**

**VOTING GUIDE to**

**2012 Global Primary &**

**Regional Delegate Elections**

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#### 1. 2012 GLOBAL PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

The Democrats Abroad 2012 Global Presidential Primary (hear after to be called Global Primary) and Regional Delegate Election will be held during the period from May 1 to 6, 2012. Voting will be done in person at Country Committee Voting Centers or by an absentee ballot upon request. Requests for an absentee ballot must be made no later than April 30, 2012 to a Regional Vice-Chair. Members can vote by email.

The May 1-6 Regional Delegate Elections will elect 11 of the 15 National Convention Delegates who will attend the September 3-6 Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Certification of those elected at the Regional Election must be done by May 16. The remaining 4 global delegates will be selected at the May 19 -20 Democrats Abroad Global Convention in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Any member of Democrats Abroad can self nominate to be a delegate at the regional or global level by submitting an application (Exhibit I) to be found at: [www.democratsabroad.org](http://www.democratsabroad.org) (orange button marked 2012 Global Primary).

Democrats Abroad members have the option to vote absentee in their State’s Presidential Primary or in some States a General Primary where there is an election for the Federal candidates for President, Representative and Senator. Our voters are encouraged to vote in our Global Primary only. Were a member has option to vote in a State Primary for a Representative or Senator we asked them not to cast a vote for a Presidential preference but to hold their vote to our Global Primary. Our Global Primary ballot will include a statement that the voter affirms that they have not cast a vote for the President in a State Primary.

#### 1.1 Voting Centers

The 2012 Global Primary is the “first determining step” in the Democrats Abroad Delegate Selection Pan (the “DSP”) where members in each of our three Regions can cast votes for candidates running to be their Regional Delegates. Those three Regions are: a) Americas; b) Europe-Middle-East-Africa (“EMEA”); and c) Asia Pacific.

Each Country Committee must have as many Voting Centers as it has recognized Chapters. If a Country Committee does not have any recognized Chapters, it must have at least one Voting Center. If a Country Committee participated in the 2008 Global Primary, then it must also have as many Voting Centers as it had then. A Country Committee may choose to have more Voting Centers than is minimally required, but keep in mind that this new figure will be the minimum required for 2016.

The addresses of each Voting Center and their respective hours of operation must be declared to the International Chair of Democrats by February 28, 2012 and may not be changed without written agreement of the International Chair.

#### 1.2 Election of Delegates

The May 1-6 Regional Delegate Elections will elect 11 National Convention Delegates who will then attend the September 3-6 Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. Certification of the Regional Elections must be done before May 16. The remaining global delegates will be selected at the May 17 -20 Global Convention in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Any member of Democrats Abroad can self nominate to be a delegate at the regional or global level by registering an application (Exhibit I) to be found at: [www.democratsabroad.org](http://www.democratsabroad.org) – orange button marked 2012 Global Primary.

The exact number of National Convention Delegates that will be elected in each Region will depend on the percentage of Democratic participation within each Region voting in the Global Primary worldwide. Regardless of the level of participation, each Region will elect at least one (1) National Convention Delegate. In other words, each Region’s Democrats Abroad members will each cast votes for their Regional Delegates to the National Convention. And each Region will get at least one Regional Delegate (3 out of the 11 positions), while the rest (the other 6) will be apportioned to each Region based upon their members proportional vote in the global vote. For example, if the Americas, EMEA and Asia-Pacific regions all have equal participation in the Global Presidential Primary, then each Region would have at least three (3) Regional Delegates.

The 2012 Global Primary promises to be a major important news item that we as Democrats Abroad have to communicate to the international and U.S. media. A well-organized media plan for the running of the Voting Centers will reap dividends to our Country Committee or local chapter not only during the 2012 Presidential election cycle, but in the long run as well.

#### 2. ORGANIZING THE VOTING CENTERS

As a leader of Democrats Abroad, the early work you do to organize the Voting Centers will help assure a smooth and successful event. It is important that our voters leave a Voting Center feeling positively about the Democratic Party and your Country Committee. In order to be assured that your Country Committee or Chapter volunteers are well prepared for running a Voting Center take the time to review this Guide. It is your duty to make sure that all your volunteers gets a copy of the Guide.

Because of the various deadlines that the Delegate Selection Plan (DSP) imposes, you will need to start organizing your Voting Center as soon as possible. Your planning should ensure that the site of the Voting Center will be adapted to the requirements of the DSP and the needs of your own Country Committee or Chapter. Familiarize yourself with the Voting Center Rules (Exhibit II) and the various forms in the DSP Plan as well as with the summary tables attached to this Guide. These are important for the smooth operation of the Voting Centers.

