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. THREE ASSOCIATES JOIN CDI
CDI is pleased to advise that Dr Sharon Bessell, Dr Peter Larmour and Mr John Wood have become CDI Associates.
Sharon has considerable expertise on children's rights, women's rights and social safety nets and has worked in Southeast Asia. Peter specialises in development and has pioneered the teaching of anti-corruption strategies. He has great experience in the Pacific. John is a former Deputy Ombudsman of Australia with a wealth of experience on governance issues as well as administrative and consumer rights. All three Associates have worked closely with CDI in the past and this association has now been formalised. Brief biographic details are posted on the website.

2. ANU-CDI PARLIAMENTARY OFFICIALS COURSE
The inaugural ANU-CDI Parliamentary Officials Course was held from 9-27 September in Canberra. The course entitled 'Responsible Parliamentary Government' was developed by CDI and the Graduate Program in Public Policy at the Australian National University.

The course was designed to equip parliamentary officials with a range of skills. It covered an extensive range of parliamentary activities including constitutional foundations of the Australian system, responsible government, parliamentary privileges, research and information services, media coverage of parliament, the legislative process, management of parliamentary business and parliamentary procedure.

Participants for the course came from five nations: Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam.

3. PHILIPPINE JUDICIAL VISIT TO AUSTRALIA
As part of the ongoing CDI Philippine-Australia Judicial Exchange Program, the Philippine Judicial Academy requested that CDI focus the 2002 Philippine judicial visit to Australia, on issues of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and mediation. The visiting delegation, led by Justice Josue Bellosillo, was comprised of five judges (including three Supreme Court Justices) and one legal scholar. The visit, which took place on 8-17 October, was held at the Federal Court in Sydney and Melbourne, and the NSW Judicial Commission. The delegation was also fortunate to hold discussions with justices of the Family Court of Australia and the Victorian Supreme Court.

4. VISIT BY THAI PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION
A senior delegation comprising representatives of both houses of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Thailand visited the Australian National University on Tuesday 14 October for discussions with the National Thai Studies
Centre and the Centre for Democratic Institutions. The delegation was led by the First Vice-President of the Thai Senate Mr Pichet Pattanachote. Dr John Funston, Associate Director, and Ms Chintana Sandilands, Assistant Director of the National Thai Studies Centre, together with Mr Roland Rich, Director of the Centre for Democratic Institutions, held discussions with the visitors. The main discussion concerned the working of Thailand’s new institutions under the 1997 Constitution. Significant problems of corruption remained and the great danger was that the electorate would lose faith in the system.

Report
Thai parliament

5. PACIFIC OMBUDSMAN COURSE
With the rapid development of ombudsman institutions throughout the world in the last ten years, there have been an increasing number of requests from within the Asia-Pacific Region for training assistance for staff. CDI has responded to this demand and supported five ombudsman officials from Fiji, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu through this professional short course. The course was held from 4-22 November at the National Centre for Development Studies at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Report

6. THREE CONFERENCES IN NOVEMBER - BANGKOK, SEOUL, TOKYO
Roland Rich, Director of CDI, attended three important conferences in November in Bangkok, Seoul and Tokyo. All three were concerned with different aspects of the process of consolidating democracy in the world.
In Bangkok, Congress IV of King Prajadhipok’s Institute reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of the 1997 Constitution.
In Seoul, the Community of Democracies Non-Governmental Forum examined issues of propagating the values of democracy internationally.
And in Tokyo, a workshop sponsored by the Diet debated the place of Japan in international democracy promotion.
The thread running through the conferences was the inspirational impact democracy had for the participants. Many participants in Seoul came from former communist countries and others still lived in authoritarian societies. They had no doubt that democratic governance was indispensable to their countries. In Bangkok, participants debated the crafting of democracy for their country’s needs and in Tokyo the debate centred on the responsibility of democrats to support democracy internationally.

Report
King Prajadhipok’s Institute
CDI-KPI Memorandum of Understanding
Community of Democracy Non-governmental Forum, Seoul
Democracy Drowned Out - Washington Post Article
Democracy: Investing for peace and prosperity, Seoul
7. SUBMISSIONS TO COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY SUBCOMMITTEES

CDI has recently made submissions to inquiries being conducted by two subcommittees of the Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade:

- Inquiry into Australia’s relations with Indonesia
- Inquiry into human rights and good governance education in the Asia-Pacific

Both submissions are posted on the CDI website and on the respective parliamentary sites.

[Link to CDI activities page]
[Link to Australia’s relations with Indonesia inquiry website]
[Link to human rights and good governance education inquiry website]

8. DEMOCRACY COALITION ‘DEFENDING DEMOCRACY SURVEY’

To support the process of building international democratic architecture, the Democracy Coalition Project launched an independent survey to chronicle how governments have adhered to their commitments to promote and defend democracy beyond their national borders over the past ten years - the first global survey of foreign policy trends. The website contains a brief summary of the findings.

On the four principal criteria in the survey Australia scored as follows:

- Response to the overthrow of democratically elected government - good
- Response to manipulation of electoral processes - good
- Promotion of international norms and values of democracy - very good
- Policy toward entrenched dictatorships - fair

[Link to report]

** Upcoming Events **

9. THAI SENATE VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

Following two Australian Senate visits to Thailand, one in 2001 and the other in 2002, a return visit to Australia will take place on 2-6 December. The delegation will comprise 6 Senators and the Director of King Prajadhipok’s Institute (KPI), Thailand’s democracy promotion institute. The report will feature in the January newsletter.

10. CONFERENCE PAPER ‘THE STATE AS FIRST AMONG EQUALS’

CDI’s Executive Officer will deliver a paper to the Development Studies Network Conference to be held on 5-7 December. The conference is entitled ‘Contesting development: pathways to better practice’ and will be held at Massey University, New Zealand. The paper and
conference proceedings website will appear in the January newsletter.

11. PACIFIC RETREAT
The Fourth CDI Pacific Parliamentary Retreat was held between 25-29 November in Brisbane, in conjunction with Griffith University’s Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice, and Governance (KCELJG). The report will feature in the January newsletter.

** Featured Web Article **

12. JIHAD VS. MCWORLD: THE BATTLE FOR DEMOCRACY JOINED, BY BENJAMIN R. BARBER
This is an excerpt from Dr Benjamin Barber’s speech ‘The Second Front in the War on Terrorism: Democratizing Globalism’ based on ideas developed in Dr Barber’s book ‘Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism Are Reshaping the World’. This piece deals with what might be called the democracy deficit in globalism, and how it has spawned two destructive and rival forces: represented as Jihad and McWorld. He argues that spreading democratisation globally is the ideal way to combat both phenomena.
Link to article

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