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.

This edition:

1. AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT VISIT TO THE DPR
Under the CDI Australia-Indonesia Parliamentary Exchange program four senior officials, including the Clerk of the House of Representatives, from the Commonwealth Parliament visited the Indonesian Parliament. The exchange program provided an opportunity for secretariat officials to exchange ideas on parliamentary issues, develop institutional links and structure further training which will assist in the process of strengthening the DPR as an effective democratic institution in Indonesia. The visit builds on a scoping study done in 1999 and training placements in the Commonwealth Parliament by several DPR officials in 1999 and 2000.

Link to report
DPR

2. VIETNAMESE JUDICIAL STUDY TOUR TO AUSTRALIA
As part of its program of cooperation with the Supreme People’s Court of Vietnam, CDI invited a delegation of 7 senior Vietnamese judges to visit Australia in May 2002 to study the judicial process and exchange ideas with Australian judges. This is the second year of Australia-Vietnam Judicial Exchange, and the third exchange activity. The delegation concentrated on the role of courts in Australia’s governance system, the work of Australian judges and the adversarial system of representation of parties.

CDI report

3. SENATE DISCUSSIONS IN CAMBODIA
Following last year’s successful discussions, CDI arranged the second visit by Australian Senators to Cambodia. The Phnom Penh workshop involved Senators George Brandis, Kay Denman, Meg Lees, Marise Payne, Sue West and CDI Director Roland Rich. This two day workshop sought to draw on the Australian Senate’s experience through an exchange of ideas with Cambodian Senators. The Cambodian Senate is now three years old, and is building up its practice and procedure. It is hoped this exchange can go some way to assisting in the process. The issues discussed broadened and built on those of the preceding tour.

CDI report
Cambodian Senate

4. SENATE DISCUSSIONS IN THAILAND
This year’s Senate visit to Thailand was conducted in conjunction with the visit to Cambodia. The delegation comprised Senators George Brandis, Kay Denman, Meg Lees, Sue West and CDI Director Roland Rich, and involved participation in a one day workshop on 6 July. The aim of the visit as in the previous year was to exchange ideas on Senate best practice. Specific issues addressed on this visit included: oversight of the executive, secretariat support for the senate, committee systems, senators’ obligation and privileges, and gender equity.

CDI report
Thai Senate

5. MELANESIAN DEMOCRACY LEARNING CIRCLES: UPDATE
The Vanuatu working group for this project convened on 10 July to consider the English and Bislama versions of the learning materials. The learning materials are civic discussion guides targeted at rural and urban ni-Vanuatu. They contain 6 chapters each focusing on different aspects of Vanuatu democracy. John Liu (VRDTCA) and Bernie Lovegrove (ASPBAE) facilitated this meeting at which the materials were scrutinized by NGO leaders involved, and plans were drawn up for their use in the participants’ respective NGOs and elsewhere. The next meeting for the project will be held in September 2002 in Port Vila.

2nd interim report
Oxfam NZ
ASPBAE
Workshop report - October 2001

6. 2002 ANZSIL CONFERENCE
The Australian and New Zealand Society of International Law (ANZSIL) was established in 1992. The secretariat is based at the Centre for International and Public Law at the Australian National University in Canberra. This year’s conference was held on 15 June and dealt with the subject of ‘New Challenges and New States: What Role for International Law?’. CDI Director Roland Rich chaired the first session of the conference focusing on East Timor.

Conference program
ANZSIL website

7. VIETNAM UNDP PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE
The National Assembly and People’s Councils of Viet Nam: Strengthening Legislative Capacity for the 21st Century workshop was held in Danang on 25-28 June. At the request of AusAID, CDI facilitated the participation in the workshop of two Australian representatives: Mr John Dawkins, who held various ministries in the Hawke-Keating governments, and Mr Roland Rich, Director, CDI. The conference was held to assist Vietnam’s economic and political development through taking steps to improve the legislation processes and parliamentary oversight procedures so as to move the Vietnamese system towards the rule of law.

