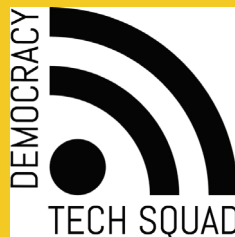
**With greater support for technological innovation from governments and international actors alike, I believe that digital technologies can serve to foster a new generation of model democrats in Africa.** ”

—Tidiani Togola, June 10, 2015

Tidiani developed a free, open-source, online application called “Yeoude” (“systematic observation”) for use in election monitoring across West Africa. He also took steps toward the formation of a “Democracy Tech Squad,” a network of specialists focusing

**Yeoude**

on the digital dimensions of democracy.



Mr. Tidiani Togola is an ICT specialist at the Réseau D’Appui au Processus Electoral au Mali and technical director of the National Agency for Telehealth and Medical Informatics in Mali. During his fellowship, he explored the potential of information and communication technologies to facilitate the practice of electoral observation in Francophone West Africa, with a focus on developing a web platform for use in nonpartisan electoral monitoring (see box). He investigated funding possibilities for future projects through relationships with the National Democratic Institute, the World Movement for Democracy, the Center for Private Enterprise, and NED. On June 10, 2015, Tidiani delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Election Observation in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities for West Africa.” Following his fellowship, he concentrated on launching his Democracy Tech Squad in Bamako and beyond.

**AFRICA**



Ms. Zin Mar Aung is co-founder of RAINFALL, a Yangon-based organization that empowers women in Burma through human-rights trainings and awareness-building. For her efforts to strengthen women’s rights and democratic values, she was awarded the International Women of Courage Award in 2012. During her fellowship, Zin Mar Aung developed training materials for women’s political empowerment in Burma. She encouraged support for reform among the Burmese diaspora in the U.S. and gave interviews with FOX News, VOA, and PRI. On January 22, 2015, she delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Burma 2015: The Make or Break Moment for Democratization,” in which she examined the twin challenges of the military and ultra-nationalism in Burma. At the end of her fellowship, Zin Mar Aung returned to Burma, where she continued her leadership in the Yangon School of Political Science and campaigned for a seat in parliament.

ASIA

## Ms. Zin Mar Aung (Burma)

“Promoting Women’s Political Empowerment in Burma”

October 2014–February 2015 | [zinmaraung1976@gmail.com](mailto:zinmaraung1976@gmail.com)

“We are at a crossroads in Burma’s political transition. Although Thein Sein’s quasi-civilian government has received greater legitimacy due to its cautious reforms, human rights have been hit hard by the forces of ultra-nationalism and entrenched military interests. Reports to the police of threats against activists go unanswered. The state has even gone so far as to publicly praise the Ma-Ba-Tha (Association for the Protection of Race and Religion) as a national hero.



We need to foster a new national identity based not on ethnicity, race, or religion, but on awareness and acceptance of Burma as a multi-ethnic state. **It is high time for civil society to initiate a unified movement to counter extremist ideologies and create a roadmap charting common goals for the coming years.** More immediately, we should support real dialogue

among key stakeholders on amending the 2008 Constitution, continue to oppose the ultra-nationalist, anti-interfaith marriage law, and closely monitor government actions before, during, and after the 2015 elections. ”

—Zin Mar Aung, January 22, 2015

On December 3, 2014, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) sponsored a Congressional briefing on human rights abuses against religious minorities in Burma. Zin Mar Aung joined USCIRF senior analyst Tina Mufford in testifying on the widespread oppression of non-Buddhists, especially the Rohingya Muslims, in Burma.





