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. **2003 CDI ANNUAL ADDRESS – DR SURIN PITSUWAN**

The CDI Annual Address was held in The Hall at University House on the 30 April 2003. CDI's Annual Address was attended by 150 people from institutions and organisations around Canberra and distinguished guests from Thailand. The Address was delivered by Dr Surin Pitsuwan, former Foreign Minister of Thailand. The Honourable Mrs. Chris Gallus welcomed and introduced Dr Surin. Dr Surin delivered a thought provoking address entitled “Islam and Democracy”.

In his speech, Dr Surin assessed the ability of Islam to promote democracy in the age of modernity and globalisation. Dr Surin reflected on Islam as it exists in South East Asia and in the homeland- the Middle East. He believes the Muslim population in countries such as Malaysia and Thailand to be moderate, flexible and open to external factors. This 'openness' enabled Islam to successfully adapt to modernity and globalisation within a region which already had two dominant religions- Hinduism and Buddhism. In the Middle East, Dr Surin believes the system to be more internally focused and less flexible. Dr Surin called upon the West to transfer what has been achieved, developed and innovated in the West, back into the Muslim world; to educate, promote human resource development and complete the loop of knowledge that at one stage was safeguarded by the Islamic world.

2. **NATIONAL THAI STUDIES CENTRE'S 2003 THAI UPDATE**

The National Thai Studies Centre, with the support of the Centre for Democratic Institutions, organised the Thai Update at the Australian National University on 29-30 April. The Thai Update analysed the development of democracy in Thailand over the last thirty years since the popular uprising of 1973. A group of distinguished Thai and Australian scholars discussed the way Thailand has developed from a military dictatorship to a functioning democracy and the special features and problems of democracy in Thailand today. As Thailand was never a colony, a unique democracy has developed within Thailand from Thai roots and in a Thai way. This development of democracy was examined from an economic, military, educational, constitutional and political viewpoint.

Dr Surin Pitsuwan delivered an informative address on the current political situation in Thailand. Dr James Klein, Representative of the Asia Foundation in Bangkok, prepared a detailed paper analysing the decisions of the 15-member Constitutional Court of Thailand over the first five years of its existence. Dr Craig Reynolds of the Australian National University examined democratic traditions within Thailand. CDI's partner organisation in Thailand, the King Prajadhipok Institute (KPI), also supported the Update with Deputy Secretary-General Dr Niyom Rathamarit participating in the forum. KPI prepared a most useful paper for the Update entitled “The 1997 Constitution: the path of reform.”

KPI paper - Review of the 1997 Constitution of Thailand  
Dr James Klein - Analysis of the jurisprudence of Thailand’s Constitutional Court  
National Thai Studies Centre  
King Prajadhipok Institute  
The Asia Foundation
3. STUDY TOUR BY MEMBERS OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS OMBUDSMAN’S OFFICE, MARCH - APRIL 2003

Under a program of cooperation between CDI and the Solomon Islands’ Ombudsman Office, John Pitabelama and Daniel Damilea of the Solomon Island’s Ombudsman’s Office attended a short course at the National Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) at the Australian National University. The course, entitled “Conflict and Development” was held from 24 March to 17 April. The aim of the course was to help participants to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between aid, intervention and conflict, and to design and carry out better interventions into situations of conflict. The course drew on expertise within the ANU, Centre for Democratic Institutions and State Society and Governance in Melanesia project, and was conducted by Dr Ben Reilly.

4. PARIS CONSULTATIONS AMONG DEMOCRACY PROMOTION FOUNDATIONS

On 20-21 March, the sixth meeting of Democracy Promotion Foundations took place in Paris jointly hosted by the Jean Jaurès Foundation and the Robert Schuman Foundation. The previous meeting had been held in Berlin in June 2001 hosted jointly by the German political party foundations. The meeting allowed publicly funded democracy promotion foundations to compare notes on their activities with a view to improving coordination and determining best practice in the field. A point of particular conjecture and debate at the Paris meeting was the war in Iraq and the impact it and the subsequent rebuilding efforts would have on the promotion of democracy in the Arab world.

Roland Rich represented CDI at the meeting and concentrated his comments on the Asia-Pacific region noting that democratic governance could certainly not be said to be consolidated in East Asia where several countries were at pivotal points in their democratic development. He also noted that the Pacific island nations were experiencing particular difficulties in maintaining their democratic institutions at a time when donor interest in the Pacific was declining.

