

## PARTICIPANT BIOS

### **Olga Algayerová**

*State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic*

Born in Bratislava, on October 13, 1959. She is a graduate in Foreign Trade from the Faculty of Trade of the University of Economics in Bratislava. In 2006 she received her MBA from the Open University Business School in London. She has over twenty years of experience in foreign trade. She has also worked for Drevounia Foreign Trade Company and as head of the export division in Slovafarma, a.s., later Zentiva International, a.s. She was appointed State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic as of August 30, 2006. She speaks English, Russian, German and Spanish. She is married and has two children.

### **Aristotelis Bouratsis**

*Head of Unit, Relations with Civil Society and Non State Actors, EuropeAid*

Mr. Bouratsis joined the EuropeAid Cooperation Office in 2001 when he was appointed Head of Unit “Cofinancing with NGOs”, horizontal operations and link between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development”. Since March 2005, he has served as Head of Unit: Relations

with civil society and non state actors” in unit F.5. Previously he worked with the European Commission in various positions for 19 years. He holds a PhD in “Economy and Enterprises Management” from University Montpellier, France.

### **Jiří Bárta**

*Executive Director, VIA Foundation*

Jiří Bárta is the Executive Director of the VIA Foundation, Prague, programmatic successor to the New York-based Foundation for a Civil Society office in Prague. The VIA Foundation’s mission is to strengthen democracy by empowering communities and people. It provides grants, training and other forms of assistance to civic initiatives and communities across the Czech Republic. A significant part of the foundation’s activities is devoted to strengthening professional skills in non-profit organizations and to promoting philanthropy and corporate community involvement. Over the past three years, VIA Foundation has been providing institutional development assistance to NGOs in Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and Romania.

Jiří Bárta received his Masters Degree in Public Management from Carnegie Mel-

lon University and is a Ron Brown Fellow (nominated by the Fulbright Commission). Currently he serves as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Transatlantic Community Foundation Network funded by the C. S. Mott and Bertelsmann Foundations. He is also a member of the Remarque Forum organized by the Remarque Institute at New York University and a Synergos Fellow.

### **Igor Blažević**

*Human Rights and Democracy Department Director, People in Need*

Igor Blažević was born in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has been living in Prague since 1991. He is the founder of the Prague-based One World, International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival. Igor has co-directed ten Asia-focused documentaries for Czech Television. He now works as the Head of the Human Rights and Democracy Promotion Department of People in Need. He graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, Croatia, departments of Philosophy and Comparative Literature.

### **Pavol Demeš**

*Director for Central and Eastern Europe, German Marshall Fund*

Dr. Pavol Demeš has been the Director for Central and Eastern Europe of the German Marshall Fund of the United States since January 2000, and is based in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. Previously he served as the Executive Director of

the Slovak Academic Information Agency- Service Center for the Third Sector, a leading NGO in the country. He also served as Foreign Policy Advisor to the President of the Slovak Republic (1993–97), and from 1991–92 he was the Slovak Minister of International Relations. An internationally recognized NGO leader, Demeš served as the elected spokesperson of the Gremium of the Third Sector, a volunteer advocacy coalition, and has served on the boards of national and international associations and foundations. In 1999 he was awarded a six-month public policy research fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington D.C. Prior to the “Velvet Revolution” in November 1989, Demeš was a bio-medical researcher at Comenius University in Bratislava. He is a graduate of Charles University in Prague (1980).

### **Michael Diedring**

*Executive Director, CEELI Institute*

Michael Diedring joined the Institute in September 2004 from the International Bar Association in London, where he was the Deputy Executive Director from January 2002. In his previous work, Michael served as the Country Representative for the Baltic-American Enterprise Fund in Lithuania, as CEELI’s initial Deputy Director, and as the manager of a judicial reform program in Albania. Michael co-founded and served on the board of the Lithuanian Investors’ Forum, the board of the Baltic Management Institute and boards of pri-

vate companies and not-for-profit organizations. He holds a JD from Syracuse University College of Law and an undergraduate degree from Drake University in Iowa.

### **Nadia M. Diuk**

*Director for Europe and Eurasia, NED*

Dr. Diuk serves as Senior Director for Europe and Eurasia at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a private nonprofit organization funded by the U.S. Congress to strengthen democratic institutions around the world through non-governmental efforts. She has supervised NED programs in this complex region since before the 1989 East European revolutions (when most democrats could only work underground), through the period of the first free elections, up to the present time of consolidating transition in the new independent states. Under her supervision, the NED worked with SEED (Support for East European Democracy) funds in Eastern Europe in the early 1990's, received special funding for the Balkans and Belarus in the mid-1990's, and is now working toward the consolidation of democratic efforts in Russia, Ukraine, the three states of the Southern Caucasus and the countries of Central Asia.