## Ms. Lily Gomes (Bangladesh)

“Strengthening Democracy in Bangladesh through Women’s Participation in Ready-Made Garment Industries”

March–July 2015 | [gomes\\_lily@yahoo.com](mailto:gomes_lily@yahoo.com)

“The Tazreen Fashions factory fire and the Rana Plaza factory collapse, which together claimed 1,200 lives, marked a turning point for Bangladesh’s Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry and its 4 million workers. The disasters gave rise to a range of well-intentioned initiatives, from heightened safety standards to international coalitions of concerned clothing brands. Yet without the responsive representation of trade unions to defend them, factory workers lack effective tools for self-determination. For a workforce that is more than 85 percent female, this requires mainstreaming gender equality in employment and building factory-level unions with majority-women leadership.

**To safeguard democracy and ensure healthy working conditions, we must support working women in their struggle for representation.** We must advocate for the enforcement of national laws and international labor standards that protect women workers. Most of all, we must support monitoring by unions as they know their situation best. These are goals to which we can all contribute: factory workers, brands, government, donors, and consumers alike. ”

—Lily Gomes, June 30, 2015



Ms. Lily Gomes is senior program officer with the Solidarity Center in Bangladesh, where she produces publications on workers’ rights and conducts trainings on gender equality, women’s leadership, fire safety, and trade union management. During her fellowship, she developed a gender policy guideline for advancing women’s leadership among trade unions, and produced an informational pamphlet about gender equality in the workplace (see box). With support from the Solidarity Center, Lily met with staff at the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and spoke on labor issues at InterAction’s Forum 2015. On June 30, 2015, she delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Strengthening Democracy in Bangladesh through Women’s Empowerment in Trade Unions.” Upon her return to Bangladesh, Lily pioneered the launch of new border safety initiatives in response to the current migration crisis in the region.

# ASIA

During her fellowship, Lily produced a leaflet on gender equality in the workplace and in trade unions, featuring language and images that maximize its appeal to workers. The Solidarity Center in Dhaka plans to translate the leaflet into Bengali and disseminate it in factories.





**Ms. Farahnaz Ispahani** has been a leading voice for women and religious minorities in Pakistan for the past twenty-five years, first as a journalist, then as a member of Pakistan's National Assembly, and most recently as a scholar based in the United States. In 2012, she was listed among *Foreign Policy* magazine's Top 100 Global Thinkers, as well as Newsweek Pakistan's Top 100 Women Who Matter. During her fellowship, Farahnaz spoke out against violence towards religious minorities in Pakistan, and wrote two op-eds for *Foreign Policy*. On June 25, 2015, she delivered a presentation at NED entitled "The Threat of Religious Extremism to Women's Participation in the Muslim World," in which she focused her analysis on the emerging challenge of ISIS. After her fellowship, Farahnaz continued to explore mechanisms to enhance women's political participation in the Muslim world.

ASIA

## **Ms. Farahnaz Ispahani (Pakistan)**

"Women's Political Participation in the Muslim World"

March–July 2015 | [ispahani.haqqani@gmail.com](mailto:ispahani.haqqani@gmail.com)

“Since 2014, ISIS and affiliated groups have gained significant ground in Muslim-majority countries, with the goal of establishing an Islamic state governed by Shari’a. These groups reject all democratic principles, including equal participation for women, and aim to widen the gender gap in parts of the world where women are already poorly represented in civic and political life.

ISIS manages to attract an increasing number of Muslim women to its cause, including those based in the West, by using sophisticated recruitment tactics and tapping into Muslim grievance against the West. I deem participation encouraged by Islamist extremists with the express purpose of denying women a larger role in society to be ‘negative participation.’ By contrast, women who bolster democratic ideals of equality and parity are involved in ‘positive participation.’

**To counteract ISIS’s growing influence, Muslim women from across the ideological spectrum must work together to form an effective counter-narrative.** Muslims need to acknowledge universal human rights and pluralism in order to successfully battle extremism and promote the positive participation of women in public life. ”

—Farahnaz Ispahani, June 25, 2015

On July 28, 2015, Farahnaz spoke at the Heritage Foundation on “Reviving Jinnah’s Legacy of Religious Freedom in Pakistan.” In her remarks, Farahnaz highlighted the urgent need to restore founding father Mohammed Ali Jinnah’s legacy of secularism and respect for religious minorities.



