THE UN’s ROLE IN DEMOCRATIZATION
Capacity-building in transition and consolidation

A Project of the Centre for Democratic Institutions and the UNU Peace and Governance Programme

Project meeting 3-4 September
UN Headquarters, New York, Conference Room C

Project Background and Meeting Schedule

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Project abstract

This research project will examine the UN’s assistance in democratic transition and consolidation. It will analyze a number of pressing issues both in general and with reference to specific cases of UN involvement. Particular emphasis will be given to post-conflict societies and cases of major current concern, such as Kosovo, East Timor and Afghanistan. Historical perspectives will be provided by examining earlier cases that continue to hold relevance for UN activities, such as Haiti, Cambodia and Namibia.

The objective of the project is to draw forward-looking conclusions about the impact and effectiveness of the UN in democracy – and particularly electoral – assistance, and generate conclusions about how the UN’s activities can better promote sustainable democracy. The project will make a contribution to the academic study of the UN and democracy promotion, and provide policy ideas that will be of interest to UN
practitioners and the wider policy community. To accommodate these aspirations, the project includes the participation of academics and UN practitioners, including scholars and policy analysts from countries that have received UN assistance. The project outputs will be an edited book and an executive summary/policy brief.

A number of lines of inquiry will be pursued: Can the UN – as an ‘external’ actor – have a decisive, substantial and enduring impact upon domestic transition and democratization? Is the UN facilitating democratic processes that rely upon favorable local conditions? Has the promotion of democracy by the UN in post-conflict and divided societies had a significant role in conflict amelioration and reconciliation? What values or models of democracy does the UN bring with it to the democratization process? Does the UN seek to have a political impact – such as sidelining extremist forces and promoting pluralist political actors in the democratic process – and is this legitimate? Can democracy in certain (especially post conflict) circumstances be in tension with other values and public goods – such as peace, stability and reconciliation – and how does the UN cope with the international pressure to hold elections early in post-conflict situations? What is the record of the UN’s indigenous capacity building in electoral and civic institutions – does the UN instil sustainable democratic processes that societies can support in the future, avoiding the emergence of ‘donor dependency’? Practically, how successful has UN assistance been in terms of consolidating democracy in transitional societies – what is the record? To what extent is it possible to draw conclusions and generalizable ‘best practices’ from limited experience in different contexts? From a theoretical perspective is it possible for external actors to instill or alter conditions that are conducive to democracy?

Meeting objectives

The September 3-4 UN-NY meeting has two purposes: to bring together most of the project researchers to discuss papers and findings; and to consult with UN staff members whose work is related, directly or indirectly, to the UN’s democracy assistance activities [see annex for outline of project participants and schedule of meeting].

Project background and themes

Historical background

It is now widely accepted that domestic governance is intrinsically related to security between and within states, as well as a broad range of human rights and welfare needs. As UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan observed, “good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development.” Today a broad movement of democracy promotion – directly or indirectly – underscores the policies and activities of many individual states, regional organizations, global organizations, regional and global legal regimes, and NGOs. The promotion of ‘good governance’ – whatever the definition – figures prominently in the official policies of many states, particularly their overseas aid programs. In the regional context, many organizations or arrangements have long had standards of good governance and democracy that apply to their membership.
The United Nations, amongst the international organizations, has a unique role in democracy promotion, assistance and facilitation; according to one supporter: the “international agent for democratization”. \(^1\) The founding of the UN, in addition to being an alliance against aggression in the Second World War, was premised upon the belief that stable, peaceful conditions within states underpin peaceful and stable relations between states. Whilst the Charter is based upon the sovereign state, “We the peoples” implies that the people’s will should lie behind that sovereignty. The Charter commits its signatories to the “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small”. Amongst the purposes of the Organization are stated the promotion of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without discrimination “as to race, sex, language or religion”. More explicitly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 expresses the UN’s mandate for the promotion of democracy. It reaffirms that all persons are born “free and equal in dignity and rights”, and that all persons have a right to “take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.” Most explicitly, “The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.” Subsequent legal instruments have codified this further. \(^2\)