Prior to her appointment at the NED, she taught Soviet Politics and Russian History; was a research associate at the Society for Central Asian Studies, England; and

editor-in-chief of the London-based publication *Soviet Nationality Survey*. Dr. Diuk is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a Board Member of the Kennan Institute of the Woodrow Wilson International Center. She holds a BA in History from the University of Sussex (United Kingdom).

### **Gabriela Dlouhá**

*Head of Transition Promotion Unit,  
Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Gabriela Dlouhá, MA, heads Transition Promotion (TRANS) Unit at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This unit has been created to establish principles and methods of official funding for the promotion of transition processes to democracy, support of human rights, civil society and democratic institutions in totalitarian and post-totalitarian countries all over the world. It currently administers democratization projects financed, or partly financed by the Czech Government in 9 priority countries: Burma/Myanmar, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Georgia, Iraq, Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine. This year's program budget is USD 2 million. The unit also charged to coordinate the democracy promotion agenda within the Ministry.

Gabriela Dlouhá is a journalist by profession, having worked previously as a news and feature reporter for Czech Television. She worked for the Office of the President as a media and public

communications specialist from 1996 until the end of Václav Havel's presidency in 2003. She was engaged as a PR consultant in the series of Forum 2000 international conferences. On behalf of the presidential office, she cooperated with various Czech and foreign NGOs as well as with international media. She has been working for the Czech MFA since 2003 (Desk Officer for Scandinavian countries and Head of Cabinet of the Deputy Minister for Bilateral Relations); on July 1, 2004 she was entrusted with establishing TRANS Unit.

### **Jeremy Druker**

*Executive Director, Transitions Online*

Jeremy Druker was one of the founders of Transitions Online (TOL) in 1999 and has been the Executive Director and Editor-In-Chief since then. He has contributed to publications such as U.S. News & World Report, TI's Global Corruption Report, and Oxford Analytica. He is a regular contributor on Central and Eastern European affairs to the ISN Security Watch publication and is the author of the chapters on the Czech Republic in the Freedom House books, *Nations in Transit* 2005 and *Nations in Transit* 2006. Mr. Druker holds an undergraduate degree from Harvard College and a Masters in International Affairs from Columbia University, where he also earned a certificate in Central and Eastern European Studies.

### **Zuzana Dzúriková**

*Resident Senior Program Officer, NDI*

Zuzana Dzúriková directs National Democratic Institute's (NDI's) Roma political participation program in Slovak Republic from the Institute's office in Bratislava. A longtime NDI staff member, Ms. Dzúriková previously supervised the Institute's parliamentary program in Montenegro, where she worked extensively with helping the Montenegrin Parliament develop, and ultimately adopt new rules of procedures and structures which emphasized more transparency and accountability in national policymaking. She joined NDI in 2000, managing NDI's parliamentary program in her native Slovak Republic.

Ms. Dzúriková has demonstrated regional expertise through her work as a trainer, election monitor, and consultant in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Ukraine, as well as in efforts undertaken with OSCE/ODIHR, UNMIK and Freedom House. She also has extensive experience providing strategic guidance to political parties, and has helped design several local and regional political campaigns.

Ms. Dzúriková was a co-founder, legal advisor and board member of Civic Eye/Obcianske Oko, a Bratislava-based domestic election monitoring and civic advocacy organization. Earlier, she was the project manager for youth election programs for the Association in Support of Local Democracy.

### John K. Glenn

*Director of Foreign Policy, The German Marshall Fund*

Dr. John K. Glenn joined the German Marshall Fund in 2004 as the Director of Foreign Policy, responsible for management of the foreign policy Key Institutions and the Transatlantic Fellows and Research Fellowship programs. He is also a visiting scholar at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University. Before coming to GMF, Dr. Glenn was the Executive Director of the Council for European Studies, leading American professional association for the study of Europe in the social sciences and humanities, based at Columbia University. In this post, he supervised all of the Council's programs, including the 2002 and 2004 Conference of Europeanists – with over 400 participating scholars and policymakers from around the world – and newly created thematic networks on immigration, welfare and social policy, and globalization. Dr. Glenn also held an appointment as visiting scholar and adjunct professor in European Union Studies at New York University from 2000 to 2004. Previously he served as a Project Manager at the Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University, where he directed a research team on evaluating NGO strategies for democratization and conflict prevention in the former communist states. He is the author of *Framing Democracy: Civil society and civic movements in Eastern Europe* (Stanford University Press, 2001) and co-editor of *The Pow-*

*er and Limits of NGOs: A critical look at building democracy in Eastern Europe and Eurasia* (Columbia University Press, 2002), as well as numerous articles in scholarly journals and publications.