## Dr. Cu Huy Ha Vu (Vietnam)

“Reflections on Freedom and Democracy in Vietnam”

July–December 2014 | [cuhuyhavuvietnam@gmail.com](mailto:cuhuyhavuvietnam@gmail.com)

“Vietnam is at a critical stage in its development. For the first time since the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) centralized control over the state in 1975, the ruling regime is looking to the West for assistance in coping with its economic and political crises. Vietnam’s Western outlook has mobilized the country’s democracy movement to raise its concerns on the international stage and call for reforms that would lead to a multi-party political system and respect for human rights.

The democracy movement must press the CPV to reverse the repressive laws contained in Articles 79, 88, and 258 of the Penal Code. For its part, the international community should use loans, investments, trade, and military assistance as levers to push for democratic change. **In the wake of increased political arrests and the heavy enforcement of oppressive laws, the democracy movement needs the support of the international community more than ever to facilitate democratization and human rights in Vietnam.**”

—Dr. Cu Huy Ha Vu, December 11, 2014

On July 16, 2014, Dr. Vu testified at a congressional hearing on Capitol Hill, discussing prospects for democratization in Vietnam and U.S. interests in the region. He also authored an op-ed in the *Washington Post*, entitled “Standing Up for Human Rights in Vietnam.”



Dr. Cu Huy Ha Vu is a leading Vietnamese constitutional scholar and legal advocate. Through a law firm established with his wife Nguyen Thi Duong Ha, Vu has challenged the ruling Communist Party’s monopoly over power and has encouraged citizens to stand up against the government’s unlawful acts. During his fellowship, he assessed the state of Vietnam’s democracy movement and the vital importance of promoting human rights in the country. On December 11, 2014, he delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Implementing Human Rights as a Path to Democracy in Vietnam,” in which he analyzed the repressive laws that the Communist Party uses to maintain power. Following his fellowship, Vu joined George Washington University as a visiting scholar. In the fall of 2015, he began an appointment as a visiting scholar at Northwestern University Law School.

ASIA





Mr. Umed Babakhanov is founder and editor-in-chief of Asia Plus, a leading independent media outlet operating in Tajikistan since 1995. In 2012, he launched “For a Tolerant Tajikistan,” an initiative that seeks to foster greater understanding between secular state institutions and the Muslim community through discussions on the role of Islam in society. During his fellowship, Umed traced the evolution of political Islam in Tajikistan. He also contributed his journalistic expertise to a conference hosted by the Center for Civil and Political Rights. On February 10, 2015, he delivered a NED presentation ahead of Tajikistan’s March 2015 elections entitled “Challenges to Stability in Tajikistan: Parliamentary Elections in the Context of Political Islam and Russia’s Economic Crisis.” Following his fellowship, Umed continued his work with Asia Plus.

EURASIA

## Mr. Umed Babakhanov (Tajikistan)

“Evolution of Political Islam in Tajikistan: From the Trenches to the Parliament—and Back?”

October 2014–February 2015 | [ubabakhanov@gmail.com](mailto:ubabakhanov@gmail.com)

“Following a protracted civil war, the Tajik government and the moderate Islamic Renaissance Party (IRPT) signed a peace agreement in 1998 permitting the latter to operate within the political system, a first for any Islamist party in Central Asia. A few years later, however, a new crisis of confidence broke out. After the 2005 and 2010 elections, deemed neither free nor fair by the OSCE, the IRPT was allowed only two parliamentary seats, despite its claims to having won a majority of the vote. Since then, the government has sought to subvert the party’s growing influence by using propaganda and state-run media to discredit it, by shutting down IRPT offices, and by jailing its members.