It is important to emphasize that, whilst these legal instruments promoted certain norms that implied some form of democracy within states, they did not yet imply an international norm of democracy promotion. State sovereignty and non-intervention into domestic affairs was emphasized in all such instruments, underscored by Article 2(7) of the UN Charter. Democracy was promoted as a vague principle; actual facilitation was considered too sensitive, especially during the ideological fervour of the Cold War and during a time when newly independent countries were not eager to compromise their hard-won sovereignty by international scrutiny of their domestic civil processes. The end of the Cold War opened up political space. The changing context appeared to have brought an increased opportunity to address ‘global’ problems at the international level, and a growing acceptance of a wider conception of peace and security. The end of the Cold War also challenged structural and global notions of international security and saw a shift in attitudes – and at a much slower rate, policies – from a paradigm of national security to one of ‘human security’, that sees issues of governance within states as of direct relevance to peace and security between states, and thus a legitimate issue of international relations. General Assembly Resolution 43/157 of 8 December 1988 reaffirmed the right to take part in the government of one’s country and the establishment of the UN sponsored International Conferences of New or Restored Democracies set in motion a debate. Following the second conference the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report to study “the ways and mechanisms in which the UN system

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could support the efforts of governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies".

The culmination of the UN’s deliberation of the consequences and prospects for democracy and democratization was the Secretary-General’s report ‘An Agenda for Democratization’. Simultaneously, there were mounting requests by numerous governments for assistance in building the institutions of democracy. Yet the idea of highlighting and conceptualizing the UN’s role in the process of democracy and democratization was a “risky business”, given the sensitivities of state sovereignty and connotations of intervention that might be implied; many in the UN clearly did not see this within the authority of the international civil service.

This whole changing context – and most notably the evolving transnational conditionalities and inputs upon ‘domestic’ politics – has challenged the established meaning of democracy: for one observer, “Regional and global interconnectedness contests the traditional national resolutions of the central questions of democratic theory and practice.” The classical democratic questions are premised upon a fairly homogenous, delineated, national political community, where politics even has the state as its terms of reference (admittedly a largely Western construct in its origins). The evolution of democracy has brought into question this notion of political community, national identity, citizenship, and representation.

**Why promote democracy?**

There is a growing consensus, based upon empirical research and evolving political norms, that democratic governance is a human right, that it is conducive to sound development and stable, plural societies, and that it is correlates to peaceful relations between and within societies (although democratic transition can increase instability).

It is worth citing Larry Diamond at length:

Countries that govern themselves in a truly democratic fashion do not go to war with one another. They do not aggress against their neighbors to aggrandize themselves or glorify their leaders. Democratic governments do not ethnically "cleanse" their own populations, and they are much less likely to face ethnic insurgency. Democracies do not sponsor terrorism against one another. They do not build weapons of mass destruction to use on or to threaten one another. Democratic countries form more reliable, open, and enduring trading partnerships. In the long run they offer better and more stable climates for investment. They are more environmentally responsible because they must answer to their own citizens, who organize to protest the destruction of their environments. They are better bets to honor international treaties since they value legal obligations and because their

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3 General Assembly Resolution 49/30, 7th December 1994.
4 The report was presented to the General Assembly on 20 December 1996 (A/51/761) as “Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies”, a supplement to two previous reports on democratization.
openness makes it much more difficult to breach agreements in secret. Precisely because, within their own borders, they respect competition, civil liberties, property rights, and the rule of law, democracies are the only reliable foundation on which a new world order of international security and prosperity can be built.” 7

In the post-September 11 world the issue has gained renewed urgency. Recent experience of Afghanistan has shown how corrupt, unstable, ineffective and repressive governance was a source of misery for millions in that country: human rights, development and education (amongst other things) all ranked around the worst in the world. At the same time, such an environment can also be a breeding ground for violent grievance and terrorism, the effects of which have a far wider impact upon international peace and security. The September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US underlined the relationship between security and governance. Terrorism finds fertile ground in undemocratic and conflict-torn societies: the UN promotion of democratization must now also be seen as a part of its wider role in international peace and security.

This is not to say that democracy – either in theory or practice – is perfect. 8 But it is surely a settled norm that underpins much of the contemporary work of the UN, and arguably the “fundamental standard of political legitimacy in the current era.” 9

UN democracy promotion: themes and challenges

The span of UN activities in this field is vast, ranging from technical assistance in drafting and implementing election laws to nation building on the basis of democratic governance. 10 The range of issues the UN must grapple with in undertaking this demanding work is also vast. It must tread the fine line between respecting Article 2(7) of the Charter – which prohibits interference in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of states – and taking leadership on behalf of the international community and in upholding basic principles of human rights. Its work must be based on the concept of state sovereignty but be motivated by the high normative ideals set by the UN. Its rules of engagement are based on a post-WWII Charter while it works in a post-Cold War world where some of the Westphalian premises are beginning to fray. A number of questions arise.