Read through this Guide and the DSP (posted at [www.democratsabroad.org](http://www.democratsabroad.org) – orange button 2012 Global Primary) and make sure you have a **FIRM GRASP** of the Voting Center Rules. Get your questions answered long before the day on which the local Voting Center is to be open. If you have questions contact the Democrats Abroad International Chair, Ken Sherman, Democrats Abroad Executive Director Vincent Fry, or International Counsel, John Eastwood, for guidance.

#### 2.1 Selecting the Voting Center Site

The Voting Center site should be selected with care to meet the requirements of the DSP and the conditions of your Country Committee. For instance, access to the site should permit the disabled to attend. One should also take every effort to ensure the physical safety of the people attending. Make sure that the site is safe, particularly with respect to fire hazards and similar dangers, and that adequate precautions have been made with respect to possible bomb and terrorist threats. Consider informing the local police of the Voting Center and asking them to help with or advise you on any necessary safety precautions. One might wish to check with the local US Embassy or Consulate about any dangers they might know about. If there are problems with the site that you have declared to the International Chair, get an ok to move to another address.

As for the facilities themselves, be sure that the site is large enough to hold the number of people that you are expecting with some additional space for overflow. You should also be sure that on the day of the vote there will be:

• adequate table(s) for registration and for voting

• adequate seating

• a place where posters may be put up

• easy access for handicapped voters

• adequate restroom facilities

• if desired, broadcast/audiovisual equipment

• phone and fax machines readily available (although not necessarily on site) which can be used for reporting the results to the International Chair of Democrats Abroad; and

• if appropriate, adequate Internet connections (WIFI)

It seems obvious, but you should be sure that the site will be open in advance so that you can set up the room, and that it will stay opened until you have finished with the day’s business and have cleaned up. Unpleasant surprises can be avoided with a little forethought.

#### 2.2 Organization at the Voting Center

You will need several volunteers to help with voter registration as they come in, as well as to assist in the smooth running of the site. You need to be prepared if there is no fax machine or computer at hand, so that your Voting Center Manager has the ability to file an election report to the International Chair of Democrats Abroad at the close of the elections. Be sure that you have lined up the volunteers well in advanced and that they will come to the site at least one hour before the event is to begin and several are at hand at the close of the election to verify the final election tabulation..

**2.3 Advance Publicity and Related Advance Work**

Advance publicity is extremely important. The Affirmative Action Plan specifically requires that you publicize all events involved in the delegate selection process with specific outreach to special target groups: African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, members of the GLBT community, the disabled and women. It is critical to our success that you issue press releases, organize a telephone campaign and otherwise to publicize the Voting Centers as widely as possible.

An 2012 Global Primary tool kit will be posted at [www.democratsabroad.org](http://www.democratsabroad.org) with materials to assist you in advertising your Voting Center including posters, banners, registration literature, etc. The DA Communications Network will develop a generic poster for local Country Committee use.

Of course, during the week prior to the opening of the Voting Center, you and your organizing committee will have to verify that the site will be ready for the event. Review the check list below once again to be sure that any unforeseen problem will have your attention.

#### 3. OBSERVERS AND MEDIA

The 2012 Global Primary will provide a good opportunity to communicate with the media in your respective countries. Every Voting Center should expect to have at least one representative from a news organization make a visit. Voting Centers may be visited by camera crews during the meeting. Some Voting Centers will be visited by other non-media guests. In order to help build the Primary locally, and if local conditions permit, you should take the initiative to seek media coverage, rather than simply making a press release and hoping someone will come. You need to interactive with local press outlets to keep them interested. Please note, however, that the Global Primary may also attract the interest of groups that mean us ill or wish to attract their own media attention by disrupting our process, so be warned that involving the local police may be necessary.

Young people who will not be of voting age by November 6, 2012, should be encouraged to observe so that they can learn how democracy works and appreciate their civic duties.

We have a responsibility to welcome media guests and give them an opportunity to fully observe our process. However, there are certain rules that must be followed by the media at the Voting Center. Voting Center Managers are obligated to inform them of these rules:

* Only American citizens who will be 18 years of age or older on November 6, 2012, and who are members of Democrats Abroad may vote at the Voting Center.
* Guests must remain quiet and not become involved. As guests are not participants in voting, they may not be given the floor.

You can attract attention to the Voting Center by planning an event before or afterward, but the key activity is voting. This is an election and not a party. If you intend to invite a local speaker or hold a meeting in conjunction with the event you are planning, this must be done discretely in a separate space so as to not interrupt the process of voting..