Continued repression of the IRPT will stoke existing tensions and undermine stability at a time when Tajikistan must cope with global challenges, including the rise of religious extremism. **To avoid social unrest, the Tajik government must build public support by recommitting to reconciliation and inclusive governance with the IRPT.** Responsible power-sharing with moderate Islamist parties will help to mitigate social grievances and stem the rise of religious radicalism in Tajikistan. ”

—Umed Babakhanov, February 10, 2015

On November 26, 2014, Umed attended a conference in Bern, Switzerland, sponsored by the Open Society Foundations, entitled “Raiding the Coffers, Violating Rights,” which focused on corruption and its impact on human rights in Eurasia.

 OPEN SOCIETY  
FOUNDATIONS

## Dr. Dmitry Dubrovsky (Russia)

“Experts, Anti-Extremism Legislation, and Threats to Civil Liberties in Russia”

January–June 2015 | [dmitry.dubrovsky@gmail.com](mailto:dmitry.dubrovsky@gmail.com)

“Given the crucial role of special expertise as the primary and often only evidence in Russian litigation, the independence and objectivity of the testimonial expert in anti-terrorism and anti-extremism litigation are critical.

As Russian courts increasingly rely upon the testimony of state-sanctioned ‘experts’ to condemn those who violate the country’s ‘foreign agent’ and ‘anti-LGBT’ propaganda’ laws, the justice system becomes a vehicle for prefabricated, political outcomes. Court testimonies today are dominated by so-called experts whose analyses of ostensibly ‘extremist’ texts range from the archaic to the esoteric. Proponents of objective science face a serious challenge when these so-called experts, using the same method of analysis, draw different or opposing conclusions about whether a particular text is extremist.

**To improve the quality of expertise and ensure balanced testimony, the Russian judicial system must guarantee both prosecution and defense their fair say in court.** At the same time, the law must protect equal admissibility of state-affiliated and nongovernmental experts and afford civil society more active participation in the litigation process. ”

—Dmitry Dubrovsky, April 21, 2015



In June 2015, Dmitry spoke at the Johns Hopkins University’s School for Advanced International Studies on “LGBT Rights in Russia: The Tip of the Iceberg.” He also spoke at the Wilson Center on “Art, Protest and the Clash of Rights in Russia.”



Dr. Dmitry Dubrovsky recently served as associate professor of political science at St. Petersburg State University. An expert on human rights in Russia, he focuses primarily on issues relating to xenophobia, ultra-right nationalism, hate crimes, and hate speech as they relate to freedom of conscience and freedom of speech. During his fellowship, he explored ways to strengthen the role of expert communities in Russian civil rights litigation, with a focus on homophobia and recent legislation, propaganda, and hate crimes against the LGBT community. On April 21, 2015, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “Hate Crime and Hate Speech Legislation in Russia: Lessons from Europe,” with former Reagan-Fascell Fellow Alexander Verkhovsky. Following his fellowship, Dmitry joined the faculty of the Harriman Institute of Columbia University as an associate research scholar for the 2015–2016 academic year.

# EURASIA



Dr. Altay Goyushov is professor of Turkic history at Baku State University. He is also one of the leaders of the “Republican Alternative” movement, which promotes liberal democratic concepts and values. A noted public intellectual, he has lectured at the Baku-based Free Thought University. During his fellowship, he was active in speaking out against the Azerbaijani government’s crackdown on civil society. He published articles in *Foreign Policy* and *openDemocracy*, in addition to speaking at Harvard University and on *Voice of America*. On February 3, 2015, Altay delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Revitalizing Secularism in Azerbaijan: Lessons Learned from the First Azerbaijani Republic.” After his fellowship, he traveled to Paris to serve as director of associated studies at the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l’Homme before returning to Baku in the summer of 2015.