Can external actors such as the UN have an enduring impact upon the political trajectory of a society?

The conventional ‘political science’ approach to democracy and democratization focuses upon domestic, indigenous variables without much attention to international actors or forces. Polities are seen to be conditioned by the political, historical, cultural and socio-economic dynamics of a particular community, often delineated by territory.\textsuperscript{11} Democracy, representation, accountability, consent – the most fundamental sources of political legitimacy – are concepts that have meaning in a contractual relationship between the government and the governed within a state. Of course, transnational processes, international organizations, and the free flow of information have inevitably had a bearing on ‘national’ political systems, sometimes with dramatic effect. International norms relating to governance and human rights at the regional and global levels have played a significant role in political outcomes and opportunities.\textsuperscript{12}

Nevertheless, the relationship between domestic and international factors in democratization processes is complex and unclear.\textsuperscript{13} It is uncertain “what factors cause liberal democracies to emerge and thrive and how manipulable these factors are by outside actors”.\textsuperscript{14} The effectiveness of international democracy promotion is debatable. Are there pre-conditions for democracy – be they social, economic, cultural, geographic – and if there are, are external actors able to instill or alter such variables? The existing democracy promotion literature is on balance cautious of big claims. Thomas Carothers observes the limited accomplishments and emphasizes the inherent limitations of democracy assistance: “democracy aid generally does not have major effects on the political direction of recipient countries. The effects of democracy programs are usually modestly positive, sometimes negligible, and occasionally negative.”\textsuperscript{15} He concludes that “democracy programs are at best a secondary influence because they do not have a decisive impact on the conditions of society that largely determine a country’s political trajectory – the charter and alignment of the main political forces; the degree of concentration of economic power; the political traditions, expectations, and values of the citizenry; and the presence of absence of powerful antidemocratic elements”.\textsuperscript{16}

This seems to be borne out in some case observations. For example, Lao Mong Hay argues that “perhaps the greatest obstacle to democracy in Cambodia is the anti-


\textsuperscript{16} Thomas Carothers, op.cit., p.341.
democratic behavior of the nation’s political elite. However history, culture, and a low level of socio-economic development are also obstacles – though not insurmountable – to building a democratic political culture.”\(^{17}\) Carothers similarly argues that “Haiti was and remains a remarkably difficult place to try to build democracy, due to its catastrophic economic situation and ragged socio-political history.”\(^{18}\)

Freedom House’s assessments present a mixed picture for the countries that the UN has been involved in. In the ‘Freedom in the World Country Ratings 1972-2001’, of the 70 countries that the UN Electoral Assistance Division had had some form of involvement in at some time over the 1990s, 13 of these countries were judged as ‘free’, 40 ‘partially free’, and 17 ‘not free’ in 2001.

It is reasonable to suggest that people everywhere have an inherent desire to have control over their lives. Participation in the organization of their communities would therefore seem to be a fairly universal desire. If the UN is facilitating this process, then it is quite possible for the organization to have a decisive impact in helping a society move forward. If the conditions are not ready, then the positive impact is likely to be much less, and even minimal. If the underlying historical, social, economic, variables are critical, how should the UN’s democracy promotion efforts be designed and implemented? How should our expectations of success by conditioned?

**Does the UN promote democratic processes that are sustainable?**

Democratic processes can be expensive; it is important that the systems and processes that the UN supports in developing countries are not beyond the means of such countries. There have been concerns that international democracy assistance is donor-lead and donor-dependent, that it ignores the issues of affordability and long term sustainability, “putting in place organizations, institutions, and processes that poor countries are unable to finance on their own, sometimes undermining more sustainable alternatives.”\(^{19}\) The corollary of this argument – that international democracy assistance programs can be overly ‘top-down’, donor-driven, preoccupied with elections – is that more emphasis should be attached to more modest bottom up, demand-driven assistance.