5. CONSULTATIONS IN LONDON WITH THE WESTMINSTER FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRACY

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy is an independent grant-making body promoting democratic development. It was established in 1992 and receives an annual grant of about four million pounds from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. WFD recently appointed David French as its new Chief Executive. He and CDI Director Roland Rich held consultations in London on 15 April and focused on
issues such as strengthening of parliaments and political parties in developing countries. WFD’s primary focus is on Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Anglophone Africa while CDI’s focus on Asia and the Pacific is complementary. The two foundations agreed to keep in touch on issues such as developing their websites to increase the impact of their programs.

6. WORKSHOP ON PROMOTING TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE THROUGH OVERSEAS AID PROGRAMS

The Australian Council for Overseas Aid, together with AusAID and Transparency International Australia, took the initiative of holding a workshop to examine the means of promoting transparent and accountable governance though the Australian aid program. The workshop was held on 21 May at the Australian National University with participation from civil society organisations, the international development contractors community, government officials from AusAID and some academics including the CDI Director

The workshop was particularly fortunate to have as a guest participant Mr Peter Aitsi from the Media Council of Papua New Guinea. He outlined the problems caused by the lack of accountability and transparency in PNG including the erosion of institutional capacity, the politicisation of service delivery and the failure of the 2002 elections. The workshop quickly focused on the ‘how’ question and many practical ideas, some flowing from TI’s useful source book, were discussed. Perhaps the key concept that emerged was the necessity to adopt longer timeframes. While accepting the need for rigorous and timely compliance processes, poverty alleviation activities had to adopt a far longer timeframe if they were to have sustainable impact. As Peter Aitsi said, "we have to think of our children in twenty years time."

The background papers for the workshop are a useful contribution to the work.

7. CDI EVIDENCE TO PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOOD GOVERNANCE EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

On 12 May, CDI appeared before the Human Rights Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade as part of the Inquiry into Human Rights and Good Governance Education in the Asia Pacific Region. CDI Director, Roland Rich addressed the Sub-Committee making reference to CDI’s submission to the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Human Rights - Inquiry into ‘Human Rights and Good Governance Education in the Asia-Pacific’. The Sub-Committee discussed the role of CDI in the promotion of human rights education and particular
recommendations made in CDI’s submission to the Human Rights Sub-Committee. Mr Rich stressed the interdependence of democracy and human rights and that human rights promotion plays a pivotal role in allowing electoral democracies to develop into liberal democracies.

8. WORKING TOGETHER FOR EAST TIMOR’ CONFERENCE

CDI’s Executive Officer, Felicity Pascoe, attended the Victorian Local Governance Association’s (VLGA) Working Together for East Timor Conference and Expo, held at the Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre in Preston, Melbourne 4-5 April, 2003. The conference and expo brought together over 300 representatives from most Australian government and non-government organizations and community groups actively involved with East Timor. Outcomes from the conference formed the basis of an Action Plan identifying priorities, strategies and principles for Australian groups and East Timorese to work together effectively in reconstruction efforts and the promotion of development within East Timor.

His Excellency Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, President of East Timor delivered the opening address in which he outlined the major challenges facing East Timor as it reaches its first anniversary since independence.

9. CDI WEBSITE GETS BETTER CONNECTED

CDI INCLUDED IN THE BRITISH SOCIAL SCIENCE INFORMATION GATEWAY

Research and publications from the CDI website have been included in the Social Science Information Gateway website (SOSIG). SOSIG is part of the United Kingdom Resource Discovery Network. It is a freely available Internet service providing a trusted source of selected, high quality Internet information in the area of social sciences, business and law for students, academics, researchers and practitioners.

CDI FEATURED MEMBER OF AUSTRALIAN POLICY ONLINE

On 9 April CDI was listed by Australian Policy Online as their Featured Member. APO provided its readers with information about the work of CDI and links to the CDI website. APO has over 90 member organizations, 1,500 email subscribers and provides access to much of the best Australian social, economic, cultural and political research available online. Their sources of information include newspapers, the broadcast media, government and various
institutions. APO covers material on topics ranging from foreign policy, defence, social policy, immigration, refugees, the environment, citizenship and the law. APO is maintained by the Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University of Technology.