EURASIA

## Dr. Altay Goyushov (Azerbaijan)

“Secularism and Religion in Azerbaijan: Lessons from the First Azerbaijani Republic of 1918–1920”

October 2014–April 2015 | [altaygr@gmail.com](mailto:altaygr@gmail.com)

“Under 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian rule, Muslim-majority Azerbaijan underwent a period of rapid modernization. Operating in a relatively free environment, Azerbaijan’s pre-revolutionary intelligentsia successfully integrated secular, liberal values into their country’s national identity, reconciling the fragmented Sunni and Shia populations of the South Caucasus. This modernization period laid the basis for the foundation of Azerbaijan’s first democratic republic in 1918.

Under Soviet communism, however, Azerbaijani elites became a tool for Soviet propaganda, operating in a closed environment that repressed independent thought and access to alternative sources of information. These circumstances undermined critical thinking, making it difficult for political elites to carry out necessary reforms once communism fell. Azerbaijan’s current intelligentsia have failed to stem the rise of religious extremism precisely because they have lacked the freedoms



their pre-revolutionary predecessors once enjoyed. **Historical precedent therefore demonstrates that an open society with individual and academic freedoms is essential to combatting radicalism and social discord. We should look to the past in shaping a democratic future for Azerbaijan.**”

—Altay Goyushov, February 3, 2015

On January 12, 2015, Altay spoke at a NED-sponsored panel discussion entitled “The Crackdown on Independent Voices in Azerbaijan.” Following the event, Altay gave an interview with *Voice of America*, in which he reflected on his experiences as a democracy advocate and discussed the current situation in Azerbaijan.





## Dr. Gubad Ibadoghlu (Azerbaijan)

“The Political Economy of Natural Resources in the Caspian Basin Countries: Challenges for Transitions to Democracy”  
March–August 2015 | [gubad.ibadoghlu@gmail.com](mailto:gubad.ibadoghlu@gmail.com)

“Democracy faces a common conundrum across the post-Soviet states of Russia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan. While these countries possess a wealth of natural resources, the revenue from these resources serves only to bolster short-sighted authoritarian governments. In all three states, the mass media is under full control of the ruling party, genuine civil society has been demolished, and public political activity is brutally suppressed. The governments involved cover their misdeeds by establishing pseudo-institutions to imitate democratic norms: Nominal parliaments are wholly dependent on the executive, while corrupt judiciaries blindly do the bidding of top officials.

Successful democratic transitions in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Russia can occur only if their governments commit to respect for fundamental freedoms. **To support this progress, the international community must toughen sanctions on Russia, increase donor support to local civil society, and strengthen independent media.** Change in our region is possible when we realize that our curse is not the presence of natural resources, but rather the decisions of our leaders. ”

—Gubad Ibadoghlu, July 16, 2015



Dr. Gubad Ibadoghlu is senior analyst for social and economic studies at the Economic Research Center, a Baku-based NGO that promotes economic development and good governance. He also serves on the board of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). During his fellowship, Gubad explored the relationship between natural resources and regime type in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Russia. In addition, he called attention to Azerbaijan’s lack of compliance with the EITI’s global standards on open and accountable management of natural resources. On July 16, 2015, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “The Political Economy of Natural Resources in the Caspian Sea Region: Challenges for Transitions to Democracy.” Following his fellowship, Gubad relocated to North Carolina, where he continued his research as a Fulbright Fellow at Duke University.



As a board member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), Gubad traveled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in April 2015 to attend EITI’s 29<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

# EURASIA



Prof. Rut Diamint is professor of political science at Torcuato Di Tella University and researcher at the National Council of Scientific and Technological Research in Buenos Aires. During her fellowship, she studied the defense policies of key Latin American countries in order to identify regional security trends. She spoke at the United Nations, the National Defense University, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the Hudson Institute. On June 16, 2015, Rut delivered a presentation at NED entitled “How the Military is Eroding Democratic Institutions in Latin America,” in which she discussed new methods by which Latin American militaries are reasserting power. Following her fellowship, Rut returned to Buenos Aires to continue lecturing at Torcuato Di Tella University and to complete an article for the *Journal of Democracy*.