**We need standard operating procedures; but to what extent can we generalize on the basis of limited experience drawn from fundamentally different cases?**

Arguably, “there are no blueprints for building democracy or for assisting those seeking to do so. We are still years away from identifying, let alone prescribing, ‘best practices’


\(^{19}\) Marina Ottaway and Theresa Chung, ‘Debating Democracy Assistance. Toward a New Paradigm’, *Journal of Democracy*, vol.10, no.4, October 1999, p.100. “Assistance has driven up the cost of democracy for many countries. Donors have encouraged expensive practices and institutions, but they will not finance them forever.” p.109
Yet even while appreciating the uniqueness of different situations, we must understand the importance and value of lessons learned. Lessons learned and best practice assumes that we can establish propositions – in this case regarding the best ways of assisting democracy – on the basis of experience and observation. Thus, certain variables – such as the nature of civil society, level of ethnic homogeneity, level of cooperation of political elites, social and economic standards, timing of elections – can be considered to be key variables across different cases. Is it possible to generalize about best practices and effective approaches on the basis of limited experience drawn from fundamentally different cases? This question relates to the methodology and is central to the project.

Does the UN apply or impose a particular model of democracy?

The *Agenda for Democratization* stated that “it is not for the United Nations to offer a model of democratization or democracy or to promote democracy in a specific case. Indeed, to do so could be counter-productive to the process of democratization that, in order to take root and to flourish, must derive from the society itself. Each society must be able to choose the form, pace and character of its democratization process.” The UN’s approach is sensitive to cultural difference as well as, generally, politically impartial. The UN pursues its work with a view to building the capacity of communities to develop their own forms of participation and collective decision-making, in the context of indigenous social conditions.

Yet, no form of intervention – even if it is welcomed with open arms – is value free. All substantial forms of intervention have an impact upon the future of a political community – if not, there would be no point in undertaking them. The whole concept of ‘national’ representation, equality, individual rights of citizenship, and secular and accountable forms of civil authority are premised upon the liberal vein of democracy. In some settings, this is a departure from traditional – including familial, clan, religious – structures of authority, even if it is not ‘imposed’. Is democracy based upon universal equality, secular political authority and individual rights – however sensitively applied – congruent with all cultures or religions? Some argue otherwise: "the liberal principle of individuation and other liberal ideas are culturally and historically specific. As such a political system based on them cannot claim universal validity.” How do UN activities interact with local political traditions?

How does the background of a particular country (its experience of democracy or otherwise) have a bearing upon the UN’s success? How does (and how should) this background of experiences with democracy condition the UN’s input?

Clearly the background of a society has a strong bearing upon the success of the UN. Societies with a history of plurality and democracy, with a strong civil society and developed civil institutions, and the sense of nation, even if interrupted by a period of

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21 *An Agenda for Democratization*, p.4.
conflict, are more likely to benefit from the assistance of the UN than those without. Societies with little democratic tradition, with a weaker or oppressed civil society, will have greater difficulty embracing the ethos of democracy. A further, and more sensitive, issue is the level of socio-economic development: are there foundational prerequisites for the existence of democracy? Is UN involvement timed and structured to take these foundational issues into consideration, or to react to short-term democratic impulses? Ignoring such issues threatens the effectiveness of promoting democracy. Yet to engage in such issues brings the UN into controversial territory – making judgments about whether the people are ‘ready’ for democracy, and whether democracy should be balanced against other priority areas such as development and stability.

Is UN democracy promotion altering the nature of political community, or the political, social or cultural dynamics of the recipient state?

UN actors and the international community in general are faced with a sensitive decision in assisting democracy in certain circumstances. We may have to recognize that it is not simply the process that matters, but also the results. Ideally, the process will marginalize militants, encourage pluralism and inclusive politics. Does this imply that the UN should ‘push’ the process in a certain direction in order to favour certain outcomes? In Bosnia the High Representative and other international actors have gone to lengths to promote electoral outcomes which they thought represented the best chance of promoting the international agenda, in some cases using methods that would be considered unacceptable elsewhere, including dismissing officials judged to be counter to the aims of the operation, reconciliation or democracy. Is this ethical? Similarly, the issue of consultation raises similar dilemmas.

Can democracy be in tension with other demands or public goods in post-conflict societies?

There is clearly pressure to move towards democracy in the countries that the UN is involved in. However, there is evidence that this can be in tension with other values or public goods – such as peace-building, reconciliation, efficient provision of public services, perhaps even economic reconstruction – especially in conflict and post-conflict situations. Early or ill-timed elections in post-conflict or delicate political situations can be hazardous – as experience of Angola and Burundi demonstrate. They can exacerbate existing tensions, result in support for nationalists or for patterns of voting that reflect war time allegiances, as in Bosnia. On the other hand, it could be said that encouraging local parties to accept responsibility for their own futures earlier, is necessary. In addition, it could be argued that democracy can weaken militant forces, as candidates opposed to reconciliation and integration might be seen as obstacles to the delivery of

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international aid. Yet surely a tight and inflexible deadline can have the opposite effect: how then to balance the impulse and pressure for democracy with local sensitivities?