Be sure that the facilities at the Voting Center are reserved for Democrats Abroad and that the Voting Center Manager as an officer of Democrats Abroad has first right to these facilities. The phone at a Voting Center site must be available to the Voting Center Manager whenever he or she requests it. If this will pose problems at the site, you must make other and adequate arrangements including looking for a different site, as the validity of the Voting Center should not be challenged.

Broadcast/audiovisual equipment at a Voting Center must be set up and used in a way that will not hinder or obstruct the participation of any voter.

Plan to have a separate table that allows you to conduct voter registration for the November elections. Include in your planning the set up of a computer and printer that will allow you to register members at [www.votefromaborad.org](http://www.votefromaborad.org)

You will want to pay special attention to the Voting Center Rules. In the event of violations of these rules, the Voting Center Manager should ask the violator to leave.

#### 4. SETTING UP THE VOTING CENTER

What follows is a step by step common-sense guide to operations at the Voting Centers. You must ensure that you and all of the organizing team are familiar with these suggestions. If you have other suggestions, a “best practices” email or posting on the Internet well in advance of the Primary will improve the process for us all.

There is no absolutely exclusively “right way” to get things organized, although there are many wrong ways. Each Committee will have to give some thought to what will work best for them under the local circumstances.

#### 4.1 Bring These To The Voting Center

The following items will be helpful or even essential when you conduct your Voting Center

* Ballots at Voting Centers in adequate numbers. The Ballot form will be sent to you, but you will have to print the Ballots out in advance and number them under the eyes of a witness to verify the integrity of the final count. Additional Ballots can be printed out if necessary, but you will need to keep count on the total number of Ballots printed, those ultimately cast and those blanks which have to be destroyed.
* Several copies of the candidate Delegate statements of those running in the Region. Consider posting them on a wall or bulletin board where the voters have a chance to review..
* Several copies of the Delegate Selection Plan (DSP)
* Several copies of the Voting Center Rules (Exhibit II)
* Several copies of the Challenge Form (Exhibit III). (If you run things properly these will never be used soon to become scratch-paper)
* Several copies of a complete list of the members of the Country Committee members eligible to vote at the Voting Center.. Keep in mind that these lists contain personal data which must be kept confidential, so don’t leave these lying around.
* Several copies of this Guide
* A hard copy of ”Party Pledge of Support, Certification Slip and Membership Form” (see Form A) in adequate numbers
* A desk or pocket calculator (and batteries or cables)
* Clipboards, black/white board(s) and/or flip chart(s)
* Lots of pens, pencils, and extra paper
* A clock or watch with a second hand
* Markers and paper or cardboard to make signs
* Masking tape
* Colored name tags
* As appropriate, broadcast/audiovisual equipment
* Computers with Internet access (wifi or cable) and printer for voter registration
* Hard copy Federal Post Card Absentee (FPCA) Registration Forms (available through the US Embassy or local Consulate) for people wishing to register to vote in the General Election and blank Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots in adequate number.

#### 4.2 Checklist

You should arrive sufficiently in advance of the time that the Voting Center is to open to ensure that the site will be fully arranged when the voters arrive. It is suggested that your Voting Center Manager be there 60 minutes in advance. Larger Country Committees will probably need to schedule more time for setting up.

* Be prepared to take action if the site is locked and unavailable.
* Arrange chairs and tables.
* Set up registration tables and voting tables/booths. If your event is expected to have a large turnout, you may wish to have several lines of registration going.
* Ensure that the computers, fax and phone are in working order.
* Your organizing committee should have designated people to help with registration. No voter should be kept waiting longer than a few moments.

#### 5. RUNNING THE VOTING CENTER

In order to be eligible to vote in the 2012 Global Primary, each voter must be an US citizen living abroad temporarily or permanently who will be 18 years of age or older on November 6, 2012 and meet the other eligibility requirements. The voter must also be a member of Democrats Abroad, and may not vote in the Primary unless they are a member. The voter needs to affirm that they have not voted in their State Presidential Primary. Provisions should be made for a US citizen to join as a member at the Voting Center then vote.

#### 5.1 The Registration Procedure

When a Voter arrives, their identity and eligibility to vote/participate should be checked immediately at the Registration Table. If the would-be voter is already eligible to vote or participate, then they should be given a ”Party Pledge of Support, Certification Slip and Membership Form” (see Form A) and requested to complete the forms at the adjacent tables so as not to tie up the Registration Table itself. If the would-be voter is not a member of Democrats Abroad but is eligible to become a member (i.e., is an US citizen, of age and a resident of the geographical area for which the Voting Center is being operated), he / she should be given the form and the “New Member” box should be ticked.