# LATIN AMERICA

## Prof. Rut Diamint (Argentina)

“International Security and the Political Use of the Military in Latin America”

March–July 2015 | [rutd@utdu.edu](mailto:rutd@utdu.edu)

“Across Latin America, military forces are regaining power even as democratic rule has taken root. Whereas in the past military officers would stage coups to restore elites displaced by expanded suffrage, Latin American militaries today are returning to power as allies and extensions of elected governments.

How is this happening? In response to citizen demands for heightened security, democratically elected rulers are turning to the military to maintain public order. As such, elected authorities not only cede legitimately acquired power to unelected military officers, but also allow them unmediated access to the populace, both in terms of services and surveillance. In much of Latin America today, militaries need not seize power by force; instead, elected governments willingly hand it over to them.

Stability achieved in this manner runs counter to democratic principles. **To avoid a return to militarism, Latin American states must hold themselves to a higher standard of democracy by reaffirming civilian control of the military.**”



—Rut Diamint, June 16, 2015

In June 2015, Rut presented her paper, “Non-State Armed Groups and Political Stability in Latin America,” to the UN Secretary General’s Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, in New York. In her remarks, she encouraged the international community to “develop better intelligence tools to track and control the flow of money and information.”



Rut Diamint (front row, second from left) meets with UN Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (June 2015).

## Ms. Maliha AlShehab (Saudi Arabia)

“Saudi Women: Status, Outlook, and Roadmap”

October 2014–February 2015 | [malihaalshehab@gmail.com](mailto:malihaalshehab@gmail.com)

“**T**he guardianship law of the Saudi state deprives women of their basic human rights on a daily basis. Irrespective of age or education level, Saudi women must have a male guardian to govern their decisions in marriage, work, healthcare, travel, and access to public services. While the late King Abdulah implemented some reforms—including the promise to allow women to vote in local council elections, work in grocery stores, and obtain scholarships to study abroad—these steps did not go far enough to improve the status of women. Even though scholarships to study abroad offer Saudi women a taste of freedom, their ability to travel remains contingent on the approval of a male guardian.



Without freedom of movement, including the right to drive, women cannot take full advantage of measures the late king introduced. **Looking with optimism toward the reign of the new King Salman, we as Saudi women, together with our allies abroad, must now call for the amendment of the guardianship law and an end to the driving ban.**”

—Maliha AlShehab, February 12, 2015



Maliha AlShehab and Sally Blair hold up T-shirts championing Saudi women's right to participate in sports (February 2015).

During her fellowship, Maliha developed a fruitful association with the Institute for Gulf Affairs, a think tank focusing on Gulf politics and international relations. Maliha contributed to the Institute's campaigns promoting Saudi women's right to participate in sports.



**Ms. Maliha AlShehab** is an accomplished writer and outspoken advocate for women's rights in Saudi Arabia. Between 2006 and 2010, she was a columnist for *Al Watan*, a leading Saudi newspaper, and is the author of the bestselling book *Saudi Woman: Image and Voice* (2010). During her fellowship, she explored ways of bringing an end to discrimination against women in Saudi Arabia and providing them with opportunities to contribute meaningfully to civil society. On February 12, 2015, she gave a presentation at NED entitled “Saudi Women: A Feather in the Wind,” in which she explored the ramifications of the guardianship system and called for its reform. Upon completion of her fellowship, Maliha remained in the DC area to continue her advocacy for women's rights.

# MIDDLE EAST





Mr. Tabish Forugh served most recently as chief of staff at the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan, where he worked to promote electoral education and build trust with citizens. During his fellowship, he examined the institutional and technical deficiencies of Afghanistan’s electoral system and provided recommendations for forthcoming elections. He participated in Afghanistan working groups and conferred with experts at Democracy International, IRI, and NDI. On January 27, 2015, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “Afghanistan’s Struggle for Democracy: The Need for Electoral Reform.” After his fellowship, Tabish pursued a graduate degree at Seton Hall University as a Fulbright Fellow. He also planned to establish a network of civil society activists advocating for electoral reform in Afghanistan.