CDI report
Vietnam National Assembly
UNDP
8. FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION: SOUTH PACIFIC FUTURES
The Foundation for Development Cooperation hosted the Development Research Symposium: South Pacific Futures in Brisbane on 22-24 July 2002 with over 80 participants from Australia and the region. The former Member of Parliament from Vanuatu Hilda Lini delivered the keynote address in which she challenged the assumptions underlying western representative democracy and argued for more emphasis on Melanesian systems of democracy. This address set the scene for three days of discussion on the state of modern democracy in the Pacific and the role of custom in modern governance processes. Extracts from several key papers of the conference are referred to.

CDI activities page
Conference program
Peter Aitsi - 'Media and Politics in PNG'
Joseph Foukona - 'State Powers and Institutions in Solomon Islands' Developing Democracy'
Gordon Nanau - 'Uniting the Fragments: Solomon Islands Constitutional Reform'

9. DEMOCRACY FORUM FOR EAST ASIA WORKSHOP: ‘THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN FIGHTING CORRUPTION’
The Democracy Forum for East Asia was established as the result of an agreement between Presidents Kim Dae-jung and Bill Clinton in November 1998 to promote and strengthen democracy in East Asia. The Sejong Institute and the National Endowment for Democracy were designated by their respective governments as the operating agencies. CDI has been invited to participate in this work. As part of its program the Democracy Forum has held five workshops and on 25-26 July it held its Sixth Workshop on the theme - The Role of the Media in Fighting Corruption: Perspectives from Asia and Beyond. The Workshop brought together over 30 journalists, academics, officials and activists from East Asia and other parts of the world to debate this important issue.

CDI activities page
Democracy Forum for East Asia website
The Sejong Institute website

** Upcoming Events **

10. CDI-ANU PARLIAMENTARY TRAINING PROGRAM
CDI and the Graduate Program in Public Policy at the ANU have developed a three week intensive training program for mid-level parliamentary officials from the Asia-Pacific region. The inaugural cohort - comprising participants from Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand - will commence study in early September. The aim of the organizers is to cement this program as an annual course and attract officials from parliaments in Asia, the Pacific and beyond to participate.

Draft course outline

11. UNU/CDI WORKSHOP
The UNU/CDI project on the United Nations Role in Democratization will hold its next planning workshop in New York on 3-4 September. The summer 2002 issue of Work in Progress Volume 16, No 3 contains a summary of the aims and methodology of the project.

Link to Work in Progress
Extract from Work in Progress

** Featured Web Articles **
12. DEMOCRACY COLLABORATIVE’S INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTABLE REPORT: ‘THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF CIVIC GLOBALISM’
The Democracy Collaborative has published the report from its first International Roundtable. The report entitled ‘The Theory and Practice of Civic Globalizm’ covers the roundtable held in April 2001 in Washington DC. It focused through 5 sessions on analysis of civic trends, the role of technology and the arts in civil society, and the role of markets and governance in global civil society. The roundtable conclusions included the notion that globalization of democracy was needed to ‘contain’ the globalized market.
Link to report
Democracy Collaborative homepage

** Featured Publication **

13. WEAVING CONSENSUS: THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA-BOUGAINVILLE PEACE PROCESS
The Bougainville Peace Agreement signed in 2001 brought to a definitive end the most violent conflict in the South Pacific since the Second World War. As the already diverse island society fractured, violent internal conflicts erupted between different Bougainvillean groups. This publication, produced in collaboration with the Bougainville Inter-Church Women’s Forum, and featuring a number of chapters from ANU academic Anthony Regan, documents an array of innovative peace initiatives that succeeded not only in ending the organized violence but also in weaving back together the diverse social fabric of Bougainville.

Accord International Review of Peace Initiatives
Conciliation Resources

All suggestions and comments are welcome.
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