CDI.NEWS

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Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to CDI.NEWS from the Centre for Democratic Institutions, Australia.

CDI is Australia’s foremost democracy promotion and training institution, working in the area of good governance (particularly parliaments, judiciaries, civil society and media) with a geographic focus on Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific.

CDI’s mission:
-To harness Australian and international best practice in support of developing countries' needs for democratic governance

CDI aims to provide:
- high quality training programs in key democratic institutions and processes
- in-country technical assistance
- applied research

CDI’s core budget is provided by AusAID, Australia’s Agency for International Development.

CDI.NEWS will keep you informed periodically of activities and upcoming events at CDI.

1. CDI’S FIFTH PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY RETREAT

CDI’s fifth Pacific Parliamentary Retreat took place in Darwin from 24-28 November 2003. The Retreat was conducted in association with the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly and hosted by the Speaker, the Honourable Loraine Braham, MLA. The Retreat included participants from...
the parliaments of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the Solomon Islands. Participants benefited from the expertise of Mr. Greg Urwin, Secretary-General Designate of the South Pacific Forum, who acted as a resource person during the Retreat. Four major themes ran through the Retreat program and discussions: land management, parliamentary issues, Australian indigenous issues and Pacific issues. The Retreat program included presentations and discussions on legislatures and good governance, the role and responsibilities of parliamentary committees, political processes and civic education, fisheries management, land management and national parks, cultural heritage management, indigenous culture and tourism. Retreat participants visited Batchelor Institute, Australia’s indigenous tertiary education institution, where they discussed Australian indigenous culture with people from Arnhemland.

2. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF VIETNAM STUDIES PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATION

At the request of the Office of the National Assembly of Vietnam (ONA), CDI conducted a study tour in Canberra for seven senior officials from the ONA on 9 and 10 December 2003. The study tour is part of a UNDP funded program to establish a National Training Centre within the National Assembly. During the program the delegation visited the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Funding and Disclosure section, the AEC Education Centre, the Department of the Parliamentary Library and CDI. The delegation was interested in the type of training and briefings newly elected parliamentarians receive in Australia.

3. PARLIAMENTARY OFFICIALS ATTEND ANU COURSE

The second Parliamentary Officials Course, jointly facilitated by CDI and the Graduate Program in Public Policy at the ANU, took place from November 3-21, 2003. CDI supported the attendance of 11 parliamentary officials from the following countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. The course aimed to assist participants in developing an informed understanding of the workings of representative and responsible parliament. The course highlighted accountability and transparency within parliamentary processes. The Australian Parliament was used as a major example and topics included constitutional foundations, parliamentary activities, and related structures for accountability and scrutiny of administration.
4. DESIGNING EFFECTIVE JUDICIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

CDI, in association with the Judicial Commission of New South Wales, is conducting a workshop entitled 'Designing Effective Judicial Education Programs' for participants from the Asia Pacific Judicial Educators Forum (APJEF). The workshop will take place at the Judicial Commission of NSW in Sydney from 28 January to 3 February and aims to strengthen the skills of judicial educators from eight countries in delivering high quality education programs. Keynote addresses will be delivered by The Hon. JJ Spigelman AC, Chief Justice of NSW, Sir Ninian Stephen, a member of the CDI Consultative Council and Professor Neil Gold from the University of Windsor in Ontario. Other topics covered will include the methodology for conducting needs assessments, program design, teaching methods and evaluating effectiveness. The report will be available on the CDI website soon.

APJEF
Judicial Commission of NSW

5. SOLOMON ISLANDS GOOD GOVERNANCE WORKSHOP

In the past, CDI has supported the attendance of officials from the Office of the Ombudsman in the Solomon Islands at short professional courses at the ANU dealing with issues of good governance. Following this, and with the support of CDI, the Office of the Ombudsman in the Solomon Islands conducted a workshop on good governance from 12-14 November 2003 for local officials. The workshop aimed to equip participants with the knowledge of relevant laws, regulations and general orders when performing their duties and responsibilities. The workshop was developed by John Smith Pitabelama, Ombudsman of the Solomon Islands and involved presentations from government officials including the Chairman of the Leadership Code Commission, the Deputy Accountant General from the Ministry of Finance and the Chairman of the Trade Dispute Panel. Topics included the roles and powers of various government commissions, issues of corruption and dispute settlement processes.