What model of electoral system is most suitable?

In any context an electoral system attempts to result in a system of government that combines and balances a number of values: accountability, participation, pluralism, representation, stability, efficiency. The timing and modalities of electoral assistance is also critical. Elections represent a key step in a broader process of building political institutions and legitimate government. Variations in electoral procedures can play a key role in determining whether the locus of political competition evolves along extremist or centrist lines, and hence in developing moderate and broad-based political parties. There are three main areas of variation that are crucial influences on the shape of post-conflict politics in most countries. First, there is the question of timing: should post-conflict elections be held as early as possible, so as to fast-track the process of establishing a new regime? Or should they be postponed until peaceful political routines and issues have been able to come to prominence? Second, there is the mechanics of elections themselves: who runs the elections? How are voters enrolled? What electoral formula is used? And so on. Third, there is the often under-estimated issue of the effect of the elections on political parties. Especially in cases of weak civil society, political parties are the key link between masses and elites, and play an absolutely crucial role in building a sustainable democratic polity. Hence, the interaction between parties and the electoral process is itself crucial. Are the political parties contesting the election narrow, personalized, sectarian or ethnically exclusive entities, using the political process to pursue their wartime objectives? Or are they broad, multi-ethnic, programmatic organizations with real links to the community? And how can the former be discouraged and latter promoted? More generally, there is the overarching issue of under what circumstances elections help to build a new democratic order, and under what circumstances they can undermine democracy and pave the way for a return to conflict. For example, elections are part of the broader process of democratization, but ill-timed, badly designed or poorly run elections can actually undermine the broader process of democratization. As Reilly observes, “the oft-repeated mantra of ‘free and fair’ elections will not, in most deeply divided societies, create sustainable democracy by itself. Indeed, sometimes they can make matters worse.”

The issue of verification, of an outside actor judging whether an election is “free and fair”, can also be rather troubling. A decision that legitimizes a political outcome, that can have a huge impact upon the destiny of the society, on the form and content of democracy – and thus in turn economics, social policy, and all other issues that inhabit the public sphere – is by its nature interventionist. The decision is not always clear-cut, and making the decision one way or the other is not a value-free one. Where does the threshold lie? To what extent can the UN show flexibility for imperfect electoral processes?

Project research questions

Over-arching issues:

Domestic context:

- What domestic circumstances are most conducive to the promotion of democracy from external actors?
- What is the role of civil society in building the foundations of democracy, especially in post conflict or transitional circumstances?
- How do national liberation movements transform themselves (or not) into party political organizations?

Case studies

- How does the history (of democracy), culture, social processes condition the form of democracy that can take root in the particular context? How do these factors have a bearing upon the likelihood that external assistance can have an impact?
- Did the UN – or any other ‘external’ actor – have an impact upon the political development of the community? What form of impact: Substantive? Facilitative?
- How did the UN work alongside local actors and benefit from their expertise and networks? What lessons can be learnt?
- Did the UN sufficiently understand and respect local cultural and social conditions in organizing its democracy programs? Did the UN sufficiently understand local political balances and dynamics in organizing its democracy programs?
- Was the UN’s involvement impartial or did it have an impact upon political balances, political agendas, or political opportunities for certain groups/interests above others?
- Was the timing and modalities of electoral activities optimal?
- Was there any tension between the UN’s involvement and sovereignty; were there any sensitivities regarding ‘interventionism’?
- In retrospect, what is the record of the UN’s involvement? What lessons can be learnt? Practically, how successful has UN assistance been in terms of consolidating democracy in transitional societies?
- To what extent did the international community genuinely build local capacity for self-governance? To what extent is the UN going beyond one-off electoral assistance to political reconstruction and indigenous capacity building?
- Did the institutional arrangements put in place encourage any forms of power sharing? Did they promote the development of programmatic political parties?
- Did the activities encourage politics to form around broad cross-cutting issues rather than along narrow sectarian lines?
- Were there any alternatives to elections considered as a means of involving local actors in the immediate process of reconstruction?
- In which sectors was the UN most effective: for example (but not necessarily limited to) electoral assistance, establishing rule of law, strengthening civil society, assisting political parties, generating economic development?
Normative/theoretical issues:

- Are ‘international standards’ of democracy and democratization sensitive to local traditions and authority structures in the cases in which the UN is involved, and can the organization ever be truly free from local politics or from having an impact? Is ‘liberal democracy’ generally applicable?
- Can electoral processes exacerbate ethnic/religious differences, or even encourage new outbreaks of conflict?
- Does the UN risk being manipulated by local parties, or being sucked into fragmentary politics?
Researchers and paper topics

THEMATIC PAPERS

Introduction
Roland Rich         Edward Newman
Director, Centre for Democratic Institutions  Academic Officer
Australian National University   United Nations University

Overview and synthesis
Roland Rich         Edward Newman

The Promotion of Democracy, International Law and Norms
Tom J. Farer
Dean, Graduate School of International Studies
University of Denver

The UN’s electoral Assistance: challenges, accomplishments, prospects
Robin Ludwig
Senior Political Affairs Officer
Dept. of Political Affairs, UN

Elections in Post-Conflict Societies
Benjamin Reilly
Bureau for Development Policy
United Nations Development Programme

Theoretical dimensions
Laurence Whitehead
Official Fellow, Nuffield College
Oxford University

Transitional Authorities: Achieving consultation and accountability
Simon Chesterman
Senior Associate
International Peace Academy

UN System Experience in Long-Term Democracy Assistance
Richard Ponzio
United Nations Development Programme
CASES

Kosovo
Ylber Hysa
Director, Kosova Action for Civic Initiatives (KACI)

Cambodia
Sorpong Peou
Associate Professor of Political Science
Sophia University, Tokyo

Haiti
Marlye Gélin-Adams
Senior Program Officer
International Peace Academy

East Timor
Tanja Hohe
Visiting Fellow, The Watson Institute for International Studies
Brown University

Afghanistan
Amin Saikal
Director, Centre for Arab & Islamic Studies
Australian National University

Namibia
Henning Melber
Research Director
The Nordic Africa Institute
Meeting Schedule

Tuesday 3 September

- 9:45 Introduction of project and participants – Roland Rich
- 10:00 Discussion on general themes and scope of project
- 10:30 Discussion of thematic papers and case studies throughout the day. Lunch 12:30.

The UN’s electoral assistance: challenges, accomplishments, prospects
Robin Ludwig

Elections in post-conflict societies
Benjamin Reilly

Theoretical dimensions
Laurence Whitehead

Transitional authorities: achieving consultation and accountability
Simon Chesterman

An empirical appraisal of democracy assistance based upon quantitative indicators
Edward Newman

CASES

Kosovo
Ylber Hysa

Cambodia
Sorpong Peou

Haiti
Marlye Gélin-Adams

East Timor
Tanja Hohe

Wednesday 4 September

- 9:45 Discussion with UN staff members
- 12:30 Lunch
- PM – continuation of paper discussion; discussion of timeframe for completing papers; discussion of possible dissemination activities.
**The Centre for Democratic Institutions**

CDI responds to the needs of developing countries in the field of good governance and democratic institutions. The centre was established as an Australian Government initiative and receives its core funding through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). It is based in the Research School of Social Sciences at The Australian National University and draws from the considerable intellectual capital of Australia's leading graduate tertiary institution. CDI focuses on the parliamentary process, the judicial process, civil society and the media, and has a particular interest in human rights and accountability. Further information can be found on its homepage at [www.cdi.anu.edu.au](http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au).

Roland Rich took up the position of inaugural director of CDI in July 1998, coming from the Australian diplomatic service. He has served on diplomatic postings in the Philippines, Burma and France and as Australian ambassador to Laos. Within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade he has served as Legal Adviser and as Assistant Secretary of the International Organisations Branch.

**The United Nations University**

The United Nations University is an organ of the United Nations established by the General Assembly in 1972 to be an international community of scholars engaged in research, advanced training, and the dissemination of knowledge related to the pressing global problems of human survival, development, and welfare. Its activities focus primarily on peace and conflict resolution, development in a changing world, and science and technology in relation to human welfare. The University operates through a worldwide network of research and postgraduate training centers, with its planning and coordinating headquarters in Tokyo.

The Peace and Governance Programme is a core unit of the University. Its mission is to contribute to the promotion of sustainable peace and good governance. The Programme organizes and supports research that produces policy-oriented recommendations for current problems, and also that which identifies longer-term trends and patterns in international politics that hold implications for peace, security and governance. The Programme is also committed to the training and capacity-building needs that arise from this research activity. Further details are available at [www.unu.edu](http://www.unu.edu) and [www.unu.edu/p&g](http://www.unu.edu/p&g).