MIDDLE EAST

### Mr. Tabish Forugh (Afghanistan)

“Strengthening Collaboration between Election Management Bodies and Civil Society in Afghanistan”

October 2014–February 2015 | [tabish.forugh@hotmail.com](mailto:tabish.forugh@hotmail.com)

“The mismanaged elections of 2009 and 2014 brought Afghanistan to the brink of civil war and set back the country’s struggle for democracy. Election management bodies (EMBs) have since become increasingly mismanaged and unable to fulfill their constitutional mandate. Technical electoral operations remain antiquated and ineffectual, delivering precarious election outcomes. The Single Non-Transferable Voting (SNTV) system, which favors individual candidates, further hinders Afghan democracy by precluding political party participation and minority representation.



The National Unity Government should call for a selection committee to appoint new, ethical leadership among EMBs and redesign their organizational structure to support better management and oversight. The government must also increase financial contributions to electoral operations and encourage EMBs to update voter registration lists and district boundary locations. Finally, a shift from SNTV to a more inclusive SNTV-proportional representation system will increase political party and minority representation in Afghanistan’s national and local legislatures. **The stability of Afghanistan and its path toward democracy hinge on electoral reform and the improved functionality and integrity of election management bodies.**”

—Tabish Forugh, January 27, 2015



Tabish’s article, “How to Save Afghanistan’s Democracy,” appeared in *Foreign Policy* on February 5, 2015. The article detailed the urgency of wholesale electoral reform in supporting Afghanistan’s longstanding struggle for democracy.

### **Dr. Leonid Gozman (Russia)**

“Social Entrepreneurship as a Way of Overcoming Russia’s Social and Political Crisis”

October 2014–February 2015 | [lgozman@mail.ru](mailto:lgozman@mail.ru)



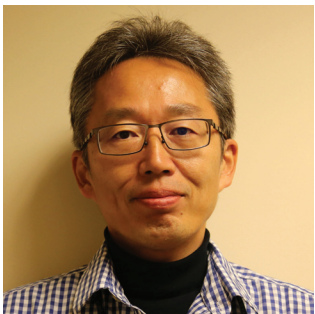
**Dr. Leonid Gozman** is president of the Union of Right Forces and former co-chairman of the Right Cause Party (2008–2011). During his fellowship, he explored social entrepreneurship as a means for deepening civic engagement and democratic development in Russia. On January 20, 2015, he delivered a presentation at NED entitled “Russia After Crimea: A Brave New World,” in which he offered his perspectives on recent political developments in Russia.

## 2014–2015 VISITING FELLOWS

### **Mr. Yoshihiro Makino (Japan)**

“Exploring Japanese Support for Human Rights in North Korea”

March–July 2015 | [yoshiseoul65@gmail.com](mailto:yoshiseoul65@gmail.com)



**Mr. Yoshihiro Makino** is senior international correspondent for the *Asahi Shimbun*, a leading Japanese media outlet. During his fellowship, he conducted an in-depth analysis of the human rights situation in North Korea and met with leading specialists, diplomats, and activists to explore avenues of support for human rights in North Korea. On July 13, 2015, he gave a presentation at NED entitled “Why Human Rights Matter in Policy toward North Korea.”

### **Mr. Raza Rumi (Pakistan)**

“Pakistan’s Democratic Evolution and Extremism”

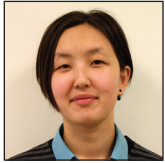
March–August 2015 | [razaahmadrumi@gmail.com](mailto:razaahmadrumi@gmail.com)



**Mr. Raza Rumi** is a leading Pakistani journalist and policy analyst who serves as editor of the *Friday Times*, Pakistan’s foremost liberal weekly paper. A consistent voice for human rights, he has served as executive director of the Justice Network and is affiliated with the Jinnah Institute, a NED-supported think tank that focuses on issues of democracy and governance. During his fellowship, he explored the effect of rising extremism on Pakistan’s democratic development.

