

Appendix 2

25 Years After the 1989 Revolutions: Time for Reflection on Unfinished Business A Seminar, October 3-5, 2014, Warsaw, Poland

Seminar Statement

As one reflects twenty-five years after the Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, it is obvious that a great deal was left unfinished. Indeed, today, we are witnessing an attempt to reverse some of the fundamental outcomes of that transformation. Yet, even before the most recent events, it was clear that the larger promise and hopes of the 1989-91 transformations remained unfulfilled. The political, economic, and social deficits are more obvious in most republics of the former Soviet Union, but they are also notable in East Central European, Baltic, and Balkan countries, which continue to face serious challenges remaining from the legacy of the communist period. All of these factors are significant as the world confronts a revisionist Russian Federation seeking to reassert its dominance over the region. The Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe (IDEE) believes that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the events of 1989 provides an opportunity to analyze what occurred, to assess the different outcomes across the region, and to develop ideas and strategies for taking on the unfinished business of that era. To do that, IDEE is organizing a focused seminar gathering democratic activists who helped bring about the 1989-91 revolutions and took part in the region's transition to address these issues. IDEE has drawn participants for the seminar from the community of activists it has worked with over more than three decades.

Program

Session 1: Revolution, Evolution, or Devolution

Presenter: Vincuk Viačorka

Respondent: Tunne Kelam

Session 2: Constitutions, Electoral Choices & Their Consequences

Presenter: Ivlian Haindrava

Respondent: Arif Hajili

Session 3: Post-Communist Development of Political Parties & Oppositions

Presenter: Arkady Dubnov

Respondents: Gábor Demszky, Isa Gambar

Session 4: 1989-91: What is the Unfinished Business Today

Panel: Mustafa Dzhemilev, Tunne Kelam, Vytautas Landsbergis, and Isa Gambar

Session 5: Decommunization & Transitional Justice

Presenter: Petruška Šustrová

Respondents: Levan Berdzenishvili

Session 6: Civic Institutions, Civic Participation

Presenters: Smaranda Enache, Miljenko Dereta

Respondents: Ales Bialiatski, Maria Dubnova

Session 7: What Happened to the Dream of Independent Media?

Presenter: Tatiana Vaksberg

Respondents: Sergei Duvanov, Maciej Strzembosz

Closing Session: 25 Years After 1989: What is the Unfinished Business?

Rapporteur: Charles Fairbanks

Theme Questions

(1) 1989–91: Revolution, Evolution, or Devolution

Were the 1989–91 revolutions a triumph of liberal values? How were those values fulfilled or lost in Central and Eastern Europe? Did economic restructuring supersede political values? How were liberal values fulfilled or lost in the former Soviet Union? To what extent did democratization fail due to the involvement of the Russian Federation and to what extent was the failure internal within each country? What role did Western governments and institutions play in fostering or inhibiting democratic outcomes?

(2) Constitutions, Electoral Choices & Their Consequences

What were the different choices for electoral systems in 1989–91 and how did they impact the political development of Central and Eastern Europe? of the countries of the former Soviet Union. Did parliamentary or presidential systems work best? How did the framework of constitutions develop or inhibit democratization in Central and Eastern Europe? in the former Soviet Union? What role did Western governments and institutions play in determining constitutional and electoral outcomes?

(3) Post-Communist Development of Political Parties & Oppositions

How did political parties develop and what was the political spectrum in the wake of communism's collapse? Why did political party development differ? Where did the political and institutional elites come from after 1989–91? How did they affect the political outcomes in the region? What role did Western governments and institutions play in assisting/limiting political parties? How democratic are Central and Eastern European political parties? Are there viable opposition parties?

(4) Decommunization and Transitional Justice

What were the different approaches to decommunization and transitional justice in Central and Eastern Europe? in the former Soviet Union? Was the lack of decommunization and transitional justice a democratic choice or an imposed one? Did participation of communist elites and institutions after 1989–91 inhibit the democratic transition? Are problems like corruption and lack of transparency related to the lack of decommunization? Was there a lasting political impact to the lack of decommunization and transitional justice?

(5) Civic Institutions, Civic Participation

Following the mass uprisings of 1989-91, why has there been so little citizen participation in the transitions from communism? Why are civic institutions so weak? What inhibited citizen participation in civic and electoral life? What role did Western governments and institutions play in assisting/limiting civic institutions? What role did the Russian Federation play in interfering in civic development in the former Soviet Union? What can be done to strengthen civic and citizen participation today?

(6) What Happened to Media?

One of the fundamental ideas emerging from the period of communism and state control of media was that the development of democracy in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union depended on a free and independent media. What happened to the dream of media independent of political control? Where is there free and independent media in Central and Eastern Europe? in the former Soviet Union? What issues have emerged regarding political influence of the media?

(7) Unfinished Business: Common Strategies for the Next Era

Where do things stand twenty-five years after 1989? Is it possible to develop common strategies for strengthening and expanding democratization in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union? Can liberal values and their impact be strengthened? What should be done to strengthen democratization in Central and Eastern Europe and what is the role of EU and NATO in achieving that? Is it possible to expand the zone of democracies to the former Soviet Union?