### Maria Leissner

*Democracy Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden*

Ms. Maria Leissner is appointed Ambassador for Democracy, tied to the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Unit for Development Cooperation. She has served as Sweden's ambassador in Guatemala (2000–2004). Before that, she was at SIDA, the Swedish development cooperation (1998–2000) working with Global Water Partnership and as senior advisor for democracy. In her political life she was the leader of the Swedish Liberal Party (1995–1997) and a Member of Parliament for 6 years (1985–1991). Ms. Leissner served as Secretary General and President for the Liberal Youth Organization (1981–1985).

Apart from her diplomatic and political experience, she has also held a couple of positions in the NGO sphere as chair of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (1991–1995) and chair for “Women Can”, a women's NGO (1992–1995). In the past years she had shorter postings abroad, in Iraq (with NDI) and Indonesia (with the EU). Ms. Leissner was also recently appointed chair of the government's delegation for Roma issues (one of the official Swedish minorities).

## Jeff Lovitt

*Executive Director, PASOS*

Jeff Lovitt was Director of Communications at the Berlin-based international secretariat of Transparency International, the global anti-corruption NGO, from November 2000 until leaving to become the first Executive Director of the PASOS Secretariat upon its establishment in Prague in March 2005. From 1999–2000, he worked as an editor and media consultant in Prague and Bratislava for international companies and NGOs, including Forum 2000, the foundation of then Czech President Vaclav Havel. From 1995–1998, he was Central Europe correspondent for *The European* newspaper. From 1987–1995, he worked as an editor and journalist in London for *The European*, the *Sunday Times*, *New Statesman* and other publications. He has also reported for the *Financial Times*, and written as an op-ed contributor for the *International Herald Tribune*. From 1991–93, he was Reviews Editor of the British political weekly *Tribune*.

## Roel von Meijefeldt

*Executive Director, Institute for Multiparty Democracy*

Roel von Meijefeldt was appointed Executive Director of the new Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD) in The Hague, the Netherlands in March 2002.

Previously he served as a Program Director of the newly established International Institute for Democracy and Elec-

toral Assistance (IDEA) in Stockholm. In this position he designed and directed programs aimed at the consolidation of democracy. Within this program, national dialogues about democratic reform processes were managed in countries around the world, including Indonesia, Nepal, Burma, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, the Arab region, the Balkans, Romania, Slovak Republic, and Guatemala. The program developed an innovative framework for democratic development to guide international assistance for advancing democracy and produced national assessments for the aforementioned countries. He became advisor for the World Bank on the application of the Comprehensive Development Framework, specifically in conflict-affected countries.

## Grigorij Mesežnikov

*President, Institute for Public Affairs*

Grigorij Mesežnikov is a graduate of the Faculty of Arts of the Moscow State University. From 1983 to 1993 he worked at the Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic and from 1993 to 1997 worked at the Political Science Cabinet of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Mr. Mesežnikov is a co-founder of the Institute for Public Affairs (IVO), where he has been working since June 1997. He has served as its President since March 1999 while serving as a director of the Domestic Politics program. During the period 1994 – 1998 he served as a secretary of the Slovak Association for Po-

litical Science. He has lectured at Trnava University, Department of Political Science. His frequent essays on Slovak politics and political parties have appeared in scholarly journals and magazines in Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Ukraine, Germany, Denmark, USA and Great Britain. He analyzes Slovak political developments for domestic and international media. Since 1993 he has been an external collaborator of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. He is a co-editor and co-author of various publications, including the Global Report on Slovak Republic.

### **Václav Nekvapil**

*Vice-president, Association for International Affairs*

Mr. Vaclav Nekvapil is the vice-president of the Association for International Affairs (AMO), a Czech independent foreign policy think-tank. Mr. Nekvapil is responsible for AMO's research activities, international projects and public discussions. He coordinates the European Program of the Research Center and serves as vice-chairman of the Research Center Council. He graduated with a degree in Political Science from Charles University. He studied at the Institute of Political Studies in Grenoble, France in 2003–2004. As a PhD student, Mr. Nekvapil teaches at the Institute for Political Science, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Charles University. His specialization is France, EU affairs, Israeli poli-

tics and society, Middle-Eastern conflict and contemporary anti-semitism.