#### 5.2 Voting at the Voting Center

The Voter must complete the required form and return them to the Registration Table where they will be registered. Failure to provide the requested information could be used to challenge a voter’s right to participate. All forms must be kept under strict control as they will be needed in the event of any challenges to the process. In any event the information is protected by data protection rules.

At the Voting Center, voters who have registered should then be given a Ballot (Ballot forms will be given to you in April) and sent to the designated voting area where they can mark the Ballot. Voters must be told that they must complete all the information requested on the Ballot or it will be subject to challenge as invalid.

Voting in the 2012 Global Primary is **NOT** on a secret Ballot, indeed quite the contrary and **EVERY BALLOT MUST BE SIGNED**. Because the process is not secret it is not necessary to set up a polling booths with a screen. However, since many voters will definitely not understand this, you may wish to set up something that allows a modicum of privacy for other voters while they are marking the Ballot. The voter should then return the completed Ballot to the Voting Center Manager or inserted by the voter into something resembling a ballot box (consider a large clear plastic container with a slot in the top). The Ballots remain under the strict control of the Voting Center Manager and the volunteers who are monitoring the vote.

As you plan for operations, you should give considerable thought as to how best to give the voters comfort in the fairness of the process under difficult circumstances.

With respect to the Ballots themselves, as noted above, the Ballot form will be provided to you in advance but it will be your responsibility to print adequate numbers of Ballots. You should note how many Ballots are printed and how many blank Ballot forms are destroyed when the Voting Center is closed after the voting is completed.

When voting is complete, it is the responsibility of the Voting Center Manager to have the voted Ballots tallied and the results immediately sent to our International Chair at the DA DC office by phone and by email or fax. Every effort should be made after to send by Express (Overnight) Mail the results of voting in writing as well as the voted Ballots to the DC office of Democrats Abroad to arrive no later than the end of the day on May 9. The forms on which to make the report the results will be sent the Voting Center Manager by the end of April.

While the Voting Center is primary about voting, there may be opportunity for the DA members to discuss policy resolution and platform issues. If you wish to have such a forum, it should take place in such a way as not to interfere with the voting,

#### 5.3 Absentee Voting Procedure

Members may vote in the 2012 Global Primary by absentee ballot should they not be able to vote at a Voting Center. Members who reside in countries with a Voting Center who wish to vote absentee must request their ballot from their country (or chapter) chair, no later than April 30, 2012. Voted ballots must be returned to the country chair (or chapter chair) by email only, as a scanned attachment, no later than May 5, 2012. Country and chapter chairs will inform their memberships when absentee ballots are available. Country and chapter chairs will tabulate absentee ballots along with physical ballots cast at voting centers, and report tabulated results to the DC office of the International Chair by May 7, 2012.

Members residing in countries that do not have a Voting Center must request their ballot from their respective Regional Vice Chair, i. e, [AMERICASrvc2012@democratsabroad.org](mailto:AMERICASrvc2012@democratsabroad.org), [EMEArvc2012@democratsabroad.org](mailto:EMEArvc2012@democratsabroad.org), or [APrvc2012@democratsabroad.org](mailto:APrvc2012@democratsabroad.org), no later than April 30, 2012. Voted ballots must be returned to the respective regional vice chair by email only, as a scanned attachment, no later than May 5, 2012. Regional groups will be informed about the global primary and the availability of the ballots by bulk email messages and announcements on the website. Regional vice chairs will tabulate regional group member absentee votes and submit the tabulated results to the DC office of the International Chair by May 7, 2012.

#### 6. DELEGATE SELECTION

Appended hereto as Appendices 1 and 2 is a memo explaining the delegate selection process and the candidacy forms for anyone wishing to run for the positions of Delegate, Alternate or Standing Committee Member for the 2012 Democratic National Convention (Exhibit 1)

[Note: The Voting Center Rules and the Delegate Selection Plan call for a certain number of formalities, such as checking IDs of people who are seeking to vote or checking IDs of presidential campaign representatives.

The term "appropriate" is used in most of those contexts, and this term is intended to require the use of common sense under the local circumstances. If someone has a complaint they can always file a challenge, but if common sense is used, and voters and candidates treated evenhandedly, you should not have any real problems. For instance, if someone claims they are a representative of a presidential campaign and the "evidence" is written on a rumpled cocktail napkin, then you should be dubious; if the person has a letter on official campaign letterhead, then one might be more open to believing that the person with the letter is the official representative.

As for voters, err on the side of letting them vote, at least provisionally -- there will be lists of voters who signed up to vote by mail or Internet, so voting twice will be difficult.]

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