6. PACIFIC OMBUDSMEN ATTEND COURSE ON ‘POLICY PRACTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY’

The 'Ombudsman Policy Practice and Accountability' course was conducted by CDI Associate John Wood through the National Centre for Development Studies at the ANU from 3-28 November. CDI supported the attendance of six officers from Ombudsman offices in Fiji, PNG, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The course aimed to develop participants’ understanding of the depth of the role of ombudsman institutions in contemporary administration. The course examined different models for an ombudsman organisation, dealing with accountability, ethics, investigation techniques, preparation and publication of reports and the relationship between the public sector ombudsman and the parliament.

7. TWO ASIA-PACIFIC CONFERENCES IN DECEMBER

CDI director Roland Rich was invited to two conferences in December; the 4th Regional Anti-Corruption Conference for Asia and the Pacific held on 3-5 December 2003 in Kuala Lumpur and the General Conference of the Council
for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific held on 7-9 December 2003 in Jakarta. The Kuala Lumpur conference demonstrated that the anti-corruption drive in Asia and the Pacific has a strong head of steam. The Anti-Corruption Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific has now been endorsed by 22 countries and it will enhance the effectiveness of the UN Convention against Corruption. The Jakarta conference showed the changing nature of security issues in the region with questions concerning terrorism now competing for attention with the traditional concentration on hot spots such as the Korean Peninsula, the Straits of Taiwan and the South China Sea.

8. COMMUNITY OF DEMOCRACIES CO-ORDINATION MEETING

The next ministerial meeting of the Community of Democracies will be held in Santiago, Chile, in early 2005. It will again involve the participation of civil society and in preparation for the Santiago meeting, the convenors invited a group of participants, including CDI Director Roland Rich, to a coordination meeting in Lisbon on 20-21 January. The Lisbon meeting contributed significantly to the preparations for Santiago. There was a lively discussion based on a position paper written by Dr David Altman, followed by a discussion on strategies and options. The meeting then split into regional groups to consider specific issues. Several key issues were identified including problems of rule of law, weakness of political parties, compromised human rights in the war against terrorism and the need to allow civil society to play its full role in building a culture of democracy.

9. SIR PAUL TOVUA TO DELIVER ANNUAL ADDRESS

Each year CDI holds its Annual Address delivered by a leading political figure on a key issue relating to democracy in the region. This year CDI’s sixth Annual Address will be delivered by Sir Paul Tovua, Chairman of the Peace Council in the Solomon Islands. Sir Tovua’s address on democracy in the Solomon Islands will be held in the Mural Hall at Parliament House on Monday 8 March. The topic is timely given Australia’s leading role in restoring law and order through the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI). As Chairman of the National Peace Council and Chairman of the Solomon Islands Intervention Taskforce, Sir Tovua will provide valuable insight into the current situation in the Solomon Islands and the prospects for restabilising effective parliamentary democracy.

10. BROADCASTING PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS

Following discussions held in December 2003 with the Office of the National Assembly of Vietnam (ONA), CDI will host a presentation with the ONA through the World Bank’s Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) on 26 February. The virtual workshop will focus on broadcasting parliamentary proceedings and will be anchored by Mr. Graeme Dobell of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation who presents a weekly program on the Australian Parliament entitled ‘Order in the House’. This presentation will be a mixed-
media session with discussions and presentations using web based material, footage from parliamentary broadcasting and examples of best international practice.

National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
GDLN

11. DPR STUDY TOUR ON PARLIAMENTARY REFORM PROCESSES

As part of CDI’s program supporting the secretariat of the Indonesian Parliament (DPR), from 22-31 March a delegation from the DPR will undertake a study tour of the Parliament of South Australia and the Federal Parliament in Canberra. This study tour will focus on reform processes within parliaments. The delegation will be led by Secretary-General Mrs. Nurhayati Daud and it is proposed that the program will include a briefing on the political dimensions of reform; how reform is conceived and pushed through the system.

DPR
South Australian Parliament
Federal Parliament

**Featured Article**

12. A CONTEMPORARY ANALYSIS OF GOVERNANCE EDUCATION

‘A Contemporary Analysis of Governance Education and Training Practices’ has been published for The Asia-Australia Institute as part of a broad program on governance entitled ‘Governance Capacity Building and Cultures of Sovereignty’. Aiming to identify best practice for design and implementation of governance training programs, the report reviews a wide range of governance training institutions within Australia, including CDI, and globally. The report finds that different institutions’ conceptualisations of governance direct the type of governance training program they adopt and calls for greater emphasis on democratic governance covering issues that incorporate democratic principles of accountability, transparency and access to review. The report recommends coordination between these institutions to allow for better cohesion in governance training and information sharing.

Report page
Asia-Australia Institute

All suggestions and comments are welcome cdi@anu.edu.au

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