## 2014–2015 HURFORD YOUTH FELLOWS

In 2014–2015, the International Forum for Democratic Studies continued its partnership with the World Movement for Democracy in hosting Hurford Youth Fellows from Afghanistan, Jordan, and Kyrgyzstan. Funded by the Hurford Foundation and based within the secretariat of the World Movement, the Hurford program seeks to build the leadership skills of emerging democracy youth activists around the world.



**Ms. Saadat Baigazieva** (Kyrgyzstan)

“Building Inclusive Youth Movements through Community Ownership and Issue-based Partnerships”  
February–May 2015 | [saadat27@gmail.com](mailto:saadat27@gmail.com)

**Ms. Saadat Baigazieva** is youth activism coordinator at Bishkek Feminist Collective SQ, an organization that promotes feminist values, social inclusion, and greater awareness of human rights in Kyrgyzstan. During her fellowship, Saadat organized online discussions on diversity within youth movements.



**Mr. Mohammad Sayed Madadi** (Afghanistan)

“Accountability and Transparency to Promote Democracy and Good Governance”  
February–May 2015 | [msmadadi1@gmail.com](mailto:msmadadi1@gmail.com)

**Mr. Sayed Madadi** is co-founder and deputy director of the Youth Empowerment Organization, a Kabul-based civil society organization. During his fellowship, he organized online discussions on developing community-based mechanisms to involve citizens—women and youth in particular—in local governance.



**Mr. Rami Soud** (Jordan)

“The Role of Youth in Social Change”  
August–December 2014 | [ramimail2007@gmail.com](mailto:ramimail2007@gmail.com)

**Mr. Rami Soud** is vice president and director of international relations at the HIKAYA Center for Civil Society Development in Amman. During his fellowship, he organized online discussions on youth movements and explored how youth can best contribute to building democracy in their countries.

## 2014–2015 RESEARCH ASSOCIATES AND INTERNS



**Elise Alexander** remained a Research Associate with the Fellows Program in 2015–2016.



**Ayhan Ucok** joined the DC-based Bipartisan Policy Center as a policy analyst in 2015–2016.



**Hainer Sibrian** continued to serve as a program assistant at the International Forum.



**Daria Winsky** entered her senior year at the University of Virginia in 2015–2016.



# “DEMOCRACY CURRICULUM”



Capitol Hill  
 Center for International Private Enterprise  
 International Forum for Democratic Studies  
 International Republican Institute  
 National Democratic Institute  
 Solidarity Center  
 U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum  
*Washington Post*  
 White House



**Top row, L to R:** (1) Spring 2015 Fellows with Sally Blair, Rudy Porter & Mark Hankin at the Solidarity Center; (2) Fall 2014 Fellows with Ashley Walburn Hull at the White House. **Second row, L to R:** (1) John Sullivan & Tidiani Togola at CIPE; (2) Cong. Ileana Ross-Lehtinen (R-FL), Lily Mengesha, Sayed Madadi, & Marlana Papavaritis. **Third row, L to R:** (1) Fall 2014 Fellows with Jackson Diehl at the *Washington Post*; (2) Spring 2015 Fellows with Zerxes Spencer and Tom Garrett at IRI; (3) Fall 2014 Fellows with Ken Wollack at NDI. **Fourth row, L to R:** (1) Spring 2015 Fellows with Sally Blair and Barry White at the Holocaust Museum; (2) Spring 2015 Fellows with Larry Diamond, Marc Plattner, and Sally Blair at the Forum; (3) Fall 2014 Fellows with Francis Fukuyama at NED.

REAGAN-FASCELL  
*Democracy Fellows Program*

International Forum for Democratic Studies  
National Endowment for Democracy  
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