**Australian Policy Online (APO)**

**CDI LINKED TO THE CASTEN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WEBSITE**

CDI has recently been linked to the website of Casten Centre for Human Rights. The Castan Centre is based within the Law Faculty at Monash University in Melbourne, Victoria. The Castan Centre aims to promote and protect Human Rights through applied research, scholarly publications, teachings, public education, consultancies, collaborative work and advocacy. In promoting and protecting human rights, the Centre brings together national and international human rights scholars, advocates and practitioners.

**Castan Centre for Human Rights Law**

**CDI’S RESEARCH ADDED TO THE ANU EPRINTS ARCHIVE WEBSITE**

The ‘Research and Publications’ section of the CDI website has recently been added to the Australian National University’s ‘Eprints’ site. Eprints is an archive site displaying papers that have been submitted for journal publication and papers posted electronically for peer consideration and comment before submission for publication. Research material submitted on this site has national and international exposure.

**Australian National University E-Print Repository**

**** Upcoming Events ****

10. **TRAINING FOR JUDGES FROM EAST TIMOR**

In association with the Federal Court of Australia, CDI is sponsoring the visit to Australia of two judges from East Timor, Judge Duarte Soares-Tilman and Judge Deolindo dos Santos. Between 28 May and 2 June they will take part in an observational tour of the court system in Darwin and attend the Judicial Conference of Australia’s Annual Colloquium in Darwin. The visit will allow the judges to investigate aspects of the court processes and, case management. This visit also provides the opportunity for the East Timor judges to develop closer relations with Australian judges.

**Federal Court of Australia**

11. **INDONESIAN INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM COURSE, PERTH JUNE**

CDI has developed a project that will bring to Australia eight Indonesian journalists for an Investigative Journalism Course. The course will be held at Murdoch University in Perth from 9-20 June. Designed specifically for Indonesian journalists, the course will focus on the skills associated with investigative reporting. The course will be directed by Professor Gail Phillips from Murdoch University and
has been jointly supported by CDI and the Australian-Indonesia Institute. Participants attending this course are:

- Ms Chik Rini, Journalist, Analisa Daily
- Mr Akuat Supriyanto, Announcer and Reporter, Spirit in the Morning
- Mr Nezar Patria, Editor Staff for Investigation Desk, Tempo Newsweekly Magazine
- Mrs Rita Widiadana, Journalist, The Jakarta Post
- Mr Paulus Bambang Wisudo, Journalist, Kompas Morning Daily
- Mr Refliani, Journalist, Media Indonesia
- Ms Fransisca Ria Susanti, Editor, Sinar Harapan
- Mr Iwan Setiawan, Journalist, Tempo Weekly News Magazine

Australian-Indonesia Institute
Murdoch University

12. PNG WOMEN CANDIDATES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE PROJECT, 2003

CDI, together with Australian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE), has developed a training project for women running for parliament in the Highlands in Papua New Guinea. The first few training workshops have recently taken place. The workshops are conducted by Sarah Garup, ASPBAE PNG National Project Officer and are being filmed by Robyn Slarke. Workshop participants include those women who have been involved in running for public office, women and men who have supported women in running for such positions and those actively involved in promoting education on citizenship and governance issues. The training workshops focus on governance, citizenship and the role of women in PNG. The workshops are to be completed by the end of June 2003 and an educational video on these workshops is to be completed by the end of 2003.

** Featured Web Article **

SHAPING GLOBALIZATION: THE ROLE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Mary Robinson, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, delivered a lecture at the American Society of International Law’s 97th Annual Meeting on 2 April 2003. In her lecture Robinson argues for the United States, as the world’s most powerful country, to demonstrate a greater commitment to international human rights law both at the global and national level. She claims that the war in Iraq is testing the foundations of a multilateral system that has been built up over the last century. It is in the collective and national interest of the United States to promote a stronger multilateral system and work effectively with other countries in order to meet global challenges of the twenty-first century. The key to achieving this is greater respect for, and implementation of, international human rights law both on an international level and through national constitutions.
Shaping Globalization: The Role of Human Rights

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

To subscribe or unsubscribe from CDI.NEWS go to the CDI website http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au/cdinews/cdinews.htm