### **Marta Pejda**

*General Secretary, Grupa Zagranica / Polish NGOs Abroad*

Marta Pejda has been the Grupa Zagranica Executive Secretary since 2006. She works closely with NGOs operating in Eastern Europe. Earlier she worked at the Warsaw Center for Contemporary Art. Marta also works as a translator (Polish/Russian/Belarusian) and spent over four years in Minsk. She is a co-editor of 2 editions of the East European Democratic Center publication on the third sector in Belarus (2002 and 2007).

### **Pavel Pšejja**

*Program Manager, Democracy and Culture Studies Centre*

Pavel Pšejja, PhD, is a Project Manager at the Democracy and Culture Studies Center (CDK), one of the leading Czech NGOs working in the field of democracy promotion. He is responsible for maintaining contacts with the foreign partners of CDK, and for the supervision of projects conducted outside the Czech Republic. He is an assistant professor at the Department of International Relations and European Studies, Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University in Brno. Mr. Pšejja was a Fulbright Fellow in the Scholar in Residence Program.

**Péter Rada**

*Program Officer, International Centre for Democratic Transition*

While working with the ICDT, Péter Rada coordinated the project “Sustainable Democracy: Protecting the Rights of Vulnerable Groups of Mali, Morocco and Mongolia” and was responsible for organizing workshops designed to shape the “New Hungarian Foreign Policy Strategy”.

He graduated from Corvinus University Budapest (MA, Diplomacy; Security Policy) and studied at Dublin City University and Ludwig Maximilians Universität. He is a PhD student at Corvinus University, Budapest, Doctoral School of Multidisciplinary Social Sciences (Faculty of International Relations). His field of research is state-building as conflict management; democracy promotion; causes and consequences of state failure.

**Hana Ripková**

*Executive Director, Fulbright Commission Czech Republic*

Dr. Ripková is the Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission in the Czech Republic. She has worked for the Fulbright Program since 1991, first as the Program Officer and, since 1996, in her current position. She is a graduate of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, Charles University, Prague. Prior to 1989 she worked at Charles University, Czech Technical University and for the Union of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists. Ms. Ripková holds a PhD in Comparative Education.

**Paula Schriefer**

*Director of Advocacy, Freedom House*

Ms. Schriefer has over 14 years of experience in democracy and human rights promotion. She currently oversees Freedom House’s advocacy, outreach and communications activities, including foreign policy advocacy, press relations, and coordination with international organizations. From 2001 to 2006 she served as Director of Programs, overseeing Freedom House’s nearly two dozen major program initiatives and thirteen overseas offices established to support independent media, open and transparent governance, civil society development, justice sector reform, and the defense of human rights. She joined Freedom House in 1997 as part of the merger between Freedom House and the National Forum Foundation (NFF), bringing much of the programming portfolio to Freedom House. Before joining NFF in 1994, she worked for the National Endowment for Democracy. She graduated Summa Cum Laude with a BA degree in Russian Area Studies from the University of Denver and completed coursework for an MA in Russian and Eastern European Studies at George Washington University. Ms. Schriefer speaks Russian and some German and French.

**Jiří Schneider**

*Program Director, Prague Security Studies Institute*

Jiří Schneider, currently the Program Director of PSSI, is the former Political Di-

rector of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. He is also the former Head of the Policy Planning Department of the MFA, a post he has held several times: 1993–1994, 1999–2001, and since the beginning of 2003. In 2002, Mr. Schneider served as an International Policy Fellow at the Open Society Institute in Budapest. From 1995 until 1998, Mr. Schneider served as the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Israel. Mr. Schneider also served as an MP of the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly from 1990 until 1992. Prior to 1989 and his entry into public service, Mr. Schneider was employed as a forestry surveyor. He serves as a part-time lecturer at Charles University, at New York University in Prague, and to PSSI's Robinson-Martin Security Scholars Program. He participated in the Fulbright American Studies Institute on Foreign Policy.

### **Jan Surotchak**

*Resident Program Director for Central and Eastern Europe, IRI*

Jan Surotchak is the former director of Freedom House Slovak Republic and an IRI resident program officer in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. Mr. Surotchak was a Fulbright Fellow in Germany and holds an MA from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

### **Katarína Vajdová**

*Executive Director, Civil Society Development Foundation*

Originally a university lecturer, Katarína Vajdová graduated with a degree in journalism from the University of Leningrad in 1978. Until 1993 she worked at the Department of Journalism at the Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University in Bratislava. She is a co-founder of Radio Ragtime (the first independent student radio station in Slovak Republic) and of the Center of Independent Journalism. From 1999 until 2001 she worked as the Executive Director of the AI Nova and, since October 2001 she has served as Director of the NPOA (CSDF). She has participated in several international fellowship programs and has lectured in Great Britain, Canada, USA and Austria. She is a member of the Association of European Journalists.